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Cypress String Quartet

Performs Final Concerts in June 2016
Celebrating 20 Years Together

“tender, deeply expressive”
– *The New York Times*

“The Cypress Quartet play with taut rhythms
and great tonal refinement, both as individuals
and in a beautifully rounded ensemble sound.”
– *BBC Music Magazine*

www.cypressquartet.com

January 21, 2016 – San Francisco, CA – The **Cypress String Quartet** (Cecily Ward, violin; Tom Stone, violin; Ethan Filner, viola; and Jennifer Kloetzel, cello) announced today that the ensemble will disband in the summer of 2016 after 20 fulfilling years of performing together. A Farewell Concert will be presented by the Cypress at the Green Room of the War Memorial Building on June 26, 2016.

As a culmination of the group’s work together, the Cypress’s recording of the complete Beethoven String Quartets will be released on AVIE Records in May 2016. This release will be in conjunction with a month-long Beethoven celebration in the city of San Francisco, during which the quartet will present all 16 quartets at public venues in every district as a gift to their hometown that has supported and nurtured the ensemble for the past two decades.

Additional highlights of the Cypress Quartet’s celebratory 20th anniversary season include performances of the complete Beethoven Quartets cycle in Prague, Budapest, and Vienna in fall 2015; a tour of Germany with an all-American program including concerts recorded for radio broadcast by WDR (Westdeutsche Rundfunk) in Cologne and SWR (Südwestrundfunk) radio; the group’s 17th Annual Call & Response program at Herbst Theatre in March 2016; an inspired set of Salon Series programs taking place in October, February, and May in intimate venues in Berkeley, San Francisco, and Palo Alto; a concert at Sonoma State’s Green Music Center in February 2016; a Farewell Concert at the Green Room of the War Memorial Building in June 2016; and collaborations throughout the season with cellist Zuill Bailey and violist Barry Shiffman culminating in a live recording in spring 2016 of the two String Sextets of Johannes Brahms with Bailey and Shiffman. This Brahms Sextets recording, as well as an album of music by Elena Ruehr, will be released on AVIE Records in the late fall of 2016 and spring of 2017, respectively.

The Cypress Quartet’s decision comes after a great deal of reflection and discussion, and the quartet agrees that it is the right time for them to move on to explore new artistic territories as individuals. The members of the quartet are deeply grateful to vast numbers of fans, donors, fellow musicians, and presenters for all of their support of the Cypress Quartet.

Since 1996, the Cypress String Quartet has worked to make chamber music integral to all aspects of modern culture. From the traditional concert stage, to classrooms and community centers, private living rooms and corporate settings, the ensemble has performed, advocated, and educated with a passion that has inspired audiences to listen to and think about music and its relevance in fresh ways.

Violinists Cecily Ward and Tom Stone and cellist Jennifer Kloetzel founded the Cypress String Quartet in San Francisco in 1996; violist Ethan Filner joined in 2001. Respected pioneers of classical chamber music in the 21st century, the

Cypress' accomplishments include 17 years of "Call & Response" programming, nearly 40 commissions and premieres; more than 15 commercially released albums; regular international concert tours including numerous tours throughout Germany organized by PR-2 Classic; collaborations with numerous renowned guest artists; the innovative "Inspired by America" multimedia program; six years as quartet-in-residence at San Jose State University; five years as the resident quartet at Centrum in Washington State; recurring visiting residencies at colleges and other institutions throughout the United States; and 20 years of educational outreach activities that have reached over 150,000 students throughout the US and internationally.

The Cypress has appeared on concert series and in venues including Cal Performances, Kennedy Center, Library of Congress, Stanford Live, Krannert Center, Ravinia Festival, and 92Y. The group's collaborators include artists such as Leon Fleisher, Jon Nakamatsu, Awadagin Pratt, Gary Hoffman, Atar Arad, James Dunham, and Zuill Bailey. The quartet can be heard on the Netflix original series *House of Cards* and has collaborated with artists ranging from Michael Franti of Spearhead to modern dance companies such as ODC.

In addition to definitive interpretations of masters such as Beethoven, Dvorak, and Schubert, the Cypress has commissioned some of the most important composers of our time including Kevin Puts, Philippe Hersant, Jennifer Higdon, George Tsontakis, Elena Ruehr, Benjamin Lees, and Dan Coleman. Through its signature Call & Response program, the Cypress String Quartet has commissioned and premiered new string quartets from both emerging and celebrated composers, asking them to write in response to established chamber repertoire.

The Cypress String Quartet records for AVIE Records. The group's CD set of Beethoven's Late Quartets was named Best Classical CD of 2012 by the *Dallas Morning News*; it released Beethoven's Middle Quartets in 2014 and will release his Early Quartets in 2016, completing the set during the group's 20th anniversary season. In 2013, the Cypress added an all-Dvořák disc on AVIE Records featuring *Cypresses, B. 152* (the work from which the ensemble draws its name) and *String Quartet in G, Op. 106*. In 2014, the group released a recording of Schubert's String Quintet D956 with cellist Gary Hoffman paired with Schubert's *Quartettsatz D703*; *The New York Times* praised its "tender, deeply expressive" interpretations.

The Cypress String Quartet members received degrees from many of the world's finest conservatories before coming together as a quartet. These include The Juilliard School, Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the Royal College of Music (London), Indiana University, The Cleveland Institute of Music, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. After a residency at the Banff Centre and a fellowship at the Center for Advanced Quartet Studies of the Aspen Music Festival, the Quartet coached intensively in London with the Amadeus Quartet. Cypress members also count the Cleveland and Juilliard Quartets as important influences.

The members of the Cypress String Quartet play exceptional instruments including violins by Antonio Stradivari (1681) and Carlo Bergonzi (1733), a viola by Vittorio Bellarosa (1947), and a cello by Hieronymus Amati II (1701). The Cypress takes its name from the set of twelve love songs for string quartet, *Cypresses*, by Antonin Dvořák.

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