

CU ★ PRESENTS

2020-21 Season
Digital program



Contents

Click on an item to navigate to its page.

Pandemic Players: A Peek Behind the Masks ★

Performance program

CU Presents Digital

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CU Presents personnel

CU ★ PRESENTS is the home of performing arts at the University of Colorado Boulder.



The Grammy Award-winning **Takács Quartet** has been moving audiences and selling out concerts for three decades at CU Boulder.

As we gather, we honor and acknowledge that the University of Colorado's four campuses are on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute, Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, Lakota, Pueblo and Shoshone Nations. Further, we acknowledge the 48 contemporary tribal nations historically tied to the lands that comprise what is now called Colorado.

Acknowledging that we live in the homelands of Indigenous peoples recognizes the original stewards of these lands and their legacies. With this land acknowledgment, we celebrate the many contributions of Native peoples to the fields of medicine, mathematics, government and military service, arts, literature, engineering and more. We also recognize the sophisticated and intricate knowledge systems Indigenous peoples have developed in relationship to their lands.

We recognize and affirm the ties these nations have to their traditional homelands and the many Indigenous people who thrive in this place, alive and strong. We also acknowledge the painful history of ill treatment and forced removal that has had a profoundly negative impact on Native nations.

We respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land. We honor them and thank the Indigenous ancestors of this place. The University of Colorado pledges to provide educational opportunities for Native students, faculty and staff and advance our mission to understand the history and contemporary lives of Native peoples.

Pandemic Players: **A Peek Behind the Masks**

By Becca Vaclavik

As the United States rounds out a full year of pandemic living, so CU Presents rounds out a year without its vibrant in-person events. Since last March, departments and artists across campus have spent the season finding new and innovative ways to connect with our audiences. One such group is the Takács Quartet, whose members have streamed its concert series directly into the homes of beloved audience members since September.

“We are so grateful for the willingness of the members of the Takács Quartet to partner with our terrific College of Music faculty and staff in the production of streamed performances during this past year while we haven’t been able to present concerts in public,” says College of Music Dean John Davis. “It is our hope that these events have brought joy and enrichment to the lives of our community supporters during these challenging times.”

From the renegotiation of contracts with outside venues, to the in-person audio and visual work of

the College of Music Operations team, to customer communications from CU Presents, moving the season online has been no small feat. It has been an unusual season inside the culture of the quartet, too.

Following violist **Geraldine Walther's retirement**, **Richard O'Neill joined the quartet** during the early days of Boulder County's COVID-19 response. He stayed with fellow Takács members. The group lived a very closed life, becoming each other's "pandemic pod," so they could safely rehearse together in-person in their homes. And over the summer they recorded a new album for Hyperion Records at the Lone Tree Arts Center, south of Denver.

"There is a very obsessive quality that comes with recording—many hours a day of playing to the best of your ability and hoping never to lose focus," says violinist Harumi Rhodes. "It was an intense bonding experience for us, especially with concert life so up in the air these days. The recording was a wonderful project for us to grow together in our new quartet formation."

Slowly, as the Boulder community settled into its new normal, the quartet returned to Grusin Hall and

other local venues, usually performing via streaming services and always while wearing masks. Though they have certainly hit their stride with the new format, Rhodes confesses they hope to return to the old way of performing again soon.

“We have been very fortunate these past months, remaining safe and healthy and having the support of our friends and family in Boulder. Now, we are mostly trying to be patient but it is difficult. We can’t wait to be backstage again in Grusin Hall and hear the expectant buzz of our CU audience chatting before a concert.

“There is already an ephemeral nature to music, and that quality seems particularly present to us right now. When we perform our CU streamed concerts this spring, we will imagine our loyal CU audience listening from home.”

