



presents...

Shenson Chamber Series

DOVER QUARTET

Joel Link | Violin
Bryan Lee | Violin

Julianne Lee | Viola
Camden Shaw | Cello

LEIF OVE ANDSNES | Piano

Thursday, April 25, 2024 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

TURINA

La oración del torero, Opus 34

DOHNANYI

Piano Quintet No. 2 in E-flat Minor, Opus 26

Allegro non troppo

Intermezzo: Allegretto; Presto

Moderato; un poco più mosso; Animato

INTERMISSION

BRAHMS

Piano Quintet in F Minor, Opus 34

Allegro non troppo

Andante un poco adagio

Scherzo: Allegro

Finale: Poco sostenuto; Allegro non troppo

**The Shenson Chamber Series is made possible by Fred M. Levin,
The Shenson Foundation.**

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Foundation.**

Dover Quartet is represented by Andrew Lane, The Curtis Institute of Music
1726 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 curtis.edu/doverquartet

Leif Ove Andsnes is represented by Enticott Music Management Ltd. in association with IMG Artists
18 Hearne Road, London W4 3NJ, UK imgartists.com

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ARTIST PROFILES

San Francisco Performances presents the Dover Quartet for the fourth time. They made their debut in October 2016 in a concert with double bassist Edgar Meyer.

Leif Ove Andsnes makes his eleventh appearance with SF Performances. He debuted here in November 1994 in recital with violinist Christian Tetzlaff.

Named one of the greatest string quartets of the last 100 years by *BBC Music Magazine*, the two-time Grammy®-nominated **Dover Quartet** is one of the world's most in-demand chamber ensembles. The Dover Quartet is the Penelope P. Watkins Ensemble in Residence at the Curtis Institute of Music and holds additional residencies at the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University and the Walton Arts Center's Artosphere Festival. The group's awards include a stunning sweep of all prizes at the 2013 Banff International String Quartet Competition, grand and first prizes at the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, and prizes at the Wigmore Hall International String Quartet Competition. Its honors include the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, Chamber Music America's Cleveland Quartet Award, and Lincoln Center's Hunt Family Award.

The Dover Quartet's 2023–24 season includes a North American tour with Leif Ove Andsnes, performances with Haochen Zhang and David Shifrin, and a tour to Europe and Israel. A sought-after ensemble, recent collaborators include Emanuel Ax, Inon Barnaton, Ray Chen, the Escher String Quartet, Bridget Kibbey, Anthony McGill,

Edgar Meyer, the Pavel Haas Quartet, Roomful of Teeth, and Davóne Tines. In 2022, the quartet premiered Steven Mackey's theatrical-musical work *Memoir*, alongside arx duo and actor-narrator Natalie Christa. They also recently premiered works by Mason Bates, Marc Neikrug, and Chris Rogerson.

The Dover Quartet's highly acclaimed three-volume recording, *Beethoven Complete String Quartets* (Cedille Records), was hailed as "meticulously balanced, technically clean-as-a-whistle and intonationally immaculate" (*The Strad*). The quartet's discography also includes *Encores* (Brooklyn Classical), a recording of 10 popular movements from the string quartet repertoire; *The Schumann Quartets* (Azica Records), which was nominated for a Grammy for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance; *Voices of Defiance: 1943, 1944, 1945* (Cedille Records); and an all-Mozart debut recording (Cedille Records), featuring the late Michael Tree—long-time violist of the Guarneri Quartet. *Voices of Defiance*, which explores works written during World War II by Viktor Ullman, Dmitri Shostakovich, and Simon Laks, was lauded as "undoubtedly one of the most compelling discs released this year" (*The Wall Street Journal*).

The Dover Quartet draws from the lineage of the distinguished Guarneri, Cleveland, and Vermeer quartets. Its members studied at the Curtis Institute of Music, Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, the New England Conservatory, and the Conservatoire Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris. They were mentored extensively by Shmuel Ashkenasi, James Dunham, Norman Fischer, Kenneth Goldsmith, Joseph Silverstein, Ar-

nold Steinhardt, Michael Tree, and Peter Wiley. The Dover Quartet was formed at Curtis in 2008; its name pays tribute to *Dover Beach* by fellow Curtis alumnus Samuel Barber.

