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June 26-29

FEATURING WORKS BY BEETHOVEN, SHOSTAKOVICH,
MENDELSSOHN, JANÁČEK AND MORE.

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Solera Quartet

Tricia Park and **Miki-Sophia Cloud** – violins

Molly Carr – viola

Andrew Janss – cello

Dominic Cheli – piano

THERE WILL BE NO INTERMISSIONS

Note from the Artistic Director:

As MusicIC's Founding Artistic Director, I am so happy to welcome you to MusicIC 2019, our ninth summer of bringing the best chamber music and artists to the Iowa City community!

The 2018-2019 season was a banner year for the Solera Quartet, marked by our sold-out Carnegie Hall debut and the triumphant release of our debut album, *Every Moment Present*. We were astonished by the rave review in the *The New York Times* which called our album "sensitive and finely articulated throughout and the sound bright and vivid...intoxicating," and we've been delighted and humbled by the response the album has received. For the past few summers, MusicIC and Iowa City have been hugely important to the Solera Quartet's development, acting as an "incubator" space for us to advance our musical growth, learn and perform new repertoire, and hone our artistic vision. This summer's programming is a love letter to you, our MusicIC audiences, who have embraced the Solera Quartet. Without your support, none of our recent successes would have been possible.

And so, MusicIC 2019 will offer a series of "greatest hits" concerts, beginning with Wednesday's concert, "À la Russe", which explores Beethoven's sublime op. 59 No. 1, in which he incorporates Russian folk tunes in honor of his patron, Count Razumovsky, and Shostakovich's devastating Piano Trio No 2.

We continue with Thursday's concert, "With Our Compliments," featuring the glorious Franck Violin Sonata and music by the dynamic contemporary composer, Missy Mazzoli. We end with "Every Moment Present" on Friday evening, a special live concert presentation of all of the music on our album by Caroline Shaw, Janáček, and Mendelssohn. And we love playing our Family Concert on Saturday morning at the Iowa City Public Library, which is always so much fun as we connect with some of our youngest and most enthusiastic fans. We're also thrilled to present the exciting pianist, Dominic Cheli, who will join our roster on the Shostakovich and Franck.

As always, special thanks goes to John Kenyon and the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature team for their support of MusicIC; Chris Brus for her substantial assistance with marketing and logistics; to Andrew Hicks, Minister of Music at Trinity Episcopal Church, for his generous hospitality of the festival; and to Kevin and Pat Hanick and Doug and June True for hosting our guest musicians.

These past nine years have been an honor and a privilege, and I can hardly believe how lucky I am to continue to present these concerts to this community that I adore. I am so grateful to be a part of the summer fabric of Iowa City and look forward to many more seasons to come. Thank you for taking this journey with us!

-Tricia Park

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

7:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church

PROGRAM I:

À LA RUSSE

Solera Quartet: Tricia Park, Miki-Sophia Cloud, Molly Carr, Andrew Janss
Dominic Cheli, piano

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)

String Quartet in F Major, op. 59, No. 1, "Razumovsky"

- i. Allegro
 - ii. Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando
 - iii. Adagio molto e mesto
 - iv. Thème russe: Allegro
- Solera Quartet*

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Piano Trio No. 2 in E Minor, op. 67

- i. Andante; Moderato
 - ii. Allegro con brio
 - iii. Largo
 - iv. Allegretto
- Dominic Cheli, piano; Tricia Park, violin; Andrew Janss, cello*

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

7:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church

PROGRAM II:

WITH OUR COMPLIMENTS

Solera Quartet: Tricia Park, Miki-Sophia Cloud, Molly Carr, Andrew Janss
Dominic Cheli, piano

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
String Quartet in G Major, op. 18, No. 2,
“Compliments”

- i. Allegro
 - ii. Adagio cantabile
 - iii. Scherzo: Allegro
 - iv. Allegro molto, quasi presto
- Solera Quartet*

Missy Mazzoli (b. 1980)
Death Valley Junction (2010)
Solera Quartet

César Franck (1822-1890)
Violin Sonata

- i. Allegretto ben moderato
- ii. Allegro
- iii. Recitativo - Fantasia. Ben moderato - molto lento
- iv. Allegretto poco mosso

Tricia Park, violin; Dominic Cheli, piano

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

7:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church

PROGRAM III:

