Shanghai Quartet

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Competition. Of Bartok's six quartets, the third is the 1927 Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia String Quartet no. 3. For his fifth string quartet, Bartok again used the folk music of his native Hungary; in the first movement, a brief suggestion of Hungarian folk music; but descending sixths of the first movement, a relentless ostinato. The motif-groupings, small melodic cells that are presented in Bartok's characteristic "arch" form. The third movement is a ghostly scherzo, in which the violins play a banal scale a half-tone higher than its accompaniment. A fast coda abruptly ends the work.

Program 2 (8:00pm)

String Quartet no. 2

The second quartet is in three movements, an Allegro molto capriccioso framed by two slow movements. The third movement is the vivace, in which the main theme is "opened out" into a five-movement span arranged in Bartók's characteristic "arch" form. The motif-groupings, small melodic cells that are presented in Bartok's characteristic "arch" form. The third movement is a ghostly scherzo, in which the violins play a banal scale a half-tone higher than its accompaniment. A fast coda abruptly ends the work.

Program 3

String Quartet no. 3

For his third quartet, Bartok again used the five-movement arch form, this time employing a variation technique in which the first and fifth movements are the same, with the same set of thematic material and identical forms. In the first movement, the violins play in unison; in the second, the violins play in counterpoint with the first violins.

By contrast, the second movement is vivace, in which the third minor third, is evocative of the primitive Arabian tunes Bartok had collected in North Africa. The second theme is a curious, jagged, and dissonant, the first movement, the violins play a banal scale a half-tone higher than its accompaniment. A fast coda abruptly ends the work.

The Shanghai Quartet currently serves as Quartet-in-Residence at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, the Conservatory of Music at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. They have performed at the Forum of the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago, and the University of Wisconsin, and have given numerous concerts in the United States and Europe. Their extensive discography includes works by Béla Bartók, Zdenek Fibich, and Robert Schumann. The Shanghai Quartet is one of the world's foremost chamber ensembles. Their elegant style melds the delicacy of Eastern music with the emotional breadth of Western repertoire, allowing it to traverse musical genres from masterpieces of Western music to the works of 20th-century composers.

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)  PROGRESS NOTES

Bartok is one of the most important figures in 20th-century music, and his music remains as relevant today as it did in his lifetime. His four string quartets are some of his most significant and influential works, and they continue to be performed and studied by musicians and musicologists alike.

ABOUT THE SHANGHAI QUARTET

Renowned for its passionate musicianship and artistry, the Shanghai Quartet has become one of the world's foremost chamber ensembles. Its elegant style melds the delicacy of Eastern music with the emotional breadth of Western repertoire, allowing it to traverse musical genres from masterpieces of Western music to the works of 20th-century composers.

Formed as the Shanghai Quartet in 1983, the Shanghai Quartet has worked with the world's most distinguished artists and regularly performs at major festivals and venues in Europe, North and South America, and Asia, from the Beijing International Music Festival to Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. The Shanghai Quartet has performed with some of the world's most renowned artists, often appearing with the Tokyo, Juilliard, and Guarneri Quartets, Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, and Maxim Vengerov. Their recordings include a long history of championing new music and have produced numerous albums, including works by Krzysztof Penderecki, Chen Yi, Bright Sheng, and Zhou Long. Their extensive discography includes masterworks by Bartók, Schoenberg, and Webern, as well as other composers whose works are the complete Beethoven String Quartets on Camerata.

The Shanghai Quartet currently serves as Quartet-in-Residence at Montclair State University and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Their concerts at the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra are a testament to their artistry and commitment to the perpetuation of a tradition of excellence in music. They are equal partners in their profession, working together to create a vibrant, engaging, and inspiring experience for their audiences.
Dr. Susan A. Cole, President
Dr. Geoffrey W. Newman, Dean, College of the Arts
Jedediah Wheeler, Executive Director, Arts & Cultural Programming

Peak Performances presents:

Quartet-in-Residence

Shanghai Quartet

The Complete String Quartets of Béla Bartók

featuring

Weigang Li, violin
Yi-Wen Jiang, violin
Honggang Li, viola
Nicholas Tzavaras, cello

Since 2002 the Shanghai Quartet has been “Quartet-in-Residence” at Montclair State University. The Shanghai Quartet proudly coaches chamber music, teaches individual lessons, and acts as coordinator of the strings department of the John J. Cali School of Music.

In consideration of both audience and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted inside the theater.

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