

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESENTS  
LOGAN CENTER FOR THE ARTS | PERFORMANCE HALL

SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2014, 3:00 PM

**PACIFICA QUARTET**

Don Michael Randel Ensemble-in-Residence

Simin Ganatra, violin

Sibbi Bernhardsson, violin

Masumi Per Rostad, viola

Brandon Vamos, cello

with **ANTHONY MCGILL, clarinet**

*2:00 PM pre-concert lecture with Steven Rings, Associate Professor of Music*

MOZART

Quintet for clarinet and strings in A Major, K. 581

*Allegro*

*Larghetto*

*Menuetto*

*Allegretto con Variazioni*

BRAHMS

Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115

*Allegro*

*Adagio*

*Andantino – Presto non assai, ma con  
sentiment*

*Con moto – Un poco meno mosso*

*Photography is prohibited.*



## PACIFICA QUARTET

Recognized for its virtuosity, exuberant performance style, and often-daring repertory choices, over the past two decades the Pacifica Quartet has gained international stature as one of the finest chamber ensembles performing today. The Pacifica tours extensively throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, and Australia, performing regularly in the world's major concert halls. Named the quartet-in-residence at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music in March 2012, the Pacifica was also the quartet-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2009–2012) — a position that has otherwise been held only by the Guarneri String Quartet — and received the 2009 Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance.

Formed in 1994, the Pacifica Quartet quickly won chamber music's top competitions, including the 1998 Naumburg Chamber Music Award. In 2002 the ensemble was honored with Chamber Music America's Cleveland Quartet Award and the appointment to Lincoln Center's CMS Two, and in 2006 was awarded a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, becoming only the second chamber ensemble so honored in the Grant's long history. Also in 2006

the Quartet was featured on the cover of Gramophone and heralded as one of "five new quartets you should know about," the only American quartet to make the list. And in 2009, the Quartet was named "Ensemble of the Year" by Musical America.

The Pacifica Quartet has carved a niche for itself as the preeminent interpreter of string quartet cycles, harnessing the group's singular focus and incredible stamina to portray each composer's evolution, often over the course of just a few days. Having given highly acclaimed performances of the complete Carter cycle in San Francisco, New York, Chicago, and Houston; the Mendelssohn cycle in Napa, Australia, New York, and Pittsburgh; and the Beethoven cycle in New York, Denver, St. Paul, Chicago, Napa, and Tokyo (in an unprecedented presentation of five concerts in three days at Suntory Hall), the Quartet presented the monumental Shostakovich cycle in Chicago and New York during the 2010-2011 season and in Montreal and at London's Wigmore Hall in the 2011-2012 season. The Quartet has been widely praised for these cycles, with critics calling the concerts "brilliant," "astonishing," "gripping," and "breathtaking."

An ardent advocate of contemporary music, the Pacifica Quartet commissions and performs many new works, including those by Keeril Makan, in partnership with the Celebrity Series of Boston and the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, during the 2012-13 season, and Shulamit Ran, in partnership with the Music Accord consortium, London's Wigmore Hall, and Tokyo's Suntory Hall, during the 2013-14 and 2014-15

seasons. In 2008 the Quartet released its Grammy Award-winning recording of Carter's quartets Nos. 1 and 5 on the Naxos label; the 2009 release of quartets Nos. 2, 3, and 4 completed the two-CD set. Cedille Records recently released the third of four volumes comprising the entire Shostakovich cycle, along with other contemporary Soviet works, to rave reviews: "The playing is nothing short of phenomenal." (*Daily Telegraph*, London) Upcoming projects include recording Leo Ornstein's rarely-heard piano quintet with Marc-André Hamelin, with an accompanying tour.

The members of the Pacifica Quartet live in Bloomington, Indiana, where they serve as quartet-in-residence and full-time faculty members at the Jacobs School of Music. Prior to their appointment, the Quartet was on the faculty of the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana from 2003 to 2012.

The Pacifica Quartet is endorsed by D'Addario and proudly uses their strings.

For more information on the Quartet, please visit [www.pacificaquartet.com](http://www.pacificaquartet.com).

The Pacifica Quartet is the Don Michael Randel ensemble-in-residence at the University of Chicago. The residency program is made possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in recognition of noted musicologist and UChicago President Emeritus Randel, to provide a permanent home for world class musicians at the University. As the inaugural Randel Ensemble-in-Residence, the Pacifica Quartet is involved in activities that allow for deep engagement between these exceptional musicians and UChicago faculty, students and staff.



