

Sunday, December 2, 2007, 3pm  
Hertz Hall

## Takács Quartet

Edward Dusinberre, *violin*  
Károly Schranz, *violin*  
Geraldine Walther, *viola*  
András Fejér, *cello*

*with*

Joyce Yang, *piano*

### PROGRAM

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) String Quartet in C major, Op. 74, No. 1,  
Hob. III:72 (1792–1793)

Allegro moderato  
Andantino grazioso  
Menuet: Allegro  
Finale: Vivace

Béla Bartók (1881–1945) String Quartet No. 5, Sz. 85 (1934)

Allegro  
Adagio molto  
Scherzo: Alla bulgarese — Trio  
Andante  
Finale: Allegro vivace — Presto

### INTERMISSION

Robert Schumann (1810–1856) Piano Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 44 (1842)

Allegro brillante  
In modo d'una marcia — Un poco  
largamente — Agitato  
Scherzo: Molto vivace  
Allegro ma non troppo

*This performance is made possible, in part, through the generosity of Earl and June Cheit.*

*Cal Performances' 2006–2007 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

**Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)**  
**String Quartet in C major, Op. 74, No. 1,**  
**Hob. III:72**

*Composed in 1792–1793.*

The Opus 74 string quartets are among the first pieces Haydn composed during his “London years,” which began after the death of his patron, Nikolaus Esterházy, in 1790. Obtaining a one-year leave of absence from Esterházy’s heir, Haydn was able to relocate to London for the 1791 concert season. Immersed in the economically vibrant musical life of London, which favored both large-scale works for public performances and small-scale chambers works for private consumption, Haydn composed the Opus 71 quartets (published with the Opus 74), the “London” Symphonies, Nos. 93–98, and the opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

Perhaps owing to the composerly prestige that would come to be associated with the genre of the string quartet in the 19th and 20th centuries, it has taken some time for modern listeners to recall that the innovation of Haydn’s string quartets lies largely in their humor and sheer fun. Much of this humor is generated by Haydn’s manipulation of musical gestures (or “topics,” as they are known in academic parlance) that evoked specific and familiar associations for 18th-century concertgoers. One such topic can be heard at the very start of the C major Quartet: following the introductory chords, the repeated note in the cello underlying the first theme is immediately recognizable as a “rustic” trope (compare it to Beethoven’s Piano Sonata No. 15, known as the “Pastoral” Sonata). Similarly, toward the end of the exposition the cello plays a series of broken fifths approximating the “drone” that this rustic trope frequently assumes in other guises (compare to Beethoven’s Sixth Symphony, known as the “Pastoral” Symphony). With characteristic wit, Haydn manipulates the rustic topic through the movement, putting it in different contexts and thus transforming its meaning. At several points, it is taken up by the viola and second violin, changing it into an innocuous accompaniment figure. It even finds its way into the melody as a rhythmic upbeat, usually in the first violin in harmonically unstable moments.

Like the first movement, the second movement employs humorous “echo effects”: a melodic frag-

ment uttered by one instrument is taken up by another in a sort of musical conversation. As is often the case in Haydn’s inner movements, the second and third movements of the C major Quartet serve as a sort of laboratory in which the composer experiments with unconventional musical ideas. For example, Haydn makes some surprising modulations through both movements: from D major to E-flat major in the contrasting section or G major to C-sharp minor in the repeat of the opening section. The third movement features even more unprepared harmonic jumps from C major to A-flat major and A major. The energetic finale features virtuosic writing for the whole ensemble and brief returns of the musical jokes from the previous movement, including the playful syncopation, the gratuitous displays of counterpoint, and (especially in the final moments) a return of the pastoral drone, which brings the piece to a lighthearted end.

