Sunday, February 17, 2008, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Tokyo String Quartet

Martin Beaver, *violin*
Kikuei Ikeda, *violin*
Kazuhide Isomura, *viola*
Clive Greensmith, *cello*

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) — String Quartet in G major, Op. 18, No. 2 (1799)

Allegro
Adagio cantabile — Allegro — Tempo I
Scherzo: Allegro
Allegro molto quasi Presto

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) — String Quartet in A minor, Op. 29, No. 1 (D. 804), "Rosamunde" (1824)

Allegro ma non troppo
Andante
Menuetto: Allegretto
Allegro moderato

INTERMISSION

Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884) — String Quartet No. 1 in E minor, "From My Life" (1876)

Allegro vivo appassionato
Allegro moderato a la Polka
Largo sostenuto
Vivace — Meno presto — Moderato

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Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Quartet in G major, Op. 18, No. 2

Composed in 1799. Premiered in 1800 in Vienna.

"He was short, about 5 feet, 4 inches, thickset and broad, with a massive head, a wildly luxuriant crop of hair, protruding teeth, a small rounded nose, and a habit of spitting whenever the notion took him. He was clumsy, and anything he touched was liable to be upset or broken. Badly coordinated, he could never learn to dance, and more often than not managed to cut himself while shaving. He was sullen and suspicious, touchy as a misanthropic cobra, believed that everybody was out to cheat him, had none of the social graces, was forgetful, and was prone to insensate rages." Thus the late *New York Times* critic Harold Schonberg, in his book about *The Lives of the Great Composers*, described Ludwig van Beethoven, the burly peasant with the unquenchable fire of genius who descended, aged 22, upon Vienna in 1792. Beethoven had been charged by his benefactor in his hometown of Bonn, Count Ferdinand von Waldstein, to go to the Austrian capital and "receive the spirit of Mozart from the hands of Haydn." He did study for a short time with Haydn, then universally regarded as the greatest living composer, but young Ludwig proved to be a recalcitrant student, and the sessions soon ended, though the two maintained a respectful, if cool, relationship until Haydn's death in 1809.

In a world still largely accustomed to the reserved, genteel musical style of pre-Revolutionary Classicism, Beethoven burst upon the scene like a fiery meteor. The Viennese aristocracy took this young lion to its bosom. Beethoven expected as much. Unlike his predecessors, he would not assume the servant's position traditionally accorded to a musician, refusing, for example, not only to eat in the kitchen, but becoming outspokenly hostile if he was not seated next to the master of the house at table. The more enlightened nobility, to its credit, recognized the genius of this gruff Rhinelander, and encouraged his work. Shortly after Beethoven's arrival, Prince Lichnowsky provided him with living quarters, treating him more like a son than a guest. Lichnowsky even instructed the servants to answer the musician's call before his own should both ring at the same time. In large part, such gestures provided for Beethoven's support during his early Viennese years. For most of the first decade after he arrived, he made some effort to follow the prevailing fashion in the sophisticated city, but, though he outfitted himself with good boots, a proper coat and the necessary accouterments, and enjoyed the society of Vienna's best houses, there never ceased to roil within him the untamed energy of creativity. It was inevitably only a matter of time before the fancy clothes were discarded, as a bear would shred a flimsy paper bag.

The year of the completion of the six Op. 18 Quartets—1800—was an important time in Beethoven's development. He had achieved a success good enough to write to his old friend Franz Wegeler in Bonn, "My compositions bring me in a good deal, and may I say that I am offered more commissions than it is possible for me to carry out. Moreover, for every composition I can count on six or seven publishers and even more, if I want them. People no longer come to an arrangement with me. I state my price, and they pay." At the time of this gratifying recognition of his talents, however, the first signs of his fateful deafness appeared, and he began the titanic struggle that became one of the gravitational poles of his life. Within two years, driven from the social contact on which he had flourished by the fear of discovery of his malady, he penned the Heiligenstadt Testament, his *cri de coeur* against this wicked trick of the gods. These first Quartets stand on the brink of this great crisis in Beethoven's life.