*“During this time we are especially grateful to the CU community as a whole and especially to our friends and colleagues in the String Department. With demands on financial resources stretched thin by the pandemic, we have decided to set up a new fund. The quartet will be making an initial gift of \$13,000 to the new **CU**ltivate Undergraduate String Scholarship Fund. This fund is not intended to benefit specifically our own students, but rather to support the continued excellence of the String Department as a whole. We feel that the future is bright for undergraduate music students despite these challenging times: We hope that others may be inspired to join us in celebrating their beautiful potential!” — Harumi Rhodes*

*“We look forward to presenting both Takács Quartet and Faculty Tuesdays recitals in person in the near future! We thank the members of the Takács Quartet for their generosity and support of our undergraduate string students through their founding of the **CU**ltivate Undergraduate String Scholarship Fund,” — Dean John Davis*

Takács Quartet

Haydn, Dutilleux and Schubert

Virtual performance streaming April 11-May 10, 2021

String Quartet in D minor, Op. 42

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

- I. Andante, ed Innocentemente
- II. Menuet
- III. Adagio, e Cantabile
- IV. Finale. Presto

String Quartet in D minor, Op. 103

Franz Joseph Haydn

- I. Andante grazioso
- II. Menuet ma non troppo presto — Trio

Ainsi la Nuit

Henri Dutilleux (1916-2013)

- I. Nocturne
- II. Miroir d'espace
- III. Litanies
- IV. Litanies II
- V. Constellations
- VI. Nocturne II
- VII. Temps suspendu

— Intermission —

String Quintet in C Major, D. 956

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

I. Allegro ma non troppo

II. Adagio

III. Scherzo

IV. Allegretto

With David Requiro, cello

Program notes

By Marc Shulgold

String Quartet in D minor, Op. 42

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

The program opens with two Haydn oddities: a pair of isolated string quartets, each in D minor, each published as a stand-alone piece, rather than as one of the usual set of six. In the case of Op. 42, there is only speculation as to its origins. Most likely, it was one of two quartets commissioned in 1784 by two Spanish nobles, the Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Osuna, and the Duke of Alba. We've gained this information from Haydn's letter to his

publisher, Artaria, in which the composer mentions two quartets (one has since been lost) that would be “very short and consist of three pieces (i.e., movements) only.” Opus 42, of course, has four movements—Haydn might have subsequently added the *Menuet*. The brevity of this work, along with its absence of technical challenges (apart from the top note of the *Menuet*), suggest that it might have been intended as an exercise for a young, student ensemble. Also worth noting is the description affixed to the opening movement: *Andante, ed Innocentemente*—slowly and innocently. Perhaps a helpful guide for its intended youthful players?

String Quartet in D minor, Op. 103

Franz Joseph Haydn

Just as Haydn’s Op. 42 was published on its own, so too was this final, incomplete work—a singular gesture of farewell, if you will, from a man who had proudly stood for decades as a pioneer and guiding light of the string quartet. These two movements were completed in 1803, a year after the publication of his last pair of completed quartets, Op. 77. If it’s likely that Op. 103 had been written as part of a third work for Op. 77, there is little doubt that Haydn considered the gentle *Andante* and cheerful *Menuet*

of Op. 103 as the final contribution to his quartet writing. Consider that when he submitted those movements for publication, he tagged on a single musical line with text from his charming four-part song, *Der Greis* (The Old Man): “*Hin ist alle meine Kraft, alt und schwach bin ich*” —Gone is all my strength, old and weak am I. The sentiments of that unexpectedly spritely little piece seemed to carry special meaning for the aging Haydn, who had that text printed on his calling cards in 1806. Knowing the composer’s pride, it comes as no surprise that there’s not an ounce of sadness or resignation in Op. 103. There are several moments of unexpected seriousness, but generally these are elegant, inventive movements that end not with a grand exclamation point but with a smile and a small wave of good-bye.

Ainsi la Nuit

Henri Dutilleux (1916-2013)

Don’t be surprised if you experience déjà entendu during the seven movements of *Ainsi la Nuit* (And So the Night). Musical phrases and episodes are briefly suggested before or after they’re introduced in full. The late French composer called this “reverse variation,” inserting four brief “parentheses,” each

quoting phrases heard elsewhere. Dutilleux said of those interludes, “Allusions to what follows—or what comes before—are placed and situated as reference points.” Early in the work, for example, chords appear that return in the second *Litanies* movement as well as a later parenthesis. All of this suggests a musical equivalent of Proust’s seven-volume “Remembrance of Things Past.” In these seven linked movements, time seems bendable and flowing. The last movement is titled “Suspended Time.”

