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Paul Haas
Music Director

SEASON 59.5

The TBSO Presents Mozart & Haydn

March 12, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.

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Funding provided by the Government of Ontario and the Ontario Arts Council.

Mozart & Haydn

March 12, 2021 6:30 p.m.



Divertimento in C major Hob. IV:1

Haydn
(1732-1809)

Allegro moderato
Andante
Finale: Vivace

Doris Dungan, flute; Thomas Cosbey, violin; Peter Cosbey, cello

String Quintet No. 4 in G minor, K. 516

Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro
Menuetto and Trio. Allegretto
Adagio ma non troppo
Adagio - Allegro

Kathlyn Stevens & Thomas Cosbey, violins; Marlena Pellegrino & Patrick
Horn, violas; Peter Cosbey, cello

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March 12

Northern Winter

Celebrating our northern voice with an eclectic mix of wintery soundscapes and icy connections.

The warm and lyrical Duo in C Major reflects Sibelius' love of nature and of his native Finland. Award winning Canadian composers Jocelyn Morlock and Linda Caitlin Smith examine the meaning of shade and reflection. Estonian Arvo Pärt's Spiegel im Spiegel is his most popular and well-known work, having a meditative and serene simplicity. And legendary Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer's String Quartet depicts an outdoor winter scene complete with occasional birds, wind and snow.

Tropical Oasis

William Grant Still's Danzas de Panama is an impressive tour de force for string quartet based on a collection of Panamanian folk tunes collected in the 1920's.

Piazzolla's name has become synonymous with Argentina's iconic dance, the tango. Here we present two popular works with sophisticated rhythms and sensuous moods: his famous Libertango and Four for Tango, a work written for the illustrious Kronos quartet.

Watch them all online at tbso.ca/tbso-live-concerts

Programme Notes

Divertimento in C major, Hob. IV:1

Composer: Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Written: 1794

Length: About 8 minutes

In his daily diary for the date November 14, 1794, Haydn wrote: "I went with Lord Abingdon to Preston, 26 miles from London, to visit the Baron of Aston -- he and his wife both love music...." It was for this visit that the composer took with him as a hostess gift several newly written compositions for the uncommon instrumental grouping of two flutes and cello. At that time the flute was growing in popularity in England, since it had become the most fashionable instrument for amateurs after the harpsichord, and the gift was very well received.

The complete set of four trios is known as Haydn's London Trios and tonight we present the first one for flute, violin and cello. Trio No. 1 has three movements in the familiar fast-slow-fast pattern common to most of Haydn's Trios. Even though this piece stands for little more than a great composer having fun, it still reveals Haydn's wit and originality.

Unfortunately, the popularity of the trios quickly faded, and they were not regularly performed again until the early 1900's. Musicologist and Haydn scholar, Robbins Landon states by 1971, San Francisco buskers had them in their repertoires, and that they "got the biggest audiences and made the most money." He adds, this was "a purpose for which Haydn certainly did not intend his London Trios, but which illustrates how music of charm, vitality, and technical mastery will survive despite the works' temporary eclipse in the nineteenth century."

String Quintet No. 4 in G minor, K. 516

Composer: W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)

Written: 1787 May

First published: 1790 in Vienna

Length: About 35 minutes

In 1787, Mozart wrote two string quintets scored for two violins, two violas and cello. They have contrasting natures – K. 515 in C major is sunny and bountiful whereas K. 516 in G minor, the piece to be performed this evening, is predominantly dark, tragic and at times, violent. Often called "viola quintets" to distinguish them from "cello quintets" in which the cello is doubled (many of you will remember the recent TBSO Live Stream of Schubert's Cello Quintet in C major), these quintets are regarded as among Mozart's finest chamber music, perhaps because he indulges his love of the viola, with an emphasis on rich inner voices as well as great first chair solos.

The work begins with restless, yet quiet agitation. The brooding opening theme, a succession of sighing broken phrases is heard initially from the first violin. The movement is unusual in that it never leaves the melancholy minor mode. Often in classical music, the form calls for a shift to a contrasting mood (in this case a happy second theme), but here there is always a poignant sense of resignation.

The second movement, *Menuetto: Allegretto*, is a long way removed from a courtly dance. Maintaining the dark mood, violent chords on what should be a weak beat are answered by silence on the ensuing strong beats. This is a defiant proclamation, hardly a dance. The central trio, in the key of G major, brings some relief, but the return of the menuetto closes the movement on a quiet note.

The third movement, *Adagio ma non troppo* is a languid, tender song that floats softly on muted strings in an expression of sadness. Tchaikovsky, the master of sorrowful music, said of this movement "No one has ever known as well how to interpret so exquisitely in music the sense of resigned and inconsolable sorrow."

The finale begins with a lengthy *Adagio* introduction, almost as if there is going to be yet another slow movement. But then Mozart unexpectedly launches into the sprightly G major *Allegro*, which creates a stark contrast and seems entirely untouched by the dark sentiments of the movements that preceded it. The tension relaxes, and the final movement, a graceful rondo, follows without pause. Some critics have questioned how such a carefree finale could belong to a work whose other movements are an expression of such intense pathos. But others counter that the feeling of joy is only understood in contrast to what came before, so it delivers an overlay of resignation and acceptance rather than triumphant success. We invite you to decide for yourself.

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