**Béla Bartók (1881–1945)**  
**String Quartet No. 5, Sz. 85**

*Composed in 1934.*

Bartók’s music has always taken inspiration from two areas that, from a certain perspective, can seem quite remote from and even antithetical to each other: the folk traditions of Eastern Europe and the academicism of the classical canon. Bartók saw no contradiction between the two, however, especially in the works of the mid-1930s and onward. It was during this time that he composed some of his most technically complex works, including *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* (1936) and the Second Violin Concerto (1937–1938). But it was also precisely at this time that Bartók was immersed in the profession of ethnomusicology, having taken up a position at the Budapest Academy of Sciences, where he oversaw a project to collect and publish a substantial body of Hungarian folk music.

Both influences are in ample evidence in the Fifth String Quartet. Bartók’s “classicist” fascination with symmetry, for example, can be found at every level of the piece: in the basic shapes of melodies, within the formal structure of movements, and across the five-movement layout of the piece as a whole. The first movement, for example, consists of three main themes that—like most first

movements—are stated in full form at the beginning (the “exposition”) and the end (the “recapitulation”) of the movement, separated by a contrasting middle section (the “development”). Unlike most sonata forms from the 19th century onward, however, Bartók recapitulates the three themes in reverse order, so that the general thematic scheme becomes a palindrome: ABCBA. The A theme of the movement is heard at the very start, consisting largely of a single note repeated in *forte* by all four instruments. Almost immediately, Bartók treats the theme imitatively, with the violins echoing the cello and viola. Following another series of repetitions—this time of a discordant minor second—in all four voices, the B theme is introduced. This theme is characterized as much by its syncopated rhythm as by its melodic shape. Another return of the “repetition motif” leads to the C theme, a less energetic, more lyrical, arching chromatic tune passed from instrument to instrument. The second movement introduces more traditional harmonies alongside the chromatically inflected scales of the first movement. It begins with a sparsely textured series of trilled motifs—a sound that has come to be associated with Bartók’s “night music” movements, in which he simulates the nocturnal sound of the outdoors. Like the first movement, this movement is also in mirror form: the opening section is followed by a sort of choral; after a middle section of melodic fragments treated in imitation, the chorale returns and leads to a final statement of the trill motifs. This thematic material also forms the basis of the fourth movement, thus creating a larger-scale mirror form across the movements, with the third movement as the axis of symmetry.

The third movement experiments with irregular folk meters and rhythms (the movement is titled *Alla bulgarese*, though the tunes themselves are not identifiably Bulgarian). The fifth and final movement similarly abandons itself to sheer rhythmic energy, consisting of a relentless barrage up and down Bartók’s folk-modal scales. Here, the composer adds a “vertical” element to the work’s symmetry by having simultaneous melodies in contrary motion—where one voice moves up, the other moves down. The most curious episode comes near the end, when the action is interrupted by a slower interlude approximating the sound of a barrel organ. The melody here, first heard in the viola and then (polytonally) in the first violin, is a diatonic version

of the movement’s main theme, demonstrating Bartók’s reluctance to polarize the various musical languages he cultivated in his compositions—a rare trait for a 20th-century composer.

**Robert Schumann (1810–1856)**  
**Piano Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 44**

*Composed in 1842.*

Schumann spent much of 1842 working on chamber music. He immersed himself in a study of Haydn and Mozart’s string quartets before embarking on a set of his own: the A minor, F major and A major quartets of Opus 41. Other fruits of this preoccupation with chamber music include the Piano Quartet in E-flat major, the *Phantasiestücke* Piano Trio, the Andante and Variations in B-flat, and the Piano Quintet in E-flat major.

It used to be a persistent myth that the Piano Quintet was the first of its kind. Though there was plenty of precedent for string quartets with an added part for viola or cello, it was Schumann, so the story went, who first conceived of the idea of adding a piano to a string quartet. While the myth has since been debunked, it is nonetheless the case that in the E-flat major Quintet Schumann posed himself a series of creative compositional puzzles for which he had few models. At several points throughout the piece, one can hear Schumann experiment with the many ways one can divide the “balance of power” within such an ensemble. After the grand introductory gesture of the first movement, for example, Schumann seems to approach the first theme of the movement the way he approached his vocal music: the piano sets the emotional stage before subsiding into an accompanimental role as the strings take over the melody. In the second theme, Schumann treats the cello and viola as a single instrument with a melody that flows seamlessly from the lower range of the former into the higher range of the latter. The piano leads the way in the development section, with the strings serving primarily to punctuate the music’s stormy mood. Finally, the introductory “fanfare” returns to usher in the final section.