EVERY MOMENT PRESENT

Solera Quartet: Tricia Park, Miki-Sophia Cloud, Molly Carr, Andrew Janss

Caroline Shaw Entr'acte (2011)

Leoš Janáček (1854 - 1828) String Quartet No. 2, "Intimate Letters"

- i. Andante - Con moto - Allegro
- ii. Adagio - Vivace
- iii. Moderato - Andante - Adagio
- iv. Allegro - Andante - Adagio

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

String Quartet in F Minor, op. 80

- i. Allegro vivace assai
- ii. Allegro assai
- iii. Adagio
- iv. Finale: Allegro molto

Saturday, June 29

10:30 a.m., Iowa City Public Library, Storytime Room

The MusicIC annual family Concert will be based on work performed elsewhere during the festival, and will feature the Solera Quartet, joined by young writers of the Iowa Youth Writing Project who will share original text inspired by classical music.

Sponsors:



PROGRAM NOTES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

730 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church

Program I:

À LA Russe

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)
String Quartet in F Major, op. 59, No. 1,
“Razumovsky”

Beethoven composed his three Quartets, op. 59, in 1805–06 for the Russian ambassador in Vienna, Count Andreas Kyrilovich Razumovsky. The count was an excellent amateur violinist, who played second violin in his own house string quartet, except when Louis Sina stepped in so he could sit back and listen. His first violinist was the illustrious Ignaz Schuppanzigh, whom Beethoven had known since 1794 and who premiered many of the composer's works.

The three *Razumovsky* Quartets represent an entirely different world than Beethoven's six early Quartets, op. 18, published only four years before. In between he had written his never-mailed letter, the heartrending “Heiligenstädt Testament,” which dealt with the anguish of his deafness and solitude, and had composed such innovative new works as the *Eroica* Symphony, the *Appassionata* Piano Sonata, and the first version of his opera *Fidelio*. His radical new style, with its expanded sonata forms, epic themes, complexities, and individualities, met with hostility and derision from early performers and critics. “Perhaps no work of Beethoven's,” wrote his famed early biographer Alexander Wheelock Thayer, “met a more discouraging reception from musicians than these now famous Quartets.”

The first movement of the present F major *Razumovsky* Quartet is remarkable for its lush

expansiveness. This is already apparent in Beethoven's first theme, which unfolds lyrically in the cello over pulsing repeated-note accompaniment, then is taken over by the first violin. The shift in register is something that he explores throughout the work and is one aspect, in addition to length, that gives such a spacious impression. Once this theme peaks, Beethoven instantly changes texture and introduces several new ideas before moving on to his new key area.

When the composer eventually launches what sounds like a repeat of the exposition, he suddenly shoots off in another direction, a grand deception clearly playing on the listener's expectation of that repeat. A famous “first” in the annals of sonata-form, this “non-repeat” considerably alters the structure of the first movement by making it one long sweep and shifting a greater proportion of time and weight onto the development section. Beethoven takes full advantage of the space he created for development by indulging in contrasts of register, new figuration, tension-building, fugal writing, and a mysterious and enormous preparation for the onset of the recapitulation.

Beethoven labeled his second movement “Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando” rather than calling it a scherzo outright, perhaps because he ingeniously adopts a full-fledged sonata form instead of the traditional scherzo-trio-scherzo or five-fold expansion of that form. Placed second rather than in the more typical third spot in the sequence of movements, this extraordinary scherzo ranks as Beethoven's most original in form. Again, expansiveness is the ruling feature of the movement, which grows out of the distinctive repeated-note rhythmic pattern of the opening. This idea generates a remarkable number of miniature themes, which Beethoven treats in wonderfully airy “scherzando” textures.

The composer uses the relatively rare description “mesto” (mournful) in his performance direction for

his slow movement, thereby acknowledging its tragic qualities. It was here in his sketches that he made the strange notation: "A weeping willow or acacia on my brother's grave." He may have been referring to his distress at his brother Caspar Carl's marriage to Johanna Reiss, who was six months pregnant, or remembering another brother who died in infancy, but the main melody, featuring the first violin and then the cello in high register, is certainly an expressive lament. The movement closes with a florid cadenza for the first violin, in which the darkness seems to dissipate and which leads directly into the finale, a device Beethoven had explored in other middle-period works.

