

Dmitri Shostakovich: The Complete String Quartets

February 3–9, 2017

30th Anniversary
Celebration

Lafayette String Quartet

Ann Elliott-Goldschmid, violin

Sharon Stanis, violin

Joanna Hood, viola

Pamela Highbaugh Aloni, cello



University
of Victoria

School of Music

The Lafayette

STRING QUARTET

Greetings from Ann, Sharon, Joanna and Pam

We are so happy you are joining us as we celebrate our 30th year together with performances of all the Shostakovich Quartets. The works you will be hearing during these 5 nights connect us back to our earliest beginnings. Throughout our career together we have been blessed to have the guiding inspiration of our dear late mentor Rostislav Dubinsky, first violinist of the Borodin String Quartet, ever encouraging us to strive for excellence and to “Keep the Quartet”.

And 30 years later — here we are — keeping the quartet far beyond what we might have imagined when we first sat down to play and coach Shostakovich’s 8th quartet together with Dubinsky. With memories, recordings and even scores and parts that he marked with his ideas, we have happily taken on learning all 15 of these remarkable quartets. We have often felt him with us in these months as we have been preparing for this cycle.

We owe much to so many people for the ways in which we have been supported and inspired to grow as musicians. We recognize every day that these 30 years would not be possible without all of them or you, our devoted audience.

We would like to thank the University community — past and present presidents, vice-presidents, deans, directors, colleagues, and staff for giving us a “home base” these last 25 years. We also are grateful to our students, past and present, whose flexibility and energy continually encourage us to grow.

We extend special thanks to our colleagues who have been sharing our teaching load this year while we have taken on the extra work of preparing for the Cycle. We are also thankful for the greater Victoria community whose support of music, indeed all the arts, provides the stimulating artistic environment in which we live and work. Many have directly supported and worked tirelessly with us to help put on this Cycle. We extend warmest thanks to our visiting scholars who so kindly have agreed to share their passion for these works and add a most exciting dimension to the week. We are honored to have them here.

And last, but not least, we want to thank our dear families and friends whose daily love and support allows us to stay on this amazing track of string quartet life.

We are so glad we are all together:

Cheers,

Ann, Sharon, Joanna, and Pam



FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

Pre-concert talks at 7 PM. All concerts at 8 PM.

Phillip T. Young Recital Hall, B-Wing, MacLaurin Building, UVic

Individual tickets \$25 / 5 concert festival pass \$100

CONCERT 1: FRIDAY, FEB. 3

Pre-concert talk with Judith Kuhn

String Quartet No. 1 in C major, Op. 49

String Quartet No. 2 in A major, Op. 68

String Quartet No. 3 in F major, Op. 73

CONCERT 2: SATURDAY, FEB. 4

Pre-concert talk with The Lafayette String Quartet

String Quartet No. 4 in D major, Op. 83

String Quartet No. 5 in B-flat major, Op. 92

String Quartet No. 6 in G major, Op. 101

SHOSTAKOVICH SYMPOSIUM: SUNDAY, FEB. 5

9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Rm. A168, MacLaurin Bldg., A-Wing

Free admission

CONCERT 3: MONDAY, FEB. 6

Pre-concert talk with Michelle Assay and David Fanning

String Quartet No. 7 in F-sharp minor, Op. 108

String Quartet No. 8 in C minor, Op. 110

String Quartet No. 9 in E-flat major, Op. 117

CONCERT 4: WEDNESDAY, FEB. 8

Pre-concert talk with Patrick McCreless

String Quartet No. 10 in A-flat major, Op. 118

String Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 122

String Quartet No. 12 in D-flat major, Op. 133

String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat minor, Op. 138

CONCERT 5: THURSDAY, FEB. 9

Pre-concert talk with Judith Kuhn

String Quartet No. 14 in F-sharp major, Op. 142

String Quartet No. 15 in E-flat minor, Op. 144



**University
of Victoria**

Message from the President



It is a pleasure to extend my sincere congratulations to the Lafayette String Quartet as they celebrate their 30th Anniversary.

