

THE SAINT MARK'S
MUSIC

SERIES
2024-2025



Seven Last Words of Christ

The Skyros Quartet

Sarah Pizzichemi & Brandon Vance, violins,
Justin Kurys, viola, & Timothy Pizzichemi, cello

Palm Sunday, April 13, 4:30 pm

In-person and livestreamed from
Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, Seattle

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.

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PROGRAM

Seven Last Words of Christ, Op. 51

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Introduction

Sonata I

“Pater, dimitte illis, quia nesciunt, quid faciunt”

Sonata II

“Hodie mecum eris in paradiso”

Sonata III

“Mulier, ecce filius tuus”

Sonata IV

“Deus meus, Deus meus, utquid dereliquisti me”

Sonata V

“Sitio”

Sonata VI

“Consummatum est”

Sonata VII

“In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum”

Earthquake

PROGRAM NOTES

Austrian composer **Franz Joseph Haydn** (1732-1809) had extraordinary influence on classical music, from mentoring of Mozart and teaching Beethoven, as well as his relationship with his younger brother and fellow composer, Michael Haydn. Beyond his direct influence on classical composers, his understanding and development of musical style has endowed upon him the titles of “Father of the Symphony” and “Father of the String Quartet.” He composed 108 symphonies and 68 string quartets! Perhaps his most ambitious works, though, are his 29 oratorios, of which *The Creation* and *The Seasons* are best known.

Born into a working-class family who loved music, but without formal training, Haydn showed early interest and talent in music, leading him to be taken in by relatives to train as a musician at the age of six. Two years later he was engaged as a professional church choirboy in Vienna, where he remained for nine years, until his voice had matured beyond was useful in a boy choir. Left to his own accord to teach himself to compose, he relied on in-depth, independent study of C. P. E. Bach’s piano works to learn counterpoint and traditional compositional techniques. One could attribute his musical development in relative isolation to his unique compositional style in contrast to the otherwise uniformly classical music milieu in Vienna and Europe of his time. Eventually he was engaged as the music director for Count Morzin in Austria, and later with the powerful Austro-Hungarian Esterházy family. This afforded him security in his chosen profession, although constrained him from public performances and access to his music. His professional obligations under his patron were loosened after a few years, allowing him to maintain his role as music director and still accept commissions and compose works for public consumption. His international popularity soared, as did his productivity. From this period came many string quartets, his *Paris Symphonies*, and the original orchestrated version of his *Seven Last Words of Christ*.

Commissioned for the Good Friday service at the Oratorio de la Santa Cueva in Cádiz, Spain in 1786, Haydn composed *The Seven Last Words of Christ* for orchestra. Subsequently he arranged the work for

string quartet as well as piano solo the following year, and eventually as a full-scale oratorio ten years later, adding vocal soloists and chorus. For today’s concert, we offer his arrangement for string quartet, Opus 51. Departing from his usual joy-infused musical style, likely due to the subject matter, Haydn explores an uncharacteristic realm of emotional darkness.

Haydn describes the assignment given to him by the canon of Cádiz, Don José Sáenz de Santa María :

Some fifteen years ago I was requested by a canon of Cádiz to compose instrumental music on the Seven Last Words of Our Savior On the Cross. It was customary at the Cathedral of Cádiz to produce an oratorio every year during Lent, the effect of the performance being not a little enhanced by the following circumstances. The walls, windows, and pillars of the church were hung with black cloth, and only one large lamp hanging from the center of the roof broke the solemn darkness. At midday, the doors were closed and the ceremony began. After a short service the bishop ascended the pulpit, pronounced the first of the seven words (or sentences) and delivered a discourse thereon. This ended, he left the pulpit and fell to his knees before the altar. The interval was filled by music. The bishop then in like manner pronounced the second word, then the third, and so on, the orchestra following on the conclusion of each discourse. My composition was subject to these conditions, and it was no easy task to compose seven adagios lasting ten minutes each, and to succeed one another without fatiguing the listeners; indeed, I found it quite impossible to confine myself to the appointed limits.

The quartet opens with an Introduction, followed by seven Sonata movements in response to readings from the gospels – the seven final expressions attributed to Jesus while crucified on the cross – and ending with an Earthquake. In the first violin’s score, each movement has the associated Bible verse written at the top.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Those movements and verses are as follows:

Introduction – *Maestoso ed adagio*

Sonata I – *Largo*

Luke 23:24

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Sonata II – *Grave e cantabile*

Luke 23:43

“Today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Sonata III – *Grave*

John 19:26-27

“Woman, behold your son! Behold, your mother!”

Sonata IV – *Largo*

Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Sonata V – *Adagio*

John 19:28

“I thirst.”

Sonata VI – *Lento*

John 19:30

“It is finished.”

Sonata VII – *Largo*

Luke 23:46

“Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”

The Earthquake – *Presto e con tutto la forza*

Matthew 27:51

“And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split.”