The second movement is marked “in the manner of a march”—specifically, a funeral march. Each of the string instruments takes its turn sing-

ing the somber tune while the piano provides a plodding rhythmic accompaniment. The first contrasting section, in the major key, pairs the first violin and cello in a simple, lyrical duet. A second statement of the funeral dirge leads to the second contrasting section, a turbulent outburst featuring a stream of arpeggios in the piano. Schumann then superimposes the funeral theme on top of this agitated section, transforming it from a lament to something more ominous, even menacing. A shift into the major key, again featuring the first violin and cello, leads to the final statement of the funeral march. The movement ends either humorously or grotesquely, depending on how one interprets the unexpected major triad at the very end that, given the mood of everything that came before it, sounds very much like the halo of someone recently departed.

The opening section of the spirited third movement is characterized by ascending and descending scalar melodies. The first contrasting section features a more subdued, disjunct melody in the first violin and echoed in the viola. After the customary repeat of the opening section, Schumann provides a second contrasting section—an anomaly for third movement scherzos but something he had done in other pieces. The section begins with a barrage of descending 16th-note figures over which, further

on, a melodic fragment taken from the first movement can be heard.

In his prose writings of this period, Schumann cautioned composers of string quartets not to strive for too “symphonic” a sound and encouraged them to explore the genre’s intimacy. The addition of a piano into the fold seems to have warranted a different set of standards, however, because in the last movement of the Quintet Schumann abandons himself to compositional revelry. The finale begins with an aggressive theme in the piano, later taken up by the strings in ever-changing keys. About halfway through the movement, Schumann flexes his contrapuntal muscles, weaving the theme with a countermelody and treating both to invertible counterpoint; later, after a reaffirmation of the tonic key of E-flat major and a grand pause, Schumann throws in a double fugue—the second subject of which is the main theme of the first movement. An ebullient coda culminates in a properly “symphonic” conclusion.

*Notes by Noel Verzosa*

*Noel Verzosa is a PhD candidate in the music department of UC Berkeley.*



Catey A. Cass

Recognized as one of the world's premiere string quartets, the **Takács Quartet** is renowned for the ability to fuse four distinct, expressive musical personalities into gripping, unified interpretations. Commenting on their latest Schubert recording for Hyperion, *Gramophone* magazine noted; "The Takács have the ability to make you believe that there's no other possible way the music should go, and the strength to overturn preconceptions that comes only with the greatest performers."

Based in Boulder at the University of Colorado, the Takács Quartet perform 80 concerts a year worldwide, performing throughout Europe as well as in Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Korea. The Quartet are Associate Artists at the South Bank Centre in London, performing several concerts there each year. Their 2007–2008 season highlights include four concerts at Carnegie Hall: *Everyman*, inspired by Philip Roth's novel, in which they performed with Academy Award-winning actor Philip Seymour Hoffman, and a three-concert series focusing on Haydn and Brahms. They also will tour with pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet. In North America, they will perform in over 30 cities, and European tours include performances in Vienna, Amsterdam, Lisbon, Frankfurt and Brussels. In May 2008, the quartet will perform a

new piece by James Macmillan, commissioned by South Bank.

The Quartet's multi-award winning recordings include the Late Quartets by Beethoven, which in 2005 won Disc of the Year and Chamber Award from *BBC Music Magazine*, a Gramophone Award and a Japanese Record Academy Award. Their recordings of the Early and Middle Beethoven quartets collected a Grammy Award, another Gramophone Award, a Chamber Music of America Award and two further awards from the Japanese Recording Academy. Of their performances and recordings of the Late Quartets, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* wrote, "The Takács might play this repertoire better than any quartet of the past or present."

