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“a sumptuous sound with beautifully controlled dynamics”

– Don Kaplan, Early Music America



THE NEW ESTERHÁZY QUARTET

Kati Kyme, violin

Lisa Weiss, violin

Anthony Martin, viola

William Skeen, violoncello

present

The Danube Runs Through It

Joseph **Haydn**: *Quartet Op. 33, No. 1 in B minor* (1781)

Imre **Székely**: *Quatuor Hongrois in B flat*

Béla **Bartók**: *Quartet No. 1, Op. 7* (1909)

Saturday, April 20, 2013, at 4pm, St. Mark's Lutheran Church,
1111 O'Farrell Street (at Franklin), San Francisco, 94109

Sunday, April 21, 2013, at 8pm, All Saints' Episcopal Church,
555 Waverley Street at Hamilton, Palo Alto, CA 94301 *Please note: this is an evening concert*

Tickets \$25 (discounts for seniors and students)

(415) 520-0611 // www.newesterhazy.org

San Francisco, March 20, 2013– **On its 1785-mile course from the Black Forest to the Black Sea, the Danube connects Austria to Hungary, Haydn to Bartók.** Each composer evokes the music “East of Vienna” in his own way: Haydn included a Gypsy fiddler in his Quartet Op. 33, No. 1 as an exotic element, while Bartók truly internalized the Hungarian folk music idiom. **Violinist Lisa Weiss explains there are more connections between the composers than the shared river and land:**

“We discovered two remarkable anniversaries linking string quartets of our composers: Haydn wrote his opus 33 in 1781, just 100 years before Bartók’s birth, and Bartók wrote his first quartet in 1909, only 100 years after the death of Haydn. The concept for this program is based on the double-centenary connection between those works.”

Both composers communicate emotions in a similar way, says Weiss:

“As did Haydn, Bartók instinctively understood the compositional sorcery which allows a particular interval or harmony to pull at the heart, and the process of preparing his music for performance requires essentially the same approach.”

With the generous assistance of the Hungarian National Library, the quartet were able to find a “midway” composition to complete the program, the *Quatuor Hongrois* by Imre Székely (1823–1887). In contrast to the music of the countryside which inspired Haydn and Bartók, this charming piece evokes the salons of upper-class Budapest.

The members of the New Esterházy Quartet—violinists Kati Kyme and Lisa Weiss, violist Anthony Martin, and cellist William Skeen—specialize in period performance and often occupy the first chairs of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and American Bach Soloists. **Praised for their sensitive ensemble playing, New Esterházy Quartet will perform this entire program on gut-strung instruments.** Cellist William Skeen says:

“In 1909 the standard stringing for fiddles was gut, and even if a very few chose to use metal strings, those strings were generally considered to have an inferior tone. As I have been told, gut was the way to go until at least the 1940s.”

Violist Anthony Martin adds:

“We are emboldened by the example of many distinguished quartets from the Pro Arte, Budapest, Julliard, and Guarneri, forward to the Emerson and the Alban Berg. They play Haydn without compunction using the same instruments they use for Bartók, playing in their own manner, that is, in accord with their own musical values. That is just what we propose—to bring to Bartók our musical values, using the instruments with which we have learned to play together. We attempt to illuminate Haydn's structures and ideas by our own articulations, colors, blend, and intonation, and we make them work for Bartók as well.”

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