

## Music Mountain 2016 Series

performed Sunday, July 3, 2016

Cantata Profana: Jacob Ashworth, Violin; Brigid Coleridge, Violin; Colin Brookes, Viola; Andrea Casarrubios, Cello; Patrick Duff, Bass; Eric Umble, Clarinet; Michael Zuber, Bassoon; Craig Hubbard, Horn;

### THE ARTISTS

#### CANTATA PROFANA

As the New York Times recently wrote, "While its theatrical bent is a constant, Cantata Profana's approach to the repertory is admirably varied and indefinable." As a vocal and instrumental chamber ensemble, Cantata Profana brings a wide range of baroque and contemporary music to its uniquely narrative programming [style]. The ensemble is devoted to new music, old music, vocal music, "to most anything, so long as the mixture is put together thoughtfully and put across persuasively (NY Times)." [

Toggling between their Mainstage productions, smaller Spotlight [Series] concerts by their core artists, and collaborations with their sister company Heartbeat Opera, Cantata Profana presents an almost gluttonous range of music each season. Cantata Profana's fourth season included a staging of Hans Werner Henze's epic masterwork Kammermusik 1958, as well as a mainstage collaboration with Kettle Corn New Music, programs of Italian modernism, French baroque, cabaret songs, and Purcell's opera Dido and Aeneas with Heartbeat Opera.

At home in New York and New Haven, CT, Cantata Profana has recently traveled to Avaloch Farm Music Institute in New Hampshire, the Banff Center in Canada, and Boston's Goethe-Institut.

### THE PROGRAM

SEPTET IN E FLAT MAJOR, OPUS 20 FOR VIOLIN, VIOLA, CLARINET, FRENCH HORN, BASSOON, CELLO, DOUBLE BASS by Ludwig van Beethoven

-Adagio – Allegro con brio

-Adagio cantabile

-Tempo di menuetto

-Tema con variazioni: Andante

-Scherzo: Allegro molto e vivace

-Andante con molto alla Marcia -- Presto

(This is the fourth performance of this work at Music Mountain)

OCTET IN F MAJOR, OPUS 166, D 803 FOR TWO VIOLINS, VIOLA, CLARINET, FRENCH HORN, BASSOON, CELLO, and DOUBLE BASS by Franz Schubert

-Adagio -- Allegro

-Adagio

-Allegro vivace

-Andante con variazioni

-Menuetto: Allegretto

-Andante molto -- Allegro

(This is the second performance of this work at Music Mountain)

HISTORIC ENCORE: Haydn: String Quartet in C major, opus 76, #3, "The Emperor" (partial) played by the Zapolski String Quartet

### PROGRAM NOTES

SEPTET IN E FLAT MAJOR, OPUS 20 by Ludwig Van Beethoven

In the 18th century, serenades and divertimentos were the favorite popular music both of the aristocracy and middle class. One could expect these types of works to be performed as background music for guests at teas, sit-down dinners, and garden

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parties. Mozart and Haydn wrote several works in the genre, as did many lesser-known composers of the time.

Written in 1799, the Septet in E-flat summed up this tradition. The work was extremely popular during Beethoven's lifetime—which, actually, made him irate. He ranted over the fact that the work continued to overshadow many of his truly great masterpieces until the end of his life. The numerous arrangements of the Septet demonstrate the work's popularity among amateur musicians of the time. Soon after its premiere, it appeared in transcriptions for solo piano, two guitars, piano four-hands, piano quartet, and Beethoven's own trio arrangement for either clarinet or violin with cello and piano.

In its original form, the Septet made its public debut, along with the First Symphony, at the Royal Imperial Court Theatre on April 2, 1800 at Beethoven's first Viennese Akademie, a benefit concert for the composer himself. The piece was dedicated to Archduke Rudolph's sister-in-law, Empress Maria Theresia, second wife of Franz II – an astute political move for a young composer eager to gain a solid foothold among the elite of the empire's musical capital.

The work has six movements—it is typical of this type of music to have many movements, so as to provide both adequate length for dinner parties as well as copious contrast to keep the guests entertained. Beethoven sets himself apart from others who worked in the genre with the virtuosic writing for the instruments, particularly the first violinist. Introduced by a dignified Adagio, the opening Allegro sparkles with Mozartean elegance and grace. The pastoral calm of the following Adagio affords us a rare glimpse of Beethoven at his most relaxed. The Viennese-flavored Menuetto then dances along with a chipper spring to its step. Initiated by violin and viola, the fourth movement variations on a Rhenish folk tune ("Ach Schiffer, lieber Schiffer") offer a wide range of instrumental textures—string trio, bassoon-clarinet duet, and horn abetted by violin triplets and double bass pizzicatos, among others. The more restless side of Beethoven's nature surfaces as the horn leads off the playful Scherzo. In the central Trio section, the cello shines, supported by bassoon and strings. The first truly solemn note emerges in the rather dark introduction to the last movement. Soon, however, this sullen march breaks into the high-spirited sonata-rondo finale theme to restore the carefree tone. While exploiting the deep rich hues of the other instruments, he allows the violin to indulge in a few frilly turns, and even a cadenza, to conclude this delightful work.

The Septet was first performed at Music Mountain on July 15, 1951 by members of the Berkshire String Quartet, David Glazer, Clarinet; John Barrows, Horn; Sylvia Deustcher, Bassoon, and Murray Grodner, Bass.

#### OCTET IN F MAJOR FOR WINDS AND STRINGS, OPUS 166, D. 803 by Franz Schubert

The Octet was written in February 1824, commissioned by Ferdinand, Count Troyer, a clarinetist and friend of Archduke Rudolph of Austria. He specified that it be modeled on Beethoven's Septet of 1800, for the same instruments, adding a second violin. The Septet had become immediately popular, leading Beethoven to say that he wished "it had been burnt," as it seemed to define the public taste of the time to the exclusion of his far more profound works. The Octet, also, was immediately popular, but not for long. Upon Schubert's death four years later his entire output was shelved until publishing began by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1894. The musical form employed here, the divertimento or social music was developed much earlier by Haydn and elaborated on by Mozart.

Examples of these earlier works are Haydn's Divertimento in E-flat, Hob. II; 21, (1759) for strings with two horns, a work of about 20 minutes' duration and Mozart's Divertimento No. 10, in F, K. 247 (1776), for two violins, viola, cello/bass and two horns. Two other major works of the strings/two horns orchestration preceding Beethoven's Septet are Mozart's Divertimento No. 15 in B-flat, K. 287 (1777), and Divertimento No. 17 in D, K. 334 (1778).

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However, it should be noted that the Schubert Octet is by far the longest of any of its predecessors, approaching 60 minutes.

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