The string quartet, perfected by Haydn, was the favorite form of musical entertainment in the salons of Vienna at the turn of the 19th century. As early as 1795, Count Anton Georg Apponyi had suggested to Beethoven that he undertake some works in the form, but the proposal did not bear fruit until three years later, when the Op. 18 set was begun. In 1798, Beethoven was closely associated with the noted composer and theorist Emanuel Alois Förster, perhaps as a student. (Beethoven later referred to him as his "old master.") Förster was one of the era's foremost composers of string quartets, and his influence may have inspired Beethoven to undertake his first works in the genre. Beethoven, at that time of his life still determined to impress

Program Notes

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the aristocracy, probably also wished to have his name attached to the most elegant musical form of the day. At any rate, the Quartets were begun in mid–1798 (though some sketches apparently date back to the early 1790s), mostly composed the following year, and completed in 1800. They were first played by the ensemble of Ignaz Schuppanzigh either (reports differ) in the home of Förster or in the Viennese palace of Prince Karl Lobkowitz, to whom they were dedicated upon their publication in 1801. Lobkowitz was so pleased with the Quartets that he pledged Beethoven an annual stipend of 600 gulden. With their respectful renewal of the Classical style and technique of Haydn, the Quartets enjoyed a good (though, as was always the case with Beethoven's works when they were new, not unanimous) success, and were frequently heard during the composer's lifetime. Looking back on Op. 18 in 1811, a critic for the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* wrote, "In them the loveliest melodies appeal to the feelings, and the unity, the supreme simplicity, the particular and firmly sustained character in each individual piece making up those Quartets raise them to the level of masterworks, and join Beethoven's name with the revered names of Haydn and Mozart."

The G major Quartet, the second of the Op. 18 set, is Beethoven's wittiest specimen of the genre, and, because of its frequently feather-stitched texture, is regarded by many players to be one of his most difficult to perform. The opening *Allegro*, much indebted to Haydn in its conversational intimacy, drew from Theodore Helm, Beethoven's 19th-century biographer, the following fanciful description: "The principal subject brings before one's imagination a brilliant scene in some 18th-century *salon*, with all the ceremonious display and flourish typical of the period. The doors of the drawing-room swing open to usher in the arriving guests, met with bows and gracious words of greeting." The second movement is a remarkably daring composition. It begins with a hymnal theme decorated with glistening filigree by the first violin, but soon comes to a dying close with a tiny melodic fragment composed more of silence than of sound. The first violin posits a quick repetition of the fragment, and suddenly the other instruments join it in a startling episode of skittering energy. This aberrant thought, so surprisingly stumbled upon, is quickly dismissed, however, and the hymnal theme returns, as though nothing untoward had happened, and continues without incident to its appointed close. The Scherzo, a witty descendent of those in Haydn's quartets, is marked by a certain leonine gruffness that came more and more to characterize Beethoven's works. *Aufgeknöpft*—"unbuttoned"—is how Beethoven referred to the convivial finale. Helm allowed that by this point in his imaginary *soirée* "the champagne had been passed around," and the lighthearted gaiety and quick changes of subject that bubble through the movement do certainly evoke the high spirits and good-natured banter of a gathering of congenialfriends.

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Quartet in A minor, Op. 29, No. 1 (D. 804), "Rosamunde"

Composed in 1824. Premiered on March 14, 1824, in Vienna by the Schuppanzigh Quartet.

When Wilhelmine von Chezy's play *Rosamunde*, with extensive incidental music by Franz Schubert, was hooted off the stage at its premiere in Vienna on December 20, 1823, the 27-year-old composer decided to turn his efforts away from the theater, where he had found only frustration, and devote more attention to his purely instrumental music. The major works of 1823—the operas *Fierrabras* and *Der häusliche Krieg* ("The Household War") the song cycle *Die schöne Müllerin* ("The Beautiful Maid of the Mill") and *Rosamunde*—gave way to the String Quartets in D minor ("Death and the Maiden") and A minor, the A minor Cello Sonata ("Arpeggione"), several sets of variations and German Dances, and the Octet. At that time in Schubert's life, composition seems to have been almost an escape from the difficulties of his personal situation. He was suffering from anemia and a nervous disorder as the result of syphilis and its treatment (mercury in the early 19th century!), and was constantly broke, living largely on the generosity of his devoted friends, with only an occasional pittance from some performance or publication. In March 1824, he poured out his troubles in a letter to Leopold Kupelweiser, a close friend recently moved to Rome: "In a word, I feel myself to be the most unhappy and wretched creature in the world. Imagine a man whose health will never be right again, and whose sheer despair over this makes things constantly worse instead of better; imagine a man whose most brilliant hopes have perished, to whom the felicity of love and friendship have nothing to offer but pain; whom enthusiasm (at least of the stimulating kind) for all things beautiful threatens to forsake, and I ask you, is he not a miserable, unhappy being?" Schubert then quoted some forlorn lines from Goethe's poem *Gretchen am Spinnrade* ("Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel"), which he had set in 1814: "'My peace is gone, my heart is sore, I shall find it never, nevermore' [are words which] I may well sing every day now, for each night on retiring to bed, I hope I may not wake again, and each morning but recalls yesterday's grief." Such anguish, however, did not seem to thwart Schubert's creative muse, and the year 1824, when his physician was able to somewhat restore his health through regular mineral baths, a strict diet and confinement to his room, was one of the most productive periods of his life. Moritz von Schwind, the artist who captured so well the decorous atmosphere of the Biedermeier period and whose woodcuts for children were to inspire the third movement ("Frère Jacques") of Mahler's First Symphony 60 years later, reported on Schubert's absorption with his creative activity at the time: "Schubert has now long been at work with the greatest zeal. If you go to see him during the day he says, 'Hello, how are you?—Good!' and simply goes on working, whereupon you depart."