The University of Victoria has had the privilege of hosting these four incredible women as Artists-in-Residence for 25 years. Our students, our campus and the wider community have benefitted from their dedication, enthusiasm and creativity. Nationally and internationally celebrated, the quartet has engaged in our community with passion and commitment: establishing Quartet Fest West; performing in the Galiano Ensemble; creating the Lafayette Health Awareness Forum to provide free expert health information to the public; and supporting teachers in the public schools. As outstanding educators and superb musicians, they have greatly enriched our Fine Arts program, providing mentorship, giving masterclasses, and helping to recruit some of the finest string players in Canada. In honour of their contributions, they were presented with UVic's inaugural Craigdarroch Award for Excellence in Artistic Expression in 2010.

This year, to honour this significant milestone, the quartet will perform the complete Shostakovich Cycle of String Quartets — an ambitious musical journey and a great delight for us all!

Jamie Cassels, QC
President and Vice-Chancellor



Letter from the Dean of Fine Arts



I am delighted to welcome you as Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts to Dmitri Shostakovich: The Complete String Quartets. The festival celebrates thirty years of the Lafayette String Quartet and honours the Quartet's mentor, Russian violinist Rostislav Dubinsky, who first coached members of the LSQ as graduate students at Indiana University and continued to serve as an important mentor for the ensemble.

Shostakovich's cycle of fifteen quartets documents the composer's life and spans his artistic career from the late 1930s until his death in 1975. These are remarkably complex works. My thanks to Judith Kuhn, Michelle Assay, David Fanning, Patrick McCreless, and the LSQ for sharing their expertise in a series of pre-concert talks that inform our cultural and musical understanding of these works. The festival is a remarkable gift that exemplifies the vital impact of the School of Music in bringing quality performances and scholarship to the Victoria community.

My sincere thanks to the Lafayette String Quartet — Ann Elliott-Goldschmid, Pamela Highbaugh-Aloni, Joanna Hood, and Sharon Stanis — for their artistic leadership and vision in bringing the Shostakovich string quartets to us. Congratulations to the Lafayette String Quartet on three decades of beautiful music and mentorship of our students and alumni.

Welcome and enjoy the festival!

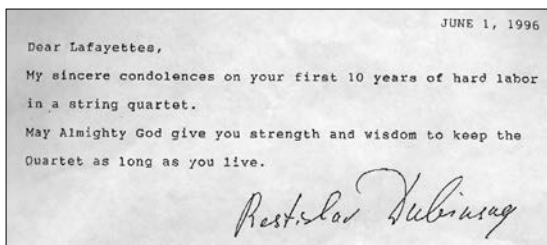
Dr. Susan Lewis
Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts

The Lafayette

STRING QUARTET

In July 1986, four young musicians, based in Detroit and just beginning their professional careers, performed together for the first time as the Lafayette String Quartet. Celebrating their 30th anniversary, the LSQ continues to flourish with its original personnel: violinists Ann Elliott-Goldschmid and Sharon Stanis, violist Joanna Hood, and cellist Pamela Highbaugh Aloni.

For five years, the LSQ prospered in Detroit, where its members taught at the Center for Creative Studies/Institute of Music and Dance, and Oakland University. The LSQ itself received coaching from some of the world's most esteemed quartets — the Amadeus, Alban Berg, and Cleveland — and from violinist Rostislav Dubinsky, of the legendary Borodin Quartet, who served as their "musical mentor" until his death in 1997.



The Quartet's extraordinary musicianship was recognized early on. In their first years together they were ranked among Musical America's "Young Artists to Watch," won the Grand prize at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and top prizes at the Portsmouth (now City of London) International String Quartet Competition, and the Chicago Discovery Competition. As winners of the 1988 Cleveland String Quartet Competition, the LSQ had the opportunity to study for two years with the Cleveland Quartet at the Eastman School of Music, in Rochester, New York.

Artists-in-Residence at the University of Victoria's School of Music since 1991, their dedication and skill has played a major role in building one of the finest music schools in Canada.

In addition to quartet performances and collaborating with colleagues in the School of Music, members of the quartet teach individual lessons, coach chamber music groups, and give studio masterclasses on a weekly basis. They have been principal players of the Galiano Ensemble of Victoria since its inception and continue to serve the community promoting strings in the public schools through outreach programs and the strings mentoring course at UVic. In June, they offer Quartet Fest West, an intensive quartet seminar that brings together young musicians from all over the world. Their annual Health Awareness Forum, founded in 2006, offers timely insights from top health experts on a wide range of topics. They received honorary doctorates from University Canada West and were awarded the inaugural Craigdarroch Award for Excellence in Artistic Expression from the University of Victoria.