Equally significant are the continual references to night—not just in the name of the work and most of the movement titles. As the composer wrote, “Everything transforms unthinkingly into a sort of nocturnal vision.” A fascination with the night can also be observed in an orchestral work he’d subtitled “The Starry Night,” after Van Gogh. There are also impressionist touches here that are drawn from Debussy, Ravel and, principally, Bartók, specifically his “Out of Doors” and Fourth String Quartet. Since he hadn’t attempted a string quartet since his student days in Paris, Dutilleux dove into the output of chamber-music masters in preparation for writing this piece, which was commissioned by the Koussevitzky

Foundation and intended for the Juilliard Quartet (it was first performed in Paris in January of 1977 by the Quatour Parrenin). In 1974, the composer “practiced” with three movements of *Ainsi la Nuit* (originally titled *Nuit*) which he sent off to the Juilliard.

String Quintet in C Major, D. 956

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

The early death of Schubert has been romanticized to the extreme—a dying genius all but left alone, cruelly ignored by musical Vienna. Yet, even in his final, illness-plagued year, he was very much a social animal who found public admiration for his music. In 1827 he joined the committee of the prestigious Vienna Philharmonic Society, and a concert featuring his B-flat Trio received glowing reviews, as had the publication of songs from “Winterreise.” A concert of his music in March of 1828, presented on the first anniversary of Beethoven’s death, was a huge and profitable success.

Just as Mozart’s last year had produced a dazzling variety of compositions, Schubert wrote unceasingly in several genres, including a mass, three expansive piano sonatas and a pair of song cycles. Oh yes, and one glorious string quintet—his final chamber work.

Incredible that his publisher, Heinrich Probst, showed interest in the submitted songs and sonatas yet all but ignored the quintet. More remarkable, this celestial masterpiece remained hidden until a public reading in 1850, to be published three years later. It was written in September of that final year and rehearsed the following month (Schubert died on Nov. 19).

Just what inspired its creation and why it called for the unusual combination of viola and pairs of violins and cellos remain a mystery. Mozart, one of Schubert's idols, had written six string quintets that utilized two violas, not two cellos. Perhaps Schubert liked the idea of a central string trio of violin, viola and cello. They would be flanked musically by violin and cello to provide high and low accompaniments and embellishments—as featured prominently in the *Adagio*.

After an extended and unsettling introduction, the *Allegro* leads into an unforgettable two-voice tune that slides from a unison note into a melody sung with inventive harmonies first by the cellos, then the violins. A generation later, the *Allegro* theme would be universally embraced by music lovers—one of whom had it etched onto his tombstone.

The soul of the quintet is found in the following *Adagio*, launched with an almost invisible melody of serene, motionless beauty—its magical world shattered by an agonizing middle section that seems to express Schubert’s anger at his deteriorating health, due mostly to the effects of syphilis. A dance-like *Scherzo* follows, with a stark contrast emerging in the meditative Trio.

Much has been made of the *Allegretto* finale, that it is too light and frivolous. Yet, as a welcome dessert from all that had transpired earlier, this gypsy-like frolic functions perfectly, briefly stepping aside for yet one more fragrant melody in the form of a lilting Viennese waltz.

About the performers

David Requiro

First Prize winner of the 2008 Naumburg International Violoncello Competition, **David Requiro** (pronounced re-KEER-oh) has emerged as one of today's finest American cellists. After winning First Prize in both the Washington International and Irving M. Klein International String Competitions, he also captured a top prize at the Gaspar Cassadó International Violoncello Competition in Hachioji, Japan, coupled with the prize for the best performances of works by Cassadó.