## **ANTHONY MCGILL**

Anthony McGill, principal clarinet of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra (MET), has been recognized as one of classical music's finest solo, chamber and orchestral musicians. Before joining the MET Orchestra in 2004, he served as associate principal clarinet of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

On January 20, 2009, McGill performed "Air and Simple Gifts" by John Williams with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman and Gabriela Montero at the inauguration of President Barack Obama, and again on August 18, 2012 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood as part of a special concert honoring John Williams 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

In 2000, McGill was a winner of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and in March of 2012 was one of the first three artists to receive the Sphinx Organization's Medal of Excellence, which were presented at the U.S. Supreme Court.

McGill frequently performs with the MET Chamber Ensemble and in January 2012 was featured in the Copland Clarinet Concerto with the MET Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. He can also be seen on the Live in HD broadcasts from the

Metropolitan Opera.

In addition to the MET Orchestra, he has appeared as soloist with the Baltimore Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Kalamazoo Symphony and Symphony in C, to name a few. In May of 2012 he and his brother Demarre McGill were invited by the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra, the orchestra where they began their careers, to be soloists in the world premiere of a concerto for flute and clarinet written for them by Joel Puckett.

Anthony McGill has collaborated with such musicians as Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman, Gil Shaham, Midori, Mitsuko Uchida and Lang Lang, and in many festivals including Tanglewood, Marlboro, Mainly Mozart, Music@Menlo, Grand Teton, Interlochen, Music from Angel Fire, Bridgehampton, and Sarasota Festival. In July 2012 he participated in the Stellenbosch International Chamber Music Festival in South Africa.

McGill's love of chamber music has taken him throughout the United States, as well as Europe and Asia. He has worked with such quartets as the Guarneri, Tokyo, Brentano, Shanghai, Pacifica, Miami, Miro and Daedalus, and with such groups as Musicians from Marlboro and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He is a member of the Schumann Trio with violist Michael Tree and pianist Anna Polonsky.

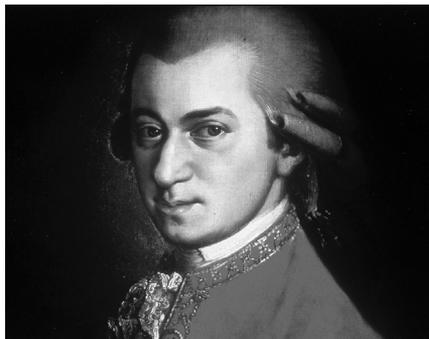
McGill has appeared on Performance Today, MPR's St. Paul Sunday Morning, Ravinia's Rising Star Series, on the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society series, and on Mr. Roger's Neighborhood television show.

He attended Interlochen Arts Academy, and the Curtis Institute of Music. His teachers have included Donald Montanaro, Richard Hawkins, Larry Combs, Julie DeRoche, David Tuttle and Sidney Forrest.

In high demand as a teacher, McGill currently serves on the faculties of the Juilliard School, the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, Mannes College and Bard College Conservatory of Music. He has given master classes at the Curtis Institute, University of Michigan, SUNY Stony Brook, Temple University, UCLA, University of New Mexico, Manhattan School of Music, and has been a coach at the Verbier Festival.

This is Anthony McGill's first appearance with UChicago Presents.

## PROGRAM NOTES



### **String Quartet in A major, K. 581 ("Stadler")**

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

*b. January 27, 1756*

*d. December 5, 1791*

Mozart was the first composer to free the clarinet from its original trumpet-like role and bring out its softer expressive

qualities. In June 1789 he set aside work on string quartets for King Frederick William of Prussia to write a clarinet quintet for a gathering of Vienna's Society of Musicians. Anton Stadler, a virtuoso performer and fellow member of Mozart's Masonic lodge, played the clarinet part; Mozart played viola. Mozart not only admired Stadler's skill but also was captivated by the extended lower range of his modified clarinet.