Beethoven incorporated a Russian theme into each of the first two Razumovsky Quartets, making an audible connection to his patron, though it is uncertain whether the idea and the choice of theme was Beethoven's or the count's. Here the cello merrily introduces the Russian theme while the violin is still trilling. We wonder what Count Razumovsky thought of Beethoven's cheerful rendition of the originally soulful melody. The mood has definitely lightened here, though the scope is still grand—a full sonata form, complete with repeat of the exposition. Beethoven crowns the work with an imaginative coda in which he slows the Russian theme, imbuing it with mock sadness, only to sweep it away with his virtuosic final flourish

-Jane Vial Jaffe

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) **Piano Trio No. 2 in E Minor, op. 67**

The Piano Trio No. 2 op. 67 was finished in the spring of 1944, and grew out of both national and personal tragedy. After several years of brutal war, Russia was in a state of exhaustion. The siege of Leningrad, in which more than one million people had died, had come to an end in January. The German army was in retreat from Russia, and revelations of

the horrors of the death camps and the fate of Jews were beginning to surface. It was just at this time that Shostakovich lost his closest friend, Ivan Sollertinsky, a fine writer on music, a brilliant linguist and witty public speaker. Shostakovich had first met him in 1927, and Sollertinsky had given a talk introducing a performance of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 8 only five days before his death from a heart attack in February 1944. Shostakovich wrote to Sollertinsky's widow: 'I cannot express in words all the grief I felt when I received the news of the death of Ivan Ivanovich. He was my closest friend. I owe all my education to him. It will be unbelievably hard for me to live without him.' Shostakovich, who had been working on his second Piano Trio since December, decided to dedicate it to Sollertinsky, following in a tradition of elegiac Russian piano trios—Tchaikovsky had written his in memory of Nikolai Rubinstein, Rachmaninov had followed with a trio in memory of Tchaikovsky. But the music itself makes it clear that Shostakovich intended a memorial far beyond the individual human being who was his friend.

The first movement begins with an unearthly fragment of a fugue, the cello playing high, eerie harmonics, the muted violin entering below, the piano following with deep octaves. This is Shostakovich at his bleakest. A sudden increase in pace brings not relief, but a heightening of anxiety. The motif with which the work began is thrown from instrument to instrument, there are sudden climaxes, and the movement peters out uncertainly just as one expects some new development. The second movement is savagely ironic, taking the witty conventions of a scherzo and subjecting them to biting discords and obsessive repetition. In the middle of the movement, the violin flings fragments of a folk song high in the air, but the effect is desperate rather than joyful. The third movement is a passacaglia: the piano repeats a slow, stark sequence of chords six times. Above the chords the violin and then the cello enter, like figures in a ruin rescuing fragments of musical memories—

unaccompanied Bach, perhaps. The music slowly builds to a climax, subsides to an inconclusive chord, and then launches straight into the finale. This brings together all the moods of the earlier movements—the bleakness of the opening, the bitter irony of the scherzo, the searching lament of the passacaglia. To these it adds a specifically Jewish element, for this is Klezmer, the wild music of Jewish celebration, here grotesquely metamorphosed into an image of sustained destructive power. At the final climax it breaks off, and a swirling pattern based on the passacaglia leads in a desperate reminiscence of the first movement, as if the terrible vision of the finale was foretold right at the beginning of the work. And at the end the chords of the passacaglia come together with the eerie harmonics from the very opening, leaving the bleak landscape as empty as when we entered it.

Whatever detailed programme or narrative Shostakovich may have had in his mind when writing the Trio is secondary to the direct impact of the music. In *Testimony*, the volume of memoirs assembled by Solomon Volkov, but now much disputed, Shostakovich is reported as saying: “I am horrified by people who think the commentaries to a symphony are more important than the symphony. What counts with them is a large number of brave words—and the music can be pathetic and woebegone. This is real perversion. I don’t need brave words on music and I don’t think anyone does. We need brave music.” That sounds like Shostakovich.

-Robert Philip

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

7:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church

PROGRAM II:

WITH OUR COMPLIMENTS

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

**String Quartet in G Major, op. 18, No. 2,
“Compliments”**

The String Quartet in G Major is the second of the six quartets of Ludwig van Beethoven’s Opus 18, composed during the years 1798–1800. The courtly themes of its opening Allegro have drawn particular attention. Their regular phrase-lengths and question-and-answer quality have suggested an extra-musical discourse, and some have heard a civilized conversation here; this has earned this music the nickname *Komplimentierungsquartett* (“Compliments-Quartet”) in Germany. Listeners are warned not to search for a literal conversation – that nickname refers more to the music’s gracious atmosphere. Given all this geniality, the recapitulation brings a nice bump when Beethoven combines his two themes and has the first try to sing over the suddenly fierce rhythms of the second.

