



Quatuor Danel with Pascal Moraguès, clarinet
Sunday, March 14, 7:00pm PDT and Thursday, March 18, 6:00pm PDT

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Music at Kohl's Virtual Season 38! We're coming to you online all season as we continue to observe the safety regulations mandated by our county and state. While we miss being with you live and in person in the warm and intimate setting of the Kohl Mansion's Great Hall, we are grateful that you have chosen to join us in this new virtual realm to enjoy great performances from the comfort of your home.

This season affords us new opportunities to share these concert broadcasts with audiences far and wide outside the concert hall walls, as well as the chance to see and hear our superb performers in their own home towns. We're delighted to be able to bring you these programs – brief, compact, modestly priced, and easily accessible from your personal screens. You can still enjoy the popular, lively introductions by beloved musicologist Kai Christiansen before each concert, as well as informal, up-close conversations with the artists inviting us to learn about their lives off the stage.

Music at Kohl is now global! Friends and family members near and far may sign up online at www.musicatkohl.org and become part of our extended concert family. We hope you'll invite them to experience Music at Kohl Online!

Now more than ever, great music brings us comfort and offers us a welcome respite from the challenges of our daily lives. Thank you for joining us for this new adventure in chamber music.

Zerlina Chen Hayes
President

Patricia Kristof Moy
Executive Director

Tickets and information: 650.762.1130 ~ www.musicatkohl.org

Music at Kohl Mansion

Sunday, March 14, 2021, 7:00pm PDT, and Thursday, March 18, 2021, 6:00pm PDT

Quatuor Danel

Marc Danel, violin

Gilles Millet, violin

Vlad Bogdanas, viola

Yovan Markovitch, cello

with

Pascal Moraguès, clarinet

Program

String Quartet in D Major

César Franck

IV. Finale: Allegro molto

Clarinet Quintet in A Major, K. 581, “Stadler”

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Allegro

Larghetto

Menuetto

Allegretto con variazioni

Quatuor Danel is represented by MKI Artists; One Lawson Lane, Suite 320, Burlington, VT 05401.

Recordings: CPO, Alpha Classics, Fuga Libera, Label Cypres, W.E.R.F. Records, Accord, Naïve Classique, Prima Facie Records, Marc Aurel, Megadisc Classics, Calliope, Stradivarius, and Metier

www.quatuordanel.eu

Music at Kohl Mansion is presented in collaboration with
Mercy High School, Burlingame – Natalie Cirigliano Brosnan, Head of School.

Program Notes

César Franck, 1822-1890

String Quartet in D Major, 1889-1890

César Franck was born a Belgian but spent the majority of his life in Paris as one of several composers comprising a brilliant Renaissance of French instrumental music towards the end of the 19th century. The oldest of the group and perhaps the most revered as a teacher, Franck is often called the “Father of Modern French Music.” A child prodigy, he entered the Paris Conservatoire at the tender age of twelve when he astonished the faculty with his virtuosity at the piano but left before completing his studies or winning any significant prizes. After a short career as a touring, performing musician and private studies around Paris, Franck settled into the organ loft of one or more churches where he once again dazzled others with his improvisations earning the admiration of no less than Franz Liszt among others. Franck eventually acquired a faculty position at the Conservatoire where his organ classes became celebrated forums for harmony and composition establishing a cult following among a younger generation of composers including Vincent d’Indy, Ernest Chausson and Claude Debussy. As a gifted and original composer, Franck left two different legacies. First, the religious works including a number of important pieces for organ. Second, a small but extraordinary cache of instrumental works dating from the last decade or so of his life ending in 1890 just before the ascendance of Debussy. Franck’s late, celebrated compositions seem to comprise one per genre including a violin sonata, symphony, piano quintet, and, the last in the series, a string quartet completed only months before his death.

Franck’s String Quartet in D major is a long, complex quartet that is both epic and nearly monolithic at the same time. While it is a one-of-a-kind original, it nonetheless influenced the design of subsequent French quartets by such composers as D’Indy, Debussy and Ravel. Like each of the singular works in his final period, Franck’s quartet vividly exhibits his devotion to the so-called “cyclic” design principle whereby the diversity of a multi-movement work is unified by a single ruling “motto” theme that appears in each movement either directly or indirectly through variation or transformation. In addition, Franck often reprises elements carefully selected from each movement in a retrospective summary as part of the finale, a way to further bind the diverse movements into unified climax and denouement. As a result, the finale is almost a mirror of the entire quartet.

