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FIRST CONCERT

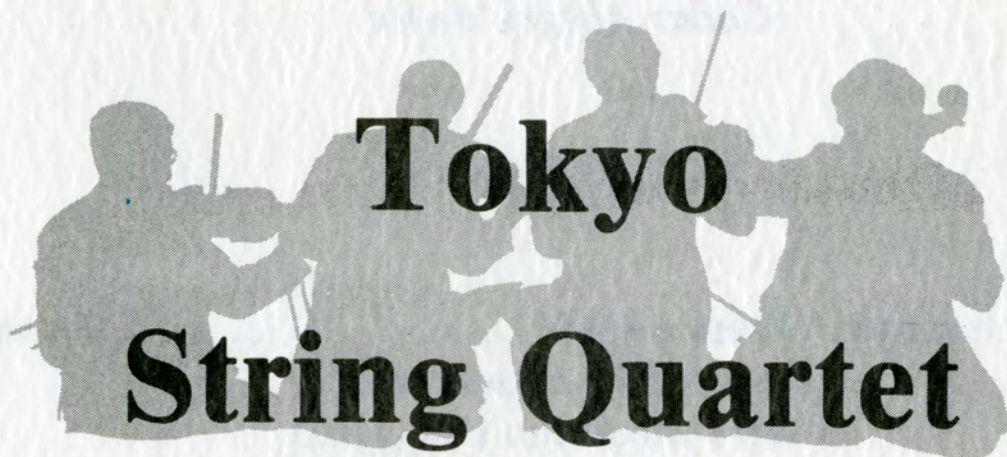
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TOK

**houston Friends of  
Music, Inc.**

and

**Shepherd School of Music**

PRESENT THE



**String Quartet**

with

**Gervase de Peyer, *clarinet***

**Peter Oundijian - *violin***

**Kikuei Ikeda - *violin***

**Kazuhide Isomura - *viola***

**Sadao Harada - *violoncello***

**Tuesday, October 16, 1984**

*and*

**Thursday, October 18, 1984**

**HAMMAN HALL**

**8:00 P.M.**

**RICE UNIVERSITY**



# PROGRAM

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1984**

**Quartet in D Major, Op. 64, No. 5 "Lark"..... Haydn**  
*Allegro moderato*

*Adagio cantabile*  
*Menuetto: Allegretto*  
*Finale: Vivace*

**Quartet No. 3 (to be played without pause)..... Bartok**

*Prima parte: Moderato*  
*Seconda parte: Allegro*  
*Recapitulazione della prima parte: Moderato*  
*Coda: Allegro molto*

## INTERMISSION

**Quartet in e minor "From my life"..... Smetana**

*Allegro vivo appassionato*  
*Allegro moderato a la polka*  
*Largo sostenuto*  
*Vivace*

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# PROGRAM

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1984**

**Quartet in g minor, Op. 74, No. 3 "Horseman"..... Haydn**

**Quartet No. 3, Op. 22..... Hindemith**

*Fugato. Sehr langsame Viertel*

*Schnelle Achtel. Sehr energisch*

*Ruhige Viertel. Stets fliessend*

*Massige schnelle Viertel*

*Rondo, Gemachlich und mit grazie*

## INTERMISSION

**Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in A Major, K. 581..... Mozart**

*Allegretto*

*Larghetto*

*Minuetto, Trio I, Trio II*

*Tema con variazioni: Allegretto*

**Gervase de Peyer, Clarinet**

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## THE TOKYO STRING QUARTET

The Houston Friends of Music is again delighted to present the Tokyo String Quartet. Acclaimed one of the world's great ensembles, the Quartet performs over 100 concerts each season in tours that have taken it to four continents. Kikuei Ikeda, Kazuhide Isomura, and Sadao Harada were trained at the Toho Music Academy in Tokyo. The newest member of the Quartet, Peter Oundjian, was born in Toronto, raised in London, and debuted at 15 while living in England. Mr. Oundjian first appeared with the ensemble when it was performing quartets during the 1981 Van Cliburn International Competition. The Tokyo String Quartet performs on four great matched Amatis, which have been graciously loaned them by the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C.

