



Farewell Concert

Sunday, June 26th, 2016

3:00pm

San Francisco War Memorial



Celebrating 20 years of

Musical Excellence

To every member of our board and staff over the past 20 years:
thank you for helping us achieve our goals.
We couldn't have done it without you.
-CSQ

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Dear Friends,

As we come to the end of our journey performing together, memories of all our amazing experiences surface and overflow as the music we are playing does the same. It has been a joy and a privilege – with enormous challenges and rewards.

On July 10, 1996, the four original members of the Cypress String Quartet (Cecily Ward, Tom Stone, Paul Wakabayashi & Jennifer Kloetzel) gathered in a living room in San Francisco to read through our first notes as this new ensemble. We chose to spend 6-8 hours every day playing, talking and dreaming about what we wanted to build. We performed at any venue that would hire the four of us. We quickly defined a mission: “It is the belief of the Cypress String Quartet that the world’s musical masterpieces have a transformative effect on both listeners and performers. CSQ is committed to dedicating the resources necessary to pursue uncompromisingly high musical standards in their work, to bring forth the best transformative qualities of these masterpieces.” We wanted to be the “best quartet in the world” but quickly learned that what was more important was to move and excite the people in front of us—whether in a classroom, living room or concert hall. Showing people how to be active listeners became a goal far more important to us than outward success.

Fast-forward twenty years: we have recorded all the Beethoven Quartets (as well as many other albums of great music), toured the world, reached large groups of students, and presented music in a wide variety of settings. We have commissioned a large body of work to keep this art form current and vital, leaving both a legacy and a record of our time.

Through music, we have travelled the world and visited every point on the emotional compass. We might wake up one day sleeping on mattresses made of hay in a dorm in London as pupils of the Amadeus Quartet and fall asleep the next night in a suite at the Mirage Hotel as faculty for the Las Vegas Music Festival. Each day and each appearance has been an adventure. From a concert in a tiny church in Austria to a 2000-seat hall in Kansas or a homeless shelter in San Francisco to a cafeteria filled with eager middle school students in Detroit, every performance has shaped who we are.

As we have strived to be a quartet in which the combination of four is greater than the individual parts – so too have all the individual moments added up to so much more than 20 years of playing music.

This year truly has been one of celebration. We have been immersed in making chamber music integral to all aspects of modern life.

Thank you for listening, it has been an honor.

The Cypress String Quartet
Cecily, Tom, Ethan & Jennifer



Farewell Concert

Sunday, June 26th, 2016 | 3pm
San Francisco War Memorial



Cecily Ward, violin

Tom Stone, violin

Ethan Filner, viola

Jennifer Kloetzel, cello

String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95 'Serioso'

I. *Allegro con brio*

II. *Allegretto ma non troppo*

III. *Allegro assai vivace ma serio*

IV. *Larghetto espressivo; Allegretto agitato; Allegro*

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Clay Flute from *Third String Quartet* (2001)

Elena Ruehr
(b.1963)

Quiet Art from *Impressions* (2003)

Jennifer Higdon
(b.1962)

Fantaisie from *Quatuor À Cordes No. 3* (2011)

Philippe Hersant
(b. 1948)

Unhurried from *String Quartet No. 6* (2005)

Benjamin Lees
(1924-2010)

Intermission

String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10

I. Animé et très décidé

II. Assez vif et bien rythmé

III. Andantino, doucement expressif

IV. Très modéré - En animant peu à peu - Très mouvementé et avec passion

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Beethoven: String Quartet No. 11 in F Minor, Op. 95 ‘Serioso’