Appropriately, his final public performance was of *The Seven Last Words of Christ* in December of 1803, before age and illness ended his performing and composing career. We now offer this musical meditation surrounded by the resonant acoustical environment of Saint Mark’s nave as we consider Jesus’ final moments on the cross, in contemplation of the coming Holy Week.

Program notes by Laura Loge

Skyros Quartet brings a bright and inventive style to the stage, with violinists Sarah Pizzichemi, Brandon Vance, violist Justin Kurys, and cellist Timothy Pizzichemi. They have performed at Aspen Music Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Society, Deer Valley Music Festival, Sunflower Music Festival, QuartetFest at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University and Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society, the CommonTone Arts Music Festival, the University of British Columbia, and on tour in China. Skyros’ debut album, *Introspective Odyssey*, includes works by Sibelius, Turina and Britten. Skyros collaborates with composers including Michael Laurello, Christopher Dietz, Philip Glass, Pēteris Vasks, Eric Banks, Ruben Naeff, Molly Herron, Matt Frey, and Tim Hansen. They have commissioned string quartets by Kate Skinner, Sabrina Clarke, Liza Sobel, and Devin Maxwell and have worked with Tonia Ko, Charlie Leftridge, and Stephanie Martin. Passionate about education, they visit schools, lead community engagement programs, and present interactive family concerts, enabling them to inspire audiences of all ages and musical backgrounds. As Artistic Directors they developed an in-school chamber music coaching program from the Chamber Music Guild. Skyros Quartet and CMG developed a chamber music podcast called The Counterpoint Club. Members of Skyros have served as faculty at Seattle University, Edmonds Community College, Union College, and the University of Texas at Austin String Project. In February 2020, Skyros Quartet formed Constellation Creatives, their own non-profit organization, to champion innovative experiences of storytelling through the lens of music with a vision to forge an interactive cultural institution embedded in the Puget Sound community. Skyros Quartet takes its name from the Greek isle of Skyros, one of a quartet of islands in the Aegean Sea.

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT SAINT MARK'S MUSIC SERIES CONCERT

All Bach on the Flentrop Organ

Friday, May 9, 7:30 pm
St. Mark's Cathedral Nave
Jonathan Moyer, organ

The 2025 installment of this annual Saint Mark's tradition will be presented by Jonathan Moyer, whose playing has been described as "ever expressive, stylish, and riveting." Moyer's innumerable performances on historical organs across Europe give him distinctive insight into Bach's music.



In-person and livestream tickets available at
saintmarks.org/concerts

AND FOR THE MONTHLY *Organ by Night* SERIES

Organ by Night is presented at Saint Mark's Cathedral on the third Sunday of each month following the Compline service, about 10:00 pm. Informal mini-concerts will introduce you to the power and beauty of a real pipe organ. All are welcome in-person in the nave or join the organist in the loft to get a feel for what playing an instrument of this size is like. Ask questions and learn more about the Flentrop organ after the concert.

NEXT UP on SUNDAY, APRIL 20

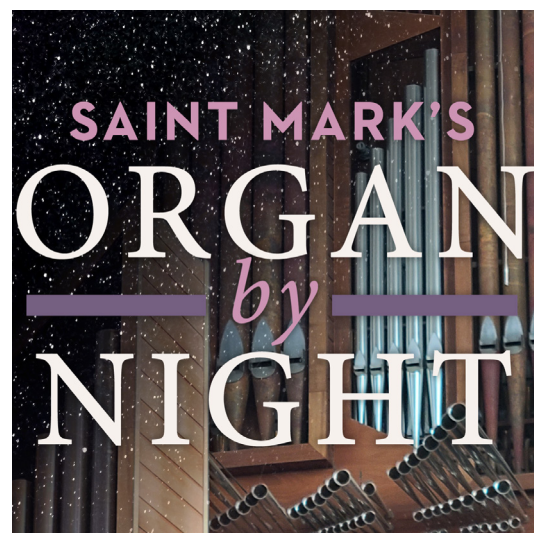
Michael Kleinschmidt performing:

Chant de Paix and *Incantation pour un jour Saint* by Jean Langlais
Moderato from *Symphonie Romane* by Charles-Marie Widor
Pastorale by Domenico Zipoli

Michael Kleinschmidt was appointed Canon for Cathedral Music at Saint Mark's in 2015 after serving in similar positions at Trinity Cathedral, Portland, Oregon, and Trinity Church, Boston. Michael's primary mentor in church music was the late Gerre Hancock, with whom he worked as Assistant Organist of Saint Thomas Church, New York City, in the early 1990s. Michael holds degrees in organ performance from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and the Eastman School of Music. In addition to his vocation, he enjoys exploring the natural wonders of the Pacific Northwest on foot.

MORE UPCOMING *Organ by Night* CONCERTS:

MAY 18 - John Stuntebeck
JUNE 15 - Shari Shull



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