The Adagio cantabile, in C major, seems similarly urbane: its themes are smooth and well-proportioned, and the movement might promise blandness were it not for an unusual episode at the center that changes everything. The opening music slows and seems to conclude with a quiet cadence, but Beethoven then transforms that cadence into a blistering Allegro. This dashes about breathlessly and then vanishes, all within the space of forty seconds.

The sparkling Scherzo tosses rhythmic bits between the four instruments, and Beethoven himself referred to the Allegro molto, quasi presto as *ausgeknopft*: “unbuttoned.” The main theme of this rondo-finale is derived from a transition passage in the opening

movement, and this movement is full of bright energy, relaxed spirits, and a sense of fun.

-Eric Bromberger

Missy Mazzoli (b. 1980)

Death Valley Junction (2010)

Missy Mazzoli was recently deemed “one of the more consistently inventive, surprising composers now working in New York” (*The New York Times*) and “Brooklyn’s post-millennial Mozart” (*Time Out New York*). Her music has been performed all over the world by the Kronos Quartet, eighth blackbird, pianist Emanuel Ax, Opera Philadelphia, LA Opera, Cincinnati Opera, New York City Opera, Chicago Fringe Opera, the Detroit Symphony, the LA Philharmonic, the Minnesota Orchestra, the American Composers Orchestra, JACK Quartet, cellist Maya Beiser, violinist Jennifer Koh, pianist Kathleen Supové, Dublin’s Crash Ensemble, the Sydney Symphony and many others.

Her second opera, *Breaking the Waves*, a collaboration with librettist Royce Vavrek commissioned by Opera Philadelphia and Beth Morrison Projects, premiered to great acclaim in Philadelphia in September 2016, and as part of New York’s Prototype Festival in January 2017. The work was described as “among the best 21st-century operas yet” (*Opera News*), “savage, heartbreaking and thoroughly original” (*Wall Street Journal*), and “dark and daring” (*The New York Times*). From 2012-15 Missy was Composer-in-Residence with Opera Philadelphia, Gotham Chamber Opera and Music Theatre-Group, and in 2011-12 was Composer/Educator in residence with the Albany Symphony. Missy was a visiting professor of music at New York University in 2013, and later that year joined the composition faculty at the Mannes College of Music, a division of the New School.

Composer’s Note:

Death Valley Junction is a sonic depiction of the town of the same name, a strange and isolated place on the border of California and Nevada. The “town” is home to three people and consists of a café, a hotel, and a fully functional opera house. *Death Valley Junction* is dedicated to Marta Becket, the woman who resurrected and repaired the crumbling opera house in the late 1960s and performed one-woman shows there every week until her retirement in 2012 at age 87. The piece begins with a sparse, edgy texture—the harsh desert landscape—and collapses into a wild and buoyant dance. Marta Becket once compared herself to the single yellow flower that is able to, against all odds, flourish in the desert. This piece attempts to depict some of her exuberant energy and unstoppable optimism, and is dedicated to her.

César Franck (1822-1890)

Violin Sonata

César Franck, organist at St. Clothilde and professor of organ at the Paris Conservatory, influenced a generation of composers including d’Indy, Chausson, Duparc, and Vierne, yet was not prolific himself as a composer. He was a late achiever par excellence: he completed his only Symphony when he was sixty-six, and he composed his memorable chamber works, the Piano Quintet and Violin Sonata, just several years before, with the String Quartet closely following the Symphony. There is no telling what he might have achieved had he not died in 1890 at age sixty-seven.

Franck’s concern for thematic unity led to the use of what his disciple and enthusiastic champion Vincent d’Indy called the “cyclic” principle—the use of similar thematic material in two or more movements in the same work. D’Indy related Franck’s cyclic procedures to Beethoven, who may have been his inspiration, but Franck’s structural ideas have much more in common with those of Liszt and his practice of deriving an entire work from one musical idea.

