



The Sixty-seventh Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,693rd Concert

Euclid String Quartet

Jameson Cooper and Jacob Murphy, *violins*
Luis Enrique Vargas, *viola*
Philip von Maltzahn, *cello*

November 16, 2008
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

String Quartet in D Major, op. 18, no. 3 (1798–1801)

Allegro

Andante con moto

Allegro

Presto

Matthew Hindson (b. 1968)

Industrial Night Music (2003)

Washington Premiere Performance

INTERMISSION

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

String Quartet no. 1 in G Minor, op. 27 (1877–1878)

Un poco andante; allegro molto ed agitato

Romanze: Andantino; allegro agitato

Intermezzo: Allegro molto marcato; più vivo e scherzando

Finale: Lento; presto al saltarello

The Euclid Quartet appears by arrangement with Lisa Sapinkopf Artists of Emeryville, California.

The Musicians

Formed in Ohio in 1998, the Euclid String Quartet takes its name from the famous Euclid Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio, home to a wealth of artistic and cultural institutions. In 2002 and 2003 the Quartet participated in the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado as a fellowship quartet. The Euclid Quartet has commissioned works from several noted composers, including Armando Bayolo and Dan Welcher. The ensemble currently holds the position of quartet-in-residence at Indiana University South Bend.

First violinist Jameson Cooper, a native of Sheffield, England, studied with Malcolm Layfield and Wen Zhou Li at The Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. He has also studied with Dorothy DeLay, Masao Kawasaki, and Roland and Almita Vamos. Cooper has performed as soloist with orchestra, recitalist, and chamber musician throughout the United States and Europe.

Second violinist Jacob Murphy, a founding member of the Euclid Quartet, hails from Fresno, California. He studied at the Eastman School of Music and Kent State University, where his principal teachers included Charles Castleman, Gregory Fulkerson, Camilla Wicks, and Claudia Shiu. Murphy's wide range of activity includes baroque period performances with lutenist Paul O'Dette and appearances with several new music ensembles.

Violist Luis Enrique Vargas was born in Venezuela, where he studied at the Vicente Emilio Sojo and Simón Bolívar Conservatories of Music. In his native land, he collaborated with the National Youth Orchestra of Venezuela and the Lara, State, and Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestras. Vargas has participated in the Aspen, Great Lakes, and Norfolk Music Festivals, and has performed as a chamber musician throughout Canada, Europe, South America, and the United States.

In this concert, the Euclid Quartet performs with cellist Philip von Maltzahn, substituting for David Breem, who is unable to play due to a hand injury. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and Indiana University, Maltzahn has performed at the Third World Cello Congress in Baltimore, Maryland, as a winner of the International Masterclass Competition.

The Program

In 1792 Beethoven moved from Bonn to Vienna to study with Haydn, the undisputed master among composers of the era. Soon the young piano virtuoso was the toast of the musical soirées held by the political and social elite of the day: the Esterházy, the Lichnowskys, Count Waldstein, and Prince Lobkowitz (to whom the opus 18 quartets would be dedicated). There is a marked change in Beethoven's compositions after 1793, when Haydn left Vienna and the younger composer turned for tutelage to Johann Georg Albrechtsberger (1736–1809), who provided him with a thorough grounding in counterpoint. This background is evident in the opus 18 quartets, which Beethoven worked on between 1798 and 1801.

“Our dominant image of Beethoven,” writes musicologist Jay Weitz, “is that of the scowling titan, not that of the (relatively) timid youngster. But surely he felt the spirits of the recently-departed Mozart and the still-breathing Haydn watching over his shoulder as he put pen to paper to write this, his very first string quartet (although it is numbered third, it was the first quartet Beethoven composed). Sketches in one of Beethoven's notebooks suggest that he began formulating ideas as early as 1794, though his preparations commenced earlier still.”

The first movement of the *Quartet in D Major*, op. 18, no. 3, begins not in the tonic but in the dominant, violating the tonal verities of the late eighteenth century at every turn. Beethoven takes the prevailing quartet style and tweaks it just enough to make it his own. In the *Andante con moto*, according to Weitz, “we hear early evidence of Beethoven's habit of making the slow movement the emotional focus of so many works.”

The scherzo is a rather serious affair, so serious that Beethoven wrote out the repeat instead of using the *da capo* indication; the dark mood prevails even in the contrasting trio. Perhaps to dispel the gloom, the *presto* takes a lighthearted approach, the emblem of which is the persistent return to those opening three notes, even at the quiet close.

