

# *SONOKLECT '96-'97*

*A Concert Series of New Music*

Terry Vosbein, Director

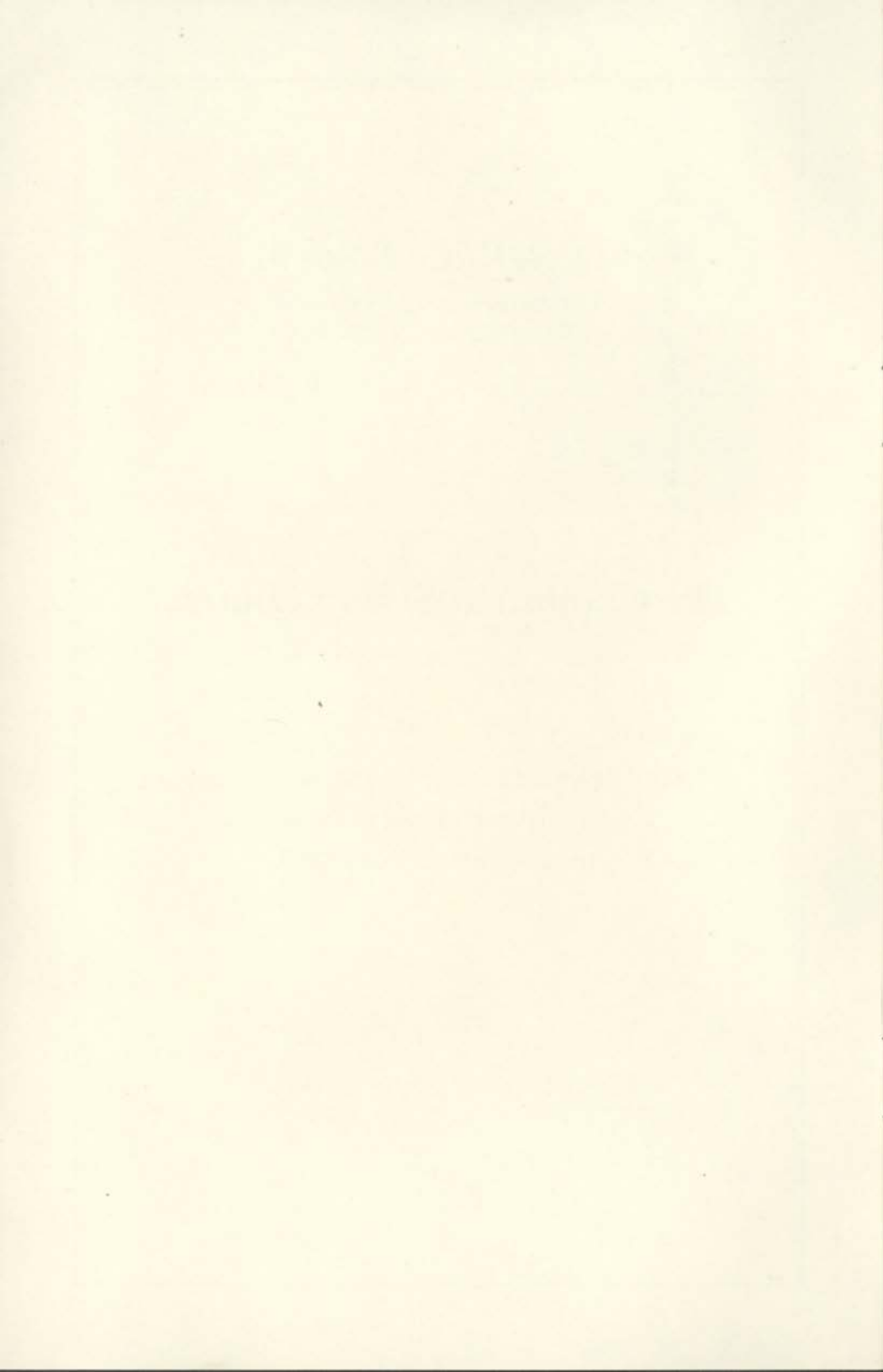
## *The Cambiata String Quartet*

Amy Schwartz, Michi Wiancko - violin

Ann Marie Hudson - viola

Anne Francis - violoncello

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY  
KELLER THEATRE • 8:00 P.M. • 2 NOVEMBER 1996



