

SUMMER FESTIVAL

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2013

7:00 PM

SEATTLE
CHAMBER
MUSIC
SOCIETY

CHAMBER MUSIC IN THE PARK
FREE CONCERT AT VOLUNTEER PARK

DVOŘÁK IN AMERICA

PROGRAM

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

String Quartet No. 12 in F Major, Op. 96, "American"

Allegro ma non troppo

Lento

Molto vivace

Finale: vivace ma non troppo

James Ehnes violin / **Amy Schwartz Moretti** violin / **Richard O'Neill** viola / **Robert deMaine** cello

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

String Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 97, "American"

Allegro non tanto

Allegro vivo—un poco meno mosso

Larghetto

Finale: Allegro giusto

Erin Keefe violin / **James Ehnes** violin / **Che-Yen Chen** viola / **David Harding** viola / **Edward Arron** cello

SPONSORED BY **THE CLOWES FUND**

WITH ADDITIONAL FUNDING BY **JOSEPH AND LIGIA WIEGAND FAMILY FOUNDATION**

PRE-CONCERT CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY

CLASSICAL KING FM 98.1 AND **SOUNDBRIDGE SEATTLE SYMPHONY MUSIC DISCOVERY CENTER**

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

(1841–1904)

String Quartet No. 12 in F Major, Op. 96, “American” (1893)

Dvořák composed his Quartet No. 12 for Strings in F Major, Op. 96 “American” in 1893 while living in the Czech community of Spillville, Iowa, during his three-year stay in the United States. He wrote the work shortly after completing the Symphony No. 9, “From the New World.” Reflecting on his stay in Iowa he later noted, “As for my new Symphony, the F-Major String Quartet and the Quintet [Op. 97]...I should never have written these works ‘just so’ if I hadn’t seen America.”

As with the famous Symphony, listeners are divided on the extent to which the themes reflect American sources (both African-American and Native-American) versus melodies suggesting Bohemia. The issue is complicated by the fact that pentatonic scales are readily discernible in music on both sides of the Atlantic.

The first movement, *Allegro ma non troppo* begins with a wash of shimmering sonorities out of which the viola—the composer’s primary instrument as a performer—begins the journey with a bold tune soon picked up by the others. The theme itself can be heard as fitting both the American and Bohemian musical worlds. A second and less emphatic folk-like theme soon emerges, filled with tender yearning. Both themes are clearly based on the abovementioned pentatonic scale. During the development Dvořák concentrates largely on the first theme until late in the movement when he uses the second theme for an ambitious fugato before the recapitulation of both tunes.

Marked *Lento*, the second movement is the emotional core of the Quartet. The sad main theme has been characterized by many commentators as African-American and/or Native American. Whatever its ultimate source—which includes, of course, the composer’s Bohemian heart-land—this aching beautiful extended song builds to an ardent climax before subsiding into a quiet close supported by alternating *legato* and *pizzicato* passagework.

What follows is an energetic rondo structure simply

labeled *Molto vivace*. Dvořák cleverly transforms its single theme into a slower variant, giving the impression of a separate second theme. Of note is that after the initial statement of the theme the composer has purloined the call of the scarlet tanager, which Dvořák frequently heard during his walks in the Iowa countryside.

The Quartet’s *Finale: Vivace ma non troppo* begins energetically with a skipping tune energized by strong pulses in the lower strings, thought by some commentators to represent Native American drumming. (During his stay in Spillville Dvořák heard a touring group of Chippewas and was strongly impressed by their music.) A sweet and reverent chorale-like episode mid-movement may have been inspired by hymns he played on the organ at the Saint Wenceslas Church in Spillville. Dvořák brings back a shorter version of the opening tune to end the movement in an unequivocally festive mood.

String Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 97, “American” (1893)

Somewhat less familiar than the Op. 96 String Quartet, the more-or-less synchronous String Quintet carries the same nickname, “American.” Indeed, it employs musical themes drawn from the composer’s exposure to a traveling troupe of Chippewa Indians noted above. The Quintet also revels in clear evocations of square dance and hoedowns. Some of the rhythmic figures in the Quintet resulted from the composer’s fascination with the Indian drumming he heard and felt.

The first movement, *Allegro non tanto*, opens with an ear-catching tune that is cut from the same cloth as many of his pre-American Bohemian melodies. A second and highly energetic theme, however, is heard over a drum-based dotted (long-short) rhythm, which derives from an Indian theme.

In the following scherzo-like *Allegro vivo* we hear another Native American drumming background while savoring typically beguiling Dvořákian melodies and unmistakable echoes of a hoe-down. A soulful Trio provides a tender respite from the high-jinx energy of the opening and identical closing section.

Theme and variations is the name of the game in the *Larghetto*. The two-part theme begins with a repeated descending motive while the lyrical continuation may have come from sketches for a proposed new national anthem for the United States. Five variations explore the implications of the bi-partite theme, ending in a burst of dynamism that dissipates quietly at the very conclusion.

A brilliant, energetic and frolicsome rondo, *Allegro giusto*, leaps forward with a tune drawn from the same dotted rhythm heard in the opening movement. An early section, animated by rapidly repeated notes and insistent pizzicatos once again suggests Indian dancing. A lovely singing episode finds us back in the Bohemian countryside. The work ends boisterously in unbuttoned good cheer.

Program Notes by Steven Lowe

ABOUT SEATTLE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

Established in 1982, Seattle Chamber Music Society (SCMS), led by Grammy Award-winning Artistic Director James Ehnes, presents world-renowned musicians in fresh, exciting and spontaneous ensemble performances of traditional, contemporary and seldom-heard chamber music during a four-week Summer Festival in July and two-week Winter Festival in January at the Illsley Ball Nordstrom Recital Hall at Benaroya Hall.

For more information, visit www.seattlechambermusic.org

James Ehnes *violin, Artistic Director*

Known for his virtuosity and probing musicianship, violinist James Ehnes has performed in over 30 countries on five continents, appearing regularly in the world's great concert halls and with many of the most celebrated orchestras and conductors. In the 2013-2014 season James performs in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Russia, Israel, Belgium, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Australia. Season highlights include concerts with the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Toronto Symphony, and a three-week residency in Melbourne, as well as performances in London, Paris, Berlin, Leipzig, Brussels, Prague, Tel Aviv, and Moscow. An avid chamber musician, Ehnes will tour with his string quartet, the Ehnes Quartet, and lead the winter and summer festivals of the Seattle Chamber Music Society, where he is the Artistic Director.

Amy Schwartz Moretti *violin*

With an affinity for chamber music and an extensive performing career, Amy Schwartz Moretti has appeared in Europe and across North America since her solo concerto debut in Carnegie Hall. Recent appearances include concerts at Rome's Palazzo Barberini in Italy, [le] Poisson Rouge in NYC, historic Fayetteville, Texas, and Musical Masterworks in Old Lyme, Connecticut. She

previewed "Shades of Blue," a violin concerto written for her, jazz trio and orchestra directed by composer Matt Catingub at the Fabian Concert Series. Upcoming engagements include her West Coast performances with Camerata Pacifica, double concerto performances with cellist Robert deMaine and the Omaha Symphony with Music Director Thomas Wilkins and a European tour with concerts at London's Wigmore Hall and the Musée du Louvre in Paris as a member of the Ehnes Quartet.

