

dedicated to Haydn and the "Hoffmeister" Quartet, K. 499 (1786), perhaps he felt the need to seek a new challenge in the chamber medium. Mozart entered the Quintet into his thematic catalog on April 19, 1787, shortly after returning to Vienna from Prague, where the triumphant reception of *Le nozze di Figaro* had resulted in a commission for a new opera. He likely worked on the Quintet while waiting to receive the libretto for *Don Giovanni* from his collaborator Lorenzo da Ponte.

There seems to be little doubt that Mozart planned the C major Quintet and its successor, the Quintet in G minor, K. 516 as a contrasting pair, in much the same manner as the Symphonies Nos. 40 and 41 (interestingly, also in G minor and C major, respectively). Indeed, in its elevated character, breadth, and scope, the C major Quintet inhabits a world very close to that of the "Jupiter" Symphony.

The opening Allegro of the Quintet is one of Mozart's boldest and most substantial conceptions, a truly noble movement that includes a development section of exceptional richness and diversity. The Minuet, more customarily the third movement in such works, follows; its nearly symphonic construction is far removed from a typical stylized dance. The Andante flows with a heart-easing tranquility that is hardly dissipated by the glowing harmonies of the finale, a movement of deceptive simplicity that was once characterized by Mozart's biographer Alfred Einstein as "godlike and childlike."

# MOZART

## Quintet In C (K. 515)

Piatigorsky • Majewski • Primrose • Baker • Heifetz

# Bach

## Chaconne

from Partita No. 2



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

Alongside Paganini's 24 Caprices for solo violin and Bach's six cello suites, his Partitas and Sonatas (three apiece) for solo violin stand out among their comparatively few siblings as magnificent music written for an unaccompanied stringed instrument. And while they also represent the zenith of polyphonic writing for a non-keyboard instrument, Bach's sonatas and partitas were also crucially important in the development of violin technique. With their colossal scope, huge technical demands, and musical complexity, and notwithstanding their awesome intellectual intensity, these creations greatly transcended anything that had preceded them, including the Partitas for solo violin by von Westhoff (1696), and various comparable solo works by Biber, Pisendel, and others. It seems most probable that either the Dresden virtuosi Pisendel or Volumier, or even more likely the Cöthen Konzertmeister Spiess, would have been the first players to attempt these exceptionally challenging works, all of which sound as if they were written for an age of instrumental virtuosity that still lay far in the future.

The sonatas are restricted to four movements (slow-fast-slow-fast, as with the early sonata da chiesa), one of which is a fugue. The Partitas are generally more extended, and of unorthodox formal design (as perhaps is implied by their more wide-ranging generic title), and by the more exploratory, improvisatory feel of the music even as they consist of sequences of Baroque dances. The awesome and eloquent Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004, seems for the most part to follow the conventional outline of the Baroque suite, opening with an earnest and purposeful Allemanda unexpectedly free of chordal multiple-stopping. There follow a Corrente and a Sarabanda, whose brief coda

furnishes the link with the succeeding Giga.

However, this work concludes with the most labyrinthine and intellectually powerful single movement ever devised for an unaccompanied string instrument. This is Bach's famous Chaconne (originally "Ciaccona"), a colossal arched series of 64 stunning variants upon the stark, open-ended four-measure phrase heard at the beginning. Two monumental outer sections in the minor enclose a major-key central episode, and this great structure encompasses every aspect of violin-playing technique and contrapuntal ingenuity that would have been known in Bach's day. The Chaconne, whose duration exceeds 15 minutes (and is thus longer than the rest of the work put together) is often performed as a free-standing movement and has also been widely transcribed for other instruments. All five of Mozart's numbered string quintets are composed for a combination of two violins, two violas, and cello, an unusual disposition that varies from the more customary quintet that calls for viola and two cellos (the ensemble used, for example, by Boccherini and Schubert). Mozart's choice of two violas undoubtedly reflects his great love for the instrument, and its use profoundly affects the color and structure of all his string quintets.

The C major Quintet is the first of a pair completed in the spring of 1787. Why Mozart should have returned to the genre fourteen years after his previous effort, the Quintet in B flat major, K. 174, is unclear. Having recently explored the potential of the string quartet in the six works

# Bach Chaconne

(From Partita No. 2 In D Minor For Violin Unaccompanied)

performed by Jascha Heifetz

## MOZART Quintet In C (K. 515)

Piatigorsky • Majewski • Primrose • Baker • Heifetz

1. Bach Chaconne 12:40

Mozart

2. Allegro 8:23

3. Menuetto Allegretto 7:21

4. Andante 4:58

5. Allegro 6:44

Total Time: 40:06