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## Cypress String Quartet Performs Farewell Concert

Featuring Debussy, Beethoven, and Selections from  
Cypress-Commissioned Works

“Artistry of uncommon insight and cohesion”  
– *Gramophone*

“Tender, deeply expressive”  
– *New York Times*

“A beautifully rounded ensemble sound.”  
– *BBC Music Magazine*

Sunday, June 26, 2016 at 3:00pm  
Opera Lab at the San Francisco War Memorial  
301 Van Ness Ave. | San Francisco, CA  
Tickets: 415.500.2150 or [www.cypressquartet.com](http://www.cypressquartet.com)

San Francisco, CA –The **Cypress String Quartet** (Cecily Ward, violin; Tom Stone, violin; Ethan Filner, viola; and Jennifer Kloetzel, cello) will perform its last concert in San Francisco on **Sunday, June 26, 2016 at 3pm** in the **Opera Lab at the San Francisco War Memorial**. This **Farewell Concert**, which marks the end of the Cypress String Quartet’s 20 fulfilling years together, will include Debussy’s Quartet in G minor, Op. 10; Beethoven’s String Quartet No. 11, Opus 95; and selections from Cypress-commissioned works by Elena Ruehr, Jennifer Higdon, Philippe Hersant, and Benjamin Lees. Tickets also include special Cypress Quartet memorabilia such as label pins, tote bags, signed scores, and more.

To commemorate their two decades as an ensemble, the Cypress’ Farewell program will begin with Beethoven’s String Quartet No. 11, Opus 95 “Serioso.” The Cypress has championed and recorded since their 2012 self-release of the Late Quartets. Of the recording of the Late Quartets, *Gramophone* reported, “The Cypress players are seamless conversationalists who take Beethoven at his word but aren’t afraid to place keenly dramatic and subtle stamps on the music.” *The New York Times* praised the “rich tone, crisp ensemble work and expressive nuance” of the Middle Quartets. The Cypress’ recording of Beethoven’s Middle Quartets was released in 2014 on AVIE Records and on May 6, 2016, the Cypress completed their cycle of the genre’s greatest oeuvre with a 2-CD set of Beethoven’s Early Quartets (AVIE). The concert will continue with selections from works commissioned by the Cypress through their signature Call & Response program from composers by Elena Ruehr, Jennifer Higdon, Philippe Hersant, and Benjamin Lees. The final piece on the program will be Debussy’s Quartet in G minor, Op. 10 – the first string quartet the Cypress learned together when they formed in 1996.

This Farewell Concert follows the Cypress String Quartet’s city-wide celebration of Beethoven – Beethoven in the City – in which the quartet performed all 16 Beethoven quartets in 16 locations over 16 days. The initiative was described as “Beethoven Olympics” (*SF Arts*) and “a thank-you gesture to San Francisco for having been such a reliable host all these years, and...a dramatization of the ‘gospel of unexpected beauty’” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). The free performances reached every district in San Francisco at least once, sometimes twice, and attracted over 5000 listeners.

Highlights of the Cypress Quartet's celebratory and final 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; 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.

Praised by *Gramophone* for its "artistry of uncommon insight and cohesion," and by *The New York Times* for "rich tone, crisp ensemble work and expressive nuance," the San Francisco-based Cypress String Quartet has performed together for 20 years, recording over 15 albums and performing throughout the world. Since its inception, the Cypress has created a niche as a passionate, insightful, and innovative ensemble. The Cypress members enthrall their audiences, whether performing for seasoned concertgoers or those hearing classical music for the first time.

The Cypress maintains a busy national and international tour schedule, making appearances 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 has also been heard on the Netflix original series *House of Cards* and collaborated with artists ranging from Michael Franti of Spearhead to modern dance companies.

Through its signature Call & Response program, the Cypress String Quartet commissions and premieres new string quartets from both emerging and celebrated composers, asking them to write in response to established chamber repertoire. Call & Response creates a dynamic dialogue between the past and present, between performers and composers, and among audiences of all ages. The Cypress Quartet's annual Call & Response concert has earned a strong West Coast following and is preceded by community outreach throughout the Bay Area in public libraries, unorthodox spaces, and schools. In addition, the Cypress tours Call & Response repertoire, bringing these new works to cities across the country.

The Cypress String Quartet records for the AVIE record label. In addition to the Beethoven recordings, in 2013, the Cypress added an all-Dvořák disc on the AVIE record label 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.

Dedicated to mentoring and training the next generation of exceptionally talented individuals, the Cypress String Quartet has been visiting artist at many of the top universities in the United States, including Harvard, MIT, Stanford, and the University of California. The Cypress' passion for sharing music extends far beyond classroom and concert hall halls to non-traditional venues such as boardrooms, art galleries, and private residences. By combining passionate performances and lively discussion, the Cypress creates an unforgettable experience.

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 count the Cleveland and Juilliard Quartets as some of their greatest 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.

For more information, visit [www.cypressquartet.com](http://www.cypressquartet.com).