



2023 - 2024

38th SEASON

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JOAN BLACKMAN

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CONCERT ONE

LIFE'S A BEACH

Generously sponsored by the Vetta Board of Directors

Jane Coop - *piano*

Joan Blackman - *violin*

David Gillham - *violin*

Jacob van der Sloot - *viola*

Zoltan Rozsnyai - *cello*

FRIDAY, OCT. 13, 2023 | 2:00PM

West Point Grey United Church

SATURDAY, OCT. 14, 2023 | 7:30PM

West Vancouver United Church

SUNDAY, OCT. 15, 2023 | 2:00PM

Pyatt Hall

Sponsored by the Alan & Gwendolyn Pyatt Foundation

MONDAY, OCT. 16, 2023 | 2:30PM

ArtSpring

Generously sponsored by Alan and Mary Coombes

PROGRAM

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

**String Quartet No. 4 in B flat major,
Opus 76** (1797)

- i. Allegro con spirito
- ii. Adagio
- iii. Menuetto: Allegro
- iv. Finale: Allegro, ma non troppo

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)

**String Quartet No. 1 in C major,
Opus 49** (1938)

- i. Moderato
- ii. Moderato
- iii. Allegro molto
- iv. Allegro

INTERMISSION

Amy Beach (1867–1944)

**Piano Quintet in F# minor,
Opus 67** (1907)

- i. Adagio-Allegro moderato
- ii. Adagio espressivo
- iii. Allegro agitato – Adagio come prima – Presto

PROGRAM NOTES

Franz Joseph Haydn

String Quartet No. 4 in B flat major, Opus ~~76~~ 77

The six String Quartets, Opus 76, form the last complete set of string quartets that Haydn composed. Written in his zenith, after the younger Mozart's death and before Beethoven was writing quartets, Haydn's music was so much loved by his adoring audiences they gave three of the quartets nicknames, the fourth being "Sunrise".

Although Haydn was probably not thinking of a sunrise specifically, the first movement, Allegro spiritoso, does evoke the colours of a rising sun with a rising violin fantasia over calm held chords. The movement scampers around in with "con spirito" energy, and returns several times to the sunrise sequence. At one point, the clouds threaten darkness as Haydn inverts the notes to descend when the cello has the passage. Haydn's brilliance at constantly developing and playing with themes is at its best here.

After such lightness, the Adagio seems sombre, like a hymn. Alternating between chorales and cadenza-like soliloquies which lend grace and a touch of playful improvisation, this movement provides a thoughtful, "overcast" contrast to the brightness of the first movement.

The third movement, a minuet and trio, approaches the humour and faster tempo of a scherzo that would soon replace the traditional minuet movement. The minuet section combines earthiness with sophistication with a stomping theme in dress shoes. With its drone basses, rustic octave doublings and strange major-minor flip-flops, the trio evokes Hungarian or Balkan folk music.

The finale begins with what could be an English folk dance – lilting, tuneful and pithy. The tune sets our expectations for a lively rondo, where the same tune reappears after every new variation, but surprisingly the tune itself transforms into a cornucopia of variations. Haydn then takes us on a wild ride in an extended coda. As the music accelerates, he fragments the theme between all four instruments, a technique Beethoven would emulate in his late quartets.

Dmitri Shostakovich String Quartet No. 1 in C major, Opus 49 (38)

Shostakovich composed this quartet just after his beloved son Maxim was born. After severe criticism by Stalin and the Soviet state, Shostakovich was enjoying a period of calm because of the success of his fifth symphony. Shostakovich said about his first quartet, “I visualised childhood scenes, somewhat bright moods associated with spring”. He also said “Don’t expect to find special depth in this, my first quartet opus. In mood it is joyful, merry, lyrical.” Perhaps this is the reason we don’t hear the spiky dissonances we often associate with Shostakovich. Instead, this 15 minute quartet is an untroubled miniature, an intimate record of a brief time of personal contentment.

