

UC San Diego

ARTPOWER



**TESLA QUARTET
AND
DAVID KAPLAN**



Dear ArtPower Friends,

For two decades, ArtPower at UC San Diego has been a leader in arts and culture, enriching the lives of countless individuals through diverse and captivating programming. ArtPower's 20th anniversary season provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the organization's remarkable journey and its enduring commitment to bringing world-class performing arts to our community.

Founded in 2003, ArtPower was conceived with a simple yet profound mission: to engage, energize, and transform the diverse cultural life of the University and San Diego through the performing and media arts. Over the years, ArtPower has consistently delivered a diverse array of performances that span the genres with the goal of developing more empathetic students and community members who are better prepared to engage in the world around them.

Our 20th anniversary season promises to be a testament to ArtPower's unwavering dedication to this mission. With a carefully curated lineup of performances and events, this season is set to captivate, challenge, entertain, and inspire audiences in ways that only ArtPower can.

ArtPower's commitment to education and community engagement remains as strong as ever. Throughout the season, there will be a range of programs that connect artists with students, community members and art enthusiasts of all ages and backgrounds. These initiatives not only enhance our understanding of the arts, but also for one another.

As we embark on this milestone season, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who have invested their time, talent, and treasure into ArtPower at UC San Diego. Looking forward to the next twenty years, let us revel in the beauty of artistic expression and reflect on the impact ArtPower has had on our community. Thank you for being part of the ArtPower legacy.

Cheers,

Colleen Kollar Smith



Chamber Music/USA

**TESLA QUARTET
AND
DAVID KAPLAN**

Nov. 3, 2023 at 7:30 pm
Department of Music's
Conrad Prebys
Concert Hall

Tesla Quartet
Ross Snyder, *violin*
Michelle Lie, *violin*
Edwin Kaplan, *viola*
Austin Fisher, *cello*

David Kaplan, *piano*

Program

Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Violin Sonata in A Major, Opus 47 "Kreutzer"
Adagio sostenuto; Presto
Andante con Variazioni
Finale: Presto

Leoš Janáček (1854–1928)

String Quartet No. 1 "The Kreutzer Sonata"
Adagio; Con moto
Con moto
Con moto
Con moto

Intermission

Amy Beach (1867–1944)

Piano Quintet in F-sharp Minor, Opus 67
Adagio; Allegro moderato
Adagio espressivo
Allegro agitato

This program is part of:





The Kreutzer Affair

The Kreutzer Affair is an immersive theatrical concert program created by the Tesla Quartet with pianist David Kaplan, exploring how music was captured into words and then rebottled into music again.

The program's point of inspiration is the Violin Sonata No. 9 in A Major by Ludwig van Beethoven, known simply as the "Kreutzer" Sonata. The piece is fiery and transcendent, written "in the style of a concerto," and brought controversy almost from its inception. Originally written in 1803 for the renowned violinist George Bridgetower, Beethoven rescinded his dedication after a drunken argument and gave the honor instead to Rodolphe Kreutzer. Never mind that the great violinist despised and refused to play the piece—it would thereafter be known by his name.

Fast forward a century later, and the towering Russian writer Leo Tolstoy writes a controversial novella eponymous with the violin sonata, in which the music serves as a vehicle for both its plot and its message. The emotional and physical violence of the story bristles, and the story was immediately banned when published in 1889.

Finally, we arrive at Leoš Janáček, the poignant and visionary Czech composer, whose First String Quartet recaptures Tolstoy's searing narrative into the form of music, masterfully rendering the passion, contradiction, and tragedy of the novella.

In a continuous seventy minute performance, the Tesla Quartet and David Kaplan interweave the three movements of Beethoven's Violin Sonata and Janáček's String Quartet No. 1 with dramatic excerpts from Tolstoy's novella, recited by the musicians themselves.

After intermission, the quartet and pianist join for another poignant work: Amy Beach's Piano Quintet in F# minor. A precocious composer and performer at the piano, Beach is resonant of the character of Poznitchev's wife, unnamed in the text of the Kreutzer Sonata by Tolstoy. They were both pianists who gave up their musical aspirations by marrying in society. Amy Beach's quintet represents the silenced voice of Tolstoy's tragic character.