The opening theme begins with a three-note “generating cell,” as d’Indy called it, that permeates the work. Almost immediately Franck shows his penchant for changing keys. As a teacher of organ, with composition mixed in, Franck grew uneasy when any student remained too long in one key—“Modulate, modulate!” he would urge, which was known to exasperate Debussy, who studied briefly in his class. Formally the first movement is based on this and another main theme that occurs only in piano interludes; the subjects alternate while passing through myriad keys. The presentation of the thematic material in this fashion and the lack of development give the movement the feel either of a prologue or of an inner movement. Originally Franck had conceived the movement in a slow tempo, but changed it to Allegretto after hearing it played by violin virtuoso Eugène Ysaÿe, to whom the work is dedicated.

Full-fledged sonata form is saved for the second movement, which employs a bit of the generating cell and also introduces another theme that will return in the finale. The brilliance of this Allegro movement contrasts nicely with the poetic first movement and with the rhapsodic third movement. This Recitativo-Fantasia sounds improvisatory at the outset as Franck ruminates upon the generating cell. The final Fantasia section is dominated by another theme that will reappear in the finale and ends with an unexpected harmonic turn. The finale is remarkable for the exact imitation between the violin and piano—one of the famous examples of canonic writing in the literature—which appears four times like a rondo refrain. The intervening episodes are based on the materials of the previous movements.

The Sonata was apparently given as a wedding present to Ysaÿe, who first performed it with pianist Léontine Bordes-Pène as the last work on an all-Franck concert at the Musée Moderne de Peinture in Brussels on December 16, 1886. D’Indy described that memorable late afternoon performance:

It was already growing dark as the Sonata began. After the first Allegretto, the players could hardly read their music. Unfortunately, museum regulations forbade any artificial light whatever in rooms containing paintings; the mere striking of a match would have been an offense. The audience was about to be asked to leave, but, brimful with enthusiasm, they refused to budge. At this point, Ysaÿe struck his music stand with his bow, demanding, “Let’s go on!” Then, wonder of wonders, amid darkness that now rendered them virtually invisible, the two artists played the last three movements from memory with a fire and passion the more astonishing in that there was a total lack of the usual visible externals that enhance a concert performance. Music, wondrous and alone, held sovereign sway in the blackness of night. The miracle will never be forgotten by those present.

-Jane Vial Jaffe

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

7:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church

Program III:

EVERY MOMENT PRESENT

Caroline Shaw
Entr’acte (2011)

Caroline Adelaide Shaw is a New York-based musician—vocalist, violinist, composer, and producer—who performs in solo and collaborative projects. She is the youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for Music, for *Partita for 8 Voices*, written for the Grammy-winning *Roomful of Teeth*, of which she is a member. Recent commissions include new works for the Dover Quartet, the Calidore Quartet, the Aizuri Quartet, FLUX Quartet, Brooklyn Rider, Anne Sofie von Otter, *The Crossing*, *Roomful of Teeth*, yMusic, ACME, ICE, *A Far Cry*, Philharmonia Baroque, the Baltimore Symphony, and Carnegie Hall’s Ensemble Connect. In the 2017-18 season, Caroline’s new works were premiered by Renée Fleming with Inon Barnatan, Dawn Upshaw with So Percussion and Gil Kalish, the

Orchestra of St. Luke's with John Lithgow, the Britten Sinfonietta, TENET with the Metropolis Ensemble, the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, the Netherlands Chamber Choir, and Luciana Souza with A Far Cry. Future seasons will include a new piano concerto for Jonathan Biss with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and a new work for the LA Phil. Caroline's scoring of visual work includes the soundtrack for the feature film *To Keep the Light* as well as collaborations with Kanye West. She studied at Yale, Rice, and Princeton, and she has held residencies at Dumbarton Oaks, the Banff Centre, Music on Main, and the Vail Dance Festival. Caroline loves the color yellow, otters, Beethoven opus 74, Mozart opera, Kinhaven, the smell of rosemary, and the sound of a janky mandolin.

Composer's Note:

Entr'acte was written in 2011 after hearing the Brentano Quartet play Haydn's op. 77 No. 2 — with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a minuet and trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition.

