

Lincoln Center's  
*Great Performers*

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The Program

**Tuesday, March 31, 2020 at 7:30 pm**

*Pre-concert lecture by Scott Burnham at 6:15 pm in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse*

## Emerson String Quartet

Eugene Drucker, *Violin*

Philip Setzer, *Violin*

Lawrence Dutton, *Viola*

Paul Watkins, *Cello*

**BARTÓK String Quartet No. 3 (1927)**

Prima parte: Moderato

Seconda parte: Allegro

Recapitulazione della prima parte: Moderato

Coda: Allegro molto

SETZER, DRUCKER, DUTTON, WATKINS

*Intermission*

**BEETHOVEN String Quartet in F major, Op. 59, No. 1 ("Razumovsky") (1806)**

Allegro

Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando

Adagio molto e mesto—

Thème russe: Allegro

DRUCKER, SETZER, DUTTON, WATKINS

**BARTÓK String Quartet No. 1 (1908–09)**

Lento

Allegretto

Introduzione—Allegro—Allegro vivace

DRUCKER, SETZER, DUTTON, WATKINS

*Please make certain all your electronic devices are switched off.*

**This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.**

Alice Tully Hall, Starr Theater

Adrienne Arsht Stage

## Great Performers

Lead Support for Great Performers provided by PGIM, the global investment management business of Prudential Financial, Inc.

Additional Support for Great Performers is provided by Rita E. and Gustave M. Hauser, The Shubert Foundation, The Katzenberger Foundation, Inc., Audrey Love Charitable Foundation, Great Performers Circle, Lincoln Center Patrons and Lincoln Center Members

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### UPCOMING GREAT PERFORMERS EVENTS:

*Tuesday, April 7 at 7:30 pm in Alice Tully Hall*

**Steven Osborne**, piano

BEETHOVEN'S FINAL PIANO SONATAS

Sonata in E major, Op. 109

Sonata in A-flat major, Op. 110

Sonata in C minor, Op. 111

*Pre-concert artist talk at 6:15 pm in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse*

*Tuesday, April 21 at 7:30 pm in Alice Tully Hall*

**Emerson String Quartet**

BARTÓK: String Quartet No. 2

BEETHOVEN: String Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 ("Razumovsky")

BARTÓK: String Quartet No. 5

*Tuesday, May 5 at 7:30 pm in Alice Tully Hall*

**Emerson String Quartet**

BARTÓK: String Quartet No. 4

BARTÓK: String Quartet No. 6

BEETHOVEN: String Quartet in C major, Op. 59, No. 3 ("Razumovsky")

*Both performances preceded by a pre-concert lecture by Scott Burnham at 6:15 pm in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse*

For tickets, call (212) 721-6500 or visit [LCGreatPerformers.org](http://LCGreatPerformers.org). Call the Lincoln Center Info Request Line at (212) 875-5766 to learn about program cancellations or to request a Great Performers brochure.

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*We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.*

*In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.*

## Snapshot

By Peter Laki

The connections between the string quartets of Beethoven and Bartók run very deep. Beethoven adopted a genre that, a generation before him, had been a close cousin of the divertimento (musical entertainment), and turned it into the vehicle of his most personal musical utterances. In his hands, the quartet came to be seen as embodying pure expression in the strictest musical form, and to every composer coming after him, the quartet was the supreme challenge not only to their technical abilities but also to their emotional range.

In his six quartets, Béla Bartók proved to be a true heir to Beethoven's mantle. He created a classical sense of harmony and balance using entirely new and non-classical means—an achievement to which few of his contemporaries can lay claim. Each quartet has a different sequence of movements, and there is not a single one that adheres to the classical *allegro-adagio-scherzo-finale* scheme. Bartók was a major innovator just as Beethoven had been, and their kinship lies, to a significant extent, in their irrepensible desire to move forward.

In a series of three concerts, the Emerson String Quartet performs the six quartets by Bartók in conjunction with Beethoven's three "Razumovsky" quartets. It will be a true dialogue across the ages, linking the two capital cities of Vienna and Budapest more strongly than any highway could do.

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## Timeframe

## ARTS

**1806****Beethoven's "Razumovsky" Quartet No. 1**

First stone laid for the Arc de Triomphe in Paris

**1908****Bartók's Quartet No. 1**Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables***1927****Bartók's Quartet No. 3**Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II's musical *Show Boat* opens at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York.

