

Friday, January 28, 2022, 7:30 PM

QUARTETTO DI CREMONA

Moss Arts Center Street and Davis Performance Hall Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre





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QUARTETTO DI CREMONA

String Quartet in E Minor Giuseppe Verdi

I. Allegro II. Andantino III. Prestissimo IV. Scherzo fuga. Allegro assai mosso

Tenebrae Osvaldo Golijov

Movement 1
Movement 2

INTERMISSION

String Quartet no. 14, Franz Schubert

Death and the Maiden

I. Allegro II. Andante con moto III. Scherzo. Allegro molto IV. Presto

> North American Representation: Kirshbaum Associates Inc. 307 Seventh Avenue Suite 506 New York, NY 10001 kirshbaumassociates.com

Program Notes

STRING QUARTET IN E MINOR Giuseppe Verdi

By 1873 Giuseppe Verdi ranked among Europe's preeminent composers. Verdi had already produced 26 operas, including such classics of the era as Rigoletto, Il trovatore, La traviata, and Don Carlos. During the passionately waged political struggle known as the Risorgimento ("rising again"), which led in 1861 to Italian unification and independence, Verdi's name and music had achieved iconic stature. But after his opera, Aida, premiered in Cairo in 1871, Verdi retreated from public life to a substantial degree, tending the lands of his estate, Sant'Agata, and composing no new operas for the next 16 years. This seems to have left space for other, unexpected streams of creativity to flow. In March 1873 Verdi went to Naples to oversee rehearsals for a new production of Aida at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. Unfortunately an illness of the lead soprano, Teresa Stolz, meant a postponement of the production and weeks of enforced leisure for Verdi. Yet it was clearly not an entirely idle period, as he wrote, impressed himself by his odd endeavors, "I've written a Quartet in my leisure moments in Naples. I had it performed one evening in my house, without attaching the least importance to it and without inviting anyone in particular. Only the seven or eight persons who usually come to visit me were present. I don't know whether the Quartet is beautiful or ugly, but I do know that it's a Quartet!"

Though this was Verdi's first and last venture into the world of string guartet composition, he was no stranger to the genre, having made careful study of quartets by the great masters, especially Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. His quartet in E minor received its first performance at the Hotel della Croce in Naples, with players identified only as the Pinto brothers (violins), Salvadore (viola), and Giaritiello (cello). When a French production of Aida took him to Paris in 1876, he arranged yet another performance of the quartet at the Hôtel de Bade, this time for a hundred quests rather than a small handful. Their enthusiastic response finally encouraged him to publish the work. The guartet unfolds in four movements, three of which are in E minor; only the second movement offers a contrast in C major. It opens with a plaintive melodic exchange originating with the second violin, its rhythmic energy calmed only by a chorus-like second theme. In the tender ensemble of the Andantino the melodic argument shifts to the first violin. The third movement is brusque and turbulent, with "brillante" trill figures dominating the outer sections. But the center of the movement features a striking solo by the cello, singing in its tenor range, supported by a pizzicato accompaniment. A light, vigorous fugue closes the work.

TENEBRAE Osvaldo Golijov

Osvaldo Noé Golijov, born in La Plata, Argentina, in 1960, grew up with the music of his Eastern European Jewish heritage, classical chamber music, and the modern tango style of Astor Piazzolla. Golijov's studies in piano and composition began in Argentina, and continued at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem when he moved in 1983 to Israel. He earned a Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied with composer George Crumb. His works have received recognition with significant awards, including a MacArthur Fellowship (2003), *Musical America* Composer of the Year (2006), and two Grammy Awards for his opera, *Ainadamar* (2007). Golijov has served as composer-in-residence for major orchestras and music festivals and since 1991 has taught composition at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. His work is known for its eclectic blend of musical styles and resources, including klezmer and Sephardic ballads, Latin American folk music, and Afro-Caribbean rhythms; several of his notable compositions position a string quartet at the center.