Facing page (top left) Marktobendorf, Germany, Summer 1986

(top right) Letter from Dubinsky, 1996

(bottom left) Detroit, MI, 1986

(bottom right) Rehearsal, Institute of Music and Dance, Southfield, MI, 1989

(left) Early promo photo, Donna Terek, Detroit News, 1988

(right) Thumbs up at Banff, 1992



The LSQ has performed across Canada, the United States, Mexico and Europe, with concerts often allied with masterclasses and workshops. They had a close and lasting relationship with the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon while playing on the set of Amatis owned by the institution.

The LSQ carries a large, wide-ranging repertoire, from the classical period to the present, and has commissioned and premiered music from numerous composers. Since 1990, the LSQ has released numerous CDs on the Dorian, Centrediscs, AdLar, CBC and other labels (including its own). They have been the subject of numerous articles and the book *The Four and the One: In Praise of String Quartets* by David Rounds, published in 1999.

(top) Promo photo, Miles Lowry, 2015

(bottom) Quartet Fest West performance,
K. Farkas, UVic, 2015

The Lafayette Quartet is represented by
Lydia Kasianchuk, artist manager
250.598.7492 / kasianchuk@shaw.ca

Sunglasses promo photo,
Barb McDougall, Fall 2000





The Victoria Chamber Orchestra congratulates the members of the Lafayette String Quartet as they celebrate 30 years of playing together.

We are honoured to have such a close association with these marvelous musicians.

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Congratulations to the Lafayette String Quartet!
Inspiring Victoria's young musicians...

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Pre-concert talk with Judith Kuhn (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

String Quartet No. 1 in C major, Op. 49 (1938)

Moderato

Moderato

Allegro molto

Allegro

String Quartet No. 2 in A major, Op. 68 (1944)

Overture: Moderato con moto

Recitative and Romance: Adagio

Valse: Allegro

Theme with Variations: Adagio – Moderato con moto

INTERMISSION

Concession open in the lounge.

String Quartet No. 3 in F major, Op. 73 (1946)

Allegretto

Moderato con moto

Allegro non troppo

Adagio

Moderato

PROGRAM NOTES

The quartets of Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich are often heard as an interrogation on Soviet society and the triumphalism of its socialist-realist aesthetic. The quartets' engaging folk-like melodies are undermined by uneasy dissonances, distorted waltzes, and, especially in the Stalin-era quartets (1-5), by endings that seem more like questions than triumphs. Far more than political commentary, though, the quartets can also be heard as compassionate examinations of universal human trauma and tragedy that remain profound and relevant today.

Shostakovich wrote his **Quartet No. 1 in C major** in 1938 after a stinging 1936 Pravda denunciation of his opera, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Although the composer redeemed himself with his Fifth Symphony (1937), Stalin's "Great Terror" purges in 1937-38 took relatives and friends close to Shostakovich; it was a fearsome time. After completing the constrained, four-movement Quartet, Shostakovich switched its first and last movements. In the final version, a wistful *Allegro* is followed by somber variations and a breathless scherzo, before the louder, more positive *Moderato* provides a heroic conclusion. It is interesting to imagine how different the Quartet would have sounded, had the wistful *Allegro* remained as its finale.

Shostakovich's wartime works reflected the devastation and trauma of that violent conflict. By 1944, when Shostakovich wrote his **Quartet No. 2**, news of the Holocaust had reached Moscow, and the composer included inflections of Jewish folk and liturgical music in the work, most obviously in its cantillation-like recitative. Shostakovich's use of Jewish inflections gives his quartets an engaging "tang," and is commonly heard as a protest, not only against the Holocaust, but also against official anti-Semitism in Russia. The Second Quartet's four movements include a folk-like *Allegretto*, the recitative-like slow movement, and an ominous waltz. A slow prologue opens the finale, leading to a set of Russian-style changing-background variations, where the theme remains the same and the musical background varies. Here, however, the theme is embattled and struggles for survival.