**Gervase de Peyer**, the noted English clarinetist, is well known throughout the musical world for his outstanding chamber music performances, his frequent appearances as a guest soloist with numerous orchestras and his long list of distinguished recordings. Of late Mr. de Peyer finds himself in increasing demand as a conductor in addition to directing his own Melos Sinfonia and the London Symphony Wind Ensemble. Since 1969, he has been an Artist-in-Residence of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

## PROGRAM NOTES

There is a special place in the hearts of those who love chamber music in general and the string quartet in particular for **Franz Joseph Haydn** (1732-1809). Not only was he the father of the string quartet, but he nurtured his issue with 50 years of constant honing and improvement. Much has been made of the parent-child comparison between Haydn and his 80-odd quartets. For example, Donald Ferguson has written: "books on the care and feeding of the infant musical form were less numerous in his day than in our own; but he seems to have grasped clearly the essential aspects of his problem, exerting a discipline neither too strong nor too lax. For musical ideas, like children, are not wholly the property of the parent who engenders them. They have a long genealogy; when they come to birth, they are still conditioned by that inheritance; they will themselves, if their energy is strong, come to mold that tradition." The tradition that was molded by the vital energy of Haydn's offspring is the string quartet of Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and all other composers who to this day have followed it. Although every great composer has added a stamp of individuality, the string quartet itself, as a medium of musical expression, is alive and well and seems likely to continue to evoke admiration for its originator for a long time to come.

Like Beethoven and Bartok, Haydn was so involved in the string quartet for all of his active life that the different stages of his musical development can be gauged more clearly by paying close attention to the quartets than in any other way. The six quartets of Op. 64, dedicated to Johann Tost, a wealthy merchant, were composed in 1790, his last year in the service of the Esterhazys. The compositions of this era show the continuing confidence and originality that endured to his last year. These quartets, in comparison to those of Op. 55 and earlier, show greater complexity--such as fragmentation of phrases, contrapuntal development, and greater freedom with form--as well as greater charm and, at times, humor. The term "Lark," like must such eponyms not applied by the composer, refers to the first chirping theme of the first violin in the Op. 64, No. 5 quartet. The opening 8 bars may be taken as the melody at first hearing, until the first violin comes in with



the "real" melody, and our attention is shifted. Such shifting of emphasis and attention occurs all through the quartet and even more so in later ones. In the middle section, syncopated, unsustained, dissonant chords provide contrast with the flowing regularity of the main theme and its development. The **Adagio cantabile** is a courtly song, whose familiar classical style communicates the held-back melancholy of so many Haydn slow movements. Its flowing line contrasts both with the bouncy first movement which precedes it and the robust minuet which follows. The rustic motion of the **Menuetto**, made more bumptious by the initial grace note, relaxes the tension and dispels the seriousness of the previous movement. The **Trio** has running eighth notes with which the two violins weave in and out. It is subdued and in the minor key, but the mystery on the surface contains a hidden smile. The **Finale** is a **perpetuum mobile** of neverending sixteenth notes, whose pace is not even interrupted by the dramatic middle section. In happy flight the lark which opened the Quartet leaves us.

**Bela Bartok** (1881-1945) had a life-long fascination with the string quartet. His six published quartets span most of his creative years and he was working on a seventh when he died. Yet, it is difficult to relate the results of this earnest endeavor to the quartet tradition of the 18th and 19th centuries. He has abandoned sweet familiarity (and those who seek it will be forever disappointed) for brutal chords, unresolved dissonances, and savage rhythms. These ear-splitting traumas were necessary for the birth of his new idiom. His attitude toward tonality was a free one. Although he considered certain works in specific keys, they are more "near" than "in" definite keys. His rhythms, strongly influenced by the asymmetry of Hungarian folk music reflects the same freedom from 19th century constraints.

With the third string quartet he won the Coolidge prize for chamber music and its cash award of \$6000.00-- a tidy sum in 1927 dollars. This work, in one movement of four parts, is the shortest, most condensed, and perhaps the most "extreme" of all the quartets. The first and third parts are slow, the third being an abridged recapitulation of the first; the second and fourth are fast, the **Coda** bearing a similar relation to the second movement. Here for the first time we see the extensive use of techniques which later become commonplace--wide **glissandi**, often in two directions simultaneously, use of the bow's wood, as well as hair, and the **sul ponticelli**. Themes which had started to fragment in Beethoven's hands now are mere fragments of fragments with little development in the usual sense. With all this change in technique and form come novel sonorities, new rhythms, indeed a re-definition of what music is, or can be--a conceptual change every great composer is a part of in one way or another.