## PROGRAM

### String Quartet, Op. 11

Samuel Barber

*Molto allegro e appassionato*

*Molto adagio—Molto allegro*

### Quartet No. 7, Op. 108

Dmitri Shostakovich

*Allegretto*

*Lento*

*Allegro*

— INTERMISSION —

### String Quartet No. 7

Darius Milhaud

*Modérément animé*

*Doux et sans hâte*

*Lent*

*Vif et gai*

### Third String Quartet

Béla Bartók

*Prima parte—Moderato*

*Seconda parte—Allegra*

*Ricapitulazione della prima parte—Moderato*

*Coda—Allegro molto*

## PROGRAM NOTES

Samuel Barber

String Quartet, op. 11

The first movement of Barber's two-movement string quartet bursts forth with a bold unison statement of the main theme, made even more striking by its slightly awkward rhythmic pattern. In time this gives way to the subsidiary subject, a quiet chorale-like section in flexible tempo that is soon interrupted by a brief, skittish transformation of the opening melody. A wide-ranging, spun-out legato melody follows. After a succinct working-out of the three subjects, they are all returned for a pithy recapitulation. The *Adagio* is constructed around one long, sinuous theme that moves slowly and deliberately in step-wise motion. Starting with the utmost calmness and tranquillity, Barber carries the theme to an intense, exciting climax, with each instrument straining at the uppermost limit of its range. A subdued, sober coda concludes the *Adagio*. After a short pause, Barber then recapitulates the themes of the first movement, creating a kind of brief third movement that brings the entire quartet full circle, back to its original character. Barber wrote his *Opus 11* in 1936, while on a Pulitzer Traveling Scholarship; the Pro Arte String Quartet gave the premiere in Rome in December of that year.

— Melvin Berger

Dmitri Shostakovich

Quartet No. 7, Op. 108

Shostakovich's *Seventh Quartet* was completed in Leningrad in 1960. The first movement, marked *Allegretto*, is characterized by a three-note motive that appears throughout the entire quartet. Musicologists have theorized that the motive symbolizes the knocking of the KGB at the door; it was a time of paranoia for artists and musicians in Russia. The first movement also includes the foreboding sounds of airplanes droning overhead and other subdued sounds of agitation. The *Lento* is a desolate one, marked by searching solos above an almost frighteningly still bass line. From the *Lento* comes the explosive *Allegro*, which is driven by an incredible kinetic energy that finally reaches its climax in a furious unison series of the original three-note idiom. The movement winds down into a macabre waltz that quietly ends the piece. It is played without pause.

## Darius Milhaud

## String Quartet No. 7

Darius Milhaud was born in Provence in 1892. He began playing violin at age seven and started composing soon after. Milhaud attended the Paris Conservatoire as a violin student, but soon realized that his true calling was composing. One of the twentieth century's most industrious composers, he wrote approximately 441 works, including 18 string quartets. Milhaud composed the *Seventh Quartet* in 1925, the same year he married Madeleine Milhaud, his cousin. The quartet is in four movements, each one very short, light, and transparent in texture. It is dedicated to the Pro Arte Quartet.

## Béla Bartók

## Third String Quartet

Bartók's mother, a piano teacher, reported that as an infant he already could pick out tunes on the piano; at age five he started music lessons and in a few years was composing little pieces. When he was eleven he gave his first piano recital. On the program was an original composition, "The Danube River," which traces the river's path by using melodies from each of the countries through which it passes. "Where the river enters Hungary," he wrote a gay, happy polka, commenting, "it is jubilant, for it has come to Hungary." When the river departs the country, the music turns sad. Bartók's intense love for Hungary was even then apparent.

