

**Second Concert
The Artist Series**



THE CHESTER STRING QUARTET

FRITZ GEARHART Violin
KATHRYN VOTAPEK Violin
RONALD GOREVIC Viola
THOMAS ROSENBERG Cello

GUEST ARTIST
BEN MARKWELL Viola

A presentation of
INDIANA UNIVERSITY SOUTH BEND
Daniel Cohen, *Chancellor*
Robert W. Demaree, Jr., *Dean of the Arts*

Eight-fifteen o'clock
Saturday, November 9, 1991
Campus Auditorium
1991-1992 Season, Eighth Program



Program

- Quartet in G Major, Opus 18, No. 2 Beethoven
Allegro
Adagio cantabile
Scherzo: Allegro
Allegro molto quasi presto
- Quartet No. 1 Walter Piston
Allegro
Adagio
Allegro vivace

Intermission

- Quintet in C minor for Two Violins,
Two Violas and Cello, K. 406 Mozart
Allegro
Andante
Menuetto in Canone
Allegro

The use of recording or photographic devices at a concert in any auditorium of IUSB is forbidden. Eating, drinking or smoking at such events is also prohibited. Attendance by children under the age of responsible behavior is discouraged.

Program Notes

Quartet in G Major, Opus 18, No. 2 (1798-1800) Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

The G Major, the briefest and seemingly least ambitious quartet of Opus 18, emerges as a charming and witty work, very close in style and temperament to the best examples of eighteenth-century Rococo chamber music. Despite its apparent light, happy character, many other musicians consider it the most difficult of all Beethoven quartets to perform. And Beethoven's notebooks reveal that the lightness was achieved only after a lengthy and arduous struggle, covering thirty-two notebook pages, to blend many disparate elements into a smooth, artistic creation.

The subtitle, "Compliments," comes from the opening of the quartet in which a series of short, balanced phrases of supple elegance conjure up, as described in Theodor Helm's 1885 book on the Beethoven quartets, an "eighteenth-century salon, with all the ceremonious display and flourish of courtesy typical of the period...with bows and gracious words of greeting." A gruff bridge passage, starting with a repeated note, leads to a second subject and a closing theme that are attractive, but not particularly distinctive. The development is devoted exclusively to the melodies of the first subject and the bridge. The original themes are brought back in the recapitulation, but this time they are treated with greater vehemence and more freedom.

Quartet No. 1 - 1933 Walter Piston (1894-1976)

Composed for the Chardon Quartet in 1933, Piston's first quartet is in three movements, each with a well-defined and tightly constructed form. The first movement is a sonata form in a mixed C major-minor with occasional modal inflections. After a busy development with rapid passage work in sixteenth notes, the recapitulation is straightforward and is followed by a short coda beginning with the inversion of the second theme. Much of the movement is based on a harmony built of perfect fourths and possesses a good deal of dense and dissonant chromaticism, more characteristic of his earlier works. This chromaticism lessened in the works of Piston's middle years, and then reappeared, even more pronounced, in his last works.

The second movement, in a broodingly chromatic E minor, is a simple three-part form, beginning in muted strings with a slow melody in the cello. A contrasting subject with a short-long accented figure answers in the other instruments; and the two ideas are developed together toward a climax. The middle section is fugato based on a long, sharply rhythmic melody, climaxing in a short stretto. The final section, again muted, develops the initial subjects, but more briefly and entirely pianissimo, with the cello melody in inversion.

The rondo finale, Allegro vivace, is in 2/4, frequently mixed with 5/8. It is based on a motive of three repeated sixteenth notes appearing first in a subject that alternates C with D-flat, a structural reminiscence of the first movement. The toccata-like bowed staccato of this movement is characteristic of Piston's style. This work is one of the three American string quartets on the Chester String Quartet debut compact disc issued under the Koch International Classics label.

Quintet in C minor for Two Violins, Two Violas and Cello, K. 406 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

The C minor Quintet began life as a serenade (K.388) for two oboes, two clarinets, two horns and two bassoons. Originally composed in 1782, possibly for Prince Alois Liechtenstein from whom Mozart hoped to get a post as Kapellmeister, he recast it in 1784 so that it might be more accessible and better known to his contemporaries.

The Quintet is a gloomy work, particularly for Mozart. The opening theme prepares the listeners for dire happenings. This is followed by a melancholy section filled with sighing motifs. Throughout the movement there is no easing of the mood of tension. Beethoven's "fate" motif - da da da dum - even appears in the development. The Andante which follows is a plaintive tune which does little to relieve the atmosphere.

A Menuetto in canonic style continues the combative mood of the first movement. Its Trio, in the major mode, is agitated. Eric Bloom describes it: "he makes the Trio section go *al rovescio* - that is to say, in four parts with each pair of parts playing their strains against the answer turned upside down."

The final movement is a theme with variations. In the fifth variation there is a ray of hope, in the sixth it is extinguished; in the seventh, one is again given the prospect of brighter things. At the close, as if to make up for all this morbidity, the theme reappears in C Major.

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About the Artists

Widely recognized as one of America's most distinguished and sought-after young chamber ensembles, the **CHESTER STRING QUARTET** has been called "one of the best and brightest of the country's young string quartets" by *The Boston Globe*. Fulfilling the promise of excellence recognized when awarded first prize at the 1985 Discovery Competition, they are also the only American quartet with the distinction of winning top prizes at the international quartet competitions in both Munich, Germany and Portsmouth, England.

They have been Quartet-in-Residence of the innovative and exciting New York Chamber Ensemble. Their versatility is evident in highlights from recent seasons: a concert at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington; performances in nearly all of New York's major recital halls, including a re-creation of Schoenberg's "Verein" concerts in a series at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, a concert with several noted jazz musicians at Carnegie Recital Hall, a complete Beethoven cycle, and live radio and television appearances. They are committed to performing and recording numerous contemporary and lesser known works of the chamber music repertoire. As exclusive string quartet artists for the Koch International Classics label, their debut album of quartets by Piston, Barber and Porter will be released in November, 1991.

Founded at the Eastman School of Music, they are Quartet-in Residence and full-time faculty members of Indiana University South Bend. The Quartet also maintains a busy summer teaching and performance schedule, having appeared at such prestigious festivals as Aspen, Grand Tetons, Newport and Music Mountain.

The Chester Sting Quartet has performed with many internationally known solo artists as well as with members of the Guarneri and Cleveland quartets. They have been heard numerous times on National Public Radio, the BBC, and German State Radio, and have previously recorded for the CRI, Stolat, and Pantheon labels.

BEN MARKWELL is Principal Violist of the Florida Orchestra in Tampa. A native of Versailles, Kentucky, he earned his Bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama and his Master of Music degree from Northern Illinois University. His principal teachers include Henry Rubin, Shmuel Ashkenasi and Bernard Zaslav. Mr. Markwell has performed as a soloist with the Florida Orchestra, participated in numerous summer festivals, including those at Tanglewood, Bowdoin and Kneisel Hall, and studied chamber music with members of the Juilliard, Vermeer and Cleveland quartets.

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