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The nationalistic aspirations which led to the political eruptions of the mid-nineteenth century had reverberations in every field of artistic endeavor. Composers discovered a new vigor and focus for their talents. After Austria's granting independence to Bohemia in 1860 and the founding of a national opera, **Bedrich Smetana** (1824-1884) returned from Sweden to Prague to be a part of the musical renaissance of his homeland. Although Smetana's chamber music output was small (two string quartets and one piano trio), he found, as did many other composers, that the string quartet was the most natural vehicle for his deepest feelings. The Quartet No. 1 in E Minor, composed in 1876, stands very well on its own musical feet, but its subtitle, "From My Life," and the composer's detailed description of each movement give the work an additional subjective dimension, unique, or at least very rare, in the literature of chamber music. The realization of his approaching deafness is the personal tragedy which gives meaning to his descriptive words. The first movement begins with great drama. What kind of life must this dreadful fanfare presage? There are rearrangements and restatements of the theme, but little development. To Smetana the first movement represented, "my romantic mood, the unspoken longing for something I could not name or imagine clearly, and also a warning of future misgivings of misfortune." In the second movement, **Allegro moderato a la polka**, it is easy to imagine a peasant dance. The mock serious Trio has a raunchy lilt which summons up the image of Scott Joplin. To Smetana the movement, not surprisingly, "brought memories of happier times as a youth when I would strew the young world with dance pieces." With a long cello solo which seems to say, "enough of all this frivolity," Smetana introduces the **Largo sostenuto**, a romantic movement if there ever was one. With only an occasional reference to the sadness of the first movement and harshness of the last, the melodies unfold in most rhapsodic, breath-taking sweetness. This, to Smetana, was "a movement recalling the happiness of my first love for the girl who later became my wife." The last movement starts happily but the mood suddenly is changed by a high sustained E which symbolizes his approaching affliction. To Smetana the movement was "joy in the knowledge of how to make use of national music until the ominous interruption and catastrophic beginning of deafness--a glance toward my sad future."

The Haydn Quartets Op. 74, No. 3 and Op. 64, No. 5 (heard Tuesday evening), are without doubt two of the greatest and most popular Haydn string quartets. Yet tonight is the first time the Houston Friends of Music has presented any of the six Op. 74 quartets. The Op. 74, No. 3 Quartet has the subtitle "The Horseman," because of the rhythm of the first few measures of the first movement. It is clear, however, that the appeal of the quartet has very little to do with that single rhythmic pattern in the first movement. One gains a little and gives up a little when applying such identifying words. They have some use as a crutch for the memory (not unlike certain academic mnemonics), but if one finds only the metaphor for a horse's gallop in this quartet, the usefulness of the crutch has been purchased at an unacceptable price. The darkness of the first movement becomes clear only with the offbeat passage which follows the first eight measures. The second theme has the same rhythm as the opening theme, and both are held together by the glistening triplets which embellish them both and which provide the main focus for the development. The **Largo assai** is as contemplative and introspective as the slow movement of the Op. 64, No. 3 Quartet, but less formal. The third and fourth beats of the measure are full of dramatically constructed figures which fill the spaces left open in comparable places in the earlier quartet. In the **Menuetto** the main theme has none of the darkness of the movements which surround it, but the **Trio** does have hints of the undercurrents which follow. The last movement is as rhythmic and galloping as the first, but full of unexpected syncopation and hesitations. Its rapid pace produces an air of exhilaration that does not stop until the end of the movement.



**Paul Hindemith** (1895-1963) probably had more first-hand experience with the string quartet than did any other composer. An outstanding violinist and violist, as well as a competent pianist and clarinetist, he first achieved recognition as second violinist in the Rebner Quartet. Later he formed the Amar Quartet in which he played the viola, and this group became one of the leading quartets in Europe. Although we think of Hindemith as an exponent of the new music of this century, an unfinished early manuscript of a string quartet has been found, and this rather standard work shows intimate knowledge of the earlier tradition of string quartet writing.