Beethoven wrote his Op.95 quartet in 1810 and titled it “Quartetto serioso.” The key of f minor is always associated in Beethoven with music of drama and defiance, yet the piece ends with a wonderful comic-opera ending. As usual, Beethoven is playing with our expectations. The composer said of this piece: “This Quartet is written for a small circle of connoisseurs and is never to be performed in public.” Beethoven was aware that he was breaking with tradition of Haydn and Mozart, and that this new way of writing was experimental, filled with meter changes, sudden outbursts, harmonic complications, surprising silences and a fugue (a form which had fallen out of favor since Bach’s time). The writing is terse and compact, a surprise after the large-scale ‘Razumovsky’ Quartets written a few years earlier. Another new development: Beethoven dedicated this piece to a friend and not a patron or nobleman from whom he expected a fee. The dedicatee was Nikolaus von Zmeskall, a Hungarian cellist who was one of the earliest friends Beethoven made in Vienna. The last of the so-called “middle” quartets, the f minor Quartet gives the listener an idea of what is to come in Beethoven’s later works. Beethoven did not return to the quartet form until nearly fifteen years later.

The first performance of Op. 95 was given in Vienna in May 1814 by the Schuppanzigh Quartet.

[notes by Jennifer Kloetzel]

Ruehr: *Clay Flute from Third String Quartet (2001)*

The melody in Clay Flute was composed on a small toy flute that had 5 notes. Variety is made with a changing sense of tonic. The tune is played heterophonically, a traditional technique often used in improvised music where more than one instrument plays the same melody with different ornamentation at the same time. A drumming pattern is played by double-stop pizzicato. The first of Stravinsky’s Three Pieces for String Quartet was in my mind as I worked.

Higdon: *Quiet Art from Impressions (2003)*

“Impressions” is a musical response to the artists of the Impressionist period in both music (Debussy and Ravel) and painting (Monet and Seurat). This work, like the Debussy and Ravel quartets, is in four movements. The second movement, “Quiet Art”, is about the solitude in which artists work, and the passion and consistency that help to create a work of art.

It was wonderful to be able to respond to the Debussy Quartet, written in 1893, the Ravel Quartet, written in 1903, with a quartet written in 2003.

“Impressions” was commissioned by the Cypress String Quartet as part of their Call & Response series.

Hersant: *Fantaisie from Quatuor À Cordes No. 3 (2011)*

When the Cypress String Quartet commissioned me to write a new piece in 2011, I rediscovered with immense pleasure the string quartet, which I had neglected for over 20 years not for lack of interest, but for lack of availability in my schedule—I had taken on so many other projects that took me down other roads.

I approached this third string quartet in a completely different frame of mind than I had in the ‘80s. I wrote my Quartet #1 (1985) with the idea that the string quartet was extremely serious and austere, and that for me it needed to be in some way a place of experimentation, a laboratory of new musical forms. I

partially let go from that musical vision in my Quartet #2 (1988).

In fall 2011, I composed the Quartet #3 with the feeling that this musical form is demanding, admittedly, but it could also offer us a magnificent, sonorous universe, sensual and rich in color. As a result, I felt much more free, clear of all temptation to speculate on how I could change the form of the string quartet. The general structure of the work is very free: there are three movements, which all seem in opposition of one another: in the length, in the tempo, in the character...Indeed, only a little motif at the beginning unifies the movements—more a chain of harmonies than a real melody—a motif that provides structure to the first movement in its entirety, appears fleetingly in the second, and then centrally in the third.

The Quartet begins with a slow movement (Elégie), followed by a brief Scherzo (Fantaisie), and concludes with a long movement (Rhapsodie), bright and colorful, more developed than the two first movements reunited. Each of the instruments are liberally called upon in a concertante spirit, asking each to perform solo and tutti portions; I even wrote, just before the coda, a sort of cadenza in which the four instruments, particularly the two violins rival each other in virtuosity.

Lees: *Unhurried* from *String Quartet No. 6* (2005)

The String Quartet No. 6 was written for the Cypress String Quartet and completed January 29, 2005. The work comprises four movements.

A composer's fingerprint always remains the same no matter how different one work is from another, nor how many years separate each piece. The genre may range from orchestral pieces to piano concerti to operas. No matter. The fingerprint is there.