In 2005, the Takács Quartet signed a contract with Hyperion Records, for whom their first recording, of Schubert's D.804 and D.810, was released in 2006. A disc featuring Brahms' Piano Quintet with Stephen Hough was released in November 2007. The Quartet has also made 16 recordings for the Decca label since 1988 of works by Beethoven, Bartók, Borodin, Brahms, Chausson, Dvořák, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert and Smetana. The ensemble's recording of the six Bartók String Quartets received the 1998 Gramophone Award

for chamber music and, in 1999, was nominated for a Grammy. In addition to the Beethoven String Quartet cycle recording, the ensemble's other Decca recordings include Dvořák's String Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 51, and Piano Quintet in A major, Op. 81, with pianist Andreas Haefliger; Schubert's "Trout" Quintet with Mr. Haefliger, which was nominated in 2000 for a Grammy Award; string quartets by Smetana and Borodin; Schubert's Quartet in G major and Notturmo Piano Trio with Mr. Haefliger; the three Brahms string quartets and Piano Quintet in F minor with pianist András Schiff; Chausson's Concerto for violin, piano and string quartet with violinist Joshua Bell and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet; and Mozart's String Quintets, K.515 and K.516, with violist György Pauk.

The Takács Quartet is known for innovative programming. The group collaborates regularly with the Hungarian folk ensemble Muzsikás, performing a program that explores the folk sources of Bartók's music. The Takács performed a music and poetry program on a 14-city U.S. tour with poet Robert Pinsky. Upcoming commissions include works by Wolfgang Rihm and Daniel Kellogg.

At the University of Colorado, the Takács Quartet has helped to develop a string program with a special emphasis on chamber music, in a small, tightly knit community where students work in a nurturing environment best designed to help them develop their artistry. The Quartet's commitment to teaching is enhanced by summer residencies at the Aspen Festival and at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. The Takács is a Visiting Quartet at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.

The Takács Quartet was formed in 1975 at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest by Gabor Takács-Nagy, Károly Schranz, Gabor Ormai and András Fejér, while all four were students. It first received international attention in 1977, winning First Prize and the Critics' Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France. The Quartet also won the Gold Medal at the 1978 Portsmouth and Bordeaux Competitions and First Prizes at the Budapest International String Quartet Competition in 1978 and the Bratislava Competition in 1981. The Quartet made its North American debut tour in 1982. Violinist Edward Dusinberre joined the Quartet in 1993 and violist

Roger Tapping in 1995. Violist Geraldine Walther replaced Mr. Tapping in summer 2005. Of the original ensemble, Károly Schranz and András Fejér remain. In 2001, the Takács Quartet was awarded the Order of Merit of the Knight's Cross of the Republic of Hungary.

**Edward Dusinberre** (*violin*) was born in 1968 in Leamington Spa, England, and has enjoyed playing and performing the violin from a very young age. His early experiences as concertmaster of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain encouraged him to choose music as a profession. He studied with the Ukrainian violinist Felix Andrievsky at the Royal College of Music in London, where he won numerous prizes, including a prize for scales (which, unfortunately, no longer form a part of his performance repertoire). Upon graduation in 1990, Mr. Dusinberre was awarded the Tagore Medal for the most outstanding student in his year. During the same year, he won the British Violin Recital Prize and gave his debut recital in London in the Purcell Room at South Bank Centre.

After his graduation from the Royal College of Music, Mr. Dusinberre received scholarships from the Countess of Munster Trust, Martin Scholarship Fund and the Ian Fleming Fund to continue his studies at The Juilliard School with Dorothy DeLay. While at Juilliard, he served as concertmaster of the Juilliard Orchestra and continued to perform recitals and concertos in England. Upon completion of his studies at Juilliard, Mr. Dusinberre auditioned for the Takács Quartet, which he joined in 1993.