The finale begins with a bold and restless new theme that is interrupted several times by memories of the scherzo, the slow movement and the motto theme from the very first bars of the opening movement. A second and final theme offers yet one more creative variation on the motto that combines with the bold, restless flourish in counterpoint amidst the swirling multiplicity of both past and present, as the quartet rushes towards a deeply fulfilling resolution. Through the entire four-movement quartet, one hears suggestive elements of style, harmony and texture that point to the future of modern French music (Debussy’s quartet will appear three years hence) but perhaps more so, the dense, dramatic and unresolved tensions of the late Romantic period revealing Franck’s affinity for Wagner’s opera and his study of late Beethoven as preparation for composing this quartet. As such, Franck’s music

ultimately offers a unique bridge between two rapidly diverging worlds, one receding into the past and the other emerging as the dawn of the future.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1756-1791

Clarinet Quintet in A Major, K. 581, "Stadler", 1789

Mozart wrote a number of chamber works for strings and a wind instrument, including the flute, oboe, horn and clarinet. In each case, he managed to showcase the idiomatic character of the featured guest while setting it naturally within a chamber context for a balanced, blended ensemble. Often inspired to write for a particular musician, Mozart twice wrote a chamber work featuring the clarinet for his friend Anton Stadler: first, the *Kegelstatt* trio and three years later, in 1789, the exquisite Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581, which Mozart himself subtitled "Stadler's Quintet." In a single work, Mozart combines his gifts for three genres in which he was supreme: opera, the concerto, and the string quartet.

Nearly all of Mozart's mature instrumental music "sings" with a vocal character while it develops through a sure sense of drama into a compelling, wordless narrative. With the skillful handling of the most fluid chamber textures, Mozart conjures solo arias, duets, dances and choruses from an ample cast of five. Mozart single-handedly elevated the concerto to a high plane of dramatic art and his chamber works with highlighted soloist tend to arrange themselves as intimate concerti. The strings are the *tutti* ensemble that prepares for the entrance of the soloist, artfully accompanies its moments in the spotlight and graciously entertains with skill during its absence. With clarinet as operatic diva and concerto soloist, the string quartet emerges as the remaining embedded ensemble with significant portions of the music devoted to its own self-sufficient art. Yet, despite these polarized tendencies throughout the quintet, Mozart still crafts a masterfully integrated chamber work for equal partners where the clarinet blends and the individual strings occasionally sing alone from center stage.

The quintet opens with a moderately paced sonata whose sectional exposition is clearly articulated by no less than three fully lyrical themes in which the strings coax the clarinet to comment, elaborate and finally sing. The first violin and especially the cello emerge as additional solo characters from the airy textures that allow much light to shine through. The very brief development is given primarily to the rich strands of the string quartet while the reprise brings the opening material to greater fruition with the exquisitely classical elaborations that Mozart so frequently lavishes upon the attentive listener. It all wraps up with the five voices as ribbons tying a rococo bow with a streamer of laughing triplets from the clarinet falling into the last echo of the opening theme, now fitted with a simple, final cadence.

The *Larghetto* is the heart of the piece, a wistful nocturne for the mellow, indescribable humanity of the clarinet. Beginning as a touching aria, it becomes a duet as the violin joins like a lover trying to gently soothe her troubled counterpart. At first enlivened, the clarinet sings more deeply of its longing until miraculously transcending into upward scales of magical grace made especially effervescent by the atmospheric sheen of muted strings. Here is the Mozart of ineffably delicate beauty glowing with an

aura that feels to be no less than divinely inspired. Was it this movement alone that inspired a rich tradition of clarinet quintets that extend from Weber to Brahms to Paul Schoenfeld in the present day?

The Menuetto changes the scene from a starlit serenade to a glittering society dance where the rustic directness of the clarinet happily strides into an unlikely contradance with the urbane, refined and possibly aloof cadre of aristocratic strings. To accommodate the rich partitioning of the quintet, Mozart supplies two trios, one for the slightly serious elegance of the string quartet and another for the simple song of clarinet that succeeds in charming a wayward violin into a *ländler* for two.

Mozart explores every last possible set of relationships in this little chamber opera for five with a theme and variations finale. Through a variety of scenes, the characters talk, laugh, lament and dance with ever shifting moods and alliances while recalling the same story from a different angle each time. The third variation is remarkable for giving the lead to a melancholy viola while consigning the dark lower register of the clarinet to replace the missing voice within the quartet texture. Throughout, the concerto tendencies show again most noticeably when the clarinet's absence builds the anticipation of its next appearance as well as with the give and take between strings and clarinet. The best part of a variation set is often the penultimate variation (or two) whose change of mode or tempo (or both) builds an unresolved tension that only the last variation can release. Mozart sets this expectation in motion first by changing to a minor key, a foil predicting the return to an even grander mirth. He delays the resolution and increases the tension by following with a variation at a much slower tempo: restrained by the mock poise of courtly manner, teasing with pregnant pauses and halting with the languid gesture of a question mark in the full calligraphy of a brief clarinet cadenza. Release springs to life at last with a lively recall of the opening theme in its original guise and a little coda to bring the whole ensemble back on stage together for a final bow.