About the Program

Violin Sonata in A Major, Opus 47 "Kreutzer"

Ludwig Van Beethoven

Born December 16, 1770, Bonn

Died March 26, 1827, Vienna

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Beethoven was beginning to get restless. The young man who had arrived in Vienna in 1792 was a tremendous pianist, but as a composer still had much to learn, and he spent the next decade slowly mastering the High Classical form of Haydn and Mozart. By 1802 he had composed two symphonies, three piano concertos, a set of six string quartets, and numerous sonatas for piano, for violin, and for cello. These had all been acclaimed in Vienna, but in that same year Beethoven wrote to his friend Werner Krumpholtz: "I'm not satisfied with what I've composed up to now. From now on I intend to embark on a new path." That "new path" would become clear late in 1803 with the composition of the "Eroica." That symphony revolutionized music—it engaged the most serious issues, and in music of unparalleled drama and scope it resolved them.

But even before the "Eroica," there were indications of Beethoven's "new path." Early in 1803 the composer met the violinist George Polgreen Bridgetower (1778–1860). Bridgetower, then 25, was the son of a West Indian father and European mother; he had played in the orchestra for Haydn's concerts in London a decade earlier and was now establishing himself as a touring virtuoso on the continent. Bridgetower and Beethoven quickly became friends, and when the violinist proposed a joint concert at which they would perform a new sonata, the composer agreed. But, as was often the case, Beethoven found himself pressed for time. He made the process easier by retrieving a final movement that he had written for a violin sonata the previous year and then discarded. Now, in effect working backwards, he rushed to get the first two movements done in time for the scheduled concert on May 22. He didn't make it. The concert had to be postponed two days, and even then Beethoven barely got it done: he called his copyist at 4:30 that morning to begin copying a part for him, and at the concert he and Bridgetower had to perform some of the music from Beethoven's manuscript; the piano part for the first movement was still in such fragmentary form that Beethoven was probably playing some of it just from sketches.

As soon as he completed this sonata, Beethoven set to work on the "Eroica," which would occupy him for the next six months. While the sonata does not engage the heroic issues of the first movement of that symphony, it has something of the "Eroica's" slashing power and vast scope. Beethoven was well aware of this and





warned performers that the sonata was “written in a very concertante style, quasi-concerto-like.” From the first instant, one senses that this is music conceived on a grand scale. The sonata opens with a slow introduction (the only one in Beethoven’s ten violin sonatas), a cadenza-like entrance for the violin alone. The piano makes a similarly dramatic entrance, and gradually the two instruments outline the interval of a rising second (E to F#). At the *Presto*, that interval collapses into a half-step, the movement jumps into A minor, and the music whips ahead. Beethoven provides a chorale-like second subject marked *dolce*, but this island of calm makes only the briefest of returns in the course of this furious movement. The burning energy of that *Presto* opening is never far off: the music rips along an almost machine-gun-like patter of eighth notes, and after a hyperactive development, the movement drives to its abrupt cadence.

Relief comes in the *Andante con Variazioni*. The piano introduces the melody, amiable but already fairly complex, the violin repeats it, and the two instruments briefly extend it. There follow four lengthy and highly elaborated variations, and while the gentle mood of the fundamental theme is never violated, these variations demand some complex and demanding playing. For all its complexities, this is a lovely movement, and Beethoven and Bridgetower had to repeat it at the premiere.

The final movement opens with a bang—a stark A-major chord—and off the music goes. Beethoven had composed this movement, a tarantella, a year earlier, intending that it should be the finale of his Violin Sonata in A Major, Opus 30, No. 1. But he pulled it out and wrote a new finale for the earlier sonata, and that was a wise decision: this fiery finale would have overpowered that gentle sonata. Here, it dances with a furious energy that makes it a worthy counterpart to the first movement. At several points, Beethoven moves out of the driving 6/8 tarantella meter and offers brief interludes in 2/4. These stately, reserved moments bring the only relief in a movement that overflows with seething energy, a movement that here becomes the perfect conclusion to one of the most powerful pieces of chamber music ever written.

Beethoven was so taken with Bridgetower’s playing that he intended to dedicate the sonata to him, and it is a measure of the playful relations between the two that Beethoven inscribed the manuscript to the violinist: “Mulattic sonata written for the mulatto Brischdauer, a complete lunatic and mulattic composer.” And so we might know this music today as the “Bridgetower” Sonata but for the fact that the composer and the violinist quarreled, apparently over a remark that Bridgetower made about a woman Beethoven knew. The two eventually made up, but in the meantime Beethoven had dedicated the sonata to the French violinist Rodolphe Kreutzer, and so we know it today as the “Kreutzer” Sonata. Ironically, Kreutzer





did not like this music—Berlioz reported that “the celebrated violinist could never bring himself to play this outrageously incomprehensible composition.”