Golijov's Tenebrae, originally composed for string quartet with clarinet and voice, was revised in 2002 for quartet alone. It incorporates music from an unexpected but deeply meaningful source, a motet by François Couperin written in 1714 for the Tenebrae ritual of Holy Week, celebrated as a vigil during the nights leading up to Easter, and setting text from the Lamentations of Jeremiah: "Jerusalem . . . how deserted lies the city, once so full of people! With violence she was put to the ground." Golijov has explained the significance of this work, stating, "I wrote Tenebrae as a consequence of witnessing two contrasting realities in a short period of time in September 2000. I was in Israel at the start of the new wave of violence . . . and a week later I took my son to the new planetarium in New York, where we could see the Earth as a beautiful blue dot in space. I wanted to write a piece that could be listened to from different perspectives. That is, if one chooses to listen to it 'from afar,' the music would probably offer a 'beautiful' surface but, from a metaphorically closer distance, one could hear that, beneath that surface, the music is full of pain. I lifted some of the haunting melismas from Couperin's Troisième Leçon de ténèbres, using them as sources for loops, and wrote new interludes between them, always within a pulsating, vibrating, aerial texture. The compositional challenge was to write music that would sound as an orbiting spaceship that never touches ground. After finishing the composition, I realized that Tenebrae could be heard as the slow, quiet reading of an illuminated medieval manuscript in which the appearances of the voice singing the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet (from Yod to Nun, as in Couperin) signal the beginning of new chapters, leading to the ending section, built around a single, repeated word: Jerusalem."

Program Notes, continued

STRING QUARTET NO. 14, DEATH AND THE MAIDEN Franz Schubert

Franz Schubert's famous quartet in D minor dates from the early spring of 1824, a period in which Schubert devoted himself, for the first time in three years, to writing chamber music. At this time Schubert was in poor health, having been diagnosed with syphilis; he suffered from pain in his bones and had lost the ability to sing or even to play the piano. Writing in his diary, he reflected, "Pain sharpens the understanding and strengthens the mind; whereas joy seldom troubles about the former and softens the latter, or makes it frivolous." Schubert seems to explore the thin edge between pain and joy in this unusually poignant, passionate quartet. Three of its four movements are in D minor, a key frequently described in Schubert's time as "melancholy" and evocative of suffering. His 1817 song, Death and the Maiden, on which the second movement is based, was also in D minor; in retaining the original key and allowing it to permeate the work, Schubert links the quartet as a whole to the song, which expresses mortal terror and deathly consolation.

The first bar of the Allegro introduces a triplet figure that proves to be a propulsive force throughout the movement; a soft, urgent theme in dotted rhythms that enters in F major provides a gentle balance, though the two ideas fiercely intertwine as the argument proceeds. In the second movement, the main theme quotes the solemn piano introduction from Schubert's earlier song, alluding to Death's soothing, intoned words to the Maiden ("Give me your hand . . . Softly you shall sleep in my arms") with soft repeated notes and measured rhythms. A series of five variations enriches the simple melody and brings forth the agitation and pain expressed by the Maiden ("I am still young! Go, and do not touch me"), with particular eloquence emerging from the cello as it carries the theme in the second variation and exploits its contrasting ranges in the fifth. Yet a peaceful reconciliation is finally achieved in the coda. Dramatic accentuations launch the Scherzo, which sustains a taut energy even in the quiet D-major Trio section. It is worth noting that while the previous movement quotes one of Schubert's songs, the Scherzo borrows material from a German dance (D. 790, no. 6) that Schubert wrote in 1823. The finale, based on tarantella rhythms, is a furious movement that maintains a tight balance between fortissimo outbursts and long, sweeping passages that are eerily hushed.

Biography



QUARTETTO DI CREMONA

Cristiano Gualco, violin Paolo Andreoli, violin Simone Gramaglia, viola Giovanni Scaglione, cello

Winner of the 2019 Franco Buitoni Award, the Quartetto di Cremona is a preeminent quartet of its generation noted for its lustrous sound, refined musicianship, and stylistic versatility. The quartet was established in 2000 at the Accademia Walter Stauffer in Cremona, Italy, and recently

celebrated its 20th anniversary. Over the course of two decades Quartetto di Cremona has toured extensively in Europe, the United States, South America, and Asia; appeared at leading festivals; and performed regularly on radio and television broadcasts, including RAI, BBC, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. The Quartetto di Cremona's extensive repertoire encompasses key masterworks from Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert; essential late-19th and 20th-century literature by Debussy, Schoenberg, Webern, Bartók, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Ravel, Janáček, and Dvořák; and contemporary works by Golijov, Lacheman, Fabio Vacchi, Silvia Colasanti, Nimrod Borenstein, and Kalevi Aho.

In the 2021-2022 season Quartetto di Cremona embarks on two North American tours in November and February. The quartet makes its long-awaited Lincoln Center debut at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York on February 1, featuring works by Prokofiev, Schoenberg, and Weber's quintet with clarinetist David Shifrin. Other North American engagements include Houston (with Shifrin); Santa Monica; Montreal; Hamilton, Ontario; and Ithaca, New York. The group performed last summer in Finland, Denmark, Germany, France, Albania, and Italy; and later this season, it will make its debut at the Fundación Juan March in Madrid and in Linz, Austria; with other engagements such as Zurich, Milan, Rome, and an Asian tour.