The String Quartet No. 3, was composed when Hindemith was only 26 years old, but he had already written four of his string quartets and his own unique neo-classical style was emerging. His concept of horizontal independence of the melodic ideas, for example, in the fugal first movement are clear and easy to follow. The almost careless-sounding dissonances which this type of writing produces are similar only in a superficial way to the chordal dissonances in Bartok's music (as demonstrated in Bartok's third quartet heard Tuesday). This type of independent part writing is perhaps the most consistent feature of the quartet whether in the savage pounding of the second movement or the quieter phrasing of the third. It comes as no surprise that the viola plays a dominant role in Hindemith's music, and this is particularly true in this quartet. The togatta-like fourth movement with its cello solo leads to the last movement which starts in a highly dissected manner, but comes together very well at the end.

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756-1791) first heard the clarinet in the 1760's during a visit to England, but he apparently first took it seriously on his 1777 trip to Mannheim, where he wrote his father, "Imagine what a wonderful affect clarinets, flutes, and oboes have on a symphony." After settling permanently in Vienna in 1781, he became friendly with Anton Stadler, who was first clarinetist in the Imperial Court Orchestra, and it was from him that Mozart developed a comfortable familiarity with this peculiar but eloquent instrument. Besides the many solo passages for clarinet in symphonies, operas, and smaller ensembles, Mozart composed three works for that instrument which are unsurpassed in beauty and insight into the possibilities of the clarinet--the concerto (K. 622), the trio for clarinet, viola, and piano (K. 498), and the quintet for clarinet and strings (K. 587).

In the opening **Allegretto**, the violins wind their way downward as the viola and cello move upward in a series of pleasant chords into which the clarinet steals, almost unnoticed in a seemingly unimportant arpeggiated figure. It is the unobtrusive entrance of the piano in many of the piano concertos. The clarinet and strings stay apart for the first half of the movement, but after the darker second theme, they touch and separate in echoing passages reminiscent of the Sinfonia Concertante. The movement is one of never-ending joy to the lover of chamber music. In the **Larghetto** the range and agility of the clarinet, shown off brilliantly in the first movement, are less in evidence than its characteristic singing tone. As if to emphasize the clarinet's every breath, the strings are muted in a movement whose markings never get louder than **piano**. Nevertheless, the balance between the clarinet and the strings remains a model of poised perfection. The **Menuetto** is more formal in tone and is distinguished in having two lovely Trios. The first, played by the strings only, is in the minor key but more pensive than sad. The second, in which the clarinet joins, is in the form of a Viennese Landler. The last movement, **Tema con variazioni**, many experts believe, was a popular song of the day. Its cheerful and simple grace become in Mozart's hands the starting point for six elegant variations. The first two seem more the property of the wide ranging clarinet than of the strings; while the third is a dark melody in the minor key mostly for the viola. The fourth is a running dialogue for the violin and clarinet which, in form, seem standard enough today but which must have been technically innovative for the clarinet when it was written. The **Adagio**, with its tantalizing chromatic runs, leads to the **Allegro** which brings the movement to a happy end.



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## HOUSTON FRIENDS OF MUSIC - A BRIEF HISTORY PERSONAL REFLECTIONS OF SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Sitting at my desk, reminiscing on our organization's past, I am facing a poster of our first season, 1960-1961: Four concerts with a subscription price of \$6.00. A student in those days could hear for \$3.00 the Hungarian Quartet, cellist Janos Starker, Budapest Quartet, and the Quartetto Italiano. The next season had a series of five concerts including the Amadeus, the Fine Arts, the Hungarian, and the Juilliard Quartets, as well as I Mucici. The most often performed composer was Beethoven whose works have been presented 65 times; the next was Mozart with 40 compositions, following by Haydn (27 times), Brahms (25 times), Schubert (19 times), and Bartok (18 times). Modern composers such as Martinu, Hindemith, Britten, Shostakovich, Takemitsu, and others were presented as well. We are now celebrating our 25th anniversary. The subscription price for the, by now enlarged, series of nine concerts is \$75.00. We have moved from the University of Houston Campus to the Rice University Campus and, of late, are presenting some groups in back-to-back concerts, as the more-than-capacity crowd cannot now be accommodated for many concerts. Many of the original charter members are still with us; many have left. Among these are Doctor John Hill, Doctor Abe Bingel, and Dr. Alfred Neumann. Many of the Board members are amateur musicians, playing many of the presented compositions themselves, and hearing them performed by the professional groups with awe. In all, these past 25 years have been a wonderful experience for us founders, for Rice University (with whose school of music we are affiliated), and, we hope for the City of Houston.

**Walter Mannheimer**

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