

78TH SEASON OF

CONCERTS

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART | JANUARY 26, 2020



PROGRAM



Minguet Quartett, photo by Frank Rossbach

Minguet Quartett

Uli Isfort, violin

Annette Reisinger, violin

Aroa Sorin, viola

Matthias Diener, cello

With Andreas Klein, piano

Bach, Beethoven, and Beyond

January 26, 2020 | 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

String Quartet in B-flat Major, op. 18, no. 6 (1798/1800)

Allegro con brio

Adagio ma non troppo

Scherzo: Allegro

La Malinconia: Adagio—Allegretto quasi allegro

Avner Dorman (b. 1975)

String Quartet no. 2 (*Mirage*) (2004)

Mirage

Prayer for the Innocents

Ruchot

Intermission

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Sonata no. 2 in D Minor, op. 14 (1912)

Allegro, ma non troppo

Scherzo: Allegro marcato

Andante

Vivace

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Keyboard Concerto in D Minor, BWV 1052 (1734)

Allegro

Adagio

Allegro

THE MUSICIANS

Minguet Quartett

Winner of multiple awards, the Minguet Quartett is one of today's most renowned string quartets. The group performs regularly at music festivals and major concert halls worldwide, most recently at New York's Frick Collection, Washington, DC's Kennedy Center, Berlin's Philharmonie, Amsterdam's Muziekgebouw, and venues in Paris, Vienna, and Venice.

As a champion for premiering and performing contemporary works, the quartet received the 2015 Diapason d'Or in Paris for Wolfgang Rihm's *Et Lux* with the Huelgas Ensemble (ECM records). In 2010, it won the coveted ECHO Klassik Award for Peter Ruzicka's complete works for string quartet. At the 2015 AUDI Summer Concerts, Kent Nagano conducted the quartet's performance of Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Helicopter String Quartet*. Upcoming projects with Italian and German composers are underway, in cooperation with the European Academy for Music and Performing Arts and the Kunststiftung, NRW foundation in Germany. The first complete recordings of Rihm's string quartets, as well as works by Ruzicka and Joerg Widmann, are among the ensemble's most important projects.

The Minguet Quartett was founded in 1988, taking its name from eighteenth-century Spanish philosopher Pablo Minguet. Through his writings, Minguet wanted to make the fine arts accessible to the general population—and this idea is behind the Minguet Quartett's artistic mission.

Andreas Klein, piano

Andreas Klein is widely admired as a pianist of rare sensitivity and musicality. *The Washington Post* has praised his "articulate and flowing pianism," and the *New York Times* has called him "a pianist who makes silences sound like music." About a recent Glenn Gould tribute with the Minguet String Quartett, the *Calgary Herald* reported, "[Klein brings] to his performance a mature understanding...as well as a brilliant execution."

Klein has performed at many of the leading concert houses of Europe and the United States, from London's Wigmore Hall to the Berlin Philharmonie, and from New York's Carnegie Hall to Washington, DC's Kennedy Center. He is as much at home playing with the Berlin Philharmonie as he is with Chicago's outdoor Ravinia Festival or at New York's intimate (Le) Poisson Rouge.

Since his meteoric start in his native Germany, performing recitals and as soloist with orchestra, Klein eventually answered the call to go to the Juilliard School in New York. His highly focused musical approach to every work he performs was nurtured by one of his early teachers, the great pianist Claudio Arrau. A frequent broadcaster, Klein has often appeared on WGBH Boston, WFMT Chicago, and KUHF in Houston. He was the subject of a "Musician Portrait" in Germany, and his *Intermezzo with Andreas Klein* was televised by PBS.

PROGRAM NOTES

String Quartet in B-flat Major, op. 18, no. 6

String Quartet in B-flat Major, op. 18, no. 6, is the last of the opus 18 string quartets—Beethoven’s first set of quartets. It is in this work that we start to see glimpses of the greatness to come in the composer’s later quartets. The first movement, Allegro con brio, starts off with a joyous main theme. When the second theme appears, it has a more aristocratic style—serious and stately. As the movement progresses into the development, Beethoven inserts a little humor, writing into the music an abrupt stop, which startles the listener. The Adagio is a masterpiece of beauty and simplicity. In the Scherzo we get to hear more joyfulness and humor. The finale, “La Malinconia,” is the most complex movement of the quartet. Beginning slowly, and with a sense of drama, it is quite a departure from the first three movements. As the piece progresses to the Allegretto quasi allegro sections, Beethoven closes out the quartet, riffing on the last movement of Joseph Haydn’s *Sunrise Quartet*, op. 76, no. 4. *Program note by Robert Hanson, Music Program Specialist, National Gallery of Art*