String Quartet No. 1 “The Kreutzer Sonata”

Leoš Janáček

Born July 3, 1854, Hukvaldy, Moravia

Died August 12, 1928, Moravska Ostrava, Czechoslovakia

Czech composer Leoš Janáček labored for years in obscurity. And at the time of his sixtieth birthday in 1914 he was known only as a choral conductor and teacher who had achieved modest success with a provincial production of his opera *Jenufa* ten years earlier. Then in 1917 came a transforming event. The aging composer fell in love with Kamila Stösslová, a 25-year-old married woman and mother of a small child. This one-sided love affair was platonic—Kamila was mystified by all this passionate attention, though she remained an affectionate and understanding friend. But the effect of this love on Janáček was staggering: over the final decade of his life he wrote four operas, two string quartets, the *Sinfonietta*, the *Glagolitic Mass*, and numerous other works, all in some measure inspired by his love for Kamila (he also wrote her over 600 letters).

Not surprisingly, Janáček became consumed in these years with the idea of women: their charm, their power, and the often cruel situations in which they find themselves trapped by love. The theme of a woman who makes tragic decisions about love is portrayed dramatically in the opera *Katya Kabanova* (1921) and abstractly in his two string quartets. The second of these quartets, subtitled “Intimate Pages,” is a direct expression of his love for Kamila, while the first, subtitled “The Kreutzer Sonata,” takes its inspiration from Tolstoy’s novella of the same name. In Tolstoy’s story, a deranged man tells of his increasing suspicion of his wife, who is a pianist, and the violinist she accompanies in a performance of Beethoven’s *Kreutzer Sonata*. He returns home unexpectedly, finds them together, and stabs his wife to death.

Working very quickly in the fall of 1923, Janáček composed a string quartet inspired by Tolstoy’s story (the actual composition took only nine days: October 30–November 7). A few days before the premiere of the quartet in 1924, Janáček wrote to Kamila, telling her that the subject of his quartet was “the unhappy, tormented, misused and ill-used woman as described by the Russian writer Tolstoy in his work, *The Kreutzer Sonata*.” Janáček’s biographer Jaroslav Vogel reports that the second violinist at the premiere (who was in fact the composer Joseph Suk) said that “Janáček meant the work to be a kind of moral protest against men’s despotic attitude to women.”





Listeners should be wary of trying to hear exact representations of these ideas in the quartet, for this is not music that explicitly tells a story. Some have claimed to hear an elaborate “plot” in this music, but it is much more useful to approach the First String Quartet as an abstract work of art that creates an agitated, even grim atmosphere. Listeners should also not expect the normal structure of the classical string quartet. Janáček’s late music is built on fragmentary themes that develop through repetition, abrupt changes of tempo and mood, and an exceptionally wide palette of string color. The opening movement alternates *Adagio* and *Con moto* sections, and the other three movements, all marked *Con moto*, are built on the same pattern of alternating sections in different speeds, moods, and sounds. There are several striking touches: the arcing melodic shape heard in the first measures of the quartet will return throughout (the quartet ends with a variation of this figure), while the opening of the third movement is a subtle quotation from the *Kreutzer Sonata* of Beethoven, a composer Janáček disliked. Throughout the span of the eighteen-minute quartet, the music gathers such intensity that its subdued ending comes as a surprise.

Janáček’s performance markings in the score are particularly suggestive: by turn he asks the players to make the music sound “grieving,” “weeping,” “sharp,” “lamenting,” “desperate,” “lugubrious,” and—at the climax of the final movement—“ferocious.” One does not need to know Janáček’s markings, however, to feel the intensity of this music.

Piano Quintet in F-sharp Minor, Opus 67

Amy Beach

Born September 5, 1867, Henniker, NH

Died December 27, 1944, New York City

Amy Beach deserves to be remembered as more than just America’s first successful woman composer, as she is often categorized. A child prodigy, she appeared as piano soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at 17 and began composing while still a girl. At age 18 she married the Boston surgeon H.H.A. Beach, who—though a cultivated man musically—did not want his wife performing in public. He did, however, encourage her to compose. Beach had no formal training as a composer (which in her day meant European training), and as a composer she was essentially self-taught. Nevertheless, over the next several decades she produced a sequence of successful large-scale works. Her *Mass in E-flat* (1890) was the first work by a woman composer presented by Boston’s Haydn and Handel Society, and her “*Gaelic*” Symphony (1897) and Piano Concerto (1900) were performed to critical acclaim. Upon the death of her husband in 1910, Beach—then 43—resumed her career as a concert pianist, making a particularly successful series of tours





through Europe. She composed throughout her life (her list of opus numbers runs to 152), and she was still active as pianist and composer at the time of her death in 1944 at age 77.