Quartetto di Cremona began the 2020-2021 season with debuts at the Ravello Festival and at Prague's Rudolfinum alongside the Pavel Haas Quartet, but due to the pandemic, several concerts had to be postponed. The group released its 14th album, *Italian Postcards*, a debut on Avie Records in November 2020. It features works by Hugo Wolf, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and the world-premiere recording of Borenstein's *Cieli d'Italia*, commissioned by

Biography, continued

QUARTETTO DI CREMONA, (continued)

the Cremona Quartet. Despite the pandemic, the quartet was able to make its debut in Istanbul, performing with clarinetist David Orlowsky.

Quartetto di Cremona began its 2019-2020 season in Genoa—where all four members were born and currently reside—with a performance alongside pianist Anna Geniushene. The members embarked on an ambitious tour of North America in October, which brought them to California, Idaho, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Texas, Toronto, and Washington, D.C. Highlights included a world premiere of Omaggio a Monteverdi by Byron Adams at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, a night of Klezmer music in Los Angeles's Wallis Annenberg Center with clarinetist Orlowsky, and two performances at Da Camera of Houston. Advancing its commitment to the Beethoven quartets, the ensemble began a three-year Beethoven cycle in L'Aquila, Italy, along with a complete cycle performance in Tirana, Albania. The guartet appeared in concert alongside the Emerson String Quartet for the centennial celebration of the Associazione Scarlatti in Napoli. Additional highlights included a tour of the Netherlands; a recital with pianist Angela Hewitt in Leon, Spain; and numerous performances at leading Italian musical institutions throughout the season.

In July 2018 the German label Audite issued a box set of Quartetto di Cremona's complete cycle of the Beethoven quartets, recorded during the period 2013-2016, which includes the String Quintet in C major, op. 29 with Lawrence Dutton, violist of the Emerson String Quartet. The first volume in the series received widespread and immediate recognition, including a five-star rating in BBC Music Magazine and selection as album of the month by Fonoforum, the German journal. The seventh CD earned the Supersonic Award from the German magazine Pizzicato and the Echo Klassik 2017 prize. More recently, the quartet was a winner of the International Classical Music Awards 2018 for the seventh and eighth discs of its Beethoven series. An all-Schubert disc was released in May 2019 on Audite, featuring two of composer's masterpieces: String Quartet Death and the Maiden and String Quintet in C major, with cellist Eckart Runge.

Quartetto di Cremona leads a renowned string program, currently in its ninth year, for professional and advanced string quartets at the Accademia Walter Stauffer, now part of the new campus of the Stauffer String Center, which opened in October 2021. The quartet also conducts master classes while on tour throughout Europe and the United States. Awarded the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship in 2005, the Quartetto di Cremona is also the recipient of the second Franco Buitoni Award (2019) in recognition of its contribution to promoting and encouraging chamber music in Italy and throughout the world. The quartet is supported by the Kulturfond Peter Eckes, which

provides the musicians with three superb instruments: violin Paolo Antonio Testore, viola Gioachino Torazzi, cello Dom Nicola Amati. Cristiano Gualco plays his own violin Nicola Amati, Cremona 1640. In 2015 the musicians were awarded honorary citizenship by the city of Cremona.

Quartetto di Cremona's recordings are available on Audite, Ayriel Classical, Klanglogo, and Decca.

This is the quartet's first performance at the Moss Arts Center.

Tell Us What You Think!

We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to *Memphis Jookin': The Show* featuring Lil Buck on Thursday, March 17, 2022.



bit.ly/quartetto-di-cremona-feedback

Engagement Events

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2022

MASTER CLASS: QUARTETTO DI CREMONA

Members of Quartetto di Cremona listened to performances by Virginia Tech string students and provided coaching tailored to students' strengths and areas for development.

POST-PERFORMANCE Q&A

Following the performance, the Quartetto di Cremona will answer audience questions in this Q&A.

Special thanks to John Irrera and Alan Weinstein

Go Deeper

Two back-to-back experiences in 2000 inspired composer Osvaldo Golijov's creation of *Tenebrae*: a visit to Israel during a period of heightened violence and a mesmerizing trip to a New York City planetarium with his five-year-old son. Where do you hear this juxtaposition of moods and environments in Golijov's piece? What's the overall effect of this binary as a listener?