The A minor Quartet dates from February and March 1824. It had been more than three years since Schubert had written in the genre, and that earlier example, the so-called *Quartetsatz* ("Quartet Movement") in C minor (D. 703), was abandoned after a single movement had been completed. Schubert's 11 previous specimens of the form had all been written as *Hausmusik* for the family quartet (his two brothers on violin, his father playing cello and Franz as violist), so the A minor Quartet therefore stands as the gateway to the incomparable chamber music of his maturity. The piece was inspired by the enthusiastic and meticulously prepared performances of the violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh, the greatest early interpreter of the quartets of Beethoven (who often referred to him as "Milord Falstaff" because of his well-fed condition). After returning to Vienna from seven years of performing in Russia, Schuppanzigh had established a highly regarded subscription series of chamber programs with his distinguished quartet (violinist Karl Holz, violist Franz Weiss and cellist Josef Linke) in the hall that the Philharmonic Society reserved in "The Red Hedgehog," a popular local inn of the day that was later also a favorite haunt of Brahms. The A minor Quartet was premiered at the concert of March 14 with gratifying success; Schwind reported that Schuppanzigh played it "rather slowly, but with great purity and tenderness." The work was issued as Op. 29, No. 1, by the firm of Sauer and Leidesdorf in September, the only one of Schubert's quartets published during his lifetime. (The D minor Quartet, originally intended as the second number of the set, was not published until 1831 as Op. 161; the projected third piece was never written.)

Though Schubert spoke of the D minor and A minor Quartets and the Octet of 1824 as preparatory exercises for a "grand symphony," there is nothing tentative or unpolished in the structure, style or expression of any of these splendid creations. Indeed, these compositions rank with the greatest instrumental works that Schubert ever wrote—the A minor Quartet was described by musicologist Joseph Wechsberg as "the distilled essence of Schubert's genius…the true expression of his musicianship." The Quartet is music of sweet sadness, of the precise, touching melancholy sometimes rising to tragedy of which Schubert and Mozart are the unrivaled masters. The pensive opening, the emotional platform upon which the entire work is built, recalls Schubert's 1814 song *Gretchen am Spinnrade* from which he quoted lines to describe his mood at the time of the Quartet's composition: "My peace is gone, my heart is sore, I shall find it never, nevermore." The complementary theme, graced with a demure trill upon its introduction by the second violin, provides an episode of brighter outlook, but it is the main theme and its troubled prospect which provide the principal material for the development section. As was Schubert's wont, the recapitulation returns the earlier themes in full,

with a recall of the main subject serving as the sorrowful coda.

The lovely melody of the *Andante* was taken from the Entr'acte No. 3 in B-flat for the music to *Rosamunde*, Schubert's stage flop of the preceding December. The composer must have been particularly fond of this ingratiating theme, since he used it once again as the subject for the set of variations that makes up the Impromptu No. 3 in B-flat (D. 935), composed in 1827. The *Menuetto* is one of Schubert's most haunting creations, the bittersweet memory of a happy dance rather than the dance itself. Schubert borrowed the theme from his 1819 song to Schiller's poem *Die Götter Griechenlands* ("The Greek Gods"), whose text expresses a yearning for days gone by: "Fair world, where art thou, Come again glorious age of Nature." The trio, in the warmer clime of A major, provides a brief respite before the repeat of the sullen *Menuetto* rounds out the movement. The finale, a hybrid of rondo and sonata forms, is predominantly cheerful in demeanor, a determined turning-away from the dark feelings of the preceding movements. Sir J. A. Westrup said that it was "rather like one of those peasant dances that one finds in the operas of Weber or Marschner—a townsman's view of the way in which country folks enjoy themselves." (Gustav Mahler, the greatest of all musical poets of *Weltschmerz*, created some of his most powerful and moving compositions by juxtaposing the innocence of folk music with the jaded sophistication of high culture.) Moritz von Schwind captured something of the lyrical and emotional essence of the great A minor Quartet with his simple description sent to a friend following the premiere: "It is very smooth and gentle, but has the kind of melody one associates with songs—full of feeling and quite distinctive."

Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884)
Quartet No. 1 in E minor, "From My Life"

Composed in 1876. Premiered on March 28, 1879, in Prague.

In June 1874, Smetana began suffering from severe headaches. This symptom came and went, and he noted no other physical problems until October. "One night I listened with great pleasure to Leo Delibes' *Le Roi l'a dit*," he later reported. "When I returned home after the last act, I sat at the piano and improvised for an hour on whatever came into my head. *The following morning I was stone deaf*." Smetana was terrified. He wrote to his friend J. Finch Thorne that a ceaseless rushing filled his head: "It is stronger when my brain is active and less noticeable when I am quiet. When I compose it is always in evidence." He tried all manner of unguents, ointments and treatments during the ensuing months, but they brought no relief—Smetana did not hear a sound for the last decade of his life. He had to give up his position as Principal Conductor of the Provisional Theater in Prague, causing him to suffer severe financial problems—by 1876, lack of money forced him and his wife to move in with their daughter and her husband in the village of Jabkenice in northern Bohemia. He withdrew more and more from the world as he realized he could not be cured but continued to compose, completing his symphonic cycle *Ma Vlast* ("My Country," which includes the celebrated tone poem *The Moldau*) in 1879.

Among the projects that Smetana undertook soon after settling in Jabkenice was a string quartet, his first venture into the genres of chamber music since the G minor Piano Trio, a work written to assuage his grief at the death of a five-year-old daughter in 1855. The new Quartet, begun in October 1876 and completed on December 29, grew directly from his propensity at that time for recounting his earlier days, an activity that helped him put aside briefly the pain and depression occasioned by his incurable malady. The composition, which he subtitled "From My Life," was given a private reading in 1878 by an ensemble that included the young Antonín Dvořák as violist (the score served as an important catalyst and model for Dvořák's later chamber works), but was not performed in public until March 28, 1879, when violinist Ferdinand Lachner's quartet played it in Prague. The delay in its premiere was occasioned when the Prague Chamber Music Association, to whom Smetana initially submitted the score, returned it to the composer as insuperably difficult to play and too "orchestral" in style. Smetana considered their criticisms carefully and thought about remolding the music for orchestra (the renowned conductor George Szell did later make an orchestration of the Quartet), but he left the original version untouched. Though the work was at first slow to gain recognition, it has become one of Smetana's best-loved and most frequently performed compositions.

On April 12, 1878, Smetana sent an explanation of the expressive content of the E minor Quartet to his friend Josef Srb-Debrnov. "As regards my Quartet," he wrote, "I gladly leave others to judge its style, and I shall not be in the least angry if this style does not find favor or is considered contrary to what was hitherto regarded as 'quartet style.' [This work was among the earliest chamber compositions with a specific program.] I did not set out to write a quartet according to recipe or custom in the usual forms.... With me the form of every composition is dictated by the subject itself, and thus this Quartet, too, shaped its own form. My intention was to paint a tone picture of my life." Smetana then went on to give a précis of each movement. "The first movement depicts my youthful leanings toward art, the Romantic atmosphere, the inexpressible yearning for something I could neither express nor define, and also a kind of warning of my future misfortune." Despite its explicit program, the opening *Allegro*, like the other movements of the Quartet, follows a traditional formal type, so that here the viola's anguished, falling-interval melody is used as the main theme of a sonata form; the brighter complementary theme is lyrical in style and yearning in mood. The development section is so largely concerned with the main theme that Smetana chose to reverse the order of the exposition melodies in the recapitulation and end with a gloomy, dying version of the main theme.

