



Advance Program Notes

Beo String Quartet

Thursday, November 16, 2017, 7:30 PM

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

Beo String Quartet

Jason Neukom, Sandro Leal-Santiesteban, Sean Neukom, and Ryan Ash

String Quartet in G Major, op. 76, no. 1

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Allegro con spirito
Adagio sostenuto
Menuet
Allegro ma non troppo

Projection 1: Triple Quartet

Sean Neukom (b. 1983)

i.
ii.
iii.

INTERMISSION

Or Be Forever Fallen (2017) for amplified string quartet, computer, and video

Charles Nichols, *music*
Zach Duer, *video*

I. Toil of Battle
II. Wearied Virtue
III. Rolling in the Flood

This performance is supported in part by a gift from David A. West and Lindsay B. West.

Program Notes

STRING QUARTET IN G MAJOR, OP. 76, NO. 1

Joseph Haydn

Franz Joseph Haydn spent the bulk of his career (from 1766 until his death in 1809) employed as music director for successive princes of the Esterházy family, who split their time between a castle in Eisenstadt and the “Hungarian Versailles,” the palace at Esterháza (30 miles and 60 miles from Vienna, respectively). Working in relative isolation and often on tight deadlines, Haydn composed and performed works ranging from full-scale operas and symphonies to small piano sonatas (and even 126 baryton trios!) to satisfy his patrons’ musical tastes. Possibly out of necessity—imagine listening to only one composer for weeks on end—Haydn developed an experimental and unpredictable style. Although the six quartets of op. 76 were not commissioned until the late 1790s by Viennese aristocrat József Erdődy, Haydn’s style was still “full of invention, fire, good taste, and new effects...not of a sublime genius who has written so much and so well already, but one who had expended none of his fire before,” according to contemporary Charles Burney.

The string quartet in G Major is cheery and bold; at times tender, yet always very playful. Its emotions are immediate and completely natural. When looked at in this light, the inclusion of an ultra-standard work by the “father of the string quartet” on a concert of contemporary music does not seem out of place; rather, the “invention,” “fire,” and “new effects” certainly made this work a success in Haydn’s time. After all, we are attracted to contemporary music in part by the new and unexpected musical experiences it can offer listeners—for Beo, there is plenty that is new and unexpected in Haydn’s work.

—Ryan Ash, October 2017

OR BE FOREVER FALLEN

Charles Nichols

In his recent electroacoustic chamber music for amplified instruments and computer, composer Charles Nichols has explored a fusion of styles, combining the tradition and craft of classical music with the intensity and bravado of metal. In these pieces, to expand the expressive potential of the acoustic instruments, he combines virtuosic performance with interactive computer music. With *Or Be Forever Fallen*, he continues that exploration, heavily processing the amplified string quartet with saturated audio effects, including distortion, phasing, and flanging. Believing that classical music can be presented with the same immersive spectacle as popular music, he has collaborated with video artist Zach Duer, who has created animation of imaginary machinery and landscape, tightly coordinated with the music, to be projected behind the spotlighted string quartet.

Biographies

BEO STRING QUARTET

A shared dedication to the continued understanding, exploration, and love of music is what inspired the formation of Beo String Quartet with violinists Jason Neukom and Sandro Leal-Santiesteban, violist Sean Neukom, and cellist Ryan Ash.

In the mold of a 21st-century ensemble, Beo gives live performances of the masterpieces of the string quartet repertoire in traditional and non-traditional venues, collaborates with living composers to showcase the music of our time, and participates in our modern global culture through a strong social media presence.

Formed in 2015 Beo's first two years saw a wide range of successes. On tour the group presents uniquely-crafted educational seminars, as well as formal and informal performances. Beo has held residencies at music festivals such as the Charlotte New Music Festival and Dakota Chamber Music, during which they coached and performed alongside the celebrated Ying String Quartet. Beo was selected as a Major Winner for the Pittsburgh Concert Society competition in 2016.

Projects in the 2017-2018 season include multi-tiered residencies at schools such as Virginia Tech and University of North Carolina Greensboro, as well as a two-week long educational tour in North Dakota. You can also find Beo performing both original rock/pop works and covers of favorite songs in band settings as Beo Underground.

The members of Beo String Quartet hold degrees from some of the country's top conservatories, including the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and Carnegie Mellon University, and have produced studio recordings of Beethoven's String Quartet no. 7 in F Major, op. 59, no. 1; Béla Bartók's String Quartet no. 4; and Andrew List's String Quartet no. 5, *Time Cycles*.

Beo is set to enter the studio in December to produce recordings of Max Duykers's *Glass Blue Cleft* and Beethoven's String Quartet no. 10 in E-flat Major.