Movement Four springs a few surprises. The cello opens with a calm, unhurried statement and is joined by the first violin. An unexpected outburst, brings on a restatement of the cello line. Then, another outburst and another restatement, only this time a totally different element appears, a burlesca. All four instruments engage in a prolonged tongue-in-cheek exchange until the broad outlines of the opening statement appear, this time giving way to a somewhat faster call and response exchange. The final outlines of the drive to the end appear in the form of turbulent string passages that gather momentum, becoming motoric, more violent, and finally come to the climax, observing the marking in the score, "as fast as possible."

Debussy: *String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10*

One of the most influential composers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, French composer Claude Debussy's chamber music pushed the contemporary standards of harmony and form while preserving wonderful stylistic nuances. In his string quartet in G minor, Op.10, Debussy explores a subtle yet ultimately powerful combination of cyclic and variation forms, using the simple 4-note motif – G-F-D-F#.

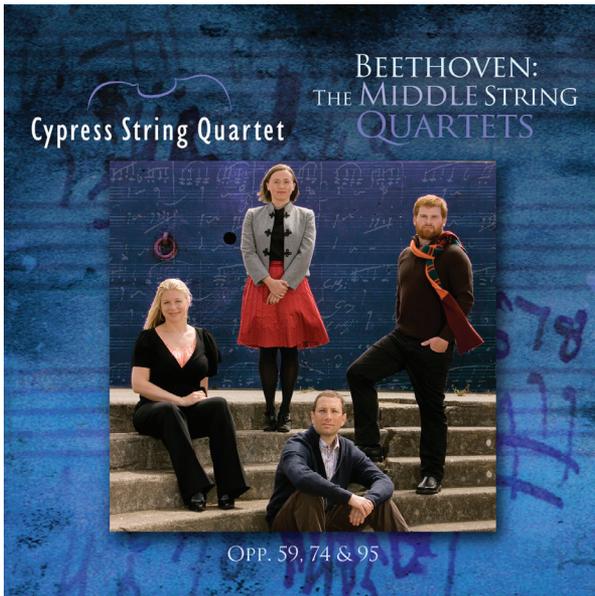
One of the most astonishing aspects of the entire four-movement work is that it is based solely on these 4 pitches and their relation to one another. The genius of Debussy's work is that one hardly notices on listening that the entire piece is based on so little material. The motive is constantly being transformed in rhythm, mode and harmony creating tremendous drama and a variety of color

and emotional expression.

In 1889 Debussy attended the Paris Exhibition, a gathering of cultures from all over the world. It was a unique opportunity for Debussy and others of his time to experience the exotic music, food and other cultural characteristics of places that were otherwise completely inaccessible. Debussy was particularly fascinated by the music of the Javanese gamelan ensemble. A feature of this music that had particular appeal to Debussy was development through repetition. Debussy's second movement imitates this aspect of gamelan music as well as its exotic sounds, and driving rhythms. In a letter to his friend Pierre Louys several years after the exhibition, Debussy wrote:

“But my dear good fellow! Remember the music of Java, which contained every nuance, even the ones we no longer have names for. There tonic and dominant had become empty shadows of use only to stupid children.”

[notes by Jennifer Kloetzel]



“technically immaculate, unanimous in purpose...”

–Strad Magazine

“rich tone, crisp ensemble work, expressive nuance...”

–The New York Times





CSQ Programs

"Their overwhelming expertise, their excellence exhibited through presentation and performance and their approachable and humble connection to every student, allowed for incredible moments that will be treasured and remembered."

-Scott Krijnen, Teacher at Castillero Middle School, Call & Response Participant

"The Music Moves program was exactly what I needed at this point in my professional life: a reality check, practical advice, first-hand experience, challenging exercises and fresh inspiration."