Following the war, in August, 1946, Shostakovich completed his **Quartet No. 3**. The work was described by both the composer and commentators as a narrative of war, moving from peaceful calm to violence and grief and in the finale, to remembrances of grief that disrupt attempts at recovery — an archetypal examination of trauma and its aftermath. As the quartet ends, the scars are evident, as the first violin is unable, despite repeated attempts, to restate the finale's main theme, as the music dies away.

Notes by Judith Kuhn

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Pre-concert talk with the Lafayette String Quartet.

String Quartet No. 4 in D major, Op. 83 (1949)

Allegretto

Andantino

Allegretto

Allegretto

String Quartet No. 5 in B-flat major, Op. 92 (1952)

Allegro non troppo

Andante – Andantino

Moderato – Allegretto

INTERMISSION

Concession open in the lounge.

String Quartet No. 6 in G major, Op. 101 (1956)

Allegretto

Moderato con moto

Lento

Lento – Allegretto

PROGRAM NOTES

At no time of his life was Shostakovich's output of string quartets under more pressure than between the end of the 'Great Patriotic War' and the death of Stalin in 1953. At this time the organs of Soviet power, having had other priorities during wartime, returned to the business of keeping artists and intellectuals in line. Authors, film-makers, and finally composers, felt the lash.

The crackdown on composers in early 1948 made it plain that Music for the People — such as cantatas, folkslike songs and orchestral suites — was the order of the day, whereas high-flown symphonies, sonatas and chamber music were most certainly not. Shostakovich's own Third String Quartet (1946) was placed on the list of works 'not recommended for performance', while his Cantata *The Song of the Forests* (1949), with its final ringing apotheosis to Stalin, showed how low he was prepared to bow the knee.

Not that he stopped composing string quartets: **No. 4** appeared in 1949, **No. 5** in 1952. But both had to go into 'the drawer', awaiting more propitious times for their public exposure. That decision was surely wise. To have put as much Jewish-folk colouring as Shostakovich did into the finale of the Fourth Quartet was already bold enough when he was working on the piece; by the time he was finished, Stalin's notorious 'anti-cosmopolitan' (read anti-Semitic) campaign was in full swing. As for the Fifth, its sheer complexity and emotional range would have been enough to bring down upon him the familiar accusations of 'formalism' (read Western-orientated elitism).

At its most intense points the Fifth features quotations from the Piano Trio of Shostakovich's pupil — and object of affection — Galina Ustvol'skaya. A personal agenda is again not hard to detect in the **Sixth Quartet**. By then the unexpected death of his first wife had removed one of the mainstays of his troubled career, and in the summer of 1956 he met and impulsively married Margarita Kaynova, a Komsomol activist in her early thirties. The quartet was composed while the couple were on honeymoon, and the wanly smiling quality of its opening bars could be read as his nervous wish to believe in the possibility of domestic bliss. Or perhaps the ambivalent tone — straightforward simplicity, or a comment on longing for simplicity after periods of strife — is itself the message, more philosophical than anecdotal?

Notes by David Fanning

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

SHOSTAKOVICH SYMPOSIUM

Rm. A1 68, MacLaurin Bldg., A-Wing

Free admission

SCHEDULE:

9:30 AM

Patrick McCreless (Yale University)

Musical Topics, Musical Gestures: Means to Ends in Shostakovich's String Quartets

10:30 AM

Michelle Assay (Université Paris-Sorbonne)

David Fanning (University of Manchester)

Shostakovich and Weinberg: a Musical Dialogue

11:30 AM

Judith Kuhn (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

The Composer as 'Spin Doctor': How Shostakovich Shaped the Reception of His Quartets

BIOGRAPHIES

Michelle Assay has a PhD from Université Paris Sorbonne and the University of Sheffield with a dissertation on the topic of 'Hamlet in the Stalin era and Beyond'. Apart from publications in this area and on 'Shakespeare and music', she is founder and co-ordinator of an international research group on 'Shakespeare in Central and Eastern Europe'. She is also collaborating with David Fanning on a comprehensive life-and-works study of Mieczysław Weinberg. Born in Tehran, Michelle Assay (Eshghpour) studied in Kiev at the Tchaikovsky Academy, graduating with a 'Magister' degree in performance and musicology. She trained and worked as a theatre actor in Canada before returning to Europe to work with Carine Gutlerner at the Paris Conservatoire, where she obtained her Diplôme d'Etat and was laureate of piano competitions. She has performed as soloist and accompanist at various international venues and gives regular pre-concert talks, speeches and lectures.