Mr. Dusinberre lives in Boulder, Colorado, with his wife, Beth, an archeologist who teaches at the University of Colorado, and their son, Sam. He enjoys hiking in the mountains near Boulder and going to the theater whenever time permits. He is also greatly interested in chess, although the need for obsessive attention to details tends to deter a very active involvement in the game.

**Károly Schranz** (*violin*) was born in 1952 in Budapest, Hungary. His first musical experiences were listening to the Gypsy bands in restaurants, which he has always admired for their virtuosity and musicianship. Mr. Schranz began playing the violin at the age of four under the very strict supervision of his mother, who often resorted to unconventional methods of teaching and encouraging

practice. (“To improve my bowing technique, she devised a method of attaching a string to my arm, and pulling in the desired direction. When this approach failed, she spanked me with a wooden spoon, which resulted in my hatred towards practicing.”) At the age of 14, he entered the Béla Bartók Secondary Music School, where he met his future wife, also a violin student at the school. In 1980, he received his music diploma from the Franz Liszt Academy of Music, where he studied with Mihály Szücs, András Mihály and György Kurtág.

Between 1976 and 1980, Mr. Schranz was concertmaster of the Hungarian Opera Orchestra, where his wife was also a member. (“My wife sat at the stand behind me. Every time I turned to look at the ballerina’s legs, I felt a sharp knocking on my head—a subtle reminder that she was keeping an eye on me.”)

One of Mr. Schranz’s childhood passions was playing soccer. Perhaps it was no coincidence then, that he met András Fejér, Gábor Ormai and Gábor Takács-Nagy, with whom he formed the Takács Quartet in 1975, on a soccer field.

Since 1986, Mr. Schranz, his wife and three daughters have made their home in Boulder, Colorado, where they often go hiking. He also loves to play tennis as often as his very busy schedule permits. Mr. Schranz is the recipient of the 1983 Franz Liszt Prize.

**Geraldine Walther** (*viola*), the most recently appointed member of the Takács String Quartet (starting in the 2005–2006 season), has been Principal Violist of the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) since 1976, having previously served as assistant principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Miami Philharmonic and the Baltimore Symphony. Among the many works Ms. Walther has performed as soloist with the San Francisco Symphony are Mozart’s *Sinfonia Concertante*, Telemann’s Concerto in G major, Berlioz’s *Harold in Italy*, Hindemith’s *Trauermusik*, *Der Schwanendreher* and *Kammermusiken* Nos. 5 and 6, Tippett’s Triple Concerto, Martinů’s *Rhapsody-Concerto* and the viola concertos of William Walton, Walter Piston, Thea Musgrave, Béla Bartók, Alfred Schnittke and Krzysztof Penderecki. She has given the U.S. premieres of several important works with the SFS, including Toru Takemitsu’s *A String Around Autumn*, Peter Lieberman’s *Viola Concerto* and George

Benjamin’s *Viola*, together with SFS Associate Principal Violist Yun Jie Liu. In May 2002, she was soloist in William Schuman’s *Concerto on Old English Rounds*, the American premiere of Robin Holloway’s *Viola Concerto*, and Britten’s *Double Concerto* for violin and viola.

In 1995, Ms. Walther was selected by Sir Georg Solti as a member of his Musicians of the World, an orchestra composed of leading musicians from around the globe, for concerts in Geneva to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. She has also served as principal violist with the Mainly Mozart Festival in San Diego and has performed as soloist with other Bay Area orchestras. An avid chamber musician, Ms. Walther regularly participates in leading chamber music festivals, including Marlboro, Santa Fe, Tanglewood, Bridgehampton and, most recently, the Telluride, Seattle and Ruby Mountain festivals, Music at Kohl Mansion, Green Music Festival in Sonoma, and the inaugural season of Music@Menlo two summers ago. She has collaborated with such artists as Isaac Stern, Pinchas Zukerman and Jaime Laredo, and has appeared as a guest artist with some of the world’s most renowned string quartets, including the Vermeer, Guarneri, Lindsay, Cypress and St. Lawrence. In 2001, she joined the Tokyo Quartet on a tour of Spain and Italy.