Australian composer Matthew Hindson was born in 1968 in Sydney. He studied composition at the University of Sydney and at the University of

Melbourne with composers including Peter Sculthorpe, Eric Gross, Brenton Broadstock, and Ross Edwards. Hindson's works have been performed by most of Australia's professional symphony orchestras and chamber groups in Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Holland, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. They have been featured at such key events as the Gaudeamus Music Weeks in Amsterdam, the ISCM Festival in Copenhagen, and the Paris Composers Rostrum. His music often displays influences of popular music styles with the result that directness, immediacy, driving repeated rhythms, and loud dynamic levels are typically found in his works.

Hindson writes of *Industrial Night Music*: "The piece was commissioned by Sandra Yates and Michael Skinner in memory of Michael's father. One of the aspects of Michael's father's life was that he worked as an army engineer. This created a sense of resonance to me as I grew up in the Illawarra, a region of Australia dominated by the steelworks at Port Kembla, briefly working there and also in the blast furnace at the steelworks at Whyalla. The outer sections of *Industrial Night Music* are built around musical expressions of mechanical and industrial processes viewed at close quarters. These include pollution, grime, dirt, ugliness, heat, a (male) worker surrounded by a surfeit of continually grinding interlocking gears, 'mecchanico machismo.' The middle section is quite different: slow-moving, it portrays the still beauty of a large industrial workplace at night, viewed from afar, lit up by thousands of lights like a giant Christmas tree. It is only after one goes within the structures themselves that the true nature of the processes involved are revealed."

Industrial Night Music received its United States premiere in July 2008. The *New York Times* said "[it] opened like a roller coaster with two gears: very fast and crazy fast. You could just about catch your breath during a twinkling interlude; then it was full speed ahead to the end."

In 1877, after a number of busy years in Oslo, teaching and conducting to make a living, Edvard Grieg left for Hardanger, Norway, with his wife Nina. Within two years he wrote several masterworks, including the *String Quartet in G Minor*. On hearing Grieg's quartet for the first time, Franz Liszt declared: "It is a long time since I have encountered a new composition,

especially a string quartet, which has intrigued me as greatly as this distinctive and admirable work by Grieg.” Grieg himself characterized the quartet as a slice out of his own life: “Concealed within it are samples of that heart’s blood of which posterity hopefully will see more than just a few drops.” The musical language is rather radical, and in many ways Grieg’s quartet is a bridge between the late Beethoven quartets and Debussy’s quartet, written fifteen years later.

Working hard to find a thematic and formal framework, Grieg at last decided to build the whole quartet on the melody of his Ibsen song *Spillemaend* (Minstrel). This melody underlies all four movements. The opening motif (octave falling to major 7th and 5th) is also the main motif in, among other things, Grieg’s *Piano Concerto in A Minor*. This motivic core pervades the entire quartet, binding it together to form a composite whole, from the dramatic G minor introduction of the first movement to the entrancing final G major of the last. This conceptual unity in the shape of a cyclic melodic idea did not originate with Grieg; it was a technique often used by Liszt, for instance. But Grieg made more consistent use of it than had been usual in chamber music up to that date.

Grieg’s quartet is also notable for its thickness of sound. It has an unorthodox richness of texture that verges on the orchestral, using fortissimo double-stopping in several instruments simultaneously. The composer was criticized for this, but he replied that his quartet was not designed to “peddle occasional flashes of brilliance. It aims at breadth; to soar, and above all at a vigorous sound for the instruments for which it is written.” Finally, the quartet is unconventional in its markedly homophonic style. But it does contain polyphonic passages — proof that Grieg was also a master of this technique.

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at the National Gallery of Art**

November–December 2008
Sunday evenings at 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

NOVEMBER

- 23 **The Singers' Companye**
Music by Native American
and other American composers
Presented in honor of
George de Forest Brush:
The Indian Paintings
- 30 **Verge Ensemble**
Music by Elliott Carter
and Jeffrey Mumford
Presented in connection
with the 3genFestival

DECEMBER

- 7 **Till Fellner, pianist**
Beethoven: Sonatas nos. 16, 17,
18, and 28
First concert in a cycle
of Beethoven's complete
piano sonatas
- 14 **New York Opera Society**
Soloists from Norway
Norwegian Christmas
Festival Concert
- 21 **Alessandra Marc**
With the National Gallery
Chamber Orchestra
Stephen Ackert and Dingwall
Fleary, guest conductors
Danielle DeSwert, pianist
Music by Ernest Bloch
and other composers
Presented in honor of
Oceans, Rivers, and Skies:
Ansel Adams, Robert Adams,
and Alfred Stieglitz
- 28 **National Gallery Orchestra**
Manfred Knoop, guest conductor
New Year Concert

For the convenience of concertgoers
the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the
performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones,
pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of
the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

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