In the Galleries

NAMWON CHOI: THE SHAPE OF DISTANCE Thursday, January 27-Saturday, March 26, 2022 Ruth C. Horton Gallery

Based in Savannah, Georgia, Namwon Choi's vivid monochromatic blue landscapes compress distance and invite an intimate perspective. Trained in traditional Korean painting, Choi's multi-perspectival, geometric, and finely detailed depictions of scenic byways evoke poetic ideas of time, transition, and states of in-betweenness.

SHIN-IL KIM: IN BETWEEN FIVE COLORS
Thursday, January 27-Saturday, March 26, 2022
Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception
Gallery

Based in Seoul, Korea, Shin-il Kim explores the limitations of language to make video sculptures and animations that shift between perception and reality. With light and color, Kim builds form from the negative spaces of characters and the gaps between lines. Language becomes a barrier to seeing, and its absence reveals meaning under the surface of knowledge.

GALLERY HOURS

Wednesday-Friday, 10 AM-5 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.

Land Acknowledgement

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech's history by increasing Indigenous student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, and meeting the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

We must also recognize that enslaved Black people generated revenue and resources used to establish Virginia Tech and were prohibited from attending until 1953. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

Health and Wellness

The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for distancing, face coverings, and cleaning and sanitation. Our status may change according to changes in university operating procedures. Find the most up to date information at artscenter.vt.edu/visit.

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

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2022 MOSS ARTS CENTER SPRING PERFORMANCES

Thurs., Feb. 3-Fri., Feb. 4, 7:30 PM **CIRQUE MECHANICS** *Birdhouse Factory*

Wed., Feb. 23, 7:30 PM **BALLET HISPÁNICO**Noche de Oro

Tues., March 1, 7:30 PM
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The 25th Anniversary Farewell Season of Love Tour

Thurs., March 17, 7:30 PM

MEMPHIS JOOKIN': THE SHOW

Featuring Lil Buck

Tues., March 22, 7:30 PM
THE MOTH MAINSTAGE

Thurs., March 24, 7:30 PM CHONTADELIA

Thurs., March 31, 7:30 PM EDGAR MEYER AND THE SCOTTISH ENSEMBLE

Fri., April 8, 7:30 PM Sat., April 9, 4 and 7:30 PM BURGERZ BY TRAVIS ALABANZA

Thurs., April 14, 7:30 PM **KRISTIN CHENOWETH** For the Girls

Tues., April 19, 7:30 PM **SARAH CHANG,** violin

Fri., April 22-Sat., May 14, 8:30-11 PM CRAIG WALSH'S MONUMENTS

Sat., April 23, 7:30 PM CHOIR! CHOIR! CHOIR!

Thurs., April 28, 7:30 PM
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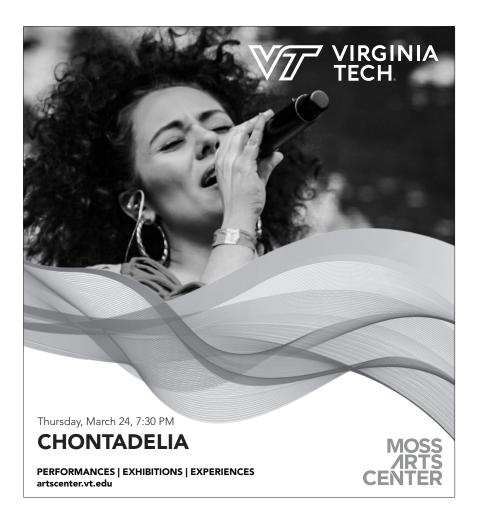
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Thursday, March 31, 7:30 PM

EDGAR MEYER AND THE SCOTTISH ENSEMBLE

MOSS /RTS CENTER

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Tuesday, April 19, 7:30 PM

SARAH CHANG, violin SONYA OVRUTSKY FENSOME, piano

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<u>YMCA AT VIRGINIA TECH</u>



2021 Highlights at the Y

*Expanded the Meals on Main program to 7 distribution sites where we serve 5 days' worth of meals & snacks to more than 250 community youth every week – that's more than 65,000 meals & snacks each year!

*Launched the region's 1st annual International Welcome Week, in tandem with other communities across the nation, to welcome new immigrants to our community as well as celebrate our neighbors who hail from international locales.

*Resumed our on-site after school programs where our Virginia Tech student leaders serve as positive role models and mentors to MCPS students



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