Imogen Holst (1907-1984) – *Phantasy Quartet* (1928)

British composer Imogen Holst, daughter of Gustav Holst, was also an arranger, conductor, teacher, musicologist, and assistant to Benjamin Britten. She was only 20 years old when she wrote the impressively mature, single-movement *Phantasy Quartet*. The composition that earned her the Cobbett Prize in 1928 exemplifies the melancholy, wistfulness, and poetic intent of her early work and reflects the pastoralism of her teacher Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Florence Price (1887-1953) – *String Quartet in G Major: II. Andante* (1929)

American composer Florence Price was one of the first African-American women to be nationally recognized as a composer, and the first African-American woman to have her composition performed by a major symphony orchestra. In 1933, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra gave the world premiere of her *Symphony No. 1 in E Minor*, first prizewinner in the Rodman Wanamaker Foundation competition. Price composed over 300 works in her lifetime, while simultaneously working as a silent film organist, writing jingles for radio ads, and teaching piano. Much of her work was thought to be lost until a trove of manuscripts was discovered in 2009. She effortlessly integrated African-American spirituals and blues into the European classical music traditions, creating a musical language that was uniquely her own.

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982) – *Entr’acte* (2011)

New York composer, Grammy-winning singer and violinist Caroline Shaw became in 2013 the youngest ever winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Music for her enigmatic composition, *Partita for 8 Voices*. Shaw composed *Entr’acte* “after hearing the Brentano Quartet play Haydn’s Op. 77 No. 2 — with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a minuet and trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice’s looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition.” *Entr’acte* has a haunting, surreal quality, and musician/writer Timothy Judd comments, “Throughout the piece we get subtle glimpses of classical and baroque music that has suddenly found itself in the wrong century.”

Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel (1805-1847) – *String Quartet in E-flat Major* (1834)

I.  Adagio ma non troppo  
II. Allegretto  
III. Romanze  
IV. Allegro molto vivace

German composer, conductor and pianist Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel was one of the most prolific composers of the 19th century, among the first women to write a string quartet, and a life-long proponent of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, and her younger brother, Felix Mendelssohn. She was a pianist of rare talent and prodigious memory who dazzled private audiences at her concert series in her Berlin home. She wrote over 500 pieces of music, but despite that impressive body of work, decided to publish her music only one year before her early death at the age of 41. She was 28 years old when she composed the colorful and expressive *String Quartet in E-flat Major*, attributing her inspiration to Beethoven’s late chamber works.

Sources: novaslc.org, bachtrack.com, ipomusic.org, news.uark.edu, caramoor.org, wuot.org, instantencore.com, cameratasa.org, oxfordmusiconline.com, yourclassical.org, classicalcandor.blogspot.com