

Brahms tried and rejected so many ideas when composing that he sometimes had enough material left over after completing one composition to begin a new one. Consequently, he composed a number of works that appear in pairs in the same genre. As expressed by Alfred Frankenstein (1906–1981), the American writer on music and art, the two works in such pairs usually “comment on each other.” Brahms’ *Quartets for Strings, Op. 51, Nos. 1 and 2*, are a perfect example of this phenomenon, as they were written in the same year. The quartet on this program, No. 2, is intimate, well disposed, and Viennese in flavor, in contrast to its sibling, which has a more daring and intellectual character. The first four notes of the quartet, A-F-A-E, represent the motto: *frei, aber einsam* (free, but lonely), according to Brahms’ friend and colleague, the Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim (1831–1907). This sequence of notes does not appear again in any of the subsequent movements. The second movement (*Andante moderato*) is tripartite (ABA) in form and reaches a level of introspection and profundity that is unmatched throughout the other movements. The third movement (*Quasi minuetto: Moderato*) is thoroughly diverting, as pleasure is mixed with sadness by means of a contrasting middle section (*Allegretto vivace*) that is typical of Brahms. The fourth movement (*Finale: Allegro non assai*) is a rondo in waltz time (3/4) with a coda, marked *Più vivace*, that brings the quartet to a scintillating close.

Program notes by Elmer Booze

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

For the convenience of concertgoers the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.

Selections from concerts at the Gallery can be heard on the second Sunday of each month at 9:00 p.m. on WGMS-FM, 103.5.

Fifty-ninth Concert Season at the National Gallery of Art 2000-2001

Under the Direction of George Manos

Sundays at 7:00 p.m. in the West Building, West Garden Court

PERFORMERS

February

4 Juliana Osinchuk, *pianist*

11 Razumovsky String Quartet

18 Leila Josefowicz, *violinist*
John Novacek, *pianist*

25 The Chamber Music Society
of Lincoln Center
David Shifrin, *artistic director*

PROGRAMS

Clementi: *Sonata, Op. 47/2*
Philip Munger: *Fragile Vessel*
Fauré: *Impromptus*
Poulenc: *Impromptu*
Saint-Saëns: *Allegro appassionato*

Shostakovich: *Quartet in F Major, Op. 73 (1946)*
Tchaikovsky: *Quartet in D Major, Op. 11*

Falla: *Suite populaire espagnole*
Shostakovich: *Sonata, Op. 134*
Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess Suite*
Novacek: *Four Rags*
Vieuxtemps: *Souvenir d'Amérique*

Rorem: *Autumn Music*
Chausson: *Concerto for Violin, Strings, and Piano in D Major*
Mendelssohn: *String Quartet No. 2, Op. 87*

*The Fifty-ninth Season of
THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS*

National Gallery of Art



2370th Concert

PENDERECKI STRING QUARTET

JEREMY BELL, violin JERZY KAPLANEK, violin

CHRISTINE VLAJK, viola PAUL PULFORD, cello

Sunday Evening, 28 January 2001

Seven O'clock

West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791)

Allegro vivace assai
Minuetto: Allegro
Andante cantabile
Molto allegro

Iannis Xenakis
(b. 1922)

Washington premiere performance

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

Allegro non troppo
Andante moderato
Quasi menuetto: Moderato
Finale: Allegro non assai

*During the month of January, selections from concerts
by the National Gallery Orchestra can be heard
Wednesday evenings at 9:00 p.m. on
“Music from Washington,” WETA-FM, 90.9.*

Quartet in G Major, K. 387
(1782)

Tetras for String Quartet
(1983)

Founded in Poland, the **Penderecki String Quartet** honored the pre-eminent Polish composer, Krzysztof Penderecki, by taking on his name in 1986 after winning a special prize for the best performance of his *Quartet No. 2* at a competition. The long-standing association with Penderecki has resulted in authoritative interpretations of his complete works for string quartet on CD, recorded in England by United Records. Other recorded works include quartets by Brahms, Shostakovich, Schnittke, and Britten on the Marquis label. The members of the Penderecki Quartet are on the faculty of Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.

Violinist **Jeremy Bell**, a Toronto native, is the newest member of the ensemble. He studied with David Zafer, George Neikrug, and Joyce Robbins and has worked with members of the Orford, Juilliard, Tokyo, Fine Arts, and Orion Quartets. As concertmaster and associate concertmaster, he has made many appearances with the Kitchener-Waterloo (Ontario) Symphony and the New Zealand National Symphony. He has also appeared as principal violist with Les Violons du Roy in Quebec City.

Violinist **Jerzy Kaplanek** has been a member of the Penderecki Quartet since 1987. A native of Poland, he graduated from the Conservatory of Music in Bytom and the Karol Szymanowski Academy. He continued his education in the United States, working with Efim Boico at the Chamber Music Institute of Milwaukee, with Sylvia Rosenberg in New York City, and with Daniel Heifetz at the University of Maryland, College Park. He has performed with the Blue Rider Ensemble and with such notable chamber musicians as Vladimir Feltsman, Francine Kay, and Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi.

Violist **Christine Vlajk** holds degrees in performance and music education from the University of Colorado and the University of Wisconsin. She has won numerous awards, including the Friedlander Fellowship from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, fellowships to attend the Banff and Aspen Music Festivals, and, as a member of the Montclaire String Quartet, first prizes at the Evian, Carmel, and Coleman International Competitions.

Cellist **Paul Pulford** was born in Guelph, Canada, and studied with Peggie Sampson and George Neikrug. Before joining the Penderecki String Quartet, he was a member of the Orford and Brunswick String Quartets. He heads the chamber music and orchestral programs at Wilfrid Laurier University and has taught at the Banff Centre, Acadia University, the University of New Brunswick, and University College Cork in Ireland.

Written in 1782 between his opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, K. 384, and his “*Haffner*” Symphony, K. 385, Mozart’s *Quartet in G Major*, K. 387, is a *Meisterstück* in the genre, as are the two works that surround it. Mozart’s judicious use of counterpoint in this quartet underlines its propinquity with the *Haffner Symphony*. The opening movement (*Allegro*), exhibiting a sunlit and joyous disposition, highlights his genius in writing complex music that retains melodic expressiveness and deftness of clarity. The second and third movements (*Menuetto: Allegro* and *Andante cantabile*) are examples of alluring sensuality in Mozart’s music, while at the same time acting as precursors of the oncoming era of romanticism. The finale (*Molto allegro*) looks back to the influence of Haydn, with its opening statement in a fugal setting. This fugal extravaganza heightens the sanguine spirit of the work and closes it with great success.

Tetras is the Greek word alluding to the number four. *Tetras for String Quartet* was commissioned by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation of Portugal for the Arditti Quartet. It is a work that employs neither polyphony nor counterpoint. “The musicians play without vibrato....The density and intensity of the work is all that matters. Rather than use [a] musical line, Xenakis uses throbbing, shifting, sliding, gliding, sputtering masses of dense sound to communicate the forces of his ideas” (Eric Salzman). As musicians who have played this work will attest, *Tetras* requires the highest virtuosity and unlimited energy. The demands are exceptional in terms of accuracy of rhythm and pitch.