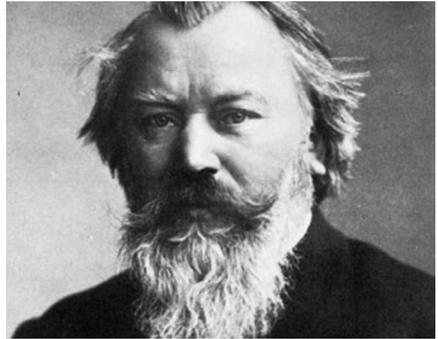
Stadler was something of a rogue — he would later lose his position in the court orchestra and leave his wife to live with his mistress. He treated Mozart shabbily, borrowing sizeable sums from him that he could not repay and adding to Mozart's chronic financial distress. Somehow this did not alter Mozart's warm feelings for Stadler, whose name Mozart himself appended to the title of the Clarinet Quintet.

A noble melody in the strings opens the Quintet. The clarinet first comments briefly then joins the strings to elaborate and lead the music forward. Twice more string voices present new themes and the clarinet answers. This wealth of melodic material continues in solo arias and tightly linked ensemble passages. The second movement *Larghetto* is a long, soulful aria in the clarinet accompanied by muted strings. Mozart achieves an ethereal blend of the five instruments as the clarinet pours out what he called its "soft, sweet breath."

The unusual *Menuetto* has two trio sections, the first for strings alone and the second for all instruments. In contrast to the good-natured minuet, the minor-key first trio is sighing and tinged with melancholy. After repetition of the minuet,

the second trio presents a completely different contrast, this time a peasant dance in which the clarinet becomes, in the words of Mozart commentator Alfred Einstein, "the rustic instrument that it was in Alpine provinces."

The last movement is a theme and six variations. In some variations the theme is embellished to display the clarinet's athletic abilities, while in others the theme is reworked to produce different moods and textures. During the third variation's plaintive viola lament, the clarinet murmurs softly in low tones. After Mozart lingers in the somber fifth-variation *Adagio*, he closes the Quintet with a sprightly, joyous final variation.



### Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115

JOHANNES BRAHMS

*b. May 7, 1833, Hamburg, Germany*

*d. April 3, 1897, Vienna, Austria*

In December 1890 Brahms resolved to cease composing. "I have worked enough," he told a friend, "now let the young take over." He sent the completed score of his Viola Quintet, Op. 111 to his publisher with a note saying, "You may bid farewell to my music." In March 1891, however, he heard a performance by the

great clarinet virtuoso Richard Mühlfeld and decided his “farewell to music” was premature. Inspired by Mühlfeld, Brahms began at once to compose for him and completed the Clarinet Trio, Op. 114 and the Clarinet Quintet, Op. 115 that same year.

Brahms considered himself a preserver of the Classical music tradition, and Op. 115 mirrors the movement sequence of Mozart’s glorious Clarinet Quintet, K. 581. But Brahms gave Op. 115 an organic unity that was forward-looking for its time. Musical motifs from early movements are explored in later ones; harmonies shift restlessly between major and minor keys in all movements; and the palette of tone colors Brahms uses is consistently autumnal. The revolutionary Modernist composer Arnold Schoenberg later praised Brahms as a “progressive” for his unifying exploration of thematic elements across an entire composition.

Op. 115 begins with an unassuming melody in the strings that is taken up by the solo voice of the clarinet. The movement’s first few measures contain musical fragments that Brahms uses again in various forms in all four movements. The opening measures also set the Quintet’s ongoing pattern of shifting harmonies.

Three wistful notes in the clarinet over muted strings begin the second movement. Mozart biographer Maynard Solomon observes that Mozart’s clarinet quintet begins with these same three note intervals and that here Brahms pays homage to his illustrious predecessor. The movement’s melancholy nocturne is interrupted by a dramatic Hungarian

gypsy lament as the clarinet rises and falls above agitated string tremolos.

The third movement performs the traditional role of scherzo and trio, although with an unusual structure. The brief opening section is more song than scherzo and serves principally to introduce a much longer scherzo-like section that runs to the end of the movement. Rather than repeat the opening introduction, Brahms artfully slips only its last few measures into the movement just before it ends.

The last movement is a theme and five variations. The theme strongly recalls the melody of the second movement’s introductory section. Four of the variations explore different aspects of the theme, but the fifth returns to the lyrical melody that opens the first movement. As a final link across the composition, Brahms brings the Quintet to a close with almost exactly the same music that ended the first movement.

—Program notes by Robert Strong © 2014