

The Tokyo String Quartet: A Residency

A research guide designed to accompany the Visions and Voices series of events culminating in the performance by the Tokyo String Quartet

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Events

The Playing Field: Music and Athletics

Monday, November 3, 7 p.m.
Heritage Hall

The Musical Mind

Wednesday, November 5, 2 p.m.
Hedco Neurosciences Building,
Room 100

Creativity in Arts Reporting

Wednesday, November 5, 7:30 p.m.
Annenberg Auditorium

Culminating Seminar and Finale Performance

Thursday, November 6, 8 p.m.
Newman Recital Hall

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Introduction

The Tokyo String Quartet: A Residency features a series of events with USC Athletics, the Brain and Creativity Institute, and USC Annenberg School of Communication, culminating in a seminar and performance. The series was organized by Midori Goto of the USC Thornton School of Music. In cooperation with Goto, Ross Scimeca of the USC Libraries has selected the following resources to help you learn more about the Tokyo String Quartet and the history of the musical form.

The Tokyo String Quartet consists of Martin Beaver, first violin; Kikuei Ikeda, second violin; Kazuhide Isomura, viola; and Clive Greensmith, cello. As one of the leading ensembles in contemporary music, the quartet has recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, RCA, and Harmonia Mundi. Visit their Web site at www.tokyoquartet.com.

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Philosophy/Humanities Librarian



Ross Scimeca

Contact Info

Hoose Library of
Philosophy/University of Southern
California/Los Angeles, CA 90089

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Ross on Mondays, 3pm-4:45pm.

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History of the String Quartet

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The Development of the String Quartet Form

Many critics consider the string quartet to be the most significant form in chamber music, comparable to the symphony in orchestral music. The origins of the musical form date to the early 18th century, and well-known compositions by Ludwig van Beethoven, Joseph Haydn, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart helped to define its conventions for later generations. Franz Schubert and other romantics—along with 20th century composers such as Béla Bartók, Arnold Schoenberg, and Dmitri Shostakovich—revisited the form and adapted it to their own historical moment.

Unlike symphonies, which are performed in larger public settings, string quartets are an intimate form that introduces audiences to the composers' private reflections. Critics have often compared Beethoven's late quartets with Michelangelo's last group of sculptures in the Medici Chapel in Florence. Using marble and sound respectively, both artists succeed in bringing their audiences into another world.

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Further Reading

The String Quartet

By Paul Griffith
Thames & Hudson, 1983
Music Library ML1160.G75 1983

The String Quartets of Beethoven

By William Kinderman
University of Illinois Press, 2006
Music Library MT145.B425S75 2006

The Twentieth-Century String Quartet: An Historical Introduction and Catalogue

By Ian Lawrence
Scarecrow Press, 2001
Music Library ML128.C4L37 2001

The String Quartet, 1750-1797: Four Types of Musical Conversation

By Mara Parker
Ashgate, 2002
Music Library ML1160.P37 2002

The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet

By Robin Stowell
Cambridge University Press, 2003
Music Library ML1160.C36 2003

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Explore the String Quartet Form

Visit the USC Music Library for an introduction to the string quartet form. You can trace its historical development through CD recordings of the following compositions at our listening stations:

- Joseph Haydn: String Quartets Opus 76, Nos. 1-6
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: String Quartets Nos. 18, 19, and 20
- Ludwig van Beethoven: The Late String Quartets Nos. 12 to 16
- Franz Schubert: String Quartet No. 14 "Death and the Maiden"
- Béla Bartók: String Quartets Nos. 1-6, particularly Nos. 3 and 4
- Arnold Schoenberg: String Quartet No. 2
- Dmitri Shostakovich: String Quartets Nos. 3, 8, and 15

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