**András Fejér** (*cello*) was born in 1955 into a musical family. His father was a cellist and conductor, and his mother was a pianist. He began playing the cello at the age of seven, because, as legend has it, his father was unwilling to listen to an upstart violinist practicing. Since his early youth, Mr. Fejér’s parents have held string quartet weekends, which for the young cellist were the most memorable of occasions—if not for the music, then for the glorious desserts his mother prepared for those sessions.

After attending a music high school, Mr. Fejér was admitted to the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in 1975, where he was a pupil of Ede Banda, András Mihály, Ferenc Rados and György Kurtág. That same year he founded the Takács Quartet with three fellow classmates. Although the Quartet has been his sole professional focus since then, he does perform as a soloist occasionally as well.

Mr. Fejér is married to a literature teacher. They have three children and live in the Rocky Mountains, where they enjoy year-round sunshine

in beautiful Boulder, Colorado. When he is not on tour, he enjoys reading, photography, tennis and hiking.



Oh Seok Hoon

In June 2005, at 19 years of age, **Joyce Yang** was awarded the silver medal at the Twelfth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. The prize package included \$20,000, three years of U.S. concert engagements, and a compact disc recording on the Harmonia Mundi USA label. The youngest of the Cliburn Competition’s participants, she was the recipient of both the Steven De Groote Memorial Award for the Best Performance of Chamber Music, as well as the Beverley Taylor Smith Award for the Best Performance of a New Work. Of her spectacular finish at one of the world’s most prestigious showcases for young talent, she told reporters, “I’m still dreaming.”

The dream continued in summer 2006 as Joyce Yang appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Mann Center, the Chicago Symphony at the Ravinia Festival, the Aspen Symphony, and she opened the season of the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center. In November 2006, Joyce Yang made her New York Philharmonic debut with Lorin Maazel in Avery Fisher Hall, preceded by concerts with them in Korea. She appeared with

them again in June 2007 in New York City and in July 2007 in Vail, Colorado, and is slated for June 2008 and the 2008–2009 season. Her 2006–2007 season also included engagements with the symphonies of Houston, Indianapolis, Fort Worth, Colorado, Kansas City, Colorado Springs and Orlando, as well as numerous recitals throughout North America and in Europe, including appearances at the Kennedy Center for the Washington Performing Arts Society.

Joyce Yang continues to captivate audiences and colleagues with her warm and generous personality, combined with musicianship that belies her age. Upcoming engagements include recitals in Chicago, presented by the Chicago Symphony; the Tonhalle in Zurich; Fort Worth for the Van Cliburn Foundation; Seoul, Korea; and six recitals in Hawaii. She appears with no fewer than 15 orchestras throughout North America as well as continues her collaboration with the Takács Quartet.

Born in Seoul, Korea, Ms. Yang received her first piano lessons at age four from her aunt. She quickly took to the instrument, which she received as a birthday present, and over the next few years won several national piano competitions in Korea. By age 10, she had entered the Korean National Conservatory, and she subsequently made a number of concerto and recital appearances in Seoul and Taejon. In 1997, Ms. Yang moved to the United States to begin studies at the pre-college division of The Juilliard School in New York.

During her first year at Juilliard, she won its Pre-College Division Concerto Competition, resulting in a performance of the Haydn Concerto in D major with the Juilliard Pre-College Chamber Orchestra. In April 1999, she was invited to perform at a benefit concert with the Juilliard Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Slatkin. Her winning of the Philadelphia Orchestra’s Greenfield Competition led to a performance of Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 3 with the Philadelphia Orchestra when she was just 12.

Joyce Yang is featured in *In the Heart of Music*, the film documentary about the 2005 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Her debut disc distributed by Harmonia Mundi USA includes live performances of works by Bach, Liszt, Scarlatti and the Australian composer Carl Vine. She currently resides in New York City, where she attends Juilliard as a student of Dr. Yohave Kaplinsky.