Marked Moderato rather than Allegro, the ephemeral first movement begins with a simple theme in C major. The second subject introduces cello glissando that evoke a slow motion ballet while the violin sings a plaintive tune with a surprise explosion, after which the two instruments switch roles. Later the first theme returns but in 4/4 instead of ¾, another miniature ballet scene. Next the violin takes up the accompaniment motive and the inner voices finish with a childlike tune which fades away to nothing.

The second movement is a set of eight variations based on a ghostly folk tune, introduced by the lonely viola. The textures and harmonies change each time, sometimes spooky, other times lighter in mood, from a visitation to the major key with a dancing triplet accompaniment to a walking accompaniment that makes it a march, but the melody remains the same.

It is only in the third movement that any sense of impish mischief arises. The Allegro molto in C sharp minor whips past in a few minutes with mischievous, busy webs of motion and a dolce dancing middle section. The two ideas are combined in the coda.

Originally conceived as the first movement, the finale is almost joyful with light scurrying melodies. Yes, Shostakovich still hints at black humour with the occasional twangy harmony and mixed metre like the first movement, but the quartet ends decisively in C major, a much more optimistic end than his original plan of ending with the sombre first movement.

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4 concerts for \$120 (a savings of 15%!)**

Amy Beach (1867-1944)
Piano Quintet in F# minor, Opus 67(1907)

Amy Beach, born as Amy Marcy Cheney in 1867, was an American composer and pianist. Beach showed musical talent from a young age. At 16, she made her debut as a pianist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. When she married Henry Harris Beach at age 18, the marriage came with restrictions on her musical performances and fortunately for us, she devoted her married life to composition instead. She later explained, "Though I had not deliberately chosen, the work had chosen me. I continued to play in concerts, but my home life kept me in the neighbourhood of Boston. My compositions gave me a larger field. From Boston, I could reach out to the world." She is recognized as the first successful American female composer of large-scale art music. Beach's compositional style was largely influenced by the German Romantic composers, especially Brahms, whose quintet she performed with the Kneisel Quartet in 1900.

The work opens with mysterious arpeggios on the piano against a held F# on eerily thin strings,

followed

by a mournfully descending line. The following Allegro moderato is an emotional journey built around two main themes, the first a yearning motive introduced on the violin that makes reference to the fourth movement of Brahms's piano quintet, and the second a more lyrical theme presented by the piano. Beach shows her gift for high drama in the development and recapitulation, and what one critic called her "lush, late-Romantic chromatic harmony" here and throughout the Quintet.

The heart of the work in every way, the slow movement opens with a gorgeously serene melody on muted strings taken up by the piano and then ingeniously inverted by the viola and cello, showing its relationship to the opening Allegro theme. A more chromatic and turbulent central section is followed by a return to the opening material, reaching a climax of great intensity before coming to a state of tranquil serenity.

The finale begins in a state of restless agitation which soon emerges full blown in the strings, a capricious melody with fantastical runs in the piano. Its agitation gives way to quiet reflection led by the viola. Over shuddering tremolos the opening idea is hinted at before returning in a wraith-like fugal passage, culminating in a dramatic flourish that leads to a reprise of the adagio from the very opening of the quintet. After an episode of quiet lyrical intensity, Beach unleashes a coda in which the 'Brahms' theme appears again, this time in octaves in the strings (just as it does in the coda of Brahms's quintet), before the two triumphant chords of F sharp major bring the work to a close. It's a thrilling end to a work that has the grand sweep and emotional depth of the great piano quintets of the Romantic era.

— programme notes by joan blackman
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THE MUSICIANS

JANE COOP, piano

Pianist Jane Coop was born in Saint John, NB and grew up in Calgary, AB. She studied with Anton Kuerti in Toronto and Leon Fleisher in Baltimore.

At nineteen she won First Prize in the CBC's national radio competition, and this, along with prizes at competitions in New York and Washington, DC, launched her career. She made recital debuts at Wigmore Hall and Carnegie Hall, as well as performing with the Toronto, Calgary, Victoria and the CBC Vancouver Orchestras. In 1976 she toured the New England States as soloist with Mario Bernardi and the National Arts Centre Orchestra of Canada in Mozart's Concerto in D minor.