David Fanning is Professor of Music at the University of Manchester and has a varied career as scholar, pianist and critic. Author and editor of books, articles and critical editions on Nielsen, Shostakovich, Weinberg and the 20th-century symphonic tradition, and editor of a five-volume performing edition of Russian operatic arias, his ongoing research projects include an expanded life-and-works study of Weinberg (in collaboration with his wife, Michelle Assay), a translation and edition of the Selected Letters of Carl Nielsen, an edited volume on Music under Nazi Occupation, and an article on 'Nielsen and Shakespeare'. As a pianist he performed for 25 years as chamber-music partner of the Lindsay String Quartet, a role he now continues with the Lindsays' successors as artists-in-residence at the University of Manchester; the Quatuor Danel. He is also critic for Gramophone and The Daily Telegraph.

Judith Kuhn is lecturer emeritus in musicology at University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and a recovering lawyer who earned her PhD from the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom. Her book, *Shostakovich in Dialogue: Form, Imagery and Ideas in Quartets 1-7* (Ashgate, 2010), explored Shostakovich's use of form and genre in his Stalin-era quartets, and was named one of the best music books of 2010 by Classic FM (UK). She has published articles in *Music Analysis*, *Notes*, *Slavic Review*, *A Cambridge Companion to Shostakovich* and other periodicals and collections.

Patrick McCreless is Professor of Music, and Affiliate Faculty in German at Yale University. He chaired the Department of Music at Yale from 2001 to 2007, and was Acting Chair in the fall semester of 2016. Previously he taught at the Eastman School of Music and the University of Texas at Austin. His early work was on Wagner and the chromatic music of the later nineteenth century. In addition to his book, *Wagner's Siegfried: Its Drama, History, and Music*, he has published essays on *Götterdämmerung* and *Parsifal*, and, with Adrian Daub of Stanford University, he wrote all the articles on the *Ring* in the Cambridge Wagner Encyclopedia (2013). He has also published on the history of music theory, rhetoric and music, performance and analysis, musical gesture, and the music of Shostakovich, Elgar, and Nielsen. He has served as President of the Society for Music Theory, and he currently is the Editor of the Journal of Music Theory.



The Victoria Symphony congratulates the
Lafayette String Quartet
for 30 years of memorable performances
in Victoria and around the world.



VICTORIA
SYMPHONY

Tania Miller, Music Director

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Pre-concert talk with Michelle Assay (Université Paris-Sorbonne) and David Fanning (University of Manchester).

String Quartet No. 7 in F-sharp minor, Op. 108 (1960)

Allegretto

Lento

Allegro – Allegretto

String Quartet No. 8 in C minor, Op. 110 (1960)

Largo

Allegro molto

Allegretto

Largo

Largo

INTERMISSION

Concession open in the lounge.

String Quartet No. 9 in E-flat major, Op. 117 (1964)

Moderato con moto

Adagio

Allegretto

Adagio

Allegro

PROGRAM NOTES

While the Post-Stalin Thaw in Soviet society proceeded on its juddering but broadly positive path, Shostakovich's personal fortunes mirrored it, but inversely. His first wife, Nina Varzar, died unexpectedly in 1954, to be followed shortly afterwards by his mother; his second marriage lasted only three years (1956-9); in 1958 he began to experience signs of a mysterious weakness of the limbs that would only much later be diagnosed as motor neuron disease (aka ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease); in the middle of 1960 began the process of his induction into Communist Party membership, which in his embattled state he felt unable to resist. Finally in November 1962, in effect stopping the rot, he married Irina Supinskaya, who provided a new bedrock for his life, and who continues to safeguard his legacy to this day. The dedications of Quartets 7 to 9 suggest that all those experiences provided a frame for his creativity, and several aspects of the quartets' musical content may be read in the same way.

The **Seventh Quartet** — at around 12 minutes the shortest of the cycle — was finished in March 1960. It carries a dedication to the memory of Nina Varzar, whose 50th birthday would have fallen the previous May. An autobiographical narrative of loss is readable in the frequent absence of one instrument or other from the quartet texture, and it is reinforced by what seem to be allusions to works associated with times of special importance during the years of Shostakovich's marriage.

