



presents...

*The Shenson Great Artists & Ensemble Series*

**EDGAR MEYER** | Double Bass  
**DOVER STRING QUARTET**

Joel Link | Violin  
Bryan Lee | Violin

Hezekiah Leung | Viola  
Camden Shaw | Cello

Friday, March 27, 2026 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

**MOZART**

**Divertimento in D Major, K. 136**

*Allegro*  
*Andante*  
*Presto*

**EDGAR MEYER**

**2 Duets for Cello and Bass**

**MENDELSSOHN**

**Quartet No. 6 in F Minor, Op. 80**

*Allegro vivace assai*  
*Allegro assai*  
*Adagio*  
*Finale: Allegro molto*

**INTERMISSION**

**EDGAR MEYER**

**Quintet for Strings**

**This series is made possible in part by the generous support of  
Fred M. Levin, The Shenson Foundation.**

**Edgar Meyer** is represented by IMG Artists  
Pleiades House, 7 W. 54th St, New York, NY 10019    [imgartists.com](http://imgartists.com)

The **Dover Quartet** is represented by Curtis Artist Management at Curtis Institute of Music  
1726 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103    [curtis.edu](http://curtis.edu)

## ARTIST PROFILES

San Francisco Performances presents Edgar Meyer for the 12th time. He first appeared in December 1991

San Francisco Performances presents the Dover Quartet for the fifth time. It first appeared in October 2016



Hailed by *The New Yorker* as “...the most remarkable virtuoso in the relatively un-chronicled history of his instrument,” **Edgar Meyer** is the only bassist to be awarded both the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize and MacArthur Grant, solidifying his unparalleled talent in his field. In 2024, he was honored with his sixth and seventh Grammy® Awards for *As We Speak*, the second acclaimed studio album released with long-time friend and collaborators, Béla Fleck, Zakir Hussain, and Rakesh Chaurasia.

2024 also saw the release of *But Who’s Gonna Play the Melody?*, a duo album featuring fellow bassist Christian McBride, as well as a complete recording of Meyer’s three concertos for bass and orchestra with *The Knights*, conducted by Eric Jacobsen and produced by Chris Thile. The concerto project includes his *Concertino for Bass and 14 Strings*, recorded in 2023 with the Scottish Ensemble led by Jonathan Morton, who commissioned and toured the piece with Meyer in 2022.

In addition to his performing and recording career, Meyer is a celebrated composer. Most recently, he was one of five composers commissioned by American violinist Joshua Bell and the New York Philharmonic for his project *The Elements*, which had its world premiere in 2023.

This season, Meyer will tour the US with



violinist Tessa Lark and cellist Joshua Roman. The newly formed trio will perform newly commissioned work alongside his string trios composed in 1980.

Mr. Meyer is the subject of an ongoing documentary filmed and produced by Tessa Lark, Andrew Adair, and Michael Thurber.

Named one of the greatest string quartets of the last 100 years by *BBC Music Magazine* and “the next Guarneri Quartet” by the *Chicago Tribune*, the two-time Grammy®-nominated **Dover Quartet** is one of the world’s most in-demand chamber ensembles. 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 members are on faculty at the renowned Curtis Institute of Music.

The Dover Quartet’s 2025–26 season features collaborative performances with preeminent artists including Marc-André Hamelin and Edgar Meyer, and performances in internationally renowned venues from Carnegie Hall to Kennedy Center to Konzerthaus Berlin. The quartet’s most recent commission is from Jerod Impichchaachaaha’ Tate, a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation and a leading composer of American Indian classical music. His new piece, *Abokkoli’ Taloowa’* (Woodland Songs), is featured on *Woodland Songs*, the group’s most recent album, which also includes Tate’s new string-quartet orchestration of *Rattle Songs* by the Indigenous singer Pura Fé, originally for her a cappella vocal group Ulali. Dvořák’s “American” Quartet, a classic of the repertoire, com-

pletes the album, released in August 2025 on the Curtis Studio label.

Recent collaborators of the ensemble include Leif Ove Andsnes, Emanuel Ax, Inon Barnatan, Ray Chen, Anthony McGill, the Pavel Haas Quartet, Roomful of Teeth, and Davóne Tines. The quartet has also recently premiered works by Mason Bates, Steven Mackey, 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*). Other discography highlights are *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 Michael Tree, the late, long-time violist of the Guarneri Quartet. The quartet’s recording of Steven Mackey’s theatrical-musical work *Memoir* was released on Bridge Records in 2024.

The Dover Quartet draws from the lineage of the distinguished Guarneri, Cleveland, and Vermeer quartets. Its members studied at Curtis Institute of Music, Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music, New England Conservatory, and Conservatoire Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris. They were mentored extensively by Shmuel Ashkenasi, James Dunham, Norman Fischer, Kenneth Goldsmith, Joseph Silverstein, Arnold 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 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*: Nicolas Lupot, Paris, 1810; Samuel Zygmuntowicz, Brooklyn, 2020
- *Julianne Lee*: Robert Brode, 2005
- *Camden Shaw*: Samuel Zygmuntowicz, New York, 2024

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Divertimento in D Major, K.136

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART  
(1756–1791)

Mozart wrote three “divertimenti” for strings, K.136–138, in Salzburg early in 1772, just after his 16th birthday. The exact form of these works is unclear, however, and for years scholars have debated how they should be classified. Though they carry the designation “Divertimenti” on the title page of the manuscript, this is not in Mozart’s hand, and in any case these three pieces lack the minuet movement characteristic of the divertimento form. Even the size of the instrumental forces Mozart had in mind is unclear—though scored for four string instruments, these works may be played by either quartet or string orchestra. There are few clues within the music itself: while these “divertimenti” are full of idiomatic quartet writing, they show an extroverted brilliance that suggests an orchestral sonority.