## SCIENCE

**1806**

Abraham Bristow, an English seal hunter, discovers the Auckland Islands off the coast of New Zealand.

**1908**

The National Technical Museum is founded in Prague.

**1927**

Carbon emissions from burning fossil fuels reach one billion tons a year.

## IN NEW YORK

**1806**

Tensions rise between the U.S. and U.K. when an American seaman is killed by a shot from a British warship.

**1908**

The Singer Building is completed in downtown Manhattan.

**1927**

Opening of Cyclone roller coaster in Coney Island

By Peter Laki

**String Quartet No. 3, Sz.85 (1927)**

BÉLA BARTÓK

*Born March 25, 1881, in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary*

*Died September 26, 1945, in New York*

*Approximate length: 14 minutes*

The Third and Fourth String Quartets are products of Bartók's mature years. They were written at a time in his life when, after a creative hiatus of a few years and recently re-married, he returned to composition with a new energy and a new synthesis between classicism and modernity. The Third Quartet was first performed in Budapest by the Waldbauer-Kerpely Quartet, Hungary's premier chamber group, in 1929; the same year it won joint first prize from the Musical Society Fund of Philadelphia. The work stands out with the uniqueness of its form, the concision with which its materials are developed, and the sophisticated ways in which simple musical elements, whose origins in folk music remain recognizable, are transformed in the course of the work.

The Third Quartet is in a single movement, divided into four distinct segments. The *Prima parte* is a masterful example of "organic growth": a complex and variegated movement arises from two or three tiny motifs that are themselves interrelated. The *Seconda parte* brings together a string of themes in various dance meters, both symmetrical and asymmetrical. This is followed by the return of the slow tempo (*Ricapitolazione della prima parte*) in which the short motifs of the work's opening are "reconfigured" to form a completely new musical entity. Finally, the Coda presents the main thematic material of the *Seconda parte* in a condensed version, culminating in a climactic ending.

**String Quartet in F major, Op. 59, No. 1 ("Razumovsky") (1806)**

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

*Born December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Germany*

*Died March 26, 1827, in Vienna*

*Approximate length: 40 minutes*

Prince Andrey Razumovsky, the Russian ambassador in Vienna, and the Princes Lichnowsky and Lobkowitz, two Viennese aristocrats to whom he was related by marriage, together received the dedications of more than a dozen major works by Beethoven. One might almost say that their "clan" underwrote a great part of what later became known as Beethoven's "heroic" or middle period. In the three quartets dedicated to Razumovsky, Beethoven made a bold leap into the future. Music had never expressed such intense emotions before, nor had the formal conventions of music had been changed so radically in such a short time.

The opening melody of the first quartet is a gently singing, lyrical theme, but a pulsating accompaniment gives it a certain edge that foreshadows the dramatic

moments that will soon appear. Beethoven subjected his theme to more far-reaching transformations than he had ever done before. As often in his middle period, Beethoven appended a coda in which the theme shows yet another of its many sides.

The second movement has the light-hearted character of a scherzo, without adhering to the conventional form of that movement type. The opening is as playful as any scherzo, but Beethoven soon sends the themes on a journey full of surprising turns and fantastic adventures. The noble and elegiac melody of the slow movement is developed amidst dramatic outbursts, lavish embellishments, occasional imitation among the voices, and moments of major-mode sunshine. The movement leads directly into the finale, based on a Russian melody Beethoven had found in a collection of folk melodies. Beethoven chose not to introduce a second theme, basing the entire movement on this one melody instead. One of Beethoven's favorite closing devices, the sudden slowdown before the end, makes the concluding *Presto* all the more irresistible.

### **String Quartet No. 1, Op. 7, Sz.40 (1908–09)**

BÉLA BARTÓK

*Approximate length: 20 minutes*

At the time when he wrote his First Quartet, Bartók was going through a major emotional crisis, having been rejected by the violinist Stefi Geyer, with whom he was passionately in love and for whom he had written a violin concerto the previous year. The opening motif in the quartet's mournful first movement is a kind of reversal of the Stefi Geyer theme (so identified by Bartók) from the concerto; it is developed in a dense, highly chromatic polyphonic style that audibly alludes to the opening of Beethoven's String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131. The fog lifts, first in an impassioned viola solo and then in a flowing pentatonic melody intoned by the cello. One feels why Bartók's friend and colleague Zoltán Kodály referred to this quartet as "return to life." This sense of emotional recovery continues in the second movement. It begins as a lyrical waltz but it eventually gathers momentum; tender, expressive passages alternate with intense dramatic outbursts.

