

Concerti del giovedì sera 2005



26 May 2005, 9 p.m.
European University Institute, Sala delle Bandiere
(Villa Schifanoia)

MANESSE QUARTET

Kirsten Rothmann-Cosic & Christiane Neukirch, Violin

Irene Untereiner, Viola

Stefan Klonner, Violoncello

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Ludwig van Beethoven

String Quartet op. 18 No. 4 in C minor

- I. Allegro ma non tanto
- II. Andante scherzoso, quasi allegretto
- III. Menuetto. Allegretto
- IV. Allegro

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Antonin Dvorak

String Quartet Op.96 in F major, "American"

1. Allegro ma non troppo
2. Lento
3. Molto Vivace
4. Finale. Vivace, ma non troppo

Entrance free

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Quartet in C minor, op. 18, no. 4 (composed 1798-1800)

Allegro ma non tanto

Scherzo: Andante scherzoso, quasi allegretto

Menuetto: Allegretto

Allegro

Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904)

Quartet No. 12 in F major, Op. 96, "American" (composed 1893)

Allegro ma non troppo

Lento

Molto vivace

Finale: Vivace, ma non troppo

Manesse Quartett

Kirsten Rothmann-Cosic, Violin

Christiane Neukirch, Violin

Irene Untereiner, Viola

Stefan Klonner, Violoncello

Ludwig van Beethoven**Quartet in C minor, op. 18, no. 4**

Though most of his published output until the year 1798 was chamber music, Ludwig van Beethoven had conspicuously avoided the string quartet, intimidated as he was by the examples of Haydn and Mozart. He had studied the works of both of the older masters carefully, going so far as to copy out certain movements in their entirety. He had met and perhaps even taken a few lessons from Mozart in 1787 and he was a student of Haydn's for about a year during 1792 and 1793. Yet when the same Count Apponyi (to whom Haydn had dedicated his Quartets op. 71 and op. 74) commissioned a quartet from Beethoven in 1795, he declined, still feeling unequal to the challenge.

Praise for his early publications (the Piano Trios, op. 1; a number of piano sonatas, including the "Pathétique" op. 13; and his first two piano concertos) boosted Beethoven's confidence. He began to sketch out his works in bound volumes of music paper rather than on the random sheets he had previously used, reflecting a new sense of himself as a serious composer. By 1800, he had completed his most ambitious project to date, his six "String Quartets, op. 18," dedicated to Prince Josef Franz von Lobkowitz, who maintained a quartet in his Vienna home. The "Quartet in C minor, op. 18, no. 4" was probably the last of the six to be written and is the only one in a minor key.

Antonin Dvorak**Quartet No. 12 in F major, Op. 96**

Dvorak spent the years 1892-95 as director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York, and while he was burdened with a heavy teaching and administrative load, these years were very productive musically, seeing the composition of the "New World" Symphony, the "American" Quartet, and the Cello Concerto.

In the summer of 1893 Dvorak took his family to Spillville, Iowa, for a holiday away from New York City. Spillville was a Czech community, and Dvorak spent a happy and productive summer there, surrounded by familiar language, customs, and food. He sketched the "American" Quartet in only three days (June 8-10, 1893) and had it complete in fifteen. Dvorak's comment was concise: "Thank God. It went quickly. I am satisfied."

The issue of a specifically "American" influence on the works composed in the United States has intrigued music lovers for years: how did life and music in America influence Dvorak? Nationalistic Americans were quick to claim that here at last was an authentic American classical music based on American materials, but Dvorak himself would have agreed to none of that. He denounced "that nonsense about my having made use of original American melodies. I have only composed in the *spirit* of such American national melodies."

Exactly what Dvorak meant by composing "in the spirit" of American music is unclear, and the tantalizing question of influence remains, especially in a work like the "American" Quartet. The issue of American influence – whether spiritual, rhythmic, or in the songs of native birds – on the music Dvorak wrote in this country will probably never be settled. Listeners may decide for themselves the ways in which this quartet seems to embody what Dvorak called the "spirit" of American music.

Manesse Quartett

The four musicians met for the first time in 1998. The title of a well-known collection of medieval German songs, the Codex Manesse, which is kept in the Heidelberg University Library, was chosen as the ensemble's name because, at the time, three of the players resided in Heidelberg. Since then the Quartett has met two to three times per year in varying locations for rehearsal sessions and concerts. In recent years, the Manesse Quartett has performed in Berlin, Heidelberg, Kassel, Regensburg, Untermerzbach, and Madrid.

The Artists:

Kirsten Rothmann-Cosic received her first lessons on the violin in Lüdenscheid. Later, she enjoyed playing chamber music in Regensburg, Paris and Heidelberg, where she pursued studies in biochemistry and molecular biology. She completed a doctoral degree in 1998 and has since been working as a research scientist with companies in Cologne and Berlin.

Christiane Neukirch was born in Regensburg, where she met Kirsten in the University Orchestra in 1989. The two have been playing together ever since: six years sharing an orchestra stand and as members of different chamber music ensembles. Christiane earned a graduate degree in Slavic languages and literature. Since 1998 she has been working as a radio and TV programme writer for the Bavarian Broadcasting Station in Munich.

Irene Untereiner took her first lessons on the violin at the public music school of Leimen at age seven. When she found out that the violin was too small a string instrument for her at age 19, she switched to the viola; a decision which, in retrospect, has to be deemed highly fortunate. Irene earned a graduate degree in Romance and English studies from the University of Heidelberg and teaches Spanish and English at a grammar-school in Heidelberg.

Stefan Klonner, a native of Schwäbisch Gmünd, did not start to play the cello before age eleven and it took another fifteen years before he became an active chamber musician. In between he trained as a bank clerk and pursued studies in economics and statistics in Heidelberg and Salt Lake City. Since the completion of a doctoral degree in Heidelberg in 2001 he has held academic positions at Yale and Cornell Universities.

I Concerti del Giovedì sera 2005
in cooperation with *Nuovi Eventi Musicali*, Florence

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE
Villa Schifanoia, Sala Bandiere / Badia Fiesolana, Refectory

31 March 2005 – Villa Schifanoia, Sala Bandiere

Sophie MARILLEY, mezzosoprano & Filippo FARINELLI, piano
“Lieder, Songs, Chansons, Ariè”

21 April 2005^{*} – Badia Fiesolana, Refectory

Francesco DILLON, violoncello
Music by D. Gabrieli, A. Knaifel, M. Stroppa, J.S. Bach

12 May 2005 – Villa Schifanoia, Sala Bandiere

Gwendolyn MASIN, violin & Gabriele LEPORATTI, piano
“From Mozart to Prokofiev”

26 May 2005 – Villa Schifanoia, Sala Bandiere

MANESSE QUARTET
L. van Beethoven, A. Dvořák

22 September 2005^{*} – Badia Fiesolana, Refectory

Martina MATTIOLI & Luigi ATTADAMO, guitar
Music by F. Sor, J.K. Mertz, A. Company, J.S. Bach, M. Castelnuovo-Tedesco

20 October 2005 – Badia Fiesolana Church

VARIETAS Chamber Choir
“Renaissance Music”

24 November 2005^{*} – Badia Fiesolana, Refectory

Claudia BUCCHINI, flute, Andrea ZUCCO, bassoon & Matteo FOSSI, piano
Music by J.S. Bach, F. Schubert, P. Hindemith, L. van Beethoven

^{*} concert organized in cooperation with *Nuovi Eventi Musicali* (Firenze)