Richard O'Neill *viola*

Richard O'Neill is the winner of an Avery Fisher Career Grant and a two-time Grammy Award nominee. He has appeared with the London, Los Angeles, Seoul, and Euro-Asian Philharmonics; the KBS and Korean Symphony Orchestras; the Moscow and Württemberg Chamber Orchestras; and Alte Musik Köln. Highlights of this season include appearances with the BBC Symphony and Andrew Davis, the premiere of Huang Ruo's Viola Concerto commissioned for him by Camerata Pacifica, his conducting debuts at Korea's Sejong Center for the Performing Arts and a televised Peace Concert at the Demilitarized Zone, and his seventh season as Artistic Director of DITTO. A UNIVERSAL/Deutsche Grammophon recording artist, O'Neill has made seven solo albums that have sold more than 150,000 copies.

Robert deMaine *cello*

Robert deMaine was appointed Principal Cello of the Los Angeles Philharmonic by Music Director Gustavo Dudamel in 2012. Mr. deMaine has distinguished himself as one of the finest and most versatile musicians of his generation, having performed worldwide to vast critical acclaim from Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Grieghalle and Den Norske Opera in Norway, KKL Luzern, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, London's Wigmore Hall and Barbican Centre, Salle Pleyel in Paris, Vienna Konzerthaus, and the Berlin Philharmonie.

Erin Keefe *violin*

Erin Keefe was recently named Concertmaster of the Minnesota Orchestra and was awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2006 as well as the 2009 Pro Musicis International Award. She has also been the Grand Prize winner in the Valsesia (Italy), Torun (Poland), Schadt and Corpus Christi international violin competitions and was the Silver Medalist in the Carl Nielsen, Sendai (Japan), and Gyeongnam (Korea) competitions. In recent seasons, Ms. Keefe has appeared as soloist with the New Mexico Symphony, the New York City Ballet Orchestra, the Korean Symphony Orchestra, the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra, the Sendai Philharmonic and the Gottingen Symphony and has given recitals throughout the United States, Europe, Japan and Korea.

Che-Yen Chen *viola*

Chen is the first-prize winner of the 2003 William Primrose Viola Competition, and winner of the "President prize" of the 2003 Lionel Tertis Viola Competition. Currently the principal violist of San Diego Symphony, Mr. Chen has appeared as guest principal violist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and Cincinnati

Symphony Orchestra. He has performed throughout the US and abroad in venues such as Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jordan Hall, Library of Congress in D.C., Kimmel Center, Taiwan National Concert Hall, Wigmore Hall, and Snape Malting Concert Hall, among numerous others.

David Harding *viola*

David Harding has an extensive solo and chamber music career, having performed throughout Europe, the United States, Canada and Central America, in such venues as the Berlin Philharmonie, Concertgebouw, and Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall. His performances have been broadcast on BBC, NPR and Deutschland Radio. David is frequently featured on CBC Radio in Canada. He regularly performs at chamber music festivals throughout North America including amongst others Strings in the Mountains, CO, Sitka Chamber Music Festival, AK, Festival of the Sound, ON, and the Cactus Pear Chamber Music Festival, TX.

Edward Arron *cello*

Edward Arron has appeared in recital, as a soloist with orchestra, and as a chamber musician throughout the United States, Europe and Asia. The 2012-2013 season marks Mr. Arron's tenth season as the artistic director of the Metropolitan Museum Artists in Concert, a chamber music series created in 2003 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Museum's prestigious Concerts and Lectures series. In the fall of 2009, Mr. Arron succeeded Charles Wadsworth as the artistic director, host, and resident performer of the Musical Masterworks concert series in Old Lyme, Connecticut, as well as the concert series in Beaufort and Columbia, South Carolina. He is also the artistic director of the Caramoor Virtuosi, the resident chamber ensemble of the Caramoor International Music Festival.

SUMMER FESTIVAL RAFFLE
6 GREAT PRIZES

Concert tickets, restaurant certificate, Molly Moon's Ice Cream, Top Pot Doughnuts, and more.

All proceeds benefit Seattle Chamber Music Society's Community Engagement programs

WINNERS WILL BE DRAWN AT THE CONCLUSION OF THIS EVENING'S CONCERT

TICKETS \$10 EACH
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