Beach made her career primarily in New England (she is often identified with the Boston school of composers that included Parker, Foote, and Chadwick) and in New York, so it comes as a surprise to learn that she was particularly attracted to California. She visited this state often, performed here on a number of occasions, and sometimes lived here for extended periods. One of her best-known works, the *Variations for Flute and String Quartet*, was commissioned by the San Francisco Chamber Music Society in 1916. During the Pan-Pacific Exposition of 1915–16, there were two Beach festivals in California, one in San Francisco and the other in San Diego. At the latter she performed at the outdoor Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park, and unfortunately it rained that day—a photo survives showing Beach (wearing a large hat) playing while the audience listens from beneath umbrellas.

Beach composed her Piano Quintet in 1907–08, and she was the pianist at its first performance on February 20, 1908, in Boston. The world of music was in ferment in 1908—in that year Mahler composed *Das Lied von der Erde*, Schoenberg his Second String Quartet, and Scriabin his *Poem of Ecstasy*. There is not the slightest trace of these new directions in Beach's Piano Quintet, which remains firmly rooted in the nineteenth-century musical traditions with which she had grown up. Brahms himself would have felt comfortable with the form and grand sonority of her Piano Quintet, though he might have been surprised by the chromaticism of her writing.

Beach's Piano Quintet is a concise work: its three movements span only 24 minutes, and there are thematic connections between movements. Much of its big sound comes from Beach's decision to set the piano against the massed strings, which often play in octaves—that can make for a dramatic situation musically as well as an impressive sound. Some of that sound is heard in the opening moments of the *Adagio* introduction, though at the *Allegro moderato* the first violin sings its long, chromatic opening idea over nervous, rippling piano accompaniment. Beach marks the second subject of this sonata-form movement both *espressivo* and *dolcissimo*, and an extremely active development treats both themes before the movement comes to a quiet close.

Strings are muted as they lay out the opening idea of the *Adagio espressivo*, but those mutes come off as this movement rises to several grand climaxes, the first marked *appassionato* and the second triple *forte*. Beach titles the finale *Allegro agitato*, and agitated it certainly is, as it opens with racing runs and a return to the





broad sonority of the opening movement. The viola has the long second subject before a fugue-like passage for strings leads to a recall of the music from the slow introduction to the first movement. This builds to a great climax, and a Presto coda drives the quintet to its sonorous close.

Program notes by Eric Bromberger

About the Artists

Tesla Quartet

The Tesla Quartet is known the world over for their "superb capacity to find the inner heart of everything they play, regardless of era, style, or technical demand" (*The International Review of Music*). From contemporary works to established masterpieces, the Tesla Quartet's thoughtful interpretations reveal the ensemble's deep commitment to their craft.

Now entering its second decade, the quartet performs regularly across North America and Europe, with recent highlights including their debut at Lincoln Center, a return to Wigmore Hall, and performances at Stanford University's Bing Concert Hall as winners of the prestigious John Lad Prize. Other recent international engagements include tours of Brazil, China, and South Korea.

Remaining true to their ethos, the Tesla Quartet has proved resilient in the face of global depression. From the safety of their own homes, they overcame technological hurdles in order to cheer on the healthcare heroes of the New York Presbyterian Hospital with weekly concerts; commissioned 12 works for their series *Alternating Currents*, an homage to Beethoven and a celebration of diverse voices; and helped pioneer *ImmerSphere*, an immersive augmented reality virtual concert experience. With renewed hope, the Tesla Quartet is focusing its efforts in the coming seasons on inspiring climate action with the commissions of several full length works for string quartet, including Jeff Nytech's piece decrying deforestation, *Song of the Lorax*.

In 2018, the Tesla Quartet released its debut album of Haydn, Ravel, and Stravinsky quartets on the Orchid Classics label to critical acclaim. *Joy & Desolation*, out October 2019 on Orchid Classics, featured quintets by Mozart, Finzi, John Corigliano and Carolina Heredia with clarinetist Alexander Fiterstein.

The Tesla Quartet builds upon years of early success at numerous competitions including top prizes at the prestigious 2016 Banff International String Quartet Competition, 2015 International Joseph Haydn Chamber Music Competition, and





2012 Wigmore Hall London International String Quartet Competition. From 2009 to 2012, the quartet held a fellowship as the Graduate String Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Colorado-Boulder, where they studied with the Takács Quartet. The group originally formed at The Juilliard School in 2008.

The Tesla Quartet is Ross Snyder (violin), Michelle Lie (violin), Edwin Kaplan (viola), and Austin Fisher (cello). Learn more at www.teslaquartet.com.