Leoš Janáček (1854 - 1928)

String Quartet No. 2, "Intimate Letters"

In the summer of 1917, Leoš Janáček met Kamila Stosslova and her husband David, an antique dealer in Bohemia. Accounts have it that the composer became infatuated with Kamila who was 38 years younger than he. It is also clear that she never reciprocated his feelings, while remaining an admirer and friend. Nevertheless, the relationship embittered the composer's wife, Zdenka, increasing the emotional distance between them although it did not lead to any serious separation. Over the next 11 years Janáček wrote to Kamila nearly every day, pouring out his heart, anxieties and joys. His letters, over

600 of them, have been preserved and published, in translation, under the title *Intimate Letters*.

This obsession with Kamila, one-sided as it was, apparently served as an important outlet and valve for the intense emotions felt by the composer at this time of his life. Kamila was the inspiration for a number of Janáček's greatest works. In the last years of his life he even kept a special diary "for Kamila."

The String Quartet No. 2 is the one work of all his late works inspired by his love for Kamila that was written as an explicit expression of that love. Janáček's own nickname for the quartet was "Love Letters," but he changed its subtitle to "Intimate Letters." In his letters to Kamila he implied that the quartet was about the two of them, how they met and his feelings toward her. In these letters he frequently referred to the work as "my/your" quartet. Originally he wrote it for a viola d'amore but returned to the modern viola as the older instrument lacked the power desired for the prominent role (as Kamila) that he gave it in the quartet.

The music of *Intimate Letters* is passionate and compressed. There are passages with the short, abrupt tempo shifts and rhythmic patterns that imitate the sounds of the Czech language being sung, a style developed and fostered by the composer in his late operas. Tightly drawn simple themes, some with eerie or haunting melodies, some harshly dramatic, are repeated in a cyclic fashion in different forms. Use is made of pizzicato, trills, the eerie metallic sounds produced by bowing strings close to the bridge and percussive raps adding to the dissonance. Each movement was apparently designed to represent a particular theme of Janáček's feelings for Kamila. As he neared the end of working out the different movements, he wrote that he felt "as if I'm living through everything beautiful once again."

The day after completing the quartet he wrote, "Now that I'm finished with those 'Love Letters' I have an empty head. I'm like a completely ordinary man in the street — except for you." The plan was to have the first

public performance of *Intimate Letters* early in the fall, but fate intervened. While searching for Kamila's son who got lost in the woods during a visit with his mother to the composer's home, Janáček caught a chill that in a few days became pneumonia. He died on Aug. 12, 1928.

-Arthur Canter

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) **String Quartet in F Minor, op. 80**

Felix Mendelssohn wrote his last string quartet amidst great personal tragedy—the sudden death of his sister, Fanny, his most trusted critic, artistic peer, and personal confidant. Indeed, in a letter discussing his grief a mere ten days following her passing, Felix mourns: “she was every moment present in her goodness and love... which made me feel all was sure to go well.” Much has been made of Felix's musical expressions of self-assured youthful exuberance—supporting the popular image of him as a brilliant, privileged, prodigy. Yet, when confronted with op. 80, we cannot slip into such an easy narrative. From its first terrifying tremors, this music is moody, conflicted, and searching. Felix described his state of mind during this period as “gray on gray.” F minor dominates the quartet, the shadowy home of three of its movements. Only the elegiac slow movement lives in a more hopeful A flat major, but even this music is tinged with loss from the cello's opening descending lament.

Fanny, like her father and grandfather before her, met an untimely demise from a massive cerebral stroke. Knowing this was the vision of death Felix knew most intimately—sudden, uncontrollable, and rising up from within—the quartet's first movement strikes a chilling parallel. Low tremolos surge from the deep and strike—ominous and cruel. The first violin weeps and wails, searching for relief in sequence after sequence, but is ultimately overcome.

Rather than one of Felix's signature fanciful scherzos,

the second movement erupts in a ruthless, dark dance, simmering with barely contained violence. In correspondence earlier that year, Felix alluded to Fanny's suggestion of a “scherzo serioso,” possibly evoking Beethoven's F minor op. 95. Felix proposed that his sister might one day flesh out this idea. How moving then, that he realizes her wish posthumously here. In the trio section, we enter a ghostly realm, a breathy, seductive dance. Here is death as the great equalizer—eerily intimate to all and at times strangely attractive.