Jane has since played in over twenty countries, in such halls as the Bolshoi Hall in St. Petersburg, the Kennedy Center, Alice Tully Hall, Roy Thomson Hall, the Beijing Concert Hall and the Salle Gaveau (Paris). In Canada she has given concerts from coast to coast to coast. She is one of the few who has remained resident in Canada throughout her career. Commissions from Stephen Chatman, Ramona Luengen and others have been included in both her live performances and her recordings. Coop's long-time association with violinist

Andrew Dawes, and her more recent partnership with cellist Antonio Lysy, have given her the opportunity to delve into the sonata literature of Beethoven. In summer festivals around the world, she has performed with the Manhattan, Miami, Audubon, Orford, Lafayette, Colorado, Seattle, Angeles and Pacifica String Quartets, as well as with the Los Angeles Chamber Winds, York Winds, and such luminaries as Barry Tuckwell, Jamie Somerville, Martin Beaver, Jeanne Baxtrasser and Michelle Zukovsky. Coop is a faculty artist at the Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival, the oldest chamber festival in North America. There she collaborates in performances of much of the chamber music literature for piano and strings, and coaches brilliant young musicians from across the continent.

Her sixteen recordings, three of which have been nominated for Juno awards, have garnered

glowing reviews and have been heard on classical radio programs in many countries. In December 2012, Jane Coop was appointed to the Order of Canada, our country's highest honour for lifetime achievement.

JOAN BLACKMAN, artistic director / violin

Artistic Director of Vancouver's Vetta Chamber Music Society, Ms. Blackman enjoys a vibrant and varied musical life. She served as Associate Concertmaster of the Vancouver Symphony for many years and has performed and recorded as soloist with the Vancouver Symphony, Victoria Symphony, CBC Radio Orchestra, Turning Point Ensemble and the Banff Festival Orchestra. She also teaches privately and has given masterclasses throughout B.C.

Blackman is known throughout Canada and the U.S. as a fine chamber musician and has performed with premier groups such as the Penderecki String Quartet, the Purcell String Quartet and the Gryphon Trio. Besides performing and curating the Vetta Chamber Music series in Vancouver, she works with the Canadian Music Centre in their Celebration concert series. Joan is also a member of the Sea and Sky collective which has released two CDs and performs throughout B.C.

Joan has appeared on numerous series including Music in the Morning, MusicFest Vancouver, the Jeffrey Concerts in London, Ontario, and the American String Project. She has also appeared at summer festivals including the Hornby Island Festival, the Pender Harbour Chamber Music Festival, Kaimerata, and the Victoria Summer Music Festival.

"Your heart would need to be made of stone not to have loved Joan Blackman's splendid solo". "Shapelier phrases and sweeter tone would be hard to imagine", "a ravishing tone", "first rate soloist", "exchanged lines meltingly in a flawless performance" "playing with lyricism, precision, and evident joy", are some of the accolades that have graced Joan's reviews.

David Gillham, violin

Canadian Violinist David Gillham regularly appears as chamber musician, in recital and as soloist in major cities and venues across four continents. A sought after teacher, Mr. Gillham is an Associate Professor of Violin at the University of British Columbia School of Music and is the director of the Violin Programme at the Domaine Forget International Music Festival and Academy. Mr. Gillham has given masterclasses throughout North and South America, China, Taiwan and South Africa. He was for many years a member of the acclaimed Arianna String Quartet (USA) and is a founding member of the Ridge Piano Trio and the violin and piano duo "Gillham-Inuma".

In 2002, Mr. Gillham received the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in honour of his contributions to the arts in Canada.

Mr. Gillham performs on a Carlo Tononi violin made in 1725, Venice.

Jacob van der Sloot, viola

Jacob van der Sloot started playing violin under the instruction of his mother and father, Daphne and Michael van der Sloot, when he was five. He then switched to viola with his father when he was 13 and was accepted to the Juilliard school to study with Steven Tenenbom, where he would earn his Bachelor's degree in 2019. Shortly after his undergraduate studies, Jacob became the youngest member of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra at age 22.