"The second movement, a quasi-polka," Smetana continued, "brings to mind the joyful days of youth when I composed dance tunes and was known everywhere as a passionate lover of dancing." This movement was among the first in any chamber work to incorporate stylistic characteristics of Czech music, and it even makes what appears to be a sort of inside joke when its trio section seems to imitate a café orchestra, perhaps slightly tipsy, which has forgotten the melody and can only remember the accompaniment.

"The third movement reminds me of the happiness of my first love, the girl who later became my wife." This slow movement, both tender and sad, was particularly poignant for Smetana to compose because of the strained relationship his illness had inflicted upon his marriage.

"The fourth movement describes the discovery that I could treat national elements in music, and my joy in following this path until it was checked by the catastrophe of the onset of my deafness, the outlook into the sad future, the tiny rays of hope of recovery; but remembering all the promise of my early career, a feeling of regret." The finale realizes Smetana's description with almost painful fidelity. For most of its length, the movement follows a buoyant folkish course, but then the music is suddenly cut off. A whirring in the lower strings and a piercing sound in the first violin follows. "This long insistent note owes its origin to this: it is the fateful ringing in my ears of the high-pitched tone which, in 1874, announced the beginning of my deafness. I permitted myself this little joke because it was so disastrous to me." The somber music of the opening movement is recalled, a halting attempt to resume the dance fails, and the Quartet comes to a tragic end, fading into silence.

When August Kömpel and his ensemble performed the E minor Quartet for Franz Liszt in Weimar in 1880, the violinist wrote to Smetana the following words of praise: "We, the Weimar Quartet, cannot resist the urge to tell you what rare enjoyment the performance of this original and vigorous work gave us.... Though your beautiful String Quartet is quite difficult, it captivates and holds the imagination from beginning to end, and it is indeed impossible to decide which of the movements is to be preferred. Our sincere thanks for this most welcome enrichment of the chamber music literature."

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Henry J. Fair

The **Tokyo String Quartet** has captivated audiences and critics alike since it was founded more than 30 years ago. Regarded as one of the supreme chamber ensembles of the world, the Tokyo String Quartet—Martin Beaver and Kikuei Ikeda (violins), Kazuhide Isomura (viola) and Clive Greensmith (cello)—has collaborated with a remarkable array of artists and composers, built a comprehensive catalogue of critically acclaimed recordings and established a distinguished teaching record. Performing over a hundred concerts worldwide each season, the Tokyo String Quartet has a devoted international following that includes the major capitals of the world and extends to all four corners, from Australia to Estonia to Scandinavia and the Far East. Dedicated to the performance of both new work and the classical repertoire, the Tokyo Quartet this season performs the New York premieres of *Blossoming for String Quartet* by Japanese composer Toshio Hosakawa and *Primera Luz* by Lera Auerbach. These works will be among those presented in three programs at New York's 92nd Street Y, where the quartet continues the fourth year of its official residency. Traveling extensively overseas each year, the Tokyo this fall and spring will tour European cities in Austria, Germany, Finland, France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. They will return to Japan to perform in Tokyo's Oji Hall, and Osaka's Izumi Hall and are invited back to the Toho Gakuen School of Music in Toyama for the annual string-quartet seminar. In addition to spending much of each summer teaching and performing at the prestigious Norfolk Chamber Music Festival—having served on the faculty of the Yale School of Music as quartet-in-residence since 1976—the Tokyo Quartet this year will also attend the Edinburgh Festival, the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan, and the Schubertiade Festival in Schwarzenberg, Austria. Deeply committed to coaching young string quartets, the ensemble also conducts master classes in North America, Europe and the Far East throughout the year. The Tokyo Quartet has released more than 40 landmark recordings on BMG/RCA Victor Red Seal, Angel-EMI, CBS Masterworks, Deutsche Grammophon and Vox Cum Laude, including the complete quartets of Beethoven, Schubert and Bartók. The Quartet's recordings of Brahms, Debussy, Dvořák, Haydn, Mozart, Ravel and Schubert have earned such honors as the Grand Prix du Disque Montreux, "Best Chamber Music Recording of the Year" awards from both *Stereo Review* and *Gramophone* magazines and seven Grammy Award nominations. Following their highly praised recording of Beethoven's three middle "Razumovsky" string quartets on the Harmonia Mundi label, the ensemble in an ongoing collaboration with Harmonia Mundi released the Beethoven Op. 18 quartets in November. A disc featuring works by Dvořák and Smetana is slated for release soon thereafter, and a third recording of Beethoven quartets is projected which will complete the entire cycle. The Tokyo Quartet has been featured on numerous television programs, including *Sesame Street*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, PBS's *Great Performances*, *CNN This Morning* and a national television broadcast from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, as well as on the soundtrack for the Sidney Lumet film *Critical Care*, starring Kyra Sedgwick and James Spader.