The Dover Quartet's faculty residency at Curtis integrates teaching and mentorship, a robust international performance career, and a cutting-edge digital presence. The innovative residency allows Curtis to reinvigorate its tradition of maintaining a top-quality professional string quartet on its faculty, while providing resources for the ensemble to experiment with new technologies and engage audiences digitally. Working closely with students in the Nina von Maltzahn String Quartet Program, the Dover Quartet coaches and mentors the most promising young string quartets to nurture a new generation of leading professional chamber ensembles.

The Dover Quartet plays on the following instruments and proudly endorses Thomastik-Infeld strings:

Joel Link—a very fine Peter Guarneri of Mantua, 1710–15, on generous loan from Irene R. Miller through the Beare's International Violin Society.

Bryan Lee—Riccardo Antoniazzi, Milan, 1904; Samuel Zygmuntowicz, Brooklyn, 2020.

Julianne Lee—Robert Brode, 2005.

Camden Shaw—Joseph Hill, London, 1770.

Follow the quartet at DoverQuartet.com. On Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube: @DoverQuartet.



The *New York Times* calls **Leif Ove Andsnes** "a pianist of magisterial elegance, power, and insight," and the *Wall Street Journal* names him "one of the most gifted musicians of his generation." With his commanding technique and searching interpretations, the celebrated Norwegian pianist has won acclaim worldwide, play-

ing concertos and recitals in the world's leading concert halls and with its foremost orchestras, while building an esteemed and extensive discography. An avid chamber musician, he is the founding director of the Rosendal Chamber Music Festival, was co-artistic director of the Risør Festival of Chamber Music for nearly two decades and served as music director of California's Ojai Music Festival in 2012. He was inducted into the Gramophone Hall of Fame in July 2013, and has received honorary doctorates from New York's Juilliard School and Norway's Universities of Bergen and Oslo.

In 2023–24, Andsnes performs Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto with orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, New World Symphony and London Symphony Orchestra, as well as on a Japanese tour with the NHK Symphony. Other upcoming concert highlights include performances of Rachmaninov's Third with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, Danish National Symphony and Orchestre de Paris. He also embarks on high-profile solo recital tours of Japan and Europe, before joining the Dover Quartet for Brahms and Dohnányi piano quintets on a five-city North American tour, bookended by dates at the Kennedy Center and Carnegie's Zankel Hall. *Leif Ove Andsnes: The Complete Warner Classics Edition 1990–2010*, a 36-CD retrospective, was released in October.

Andsnes's discography comprises more than 50 titles, many of them bestsellers. Spanning repertoire from the Baroque to the present day, they have been recognized with 11 Grammy® nominations, seven Gramophone Awards and many other international prizes, while his recordings of Grieg's *Piano Concerto* with the Berlin Philharmonic and of Mozart's *Piano Concertos Nos. 9 and 18* were both named "Best CD of the Year" by the *New York Times*. Capturing his two major multi-season projects with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, his Sony Classical series *A Beethoven Journey* and *Mozart Momentum 1785/86* were honored with multiple Gramophone Awards, Belgium's Prix Caecilia and BBC Music's "Recording of the Year." Andsnes's other accolades include the Royal Philharmonic Society's Instrumentalist Award, the Gilmore Artist Award, and Norway's Peer Gynt Prize and Commander of the Royal Norwegian Order of St. Olav. He was the first Scandinavian to curate Carnegie Hall's "Perspectives" series and has been Pianist-in-Residence of the Berlin Philharmonic, Artist-in-Residence of the New York Philharmonic, and the subject of a London Symphony Orchestra Artist Portrait Series.

Leif Ove Andsnes was born in Karmøy, Norway in 1970, and studied at the Bergen Music Conservatory. He is currently an Artistic Adviser for the Prof. Jiri Hlinka Piano Academy in Bergen, where he lives with his partner and their three children.

PROGRAM NOTES

La oración del torero, Opus 34

JOAQUÍN TURINA
(1882–1949)

In 1925, Spanish composer Joaquín Turina was asked by the Aguilar family—a family of lutenists—to write a work for a quartet of lutes, and he responded with a brief work called *La oración del torero*: "The Bullfighter's Prayer." The Aguilars successfully took the new work on tours throughout Europe and the Americas, and Turina quickly arranged the music for string quartet and for string orchestra; this final version was first performed on January 7, 1927. This attractive music has subsequently appeared in many other forms, including an arrangement for violin and piano by Jascha Heifetz.