-Katie Von Braun, Amaranth String Quartet



Call & Response

Over the last 17 years, the Cypress String Quartet has reached thousands of students and new chamber music fans through its annual presentations of Call & Response in the San Francisco Bay Area. Following as many as two dozen or more educational outreach presentations before students of all levels and communities each year, the Cypress Quartet gives the World Premiere of the commissioned work in a public concert in San Francisco. The program contextualizes the new work, pairing it with the older masterpieces which inspired it, and demonstrating the composers' work as a process of ongoing inspiration through the ages. Scholarship tickets permit participating students to attend the public performance free of charge.

Beethoven in the City

In celebration of both our 20th Anniversary Season and all that the city of San Francisco and its people have done to support our efforts over the years, we spent two weeks in May 2016 performing the complete String Quartets of Beethoven in a series of free public concerts in publicly accessible spaces throughout the city.



Music Moves

A mentoring program designed to help emerging string quartets develop their musical and educational skills and to explore their own unique voice as artists and educators. Along with coachings and business seminars from the CSQ, the emerging quartet visited schools around the Bay Area to give outreach performances and work with young students and blossoming musicians.

Inspired by America

An innovative multimedia project exploring the collective experience that creates the American identity. Combining original film segments, insightful commentary, imagery, and elements of the finest American chamber music, Inspired by America created a unique artistic performance and educational experience.



Adopt-a-School

In conjunction with their University Residency at San Jose State, the CSQ developed this program in order to fully integrate themselves into their home community. The quartet members made multiple visits to each school, working closely with faculty and students in specific areas of study - helping prepare students for their own performances, playing alongside, and leading lively discussions of careers in music.

String Day

An annual String Day for area high school musicians. This was an intensive one-day chamber music workshop, which offered participants opportunities to interact with members of the CSQ, immerse themselves in chamber music, and meet and play with other Bay Area high school musicians.



Music Literacy

With Applied Materials funding through San Jose Chamber Music Society, the CSQ & SJCMS developed an educational program specifically designed to address the unique needs of Horace Mann Elementary in inner city San Jose. The program helped linguistically challenged student bodies with low state standardized test scores, using the universal language of music as a bridge to other areas of study.

17 Years of Call & Response

“Words cannot express my gratitude for what you all have inspired me to be. I have realized that music can mean so much more than just notes.”

-Anyce, Middle School Student, Call & Response Participant

The Call & Response program was born out of the Cypress String Quartet’s (CSQ) commitment to presenting music as a dynamic and ongoing process of inspiration. The term “Call & Response” is usually associated with jazz and gospel music – the idea being that a musician places a call to which another musician responds. In the CSQ’s program, the term provides a forum to introduce new sounds, music, art, and thoughts about chamber music via this mode of communication. The “Call” is the Cypress searching for connections across musical, historical, and social boundaries. The “Response” is the creation of a new work by contemporary artists and the creation of a new and diverse concert audience by the CSQ. By integrating the new with the familiar, Call & Response explores how contemporary music can be an evolution of older works. The outreach presentations, pre-concert lectures, and other activities that surround the series bring music into the Bay Area community and help audiences to understand the creative process of both composer and performer. With this series, the CSQ is creating a public forum where a broad group of people come together and share in an incredible musical experience.

Atherton:	Menlo School
Berkeley:	Berkeley HS, Longfellow MS
Cupertino:	Homestead HS, Monta Vista HS
Mill Valley:	Mill Valley HS, Mill Valley MS, Tamalpais HS
Novato:	Novato Charter School
Oakland:	Corpus Christi School, Edna Brewer Middle School, Holy Names University Youth Orchestra, Montera Middle School, Thornhill Elementary School, Westlake Middle School, Oakland High School
Palo Alto:	Terman Middle School
Piedmont:	Piedmont Middle School
San Anselmo:	San Domenico School, White Hill Middle School
San Francisco:	Balboa High School, Community Music Center, French American International School, KIPP Bayview Academy, Lincoln High School, Lowell High School, Lycee Francais La Perouse, Mission High School, Out-of-Site Afterschool Program, Presidio Middle School, Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory, School of the Arts, Thurgood Marshall Academic High School
San Jose:	Castillero Middle School, Independence High School, Leland High School, Lincoln High School, Lynbrook High School, Piedmont Hills High School
San Mateo:	Aragon High School, San Mateo High School
San Rafael:	Davidson Middle School, Enriching Lives Through Music (E.L.M.), Marin Academy, Miller Creek Middle School, Terra Linda High School
Santa Clara:	Wilcox High School
Saratoga:	Saratoga High School