Alfred Einstein believes that this music, composed after Mozart’s second trip to Italy, may have been written for use during his third Italian tour late in 1772 and that the simple addition of horns and oboes would transform these quartet-like works into symphonies on the three-movement Italian model. Mozart may thus have extracted double service from these three pieces: as divertimentos for string quartet in Salzburg and as potential symphonies intended for the court of Milan, where he had been feted during previous tours. The uncertainty about the form of these works has led to their being classified variously (and erroneously) as the “Salzburg symphonies” and as “quartet-symphonies.”

Whatever its form, Mozart’s K.136 is delightful music and has been an audience favorite for centuries. The amiable open-

ing *Allegro* makes virtuoso demands on both the first and second violin sections; particularly effective here is Mozart’s very brief (ten-measure) excursion into D minor during the development, a moonlit episode amid the movement’s generally sunny atmosphere. Einstein describes the *Andante* as “graceful and ‘tender,’ quite in the Italian fashion.” The effervescent final *Presto*—in sonata form rather than the expected *rondo*—uses as its main theme a variation of the first movement’s opening theme, a rare example of cyclic writing by Mozart. In the course of the development, the teenaged composer throws in an extended passage of accomplished contrapuntal writing.

—Program note by Eric Bromberger

### 2 Duets for Cello and Double Bass

EDGAR MEYER  
(B. 1960)

These two duos were written in the 90’s for the two recordings with Mark O’Connor, Yo-Yo Ma and myself, with one duo on each recording. They share one characteristic which is a non-standard beat structure. Duo #1 is grouped in 3 14/4 measures at a time from start to finish. Duo #2 alternates between serene music and raucous music. The raucous music is grouped irregularly. The serene music is grouped in 5 5/2 measures at a time.

—Edgar Meyer

### String Quartet in F Minor, Opus 80

FELIX MENDELSSOHN  
(1809–1847)

Mendelssohn’s life was short, and its ending was particularly painful. Always a driven man, he was showing signs of exhaustion during the 1846–47 season, which included trips to London and conducting engagements on the continent. In May 1847 came the catastrophe: his sister Fanny, only 41, suffered a stroke and died within hours. She and her younger brother had always been exceptionally close—Mendelssohn collapsed upon learning of her death, and he never recovered. Worried family members took him on vacation to Switzerland, where they hoped he could regain his strength and composure.

At Interlaken, Mendelssohn painted, composed the *String Quartet in F Minor*, and

tried to escape his sorrow, but with little success. An English visitor described his last view of the composer that summer: “I thought even then, as I followed his figure, looking none the younger for the loose dark coat and the wide brimmed straw hat bound with black crape, which he wore, that he was too much depressed and worn, and walked too heavily.” Back in Leipzig, Mendelssohn cancelled his engagements, suffered severe headaches, and was confined to bed. After several days in which he slipped in and out of consciousness, the composer died on the evening of November 4. He was 38 years old.

Given the circumstances of its creation, one might expect Mendelssohn’s *Quartet in F Minor* to be somber music, and in fact it is. It is the last of Mendelssohn’s quartets (and his last major completed work), but it has never achieved the popularity of his earlier quartets—the pianist Ignaz Moscheles found it the product of “an agitated state of mind.” Yet this Quartet’s driven quality is also the source of its distinction and strength. One feels this from the first instant of the *Allegro vivace assai* (it is worth noting that three of the four movements are extremely fast): the double-stroked writing, even at a very quiet dynamic, pushes the music forward nervously, and out of this ominous rustle leaps the dotted figure that will be a part of so much of this movement. A more flowing second subject nevertheless maintains the same dark cast, and after a long development this movement drives to its close on a *Presto* coda.

The second movement, marked *Allegro assai*, is in ABA form: the driving outer sections keep the dotted rhythm of the opening movement, while the trio rocks along more gently. The *Adagio*, the only movement not in a minor key, is built on the first violin’s lyric opening idea. The music rises to a somewhat frantic climax full of dotted rhythms before subsiding to close peacefully. The finale, marked *Allegro molto*, pushes ahead on the vigor of its syncopated rhythms, which are set off by quick exchanges between groups of instruments. As in the first movement, there is more relaxed secondary material, but the principal impression here is of nervous energy, and at the close the music hurtles along triplet rhythms to an almost superheated close in which the F-minor tonality is affirmed with vengeance. It is not a conclusion that brings much relief, and it speaks directly from the agonized consciousness of its creator.

—Program note by Eric Bromberger

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## Quintet

### EDGAR MEYER

The opening movement of the *Quintet* is a cross between a theme and variations and variations on a ground bass. It opens with an AABA theme of approximately 40 seconds, followed by 12 “variations” and a reprisal of the theme. There is not always strict character differentiation between variations, but sometimes instead there is more of a transformation over the course of a couple of them. The tempo is constant,

and the speeding up and slowing down is achieved by metric modulation in such a way that each variation is supposed to be exactly the same duration.

The second movement is earthy and uses ornamental quarter tones in the four higher strings to sometimes create a bluesy effect. The cello starts with the main riff followed by a “trio” and the 1st violin recaps the cello melody.

The third movement wanders around looking for a melody which is eventually found by the first violin about 2/3’s of the way through. This melody ends in the movement’s only proper cadence, which is followed by the four upper strings taking the opening figure thru all 12 keys and end-

ing up where it started.

The fourth movement involves a good bit of left hand finger wiggling for all. The triplets are essentially measured trills, conceived as an energetic gesture. The opening melody is fiddle derived, and along with the following section where the viola, cello, and bass enter, is syncopated against a strict 4/4.

This *Quintet* was written for and premiered by the Emerson Quartet and myself in 1995 and recorded in 1998.

—Program note by Edgar Meyer