While composing op. 80, Felix withdrew to Switzerland and sought refuge in painting. His watercolor of Lucerne below appears to be a simple landscape, but is rich with meaning. The interior of the covered bridge depicted in the foreground is in actuality filled with carvings of the *totentanz*, the medieval dance of death, while the celestially reaching church spires in the upper left do not exist. Indeed, Felix staged this scene to depict the arduous journey through mortality to the afterlife. The dance of death no sooner ends than a loving elegy begins. Mirroring his artful placement of the Lucerne spires, Felix turns the gaze of op. 80's slow movement heavenward, celebrating the hope of salvation amidst his heartbreak.

Felix first made Goethe's acquaintance as a small child, and the poet was a fixture throughout the composer's creative life. Surely, he was aware of Goethe's iconic “*Erlkönig*” and its depiction of death as an otherworldly demon, whispering in his victim's ears while chasing them into oblivion. Though the poem may not have been a conscious influence, the quartet's breathy, frantic finale evokes this 19th century trope.

The modern listener encountering this requiem for Fanny, cannot possibly ignore the work's epilogue; two months after completing the quartet, Felix himself suffered a fatal stroke. In a poignant final chapter, the siblings' ever-present connection was restored, as they were laid to rest side by side.

-Miki-Sophia Cloud

THE MUSICIANS

SOLERA QUARTET



Acclaimed by *The New York Times* as “a group that sees in musical mixology an opportunity for both new insight and full-bodied provocation” and whose playing is “intoxicating...sensitive and finely articulated”, the Solera Quartet has quickly gained a reputation for its fiery musical expression, poetic sensibility, entrepreneurial acumen, and exceptional dedication to social initiatives. Formed in 2015, the Soleras are the winners of the 2017 Pro Musicis International Award. In this history-making win, the Solera Quartet is the first and only American chamber ensemble invited to join Pro Musicis’ illustrious roster. The 2018-19 season included the Quartet’s sold-out Carnegie Hall debut.

Deeply committed to utilizing music as an agent for social change, the Solera Quartet is passionate about sharing music within the prison system. In collaboration with the non-profit organization Project: Music Heals Us, the Soleras’ Prison Residency Project brings interactive, thoughtfully-conceived chamber music concerts into incarcerated communities across the United States. In recognition of this work, the Solera Quartet is the 2018 recipient of the Guarneri String Quartet Residency, funded by the Chamber-Music America Residency Partnership Program.

The word *solera* describes a craft method of producing wine and spirits, in which new and old vintages are

layered in one barrel to achieve a uniquely complex and ever-evolving blend. Similarly, the Solera Quartet is founded on a deep respect for the rich string quartet tradition alongside an intrepid desire to add new layers to that tradition through its fresh interpretations and innovative approach to the concert experience.

TRICIA PARK, violin



Violinist Tricia Park has been praised by critics for her “astounding virtuosic gifts” (*Boston Herald*) and “achingly pure sound” (*The Toronto Star*). Tricia is a founding member of the Solera Quartet and the Founding Artistic Director of MusicIC. She is also a recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. Since appearing in her first

orchestral engagement at age 13, Tricia has appeared on five continents as soloist and chamber musician. Tricia received her Bachelor and Master of Music from the Juilliard School and an MFA in Writing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she was awarded a Writing Fellow and a scholarship from the New Artist Society.

MIKI-SOPHIA CLOUD, violin



Violinist Miki-Sophia Cloud is a member of the Solera Quartet, winner of the 2017 Pro Musicis International Award. A core member of the self-conducted chamber orchestra, A Far Cry, her work as one of the ensemble's concertmasters, soloists, and program curators has been hailed by *The New York Times* and *Boston Globe*. In 2014, *Dreams &*

Prayers, the first album she developed for A Far Cry, was nominated for a Grammy Award. In 2016, she joined the music faculty of Dartmouth College where she relishes mentoring twelve bright and enthusiastic young violinists.

MOLLY CARR, viola



Violist Molly Carr enjoys a diverse musical career as recitalist, chamber musician, educator and artistic director. She was a top prize winner in the Primrose International Viola Competition, made her New York solo debut at Lincoln Center with the Juilliard Orchestra, and has performed in festivals across North America, Europe, the Middle

East and Asia. Molly is a member of the Solera Quartet, violist of the Carr-Petrova Duo, and is the founder/director of the non-profit Project: Music Heals Us. Ms. Carr serves on the viola faculties of the Juilliard School's PreCollege Program and the Alberto Jonas International School of Music in Valencia, Spain.