CSQ Discography

Beethoven: The Early String Quartets

String Quartets Op. 18 Nos. 1-6

Beethoven: The Middle String Quartets

String Quartets Op. 59 Nos. 1-3, Op. 74, & Op. 95

Beethoven : The Late String Quartets

String Quartet Op. 127, Op. 132, Op. 130, Op. 131, Op. 135
Große Fuge, Opus 133 and Alternate Finale

Schubert: Quintet and Quartettsatz

Schubert String Quintet in C Major, D.956
Schubert String Quartet No. 12 Quartettsatz in C Minor, D. 703

The American Album

Dvořák String Quartet No. 12 in F Major, Op. 96 "American"
Griffes: *Two Sketches Based on Indian Themes*
Barber String Quartet in B Minor, Op. 11

Dvorak: Cypresses & Op. 106

Cypresses B152
Dvorak String Quartet No. 13 in G Op. 106 B192

The 15th Anniversary Album

Debussy String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10
Ravel String Quartet in F Major
Schulhoff Five Pieces for String Quartet

How She Danced: String Quartets of Elena Ruehr

String Quartets No. 1, 3, & 4

Benjamin Lees: String Quartets 1, 5 & 6

Jennifer Higdon

Impressions

Jay Clويد: Spectral Evidence

Spectral Evidence
eleven windows

Daniel Asia: Trilogy

String Quartet No. 2

Debussy, Suk & Cotton

Debussy String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10
Barcarolle & Ballade
Cotton String Quartet No. 1

The Cypress String Quartet Live

Mozart String Quartet K. 464
Beethoven String Quartet Op. 18 No. 5
Coleman quartetto ricercare

Haydn, Ravel & Schulhoff

Haydn String Quartet in D Major, Op. 76 No. 5
Ravel String Quartet in F Major
Schulhoff Five Pieces for String Quartet



"...beautifully proportioned and powerful."
-Washington Post

CSQ Repertoire List

- Bach** 371 Chorales
Barber Quartet Op.11
Barber *Dover Beach*
Bartok Quartets Nos. 2,3,4 & 6
Beethoven Complete String Quartets
Berg *Lyric Suite*
Berio *Glosse*
Bloch *Paysages*
Bloch *In the Mountains*
Brahms Piano Quintet
Brahms Sextets Op. 18 & Op. 36
Brahms String Quintet in G Major, Op. 111
Brahms Clarinet Quintet in B Minor, Op. 115
Brahms Quartet in A Minor Op. 51 No. 2
Britten Quartet No.3 in G Major, Op. 94
Cloidt *Eleven Windows*
Coleman Clarinet Quintet
Couperin Pièces en Concert
Debussy Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10
Delius String Quartet (1916)
Dohnányi Piano Quintet in C Minor, Op. 1
Dvořák Piano Quintet in A Major, Op.81
Dvořák *Cypresses*
Dvořák Quartets Opp. 51, 96 & 106
Elgar *Introduction & Allegro*, Op. 47
Fauré *La Bonne Chanson*, Op. 61
Franck Piano Quintet in F Minor
Franklin String Quartet
Glazunov Novelettes, Op. 15
Griffes *Two Sketches based on Indian Themes*
Haydn Quartets Op. 20 Nos. 1 & 4
Haydn Quartets Op. 33 Nos. 3 & 5
Haydn Quartets Op. 76 Nos. 3, 4 & 5
Haydn Quartet, Op. 77 No. 2
Haydn Quartet, Op. 55 No. 2 *The Razor*
Haydn Quartet r, Op. 54 No. 1
Ives Quartet No. 1
Janáček Quartet No. 1 *Kreutzer Sonata*
Janáček *Idyll*
Kernis *Musica Celestis*
Lauba Quartet No. 2 *Morphing*
Lees Quartet No. 1
Martinů String Sextet
Mendelssohn Quartet in A Minor, Op. 13
Mendelssohn Quartet in D Major, Op.44 No. 1
Mozart Quintets K.516 & K. 515
Mozart Quartets K.590, K.421, K. 464, K. 465, K. 575 & K. 589
Panufnik Quartet No. 2 *Messages*
Prokofiev Quartet No. 2
Puccini *Crisantemi*
Ravel Quartet in F Major
Respighi *Il Tramonto*
Ruehr Quartet Nos. 1 & 3,
Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht*
Schubert String Quintet in C Major, D. 956
Schubert Quartets D.810, D. 804 & K. 887
Schubert Quartettsatz in C Minor, D.703
Schulhoff Five Pieces
Schulhoff *Divertimento*
Schumann Piano Quintet Op.44
Shostakovich Quartet in F Minor, Op.122
Shostakovich Two Pieces for Octet, Op.11
Shostakovich Piano Quintet Op.57
Spohr Concerto for Quartet & Orchestra, Op.131
Stravinsky *Concertino*
Suk *Barcarolle & Ballade*
Webern *Bagatelles*, Op.9
Webern Five Pieces for Quartet, Op.5
Webern Langsamer Satz