In the *Third String Quartet*, Bartók integrates two major tendencies of his music: the pervasive influence of folk music and some compositional devices of the pre-Bach period.

Although the quartet is in one continuous movement, it is divided into four distinct sections, marked *Prima parte*, *Seconda parte*, *Ricapitolazione della prima parte*, and *Coda*. The first segment, moderate in tempo, grows from a three-note cell made up of a rising interval (a fourth) and a smaller descending interval (a third), which is heard after a few measures of introduction. Bartók subjects this brief motto to continuous development, so that in one form or another it is heard virtually throughout this whole part, including a section of "night music" that evokes the mysterious rustling sounds of a desolate forest.

The principal theme of the fast *Seconda parte*—a simple rising and falling scale line—is first played pizzicato by the cello. In expanding this subject, Bartók employs many of the compositional techniques he learned from the music of the past, along with a dazzling number of instrumental effects, including *col legno* (hitting the string with the wood of the bow), and *ponticello* (bowing near the bridge).

The *Ricapitulazione della prima parte* is indeed a condensed recapitulation of the first part, but so freely varied that the connections may be hard to hear. A few reminders of the three-note motif, however, serve as landmarks. The *Coda* might aptly be called *Ricapitulazione della seconda parte*, since it is mostly concerned with a telescoped recollection of materials first heard in that section. The treatment of the scalelike motif grows extremely complex and intricate before the quartet's harsh ending.

Bartók completed the quartet in Budapest in September 1927, and the premiere was given by the Waldbauer Quartet in London on February 19th, 1929.

— Melvin Berger



## THE CAMBIATA STRING QUARTET



The Cambiata String Quartet was formed in 1994 at The Cleveland Institute of Music, while its members were working towards performance degrees. The quartet was involved with the Cavani String Quartet and Peter Salaff as part of the Intensive Seminar/Apprenticeship Program for young professional string quartets.

Described as "fresh, captivating and wildly talented" in performance, the quartet was awarded first prize in the 1995 Darius Milhaud Performance Prize Competition for its performance of his seventh string quartet and also captured second prize in the twenty-fourth annual Carmel National Chamber Music Competition. In the spring of 1996 the Cambiata Quartet joined the Cavani Quartet in performances of Mendelssohn's *Octet*, both in Cleveland and in Ashland, Oregon.

The Cambiata Quartet was named the recipient of fellowships to the 1995 and 1996 Aspen Center for Advanced Quartet Studies. In June of 1995, as part of the prestigious Isaac Stern Chamber Music Workshop, the quartet had several performances in Weill Recital Hall and concluded the three-week session with a sold-out performance on the main stage of Carnegie Hall. And they will be returning to the Friends of Chamber Music Series in Reading, Pennsylvania in March.

Since its formation, the quartet has performed extensively at the Institute and has recorded for the Minneapolis-based Native American Television, the City of Cleveland Bicentennial Commission, and Tate/Tate Productions. The Cambiata Quartet has coached with Isaac Stern, Janos Starker, Henry Meyer, Leon Kirchner, Bonnie Hampton, Robert Vernon, and members of the Cleveland, Emerson, Juilliard, Guarneri, Tokyo, Orion, American, Audubon and Vermeer Quartets.

## 1996-97 SONOKLECT Schedule

28 September

*The Music of Monk and Duke*

2 November

*The Cambiata String Quartet*

3 December

*Heather Millette*

Clarinetist

25 January

*Los Tres Musicos*

Piano Trio

15 March

*The Verdehr Trio*

and Composer *Donald Erb*

10 May

*Christine Schadeberg*

Vocalist

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As many of you know, Sonoklect was the creation of Margaret Brouwer, former music professor at Washington and Lee University. She founded the festival and directed it from its inception. Margaret is now the head of the composition department at the prestigious Cleveland Institute of Music, where she is replacing the retiring Donald Erb. It is W&L's loss and Cleveland's great gain.

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