

Strings in Nature

SUNDAY | JULY 10 | 9 AM
NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY



Gabriela Díaz, violin | **Ariel Horowitz**, violin
Jordan Bak, viola | **Jaqueline Choi**, cello

HAYDN String Quartet in D Major, Op. 64, No. 5, Hob. III: 63 “The Lark”

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Adagio
- III. Minuet. Allegretto
- IV. Finale. Vivace

(Approximate duration 17 minutes)

MARTINŮ Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola

- I. Poco allegro – Poco vivo
- II. Poco andante – Andante moderato
- III. Allegro – Morderato

(Approximate duration 16 minutes)

BORODIN String Trio in G Major

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante

(Approximate duration 19 minutes)

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) String Quartet in D Major, Op. 64, No. 5, Hob. III: 63 (“The Lark”)

In 1790, Haydn’s thirty-year tenure as composer and conductor for the princely Esterházy family concluded, and his career took a sudden turn. He had been a servant-musician, though an honored one, and when the Esterházy Prince died, Haydn became a formidably successful free-lance musician. In effect, he became a touring celebrity, and by 1795, he had become quite wealthy.

This quartet, known generally as “*The Lark*,” takes its nickname from the initial entrance of the first violin articulating the opening theme in a high register. This quartet has also been nicknamed “*Hornpipe*” because of the spirited finale’s resemblance to the English folk dance known as the “*Hornpipe*.” Haydn gave neither of these nicknames to the quartet, and it is not known exactly when and how they became attached to the work.

Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959): Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola, H.313

Bohuslav Martinů was born and lived his early years in the church bell-tower of a tiny Bohemian town where his father was a watchman and cobbler. At the age of eight, Martinů

made his debut performing, and at ten, he began to compose. When he was sixteen, he entered the Prague Conservatory, but he was not successful as a student because academic discipline interfered with his personal artistic interests and his private creative needs. As an adult, for ten years Martinů performed as a violinist, a member of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, whose conductor Václav Talich encouraged him as a composer. He spent time in Paris in the 1920s and left Prague in 1940. In 1941, he came to the United States. In 1946, while he was working on his Quartet No. 6, the Prague Conservatory offered him a teaching position. Eager to return to home, he sent his wife to Czechoslovakia to prepare their move. Martinů stayed in New York to finish his composition, but most unfortunately, he had a freak accident and fell off the balcony of his apartment and was very seriously injured. He recovered but suffered from nervous shock, partial hearing, and memory loss. Since he was then only fifty-six years old, he was gradually able to resume work, although the accident took a permanent toll on his physical and creative energy. In 1953, he returned to Europe to spend his last years in France and Switzerland.

Martinů composed the Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola in 1947 after being inspired by a performance by his friends, the brother-sister duo of Lillian and Joseph Fuchs, of Mozart's *Violin and Viola Duos*. When Martinů finished his three-movement work, he dedicated it to the Fuchs pair. In it, Martinů gives voice to his interest in the Renaissance and Baroque periods, as the name Madrigals suggests.

Alexander Borodin (1833-1887): String Trio in G Major

Alexander Borodin was one of 19th century's Russia's greatest experimental chemists and a composer only by avocation, which accounts for why his compositions are few in number. He was a distinguished physician, who studied in Germany at Heidelberg and founded and directed the first medical school in Russia for women. All this activity left him little time for composition, but he wrote symphonies, the great but unfinished opera *Prince Igor*, the tone poem *On the Steppes of Central Asia*, and a number of other works that are still performed. Some of his compositions he only completed when he was forced to do so by his friends, who sometimes had a hand in helping him.

There is virtually no information about this trio, sometimes called No. 2. Some music historians claim that it was composed between 1855 and 1860, while others have attested that it dates from 1847, which would make it Borodin's earliest work, (he would have been fourteen). It seems to have been conceived on a larger scale than his other trio. Only the first two movements have survived; no one knows if Borodin ever finished the work or whether it had one or two more movements. He presumably composed it when, in his late twenties, he was engaged in chemical research in Heidelberg and was only devoting his leisure hours to music. Music historians have commented that a free juxtaposition of keys marks his work of these Heidelberg years, and that it must have horrified musical purists.

Its manuscript bears the inscription 'Grand Trio,' and although only the first two movements survive, it was presumably composed on a large scale; actually, no one knows if Borodin ever finished composing the work. If he did write more movements, they are not extant. © Susan Halpern, 2022.

Festival Artist Biographies can be found on page 82.