Such vague allusions become explicit quotations in the **Eighth Quartet**, composed later in 1960, where they suggest flashbacks over a damaged life. Tying them together is the composer's famous DSCH monogram — the notes D, E-flat, C, B-natural, enshrining his initials as expressed in German nomenclature (where E-flat is pronounced 'S' and B-natural is H). No wonder Shostakovich insisted that apart from the printed dedication 'To the Memory of Victims of Fascism and War' the piece was also a kind of requiem for himself.

In this light it does not seem fanciful to attribute the new streak of determination marked by the colossal 719-bar finale of the **Ninth Quartet** to the stabilising force of his third wife, to whom the work is dedicated. The creative effort involved is also embodied in the overall Beethovenian trajectory of the work: from uncertainty, through doubt and sardonic grotesquerie, to eventual fist-brandishing energy.

Notes by David Fanning

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Pre-concert talk with Patrick McCreless (Yale University).

String Quartet No. 10 in A-flat major, Op. 118 (1964)

Andante

Allegretto furioso

Adagio

Allegretto

String Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 122 (1966)

Introduction: Andantino

Scherzo: Allegretto

Recitative: Adagio

Etude: Allegro

Humoresque: Allegro

Elegy: Adagio

Finale: Moderato

INTERMISSION

Concession open in the lounge.

String Quartet No. 12 in D-flat major, Op. 133 (1968)

Moderato – Allegretto

Allegretto – Adagio – Moderato – Adagio – Moderato – Allegretto

String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat minor, Op. 138 (1969)

Adagio – Doppio movimento – Tempo primo

PROGRAM NOTES

The **Tenth Quartet** marks a return, in Shostakovich's quartet cycle, to a certain conventionality, after the autobiographical Eighth and the edgy Ninth. This generally conservative quartet returns to the traditional four-movement structure of the First, Second, Fourth, and Sixth (allegro—slow movement—dance/scherzo—finale), though with the scherzo and slow movement reversed. The emotional specificity of the tempo marking of the second movement, *Allegretto furioso*, is unique in the quartets; no other movement is so explicit about emotional character.

With Quartets 11-13 we come to the first three of the five late quartets. Here the central issues are Shostakovich's experimentation with musical form at the highest level — the level of the order and relation of movements — and his innovations on the musical surface. The **Eleventh Quartet** (1966), in F minor, has seven short movements, each with a generic title (*Introduction, Scherzo, Recitative*, etc.), and all interconnected — that is, with no inter-movement pauses. Like the other two minor-mode late quartets (the Thirteenth and the Fifteenth), it seems to deal directly with death. Its successor, the **Twelfth** (1968), which returns to the major mode (D-flat major), is one of the most ambitious works in the cycle. Shostakovich himself said of it, "It's a symphony! It's a symphony!" — and we can see why; its monumentality is well earned. Its division into movements is unique in all of Shostakovich's oeuvre: a six-minute moderato followed by a massive, twenty-minute movement that starts out as a scherzo, then interjects an adagio and moderato of entirely different character, before recapitulating much of the first movement and part of the scherzo. With its introduction of the first twelve-tone rows in the cycle (the first of which we hear in the cello at the very beginning of the first movement), its intricate musical argument, and its status as the most technically demanding of all the quartets, it poses challenges that demand the most from performers, critics, and analysts. Finally, the grim **Thirteenth Quartet** (1970), in B-flat minor, is Shostakovich's only one-movement quartet. Like the Twelfth, it also opens with a twelve-tone row, and it continues to use eleven- and twelve-note rows as themes throughout. It is the work in which the composer's innovations in the late quartets are most concentrated, and in which the musical language is the most obtuse and enigmatic. It features the most jarring contrasts of material, the widest range of possible textures, and the maximal exploitation of contemporary string techniques. Perhaps nothing in it is so strange as its ending: the viola ends its last soliloquy on a high B-flat, three octaves above middle C, pianissimo. A moment later, the second violin joins in on the same note, followed by the first violin, also pianissimo. Suddenly, in the penultimate measure, all three instruments crescendo to a quadruple forte on the same note, and, with a joint accent on the downbeat of the last measure, they together bring the work to a bizarre and violent end, high in the stratosphere.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Pre-concert talk with Judith Kuhn (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee).