String Quartet no. 2 (Mirage)

Anyone who has walked in the desert or driven in hot weather is familiar with the phenomenon of a mirage. What seems like a pool of water in the distance, disappears as you get near it. When I was asked to write a new piece for the Jerusalem Quartet, I wanted it to be uniquely Israeli. *Mirage* is characteristic of both our physical land and our history and heritage. Throughout the piece, themes appear and develop, but before reaching a satisfying culmination they evaporate or fade away as we approach them. The first movement, *Mirage*, begins with a short mystical introduction. The initial theme recalls a quasi-Indian raga and on rhythmic cycles, while the second movement is inspired by the rhythms of classical Persian music. Throughout this movement, the opening three chords help to blur the boundaries between what is real and what is fantastic. As the mirage continues to elude the traveler, frustration builds, creating more and more energy, and also anxiety, toward the end of the movement.

The second movement, *Prayer for the Innocents*, follows the first movement without a pause. It begins with a transition based on the opening three chords, which leads into a solemn prayer. The prayer theme is first introduced in a baroque-like fashion and then is followed by a variant in Middle Eastern style. As a quiet cry can express tragedy more powerfully than words, this movement is simpler in style. While I was writing this movement, the horrible massacre in Beslan, Russia, occurred. In memory of the children who died there, the movement’s title, *Prayer for the Innocents*, quotes a Russian archbishop praying for the victims’ souls.

The third movement’s title is *Ruchot*. This Hebrew word has multiple meanings and refers to winds, spirits, and souls. Desert winds are extremely unpredictable—one minute weak and the next minute strong. The winds carry sand and can cover or reveal anything in a matter of seconds. In a sense, they can imitate spirits or souls—and are a kind of mirage. *Program note by the composer, Avner Dorman*

Sonata no. 2 in D Minor, op. 14

Sergei Prokofiev composed *Sonata no. 2 in D Minor*, op. 14, in 1912, while a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Although he had already met with success, both as a pianist and a composer with his first piano concerto, it is in this sonata that we hear Prokofiev start to develop his distinct musical language of percussive angularity and harshness. The sonata premiered in Moscow in 1914, and Prokofiev kept it in his repertoire for years to come, including performing it at his New York debut in 1918. *The New York Times* described the sonata as evoking “a charge of mammoths on some vast immemorial Asiatic plateau.” *Program note by Robert Hanson, Music Program Specialist, National Gallery of Art*

Keyboard Concerto in D Minor, BWV 1052

Johann Sebastian Bach wrote a total of seven keyboard concertos. The *Keyboard Concerto in D Minor, BWV 1052*, is a brilliant hodgepodge of earlier works by Bach that he repackaged to create a masterpiece. The first two movements come from “Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal in das Reich Gottes eingehen” (“We must pass through great sadness”), BWV 146, and the third movement comes from “Ich habe meine Zuversicht” (“I have placed my confidence”), BWV 188. In taking from his earlier compositions, Bach further developed the musical ideas, creating a work full of drama and passion fit for works originally composed for the church. *Program note by Robert Hanson, Music Program Specialist, National Gallery of Art*

Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Eighth Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin Concerts

Unless otherwise noted, concerts are held in the West Building, West Garden Court.

Diane Monroe, violin

With PUBLIQuartet

Violin Woman, African Dreams

Music inspired by the environment and objects from The Colored Girls Museum, Philadelphia.

This concert is part of a series of performances by female violinists, showcasing the brilliance and stylistic versatility of the instrument.

February 2, 3:30 p.m.

Nordic Voices

Music from the Time of Charles V

Celebrating Alonso Berruguete:

First Sculptor of Renaissance Spain

February 9, 3:30 p.m.

Eighth Blackbird

Ice 'n' SPICE

Works by Nina Shekhar, Fjola Evans, Andy Akiho, and others.

February 16, 3:30 p.m.

Third Coast Percussion

Music of Devonté Hynes (aka Blood Orange), Ryan Lott (aka Son Lux), and iconic composer Philip Glass.

February 23, 3:30 p.m.

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

Please be sure that all portable electronic devices are turned off.

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