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Kai Christiansen is a musicologist, writer and lecturer on chamber music
and is the founder of earsense, an online chamber music exploratorium at earsense.org*

Meet the Musicians

Quatuor Danel

Marc Danel, violin
Gilles Millet, violin
Vlad Bogdanas, viola,
Yovan Markovitch, cello

The **Quatuor Danel** has been at the forefront of the European music scene for more than twenty years, and with its bold, vibrant, and concentrated performance style caused a sensation with its debut North American tour in 2015-16. Subsequent tours have taken the Quartet to the major series and cities in the United States and Canada, including concerts at New York's Frick Collection and The Clarice Smith in Maryland, and in San Francisco, Montreal, and Washington, D.C. The Quartet's singular voice,

uncompromising depth, and utter commitment to the group's interpretations set the Danel apart from every other string quartet performing today. The ensemble is famous for its deeply personal interpretations of the string quartet cycles of Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Shostakovich, and Weinberg, and its lively and fresh vision of traditional quartet repertoire has won the Danel lavish praise from both the public and the press. In addition, Russian composers have a vital place in the Quatuor Danel's repertoire: the quartet has championed the string quartets of Shostakovich, and its recently reissued recording of the complete cycle is considered one of the benchmark interpretations of these quartets.

Uniquely among string quartets, the Danel has worked closely with both Valentin Berlinsky from the Borodin Quartet as well as Irina Shostakovich to refine the deeply personal interpretations of Russian music for which the ensemble is revered in Europe. Their long personal relationship and exceptionally close work with Dmitri Shostakovich's widow Irina informed these performances in a specific and profoundly personal way, offering a very rarely accessed glimpse into Shostakovich's genius. Over the past three years the Quatuor Danel has recorded the previously unknown quartet oeuvre of Mieczyslaw Weinberg, the neglected contemporary of Shostakovich, for the CD label CPO. The Quartet will continue to offer this breathtakingly beautiful repertoire in coming seasons. In addition, they have collaborated with major contemporary composers such as Wolfgang Rihm, Helmut Lachenmann, Sofia Gubaidulina, Pascal Dusapin, and the stars of the younger generation including Jörg Widmann and Bruno Mantovani.

The Quatuor Danel is a regular guest at the major European festivals, and performed at the Ottawa ChamberFest in both 2016, 2018, and 2019. Recent and upcoming recording projects consist of the three Tchaikovsky quartets, the Quartet and Piano Quintet by Franck with pianist Paavali Jumppanen, and a longer-term project combining all the string quartets of Haydn with late Beethoven. At the very heart of the Quatuor Danel's work lies their ambassadorship for young musicians in general and string quartets in particular. As the artist-in-residence at the University of Manchester (England) since 2005, the Quartet members work closely with students, with teaching and master classes as a fundamental part of their activities. For further information see www.quatuordanel.eu

Pascal Moraguès, clarinet

Pascal Moraguès has been first principal clarinet in the Orchestre de Paris since 1981, Professor at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris since 1995, and guest Professor at the College of Music in Osaka (Japan) since 2002. He is leading a busy career both as a soloist and a sought after chamber musician. Conductors he has performed with as a soloist include Daniel Barenboïm, Pierre Boulez, Semyon Bychkov, Carlo-Maria Giulini, Zubin Metha, Wolfgang Sawallich, Christophe Eschenbach, Yuri Bashmet, Emmanuel Krivine, Frans Bruggen, Louis Langrée and Stephan Sanderling. He is a member of the Quintette Moraguès, the Viktoria Mullova Ensemble, the Ensemble of Katia and Marielle Labèque and he is regularly invited as a member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

In chamber music, he has also played with Sviatoslav Richter, Christian Zacharias, Daniel Barenboïm, Elena Bashkireva, Christophe Eschenbach, Pascal Rogé, Christian Ivaldi, Brigitte Engerer, Itamar Golan, Stephen Bishop, Oleg Maisenberg, Joseph Kalichstein, Schlomo Mintz, Joshua Bell, Yuri Bashmet, Gary Hoffman, Nathalia Gutmann, Dame Felicity Lott, with the Wanderer and the Guarneri Trio and with the

Borodine, Sine Nomine, Carmina, Amati, Prazak, Leipzig, Lindsay, Endellion, Jerusalem, Isaye and Talich String Quartets. Pascal Moraguès frequently performs in prestigious international music halls like the Wigmore Hall in London, the Musikverein in Vienna, the Konzerthaus in Vienna and Berlin, the Carnegie Hall in New York, the Lincoln Center in Washington, The Jerusalem Festival, the Lucerne Festival, the Théâtre des Champs Elysées and Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. He is regularly invited to Japan, the United States, Australia, the Middle East and all over Europe for concert tours and master classes. Mr. Moraguès has made multiple recordings with Sviatoslav Richter, Viktoria Mullova, and the Quintette Moraguès, most of which have won international prizes.