"Their courage in fostering new works with such determination marks them as worthy of national pride."

-San Francisco Classical Voice

Commissioned Works

Asia Quartet No. 3 *The Seer*

Coleman Quartet No. 2

Coleman *quartetto ricercare*

Coleman Quartet No. 3 *together, as the river*

Cotton Quartet No. 1

Cotton Serenade

Furman Paso del Fuego

Hersant Quartet No. 3

Hersant Quartet No. 4 *Der Gestirnte Himmel (The Starry Sky)*

Higdon *In the Shadow of Sirius*

Higdon *Impressions*

Landers *Memoria chiamata e riposta*

Lees Quartet No. 5

Lees Quartet No. 6

Puts *Lento Assai*

Rohde *Gravities*

Ruehr Quartet No. 6

Ruehr Quartet No. 4

Ruehr Quartet No. 5 *Bel Canto*

Tsontakis Quartet No. 5

Tsontakis Quartet No. 6

Weesner *Sudden, Unbidden*

Weesner *Flux*

Premiered Works

Andrews Quartet No. 2

Asia Quartet No. 2

Bloom-Cohen *Misjudgement in Paris*

Chen Yi *Angel Island Passages*

Cloidt *Spectral Evidence*

Gorecki Piano Quintet

Hanks *We go out into darkness; we speak but in memories*

Ruehr *Deschutes Driftwood*

Elena Ruehr

Elena Ruehr says of her music “the idea is that the surface be simple, the structure complex.” An award winning faculty member at MIT, she is also a Guggenheim Fellow and has been a fellow at Harvard’s Radcliffe Institute and composer-in-residence with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, which performed and recorded her major orchestral works (O’Keeffe Images, BMOP Sound) as well as the opera Toussaint Before the Spirits (Arsis Records). Three of her six string quartets were commissioned by the Cypress String Quartet, who have recorded *How She Danced: String Quartets of Elena Ruehr*. Her quartets have also been performed by the Biava, Borromeo, Lark, ROCO and Shanghai string quartets. Her other recordings include *Averno* (Avie with the Trinity Choir, Julian Wachner, conducting), *Jane Wang considers the Dragonfly* (Albany), *Lift* (Avie) and *Shimmer* (Metamorphosen Chamber Ensemble on Albany).