Turina outlined the situation his music describes: it is the afternoon of a bullfight in Madrid, and a bullfighter ducks through a small door into a tiny chapel, where he offers a quiet prayer before entering the noisy bullring to confront death. But rather than trying to offer a literal depiction of these events, Turina instead writes a brief mood piece that evokes that intense atmosphere. The music falls into a number of short sections: the muted beginning gives way to an expressive, almost sultry opening theme. There follow a number of brief episodes, and Turina has noted that one of these is based on the *pasodoble*, an old Spanish dance in duple time). The music rises to a climax, then the themes are recalled as this evocative music makes its way to the delicate (and peaceful) close.

Piano Quintet No. 2 in E-flat Minor, Opus 26

ERNST VON DOHNÁNYI
(1877–1960)

Ernst von Dohnányi's *Piano Quintet No. 1* had been a brilliant success. He composed it in the spring of 1895, while still a 17-year-old student at the Royal Hungarian Na-

tional Academy of Music in Budapest. His teacher showed the boy's manuscript to Brahms in Vienna, and that aging composer was amazed. Brahms is reported to have exclaimed "I could not have written it better myself," and he arranged its premiere, which took place in Vienna. That quintet, published as the youthful composer's Opus 1, launched Dohnányi's career as a composer.

But much had changed 19 years later when Dohnányi composed his *Piano Quintet No. 2*. It was now 1914, and the world had been transformed in the years since the premiere of his *First Quintet* in the Vienna of Brahms. World War I had begun, and the Austro-Hungarian empire was crumbling. Music itself—under the powerful influences of Stravinsky and Schoenberg—was heading in entirely new directions. And Dohnányi was facing a crisis in his own life: his first marriage had failed, and now he was engaged in an affair with the German actress Elsa Galafrés, who would become his second wife. Dohnányi's *First Piano Quintet* may have ended in C major triumph, but his *Second Quintet*, in the somber key of E-flat minor, is a much darker work than its youthful predecessor.

It is also a much deeper and more original work, and Dohnányi himself preferred it to his earlier effort. The *Second Quintet* is very tightly unified around two themes that appear early in the first movement and that will then return at moments throughout the quintet. The marking for the first movement is *Allegro non troppo*, but rather than being dramatic, this opening feels subdued. Dohnányi specifies that it should be *sotto voce* ("under voice"), and over the murmuring piano, first violin and cello lay out the long opening theme-shape that will serve as the backbone of the entire quintet. Piano alone introduces the chordal second subject, a poised and chorale-like idea that will also reappear in various forms. The development begins on this chorale tune and eventually drives to a full throated-climax. This energy subsides, and Dohnányi concludes by recalling his principal themes: the piano theme is reprised first, followed by the strings, which draw this movement to its conclusion, marked triple *piano* (in fact, all three movements of this quintet will end at the dynamic of triple *piano*).

The central *Intermezzo* has a very unusual structure: essentially it is a waltz, but a waltz broken by a number of interruptions along the way. The viola introduces the waltz-theme immediately. Some have heard this as a recall of past Viennese ele-

gance, but there is something tense, almost slithering, about this waltz tune, and quickly the interruptions begin. First comes a *Presto* in 2/4 that sparkles along elegantly. This in turn is interrupted by a *Rubato e capriccioso* episode in which the waltz returns at a different tempo, and these sudden changes of tempo, theme, and mood mark the entire movement. Dohnányi brings back both the waltz—now smoothed off into 4/4—and the *Presto* to conclude.

The final movement begins slowly—the marking is *Moderato*—with a fugal recall of the seminal theme from the opening movement, and once again Dohnányi stresses that he wants it *sotto voce*. The main body of the movement leaps ahead at the *Animato*, and now the fugal writing is tense and fast, full of stinging harmonies, chromatic writing, and frequent tempo changes. The movement drives to a grand climax with the first violin soaring high over the other voices, and with this violence behind him, Dohnányi slows the tempo and brings back his principal themes, now stated very quietly. This coda is long, and the quintet concludes peacefully in E-flat major. It is hardly a triumphant conclusion, but after all that has gone before, it is a very satisfying one.

Dohnányi was the pianist, along with the Klinger Quartet, at the premiere, which took place in Berlin on November 12, 1914. Somehow, this expressive and haunting music has never made it into the standard repertory. For those who don't know the *Quintet in E-flat Minor*, it will come as a surprise—and a good one.