David Kaplan

David Kaplan, pianist, has been called "excellent and adventurous" by the *New York Times*, and praised by the *Boston Globe* for "grace and fire" at the keyboard. As orchestra soloist, he has appeared with the Britten Sinfonia at London's Barbican and Das Sinfonie Orchester Berlin at the Philharmonie, and next year makes debuts with the Symphony Orchestras of Hawaii and San Antonio. As recitalist, he has performed at the Ravinia Festival, Sarasota Opera House, Music on Main in Vancouver, Strathmore, Washington's National Gallery, and New York's Carnegie and Merkin Halls.

Kaplan has consistently drawn critical acclaim for creative programs that interweave classical and contemporary repertoire, often incorporating newly commissioned works. As a guest artist of Piano Spheres at Los Angeles' Zipper Hall, he recently premiered "Quasi una Fantasia," a program exploring the grey area between composition and improvisation through works by Anthony Cheung, Christopher Cerrone, and Andrea Casarrubios, together with Couperin, Beethoven, Schumann, Saariaho, Ligeti, and his own improvisations. Kaplan's "New Dances of the League of David," a recital infusing Schumann's Davidsbündlertänze with 16 new works by composers including Augusta Read Thomas, Marcos Balter, Caroline Shaw, and Andrew Norman was cited among the "Best Classical Music Performances of 2015" by the *New York Times*.

Balancing solo performances with meaningful collaborations, Kaplan has played with the Attacca, Ariel, Enso, Hausman, and Tesla String Quartets. As a core member of Decoda, the Affiliate Ensemble of Carnegie Hall, he performs frequently in New York's most exciting venues, from the Metropolitan Museum of Art to National Sawdust, as well as creating innovative residencies as far away as Abu Dhabi, Mexico, and Scotland. He is a veteran of numerous distinguished chamber music festivals and series, such as the Seattle Chamber Music, Bard, and Mostly Mozart Festivals, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Chamber Music Northwest, and Barge Music. He is an alumnus of Tanglewood and the Ravinia-Steans Institute, and performs regularly as an alumnus of the Perlman





Music Program, including with Itzhak Perlman at Miami's Arsht Center. He serves as Co-Artistic Director of Lyrica Chamber Music, a community series in Morris County, NJ currently in its 36th season.

Kaplan has recorded for Naxos and Marquis Records, as well as for Nonesuch as part of his longstanding duo with pianist/composer Timo Andres. Later this year, Bright Shiny Things will release *Vent*, Kaplan's debut album with his wife, flutist Catherine Gregory, to include music by Gabriela Lena Frank, David Lang, Mr. Andres, Schubert, and Prokofiev.

Kaplan was a student of the late Claude Frank, and previously studied with Walter Ponce and Miyoko Lotto. His mentors over the years have included Anton Kuerti, Richard Goode, and Emanuel Ax. He studied conducting at the Universität der Künste Berlin with Lutz Köhler, under the auspices of a Fulbright Fellowship from 2008-2010. The recipient of a DMA from Yale University in 2014, Kaplan earned his Bachelor from UCLA, where he has also served on the faculty since 2016, and now is the Assistant Professor and Inaugural Shapiro Family Chair in Piano Performance.

David is proud to be a Yamaha/Bösendorfer Artist, and when at home in Los Angeles, he enjoys practicing on his childhood piano, a 1908 Hamburg Steinway model A. Away from the keyboard, he loves cartooning and cooking, and is mildly obsessed with classic cars.

David Kaplan is represented worldwide by BLU OCEAN ARTS.

For more information please visit davidkaplanpiano.com





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THE CHRISTOPHER AND PATRICIA WEIL INSPIRATION CHALLENGE

The Christopher and Patricia Weil Inspiration Challenge provides a dollar-for-dollar match, up to \$50,000, for all new, upgraded sponsor gifts, or multi-year pledges in support of ArtPower at UC San Diego. Donors with a qualifying gift for the Inspiration Challenge will be recognized at the total matched gift level. To make your gift visit artpower.ucsd.edu.





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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9 AT 7:30 PM
PRICE CENTER EAST BALLROOM

Multi-genre work *Requiem for the Enslaved* by Carlos Simon is a musical tribute to commemorate the stories of 272 enslaved men, women and children sold in 1838 by Georgetown University, infusing original compositions with African American spirituals and familiar Catholic liturgical melodies. Performed by the Hub New Music with Carlos at the piano, *Requiem* features spoken word and hip hop artist Marco Pavé, and trumpeter MK Zulu.

Requiem for the Enslaved was nominated for a 2023 GRAMMY award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