String Quartet No. 14 in F-sharp major, Op. 142 (1972–73)

Allegretto

Adagio

Allegretto

INTERMISSION

Concession open in the lounge.

String Quartet No. 15 in E-flat minor, Op. 144 (1974)

Elegy: Adagio

Serenade: Adagio

Intermezzo: Adagio

Nocturne: Adagio

Funeral March: Adagio molto

Epilogue: Adagio

Please join us for a reception in the lobby following the concert.

PROGRAM NOTES

Shostakovich's style became gradually more exploratory in his late years, as he was able to hear contemporary works from outside the USSR. In comparison to the early quartets, the later works seem more personal, eventually reflecting a preoccupation with love and death.

The **Fourteenth Quartet** is the last of four (11-14) dedicated to the original members of The Beethoven Quartet, who had been the composer's "quartet muses," and had worked closely with him since 1938. In the mid-1960s, the ensemble began to lose its original members to illness and death and, by 1973, only two remained. This quartet seems to share the sadness of that loss.

It begins, though, with a cheery dance for dedicatee Sergey Shirinsky, the Beethovens' cellist. The slow movement features a tender duet for first violin and the cello — then the only two remaining players of the original Beethovens. Here, perhaps, we are eavesdropping on an intimate and affectionate conversation as the composer and his friends comfort one another. Shirinsky's diminutive name, Seryozha, appears in code at the finale's beginning, and most obviously as its centerpiece, where the cello quotes a love song, "Seryozha, My Darling," from the composer's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*.

Shostakovich wrote his **Quartet No. 15** just over a year before his death, as he was struggling with illness and pain. Composed only of slow movements, it is nonetheless full of vitality and imagery. Death appears most obviously in the titles of the work's *Elegy* and *Funeral March*, but we can hear its jagged edges in the sounds of other movements.

Like the Eighth, the Fifteenth begins with a somber fugue, which opens into a Bruckner-like melody of pure C major. The bizarre second movement — ironically titled "Serenade" — echoes the title and key of one of Musorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death*, where Death "harvests" souls from a battlefield, and "serenades" them as they die. One can imagine the quartet's movement as Death's distorted idea of a serenade: first, an awful "singing," and then a rude, strummed accompaniment. The third-movement "Intermezzo" is perhaps a furious distortion of the lovely recitative style used in the Second Quartet, and the *Nocturne* quotes a lament from Shostakovich's song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry* (1949). In the spirit of remembrance that seems to characterize the work, the finale recalls themes from earlier movements, and ends without comfort — bleak and profoundly sad.

Notes by Judith Kuhn



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VICTORIA SUMMER Music Festival

“The Victoria Summer Music Festival was very excited to launch the 30th anniversary celebrations of the Lafayette String Quartet with their VSMF performance in July 2016. We look forward to the fabulous Shostakovich cycle and to further appearances at our Festival by this esteemed quartet!”

Arthur Rowe, Artistic Director
Victoria Summer Music Festival

Victoria Summer Music Festival
July 25 – August 9, 2017 / vsmf.org

CONGRATULATIONS

from the staff at
Schell and Associates, CPA.

It has been a wonderful
experience to watch your
success for the last 25 years.

We are very proud of your
accomplishments and being
able to assist you in some
small way along this path.

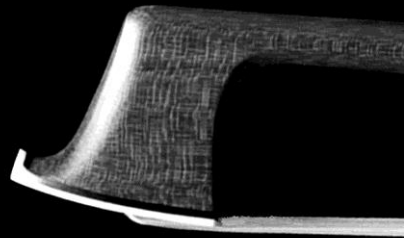
We wish you many more years
of filling the air and ears
with the magic of your music.



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Congratulations
to the LSQ
on your
30th



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GALIANO

Ensemble of Victoria

Yariv Aloni, music director

CONGRATULATIONS

to the

Lafayette String Quartet

on the occasion of its 30th Anniversary

The Galiano Ensemble is pleased to pay tribute to the Lafayette String Quartet. The members of the Quartet have been the principal players in the Galiano Ensemble since its inception and the Ensemble is proud of its long and close association with the Quartet.

Congratulations on your 30 years of performing together and sharing an unwavering commitment to teaching, mentoring and supporting students at the University of Victoria.

Best wishes to the Lafayette String Quartet for continued success in the future!

Galiano Ensemble of Victoria

www.galiano.ca