Quintet for Piano and Strings in F Minor, Opus 34

JOHANNES BRAHMS
(1833–1897)

Brahms began work on the music that would eventually become his *Piano Quintet in F Minor* during the summer of 1862, when he was 29 years old and still living in Hamburg. As first conceived, however, this music was not a piano quintet. Brahms originally composed it as a string quintet—string quartet plus an extra cello—and almost surely he took as a model the great *String Quintet in C Major* of Schubert, a composer he very much admired. But when Joseph Joachim and colleagues played through the string quintet for the composer, all who heard it felt it unsatisfactory: an ensemble of strings alone could not satisfactorily project the power of this music. So Brahms set out

to remedy this—he returned to the score during the winter of 1863–64 and recast it as a sonata for two pianos. Once again the work was judged not wholly successful—it had all the power the music called for, but this version lacked the sustained sonority possible with strings that much of this music seemed to demand. Among those confused by the two-piano version was Clara Schumann, who offered the young composer a completely different suggestion: “Its skillful combinations are interesting throughout, it is masterly from every point of view, but—it is not a sonata, but a work whose ideas you might—and must—scatter, as from a horn of plenty, over an entire orchestra...Please, dear Johannes, for this once take my advice and recast it.”

Recast it Brahms did, but not for orchestra. Instead, during the summer and fall of 1864 he arranged it for piano and string quartet, combining the dramatic impact of the two-piano version with the string sonority of the original quintet. In this form it has come down to us today, one of the masterpieces of Brahms' early years, and it remains a source of wonder that music that sounds so *right* in its final version could have been conceived for any other combination of instruments. Clara, who had so much admired her husband's piano quintet, found Brahms' example a worthy successor, describing it as “a very special joy to me” (Brahms published the two-piano version as his Opus 34b, and it is occasionally heard in this form, but he destroyed all the parts of the string quintet version).

The *Piano Quintet* shows the many virtues of the young Brahms—strength, lyricism, ingenuity, nobility—and presents them in music of unusual breadth and power. This is big music: if all the repeats are taken, the *Quintet* can stretch out to nearly three-quarters of an hour, and there are moments when the sheer sonic heft of a piano and string quartet together makes one understand why Clara thought this music might be most effectively presented by a symphony orchestra.

The *Quintet* is also remarkable for young Brahms' skillful evolution of his themes: several of the movements derive much of their material from the simplest of figures, which are then developed ingeniously. The very beginning of the *Allegro non troppo* is a perfect illustration. In octaves, first violin, cello, and piano present the opening theme, which ranges dramatically across four measures and then comes to a brief pause. Instantly the music seems to explode with vitality above an agitated piano figure. But

the piano's rushing sixteenth notes are simply a restatement of the opening theme at a much faster tempo, and this compression of material marks the entire movement; that opening theme will reappear in many different forms. A second subject in E major, marked *dolce* and sung jointly by viola and cello, also spins off a wealth of secondary material, and the extended development leads to a quiet coda, marked *poco sostenuto*. The tempo quickens as the music powers its way to the resounding chordal close.

In sharp contrast, the *Andante, un poco Adagio* sings with a quiet charm. The piano's gently-rocking opening theme, lightly echoed by the strings, gives way to a more animated and flowing middle section before the opening material reappears, now subtly varied. Matters change sharply once again with the C-minor *Scherzo*, which returns to the dramatic mood of the first movement. The cello's ominous pizzicato C hammers insistently throughout, and once again Brahms wrings surprising wealth from the simplest of materials: a nervous, stuttering sixteenth note figure is transformed within seconds into a heroic chorale for massed strings, and later Brahms generates a brief fugal section from this same theme. The trio section breaks free of the darkness of the scherzo and slips into C-major sunlight for an all-too-brief moment of quiet nobility before the music returns to C minor and a *da capo* repeat.

The finale opens with strings alone, reaching upward in chromatic uncertainty before the *Allegro non troppo* main theme steps out firmly in the cello. The movement seems at first to be a rondo, but this is a rondo with unexpected features: it offers a second theme, sets the rondo theme in unexpected keys, and transforms the cello's healthy little opening tune in music of toughness and turbulence.

Clara Schumann, who had received the dedication of her husband's quintet, was instrumental in Brahms' dedication. Princess Anna of Hesse had heard Brahms and Clara perform this music in its version for two pianos and was so taken with it that Brahms dedicated not only that version to the princess but the *Piano Quintet* as well. When the princess asked Clara what she might send Brahms as a measure of her gratitude, Clara had a ready suggestion. And so Princess Anna sent Brahms a treasure that would remain his prized possession for the rest of his life: Mozart's manuscript of the *Symphony No. 40 in G Minor*.

—Program notes by Eric Bromberger