Growing up in Victoria BC, Jacob had the opportunity to solo with the Sidney Classical, Sooke Philharmonic and the VCM Senior string orchestras, being praised for his "...deep, rich sound with flying colours." (Times Colonist, Canada) Jacob has gone on to perform in halls around the world such as Carnegie Hall, David Geffen Hall and Alice Tully hall in New York City, Museo Del Violino in Cremona, Bing Concert Hall in Stanford and the Beijing Conservatory Concert Hall, among others. He has enjoyed dedicating his summers to the study of music, participating in programs such as the Perlman Music Program, Morningside Music Bridge, the NAC's Young Artist Program, Banff International Masterclass Program, PRISMA Music Festival, Casalmaggiore Festival in Italy and a fellowship at the Bowdoin Music Festival. It was at these festivals where Jacob had

the opportunity to study with and play alongside renowned faculty such as Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Dimitri Murrath, Roberto Diaz, Atar Arad, Máté Szücs and Michael Gieler. Jacob also made his solo Carnegie debut in 2019 playing the Brahms E-flat Major viola sonata as part of Julie Jordan's "International Rising Stars" concert series.

An avid chamber musician, Jacob was part of the Noctis Quartet, which won second place at the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition and the WDAV Young Artists Competition. His chamber groups have also performed numerous times in Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium. Jacob's passion for chamber

music also carries into music outreach, playing chamber music all over New York City in hospitals, prisons, retirement homes, schools and psychiatric facilities as part of Juilliard's "Gluck" Fellowship program and through GroupMuse concerts. He also enjoys private teaching, and has served on faculty of the Victoria Summer Strings Academy.

Jacob's orchestral journey began with the Greater Victoria Youth Orchestra. He has since played with the Juilliard Orchestra, the Juilliard Lab Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra and Principal Violist of both the Sidney Classical Orchestra and the New York Concerti Sinfonietta. Jacob joined the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in 2020 and is incredibly happy to call Vancouver his home.

Zoltan Rozsnyai, cello

Zoltan Rozsnyai was born into a musical family. Both his parents and grandparents were professional musicians. He studied piano and violin, before taking up the cello at the age of six. He joined the Windsor Symphony at 15, then left to attend the University of Toronto two years later. While in Toronto, he studied with Vladimir Orloff and Daniel Domb. Zoltan also took masterclasses at the Banff School of Fine Arts, studying with Aldo Parisot, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, and Janos Starker. He played for many years in the Canadian Opera Company and National Ballet orchestras, as well as performing as soloist and chamber musician throughout Ontario. Zoltan also spent a year in India with his electric cello, traveling and collaborating with musicians. In 1999 he joined the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, and has been the Assistant Principal cellist since 2001.

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CONCERT TWO

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SUN. DEC. 3, 2023 | 2:00 pm
Pyatt Hall

SAT. DEC. 2, 2023 | 7:30 pm
Kay Meek Arts Centre

MON. DEC. 4, 2023 | 2:30 pm
ArtSpring

CONCERT THREE

MUSIC OF THE HEART

FRI. JAN. 26, 2024 | 2:00 PM
West Point Grey United Church

SUN. JAN. 28, 2024 | 2:00 PM
Pyatt Hall

SAT. JAN. 27, 2024 | 7:30 PM
West Vancouver United Church

MON. JAN. 29, 2024 | 2:30 PM
ArtSpring

CONCERT FOUR

MUSIC FOR ETERNITY

FRI. MAR. 8, 2024 | 2:00 PM
West Point Grey United Church

SUN. MAR. 10, 2024 | 2:00 PM
Pyatt Hall

SAT. MAR. 9, 2024 | 7:30 PM
West Vancouver United Church

MON. MAR. 11, 2024 | 2:30 PM
ArtSpring

CONCERT FIVE

SCHUBERTIAD E WITH ANGELA CHENG

FRI. APR. 26, 2024 | 2:00 PM
West Point Grey United Church

SUN. APR. 28, 2024 | 2:00 PM
Pyatt Hall

SAT. APR. 27, 2024 | 7:30 PM
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MON. APR. 29, 2024 | 2:30 PM
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