Requiro has made concerto appearances with the National Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Tokyo Philharmonic, and several orchestras from California including the Marin, Oakland East Bay, Peninsula, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa and Stockton Symphonies. He also has been featured as soloist with the Ann Arbor, Breckenridge, Canton, Edmonton, Lansing, Olympia, Pine Bluff and Santa Fe Symphony Orchestras, as well as with the Northwest Sinfonietta, Symphony ProMusica and Naples Philharmonic.

His Carnegie Hall debut recital at Weill Hall was followed by a critically acclaimed San Francisco Performances recital at the Herbst Theatre. Soon after making his Kennedy Center debut, Requiro also completed the cycle of Beethoven's Sonatas for Piano and Cello at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. Actively involved in contemporary music, Requiro appeared as a guest artist at the 2010 Amsterdam Cello Biennale where he gave the Dutch premiere of Pierre Jalbert's Sonata for Cello and Piano. He has collaborated with composers such as Krzysztof Penderecki and Bright Sheng, as well as with members of the Aspen Percussion Ensemble, giving the Aspen Music Festival premiere of Tan Dun's concerto, *Elegy: Snow in June*, for cello and percussion.

An avid chamber musician, Requiro is a founding member of the Baumer String Quartet and has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Seattle Chamber Music Society, Concertante Chamber Players, ECCO (East Coast Chamber Orchestra) and the Alexander String Quartet. For over eight seasons, he has served as a frequent performing artist of the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players Series in New York City. The

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center recently appointed Requiro to its prestigious Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two) beginning in the 2018-19 season.

In 2015, Requiro joined the faculty of the University of Colorado Boulder as assistant professor of cello. He previously served as artist-in-residence at the University of Puget Sound as well as guest lecturer at the University of Michigan. His artist faculty appointments include the Bowdoin International Music Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Society Summer Festival, Giverny Chamber Music Festival, Innsbrook Music Festival and Institute, Maui Classical Music Festival, and Olympic Music Festival. As a member of the Baumer String Quartet, he co-founded the annual Monterey Chamber Music Workshop.

A native of Oakland, California, Requiro began cello studies at age six and his teachers have included Milly Rosner, Bonnie Hampton, Mark Churchill, Michel Strauss and Richard Aaron.

Takács Quartet

The Takács Quartet, now entering its 46th season, is renowned for the vitality of its interpretations. The Guardian recently commented: “What endures about the Takács Quartet, year after year, is how equally the four players carry the music.” BBC Music Magazine described the group’s recent Dohnányi recording with pianist Marc André Hamelin as “totally compelling, encapsulating a vast array of colours and textures.” Based in Boulder at the University of Colorado, Edward Dusinberre and Harumi Rhodes (violin), Richard O’Neill (viola), and András Fejér (cello) perform 80 concerts a year worldwide.

In June 2020, the Takács Quartet was featured in the BBC television series *Being Beethoven*. The ensemble also released an album of piano quintets by Amy Beach and Edward Elgar, a fitting way to celebrate Geri Walther’s 15 years as the Takács’ violist before her retirement from the group. The members of the quartet welcomed Richard O’Neill as their new violist in June and are looking forward to many exciting projects during their first season together.

The Takács records for Hyperion Records, and its releases for that label include string quartets by

Haydn, Schubert, Janáček, Smetana, Debussy and Britten; piano quintets by César Franck and Shostakovich (with Marc-André Hamelin); and viola quintets by Brahms (with Lawrence Power). For its albums on the Decca/London label, the quartet has won three Gramophone Awards, a Grammy Award, three Japanese Record Academy Awards, Disc of the Year at the inaugural BBC Music Magazine Awards and Ensemble Album of the Year at the Classical Brits. Full details of all recordings can be found at takacsquartet.com.

The members of the Takács Quartet are Christoffersen Faculty Fellows at the University of Colorado Boulder. The quartet has helped to develop a string program with a special emphasis on chamber music, where students work in a nurturing environment designed to help them develop their artistry. Through the university, two of the quartet's members benefit from the generous loan of instruments from the Drake Instrument Foundation. The members of the Takács are on the faculty at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, where they run an intensive summer string quartet seminar, and are Visiting Fellows at the Guildhall School of Music.



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