ANDREW JANSS, cello



Hailed by *The New York Times* for his “muscularity and shimmering lyricism,” “insightful musicianship,” and “sumptuous elegance,” cellist Andrew Janss’ performances have been enjoyed across five continents in venues including Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, The Sydney Opera House, and the Louvre. Mr. Janss has

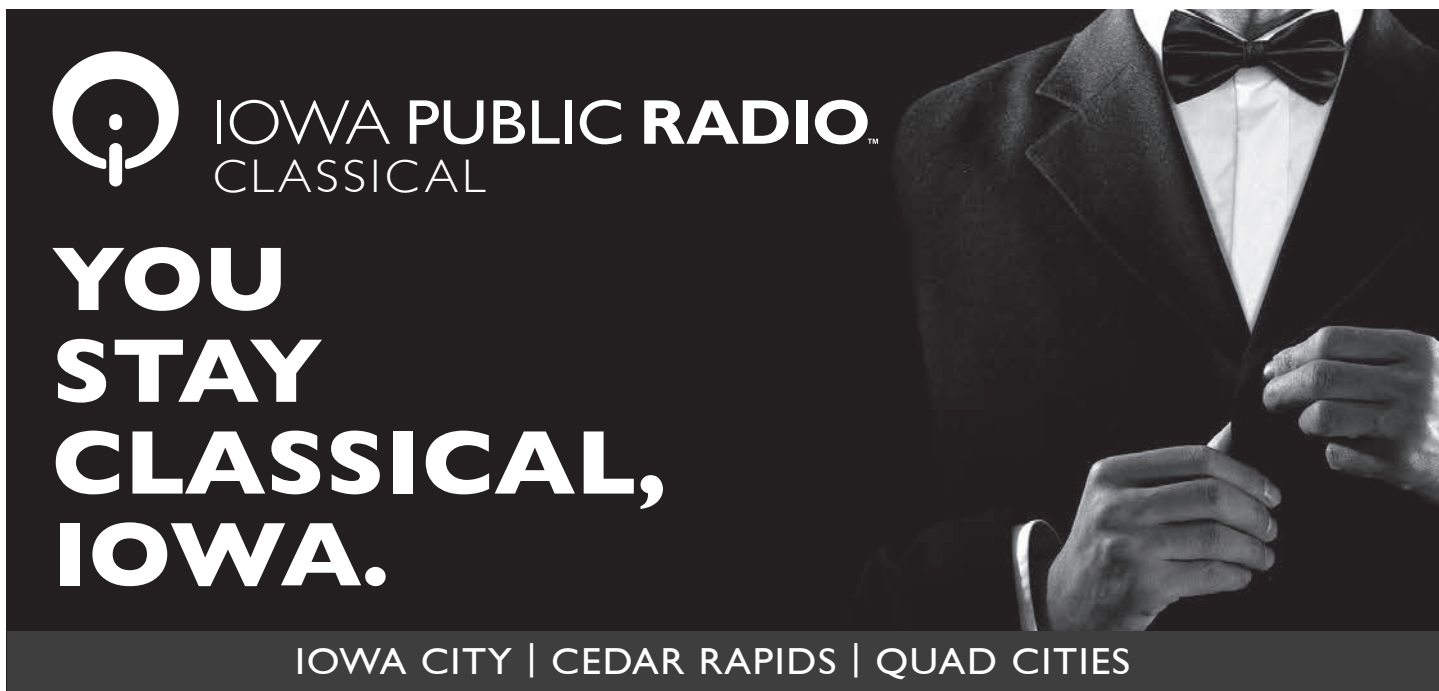
collaborated in concert with Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Lynn Harrell, Leon Fleisher, and Richard Goode, as well as chart-topping performers such as Bruce Springsteen, Lana Del Rey, Mary J. Blige, Florence + the Machine, Erykah Badu, and The Roots.

DOMINIC CHELI, piano



Pianist Dominic Cheli was the first prize winner of the 2017 Concert Artists Guild Competition. In July 2017, he released his debut CD of the music of Clementi on the Naxos label, and recently recorded his second Naxos album of the music of Liszt and Schubert. His rapidly advancing career has included notable concerts such as

his performance of Prokofiev’s Third Piano concerto with Valery Gergiev and the Colburn Orchestra at Walt Disney Hall and his Carnegie Hall recital debut this past spring. Born in St. Louis, Dominic currently resides in Los Angeles.



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