The third and last movement is preceded by an *Introduzione* that presents a cello recitative, modelled on the last movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony where the cello rejects the preceding music. But Bartók's cello recites in a distinctly Hungarian manner, announcing the great changes that are about to occur. In fact, the *Allegro vivace* that ensues makes the "return to life" complete with its exuberant and playful tone. At the movement's culmination point, the tempo suddenly slows down to a solemn *Adagio*, and the first violin plays an expressive pentatonic melody, in the style of the ancient folksongs which Bartók had saved up until this strategic moment. The folksong episode symbolizes spiritual renewal and the attainment of a new authenticity that is definitely here to stay.

*Musicologist Peter Laki, a native of Budapest, Hungary, served for many years as program annotator of the Cleveland Orchestra. He is currently on the faculty of Bard College.*



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## Emerson String Quartet

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One of the world's premier chamber music ensembles for over four decades, the Emerson String Quartet has made more than 30 acclaimed recordings, and has been honored with nine Grammys (including two for Best Classical Album), three Gramophone Awards, the Avery Fisher Prize, and Musical America's Ensemble of the Year award. The quartet collaborates with some of today's most esteemed composers to premiere new works, keeping the string quartet form alive and relevant. The group has partnered in performance with such stellar soloists as Renéé Fleming, Barbara Hannigan, Evgeny Kissin, Emanuel Ax, and Yefim Bronfman, to name a few.

Highlights of the quartet's 2019–20 season include a seven-city tour of Australia and performances at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., the Park Avenue Armory, Friends of Chamber Music in Vancouver, and Wharton Center for Performing Arts in Michigan. Overseas, the quartet performs the complete Beethoven cycle at the Seoul International Music Festival and embarks on three European tours.

The quartet's extensive discography includes the complete string quartets of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Bartók, Webern, and Shostakovich, as well as multi-CD sets of the major works of Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Dvořák. The ensemble also has recorded music by Tchaikovsky, Smetana, Debussy, Ravel, Barber, and Ives. In 2019 it joined forces with pianist Evgeny Kissin to release their debut collaborative album for Deutsche Grammophon, recorded live at Carnegie Hall in 2018.

Formed in 1976 and based in New York City, the Emerson String Quartet was one of the first quartets to have its violinists alternate in the first chair position. The quartet, which takes its name from the American poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, balances busy performing careers with a commitment to teaching, and serves as quartet-in-residence at Stony Brook University. The quartet's members have received honorary doctorates from Middlebury College, the College of Wooster, Bard College, and the University of Hartford. In 2015 the quartet received the Richard J. Bogomolny National Service Award, Chamber Music America's highest honor, in recognition of its significant and lasting contribution to the chamber music field.

## **Lincoln Center's Great Performers**

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Initiated in 1965, Lincoln Center's Great Performers series offers classical and contemporary music performances from the world's outstanding symphony orchestras, vocalists, chamber ensembles, and recitalists. One of the most significant music presentation series in the world, Great Performers runs from October through June with offerings in Lincoln Center's David Geffen Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Walter Reade Theater, and other performance spaces around New York City. From symphonic masterworks, lieder recitals, and Sunday morning coffee concerts to films and groundbreaking productions specially commissioned by Lincoln Center, Great Performers offers a rich spectrum of programming throughout the season.

## **Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.**

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Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community engagement, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. A presenter of thousands of free and ticketed events, performances, tours, and educational activities annually, LCPA offers a variety of festivals and programs, including American Songbook, Avery Fisher Career Grants and Artist program, David Rubenstein Atrium programming, Great Performers, Lincoln Center Emerging Artist Awards, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Lincoln Center Vera List Art Project, LC Kids, Midsummer Night Swing, Mostly Mozart Festival, White Light Festival, the Emmy Award-winning *Live From Lincoln Center*, which airs nationally on PBS, and Lincoln Center Education, which is celebrating more than four decades enriching the lives of students, educators, and lifelong learners. As manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and the 11 resident organizations: The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Film at Lincoln Center, Jazz at Lincoln Center, The Juilliard School, Lincoln Center Theater, The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Ballet, New York Philharmonic, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, School of American Ballet, and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

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