CHARLES NICHOLS

Composer, violinist, and computer music researcher Charles Nichols (charlesnichols.com) explores the expressive potential of instrumental ensembles, computer music systems, and combinations of the two for the concert stage and collaborations with dance, video, and installation art. He teaches Composition and Creative Technologies at Virginia Tech, is a faculty fellow of the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, and previously taught at the University of Montana. He has earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Yale University, and Stanford University, where he studied composition with Samuel Adler, Martin Bresnick, Jacob Druckman, and Jonathan Harvey, and computer music with Jonathan Berger, Chris Chafe, Max Mathews, and Jean-Claude Risset. He was a research associate at the Center for Studies in Music Technology at Yale and a technical director at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA) at Stanford. He has conducted research as a visiting scholar at the Sonic Arts Research Centre at Queen's University Belfast; taught computer music workshops at the University of Rome Tor Vergata, Banff Centre, CCRMA, and the Charlotte New Music Festival; and composed as a resident at the Ucross and Brush Creek artist retreats. His recent premieres include *What Bends* for electric violin and interactive computer music in 3D immersive audio, accompanying narrated poetry, motion capture dance, animation, and processed video in 360-degree projection, performed in conjunction with the "Extreme Appalachia" Appalachian Studies Conference; *Epimetheus Gift* for amplified bassoon and computer in 3D immersive audio, inspired by the Swedish extreme metal band Meshuggah; *Beyond the Dark*, ambient synthesized sound for installation art and 3D projection, presented at the ACCelerate: Creativity and Innovation Festival at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.; and *Nicolo, Jimi, and John*, a three movement concerto for amplified viola, orchestra, and computer, celebrating the virtuosity of Paganini, Hendrix, and Coltrane. In the band Modality, he performs electric violin, bass guitar, and computer. For more information, please visit charlesnichols.com, youtube.com/user/CharlesSNicholsII, and modality.bandcamp.com/album/under-the-shadow-of-this-red-rock.

Biographies, continued

ZACH DUER

Zach Duer is an educator and artist. He is an assistant professor in the School of Visual Arts at Virginia Tech. Previously, he held the position of immersive environment specialist at the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology and taught new media art as an instructor in the Department of Kinetic Imaging at Virginia Commonwealth University. He holds a master of fine arts in kinetic imaging from Virginia Commonwealth University (2014), a master of arts in music composition from Mills College (2009), and a bachelor of music in music composition from Minnesota State University Moorhead (2007).

Engagement Events

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

SCHOOL-DAY PERFORMANCE: BEO STRING QUARTET

Students from Craig, Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, as well as the Cities of Radford and Roanoke, attended this free school-day performance by Beo String Quartet.

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

WORKSHOP: COMPOSITION READING

Members of Beo String Quartet conducted a workshop with music composition students at Virginia Tech.

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

LECTURE: EXPRESSION

Beo String Quartet delivered a talk on musical expression for composers and performers in the School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech.

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

MASTER CLASS: BEO STRING QUARTET

During the artists' visit, members of Beo String Quartet led a master class with Virginia Tech music students.

Thursday, November 16, 2017, following the performance

QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION

After experiencing Beo String Quartet's performance, engage with the guest artists in this free informal question-and-answer session.

Special thanks to Charles Nichols and Alan Weinstein

For Virginia Tech Students

The Division of Student Affairs invites you to engage in the Aspirations for Student Learning to do more, be more, and aspire to be your best self.

Aspirations for Student Learning

Commit to unwavering **CURIOSITY**
Pursue **SELF-UNDERSTANDING** and **INTEGRITY**
Practice **CIVILITY**
Prepare for a life of **COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP**
Embrace **UT PROSIM** (That I May Serve) as a way of life

One way to work toward these aspirational goals is to engage in Keystone Happenings. Keystone Happenings highlight the Aspirations for Student Learning, provide opportunities for learning, and challenge students to reflect. Search “keystone” on GobblerConnect at gobblerconnect.vt.edu/events to discover these opportunities.

Keystone Happening Reflections for Beo String Quartet

To engage audiences with new music, Beo String Quartet has created unique music videos, employed social media in novel ways, and performed regularly as Beo Underground, covering rock/pop songs. How do you imagine this impacts their relationship to their followers, traditional classical music fans, and their music-making?

For more resources for educators, students, and lifelong learners to help you dig deeper and engage with this performance and our other season performances, view our Learning Guide at artscenter.vt.edu/experiences.

In the Galleries



PIA FRIES

September 14-December 9, 2017

Ruth C. Horton Gallery and Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor

Internationally acclaimed artist Pia Fries (Swiss, based in Dusseldorf, Germany) integrates silkscreened fragments of 16th- and 17th-century Baroque and Mannerist prints into a hybrid fusion of figuration and abstraction, art historical tradition and adventurous innovation. Intense color and lush paint careen, halt, retreat, then advance across expanses of empty white surfaces in a statement about the intersection of movement and stasis, past and present, and art and life. This exhibition presents a selection of paintings and prints from renowned private collections and prominent galleries in New York and California.

For more information on this artist, please visit piafries.com.

com.

GALLERY HOURS

Monday-Friday, 10 AM-5:30 PM

Saturday, 10 AM-4 PM

To arrange a group tour or class visit, please contact Meggin Hicklin, exhibitions program manager, at megh79@vt.edu or 540-231-0840.