The ensemble performs on the "Paganini Quartet," a group of renowned Stradivarius instruments named for legendary virtuoso Niccolò Paganini, who acquired and played them during the 19th century. The instruments have been on loan to the ensemble from the Nippon Music Foundation since 1995, when they were purchased from the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Officially formed in 1969 at The Juilliard School, the Tokyo String Quartet traces its origins to the Toho School of Music in Tokyo, where the founding members were profoundly influenced by Professor Hideo Saito. Instilled with a deep commitment to chamber music, the original members of what would become the Tokyo String Quartet eventually came to America for further study with Robert Mann, Raphael Hillyer and Claus Adam. Soon after its formation, the quartet won First Prize at the Coleman Competition, the Munich Competition and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. An exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon firmly established it as one of the world's leading quartets.

Martin Beaver (*violin*) is the newest member of the Quartet, having joined the ensemble in 2002. A prominent chamber musician, he was a founding member of two Canadian ensembles: the Toronto String Quartet and Triskelion. He has appeared with the Boston Chamber Music Society and Bargemusic, as well as at Ravinia, the Seattle Chamber Music Festival and Reizend Muziekgezelschap in Amsterdam. As a soloist, Mr. Beaver has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Montreal Symphony, Toronto Symphony, National Orchestra of Belgium and the Portuguese Radio Orchestra, among others. He was a top prize-winner at the international violin competitions in Indianapolis and Montreal, and won a silver medal at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Belgium. A former pupil of Victor Danchenko, Josef Gingold and Henryk Szeryng, he has served on the faculties of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, the University of British Columbia and the Peabody Conservatory of Music of the John Hopkins University in Baltimore and has presented masterclasses in North America, Europe and Asia. He is currently on the faculty at the Steinhardt School at New York University. Mr. Beaver has recorded for the René Gailly, Naim Audio, Naxos, SM5000 and Musica Viva labels.

Kikuei Ikeda (*violin*) was born in Yokosuka and studied violin at the Toho Academy of Music with Saburo Sumi and Josef Gingold and chamber music with Hideo Saito. While still living in Japan, he performed as soloist with the Yomiuri Symphony and the Tokyo Metropolitan and Tokyo Symphony orchestras and toured Europe as concertmaster of the Toho String Orchestra. Mr. Ikeda came to the United States in 1971. He studied with Dorothy DeLay and members of the Juilliard String Quartet at The Juilliard School, where he was a scholarship student. Mr. Ikeda was a prizewinner in the Mainichi, NHK and Haken competitions in Japan, the Washington International Competition for Strings in Washington, D.C., and the Vienna da Motta in Portugal. He has played the Mozart Violin Concerto with the Aspen Chamber Orchestra, given many recitals in Italy, New York and Tokyo, and has performed chamber music with numerous ensembles.

Kazuhide Isomura (*viola*) is a graduate of the Toho Academy, where he studied with Jeanne Isnard, Kenji Kobayashi and Hideo Saito. Upon his arrival in this country, he became assistant concert master of the Nashville Symphony, but his love for chamber music and the violin led him to The Juilliard School, where, on full scholarship, he studied violin with Ivan Galamian and Paul Makanowitsky, chamber music with Robert Mann and Raphael Hillyer, and viola with Walter Trampler. Mr. Isomura is a founding member of the Tokyo String Quartet. He also records solo viola repertoire for MusicMasters/Musical Heritage Society.

Clive Greensmith (*cello*) joined the quartet in June 1999. A graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music and the Musikhochschule in Cologne, his principal teachers were Donald McCall and Boris Pergamenschikow. He has held the position of principal cellist of London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. As a soloist, he has appeared with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, English Chamber Orchestra, Mostly Mozart Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic, and the RAI Orchestra of Rome. He has collaborated with distinguished musicians such as András Schiff, Midori, Claude Frank and Steven Isserlis, and has won several prizes including second place in the inaugural "Premio Stradivari" held in Cremona, Italy. Mr. Greensmith has served on the faculties of the Royal Northern College of Music, Yehudi Menuhin School and San Francisco Conservatory of Music and is currently on the faculty of New York University. Mr. Greensmith's recording of Brahms Sonatas with Boris Berman was recently released on the Biddulph label.