Dr. Ruehr was a student of William Bolcom at the University of Michigan, and Vincent Persichetti and Bernard Rands at The Juilliard School. Elena Ruehr’s oeuvre includes compositions for chamber ensemble, orchestra, chorus, wind ensemble, instrumental solo, opera, dance and silent film. Her work has been described as “sumptuously scored and full of soaring melodies” (*The New York Times*), and “unspeakably gorgeous” (*Gramophone*). Dr. Ruehr has taught at MIT since 1992 and lives in Boston with her husband and daughter.

Jennifer Higdon

Jennifer Higdon is a major figure in contemporary Classical music, receiving the 2010 Pulitzer Prize in Music for her Violin Concerto and a 2010 Grammy for her Percussion Concerto. Higdon enjoys several hundred performances a year of her works, and *blue cathedral* is one of America’s most performed contemporary orchestral works, with more than 600 performances worldwide since its premiere in 2000. Her works have been recorded on over four dozen CDs. Higdon’s most current project is an opera based on the best-selling novel, *Cold Mountain*, by Charles Frazier. It was premiered by the Santa Fe Opera in August of 2015 and will travel to Opera Philadelphia, Minnesota Opera and North Carolina Opera in the next two seasons. Higdon holds the Rock Chair in Composition at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Her music is published exclusively by Lawdon Press.

Philippe Hersant

Born in 1948 in Rome, Philippe Hersant studied music at the Paris Conservatory, notably in the composition class of André Jolivet, before residing at the Casa Velasquez from 1970 to 1972 and then at the Villa Medici from 1978 to 1980. Since 1973 he has been a producer for radio broadcasts with France Musique .

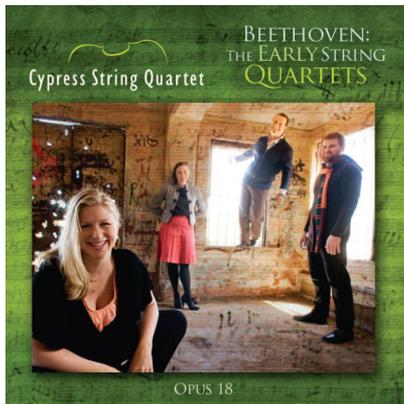
After completing his music studies towards 1970, Philippe Hersant set aside for himself a decade in which to find his own language. His patient maturation had more to do with books and words than the exclusive study of his art - with the exception of many kinds of extra-European types of music. An avid reader (he has a degree in letters) and also a lover of the cinema, he has drawn on the most varied literary sources (James Joyce, the German Romantics and many poets from the Orient and the Far-East) and also cinematographic sources (he declares a particular predilection for Fellini and for the eminent position the latter assigns to memory).

With a varied catalogue of around ninety pieces (not counting his scores for the cinema and the theatre), Philippe Hersant has achieved broad recognition on the contemporary music scene. He has received commissions from such illustrious

institutions as the French Ministry of Culture, Radio France (Le Château des Carpathes, in 1991, Trio, Violin Concerto; not forgetting that he was the featured guest of the festival Présences in 2004), Paris Opera (the ballet Wuthering Heights, in 2002) Leipzig Opera (the opera Le Moine noir, in 2006), the Orchestre National de Lyon (Streams, in 2000). In addition, the musical world has awarded him many distinctions: Grand Prix Musical de la Ville de Paris (1990), Composers' Prize from the SACEM (1991), Grand Prix SACEM for symphonic music (1998), Grand Prix of the Del Duca Foundation (2001), and two Music Awards (Victoires de la Musique) in 2005 & 2010.

Benjamin Lees

Benjamin Lees was born on January 8th, 1924, and spent his early years in San Francisco, moving to Los Angeles in 1939. Following war-time military service he attended the University of Southern California and completed four years of private study with George Antheil. He taught at the Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore, the Juilliard School, the Manhattan School of Music, and Queens College, New York. His works have been performed by major soloists, including pianists Ian Hobson, Emanuel Ax, and Gary Graffman, violinists Henryk Szeryng and Elmar Oliveira, contralto Maureen Forrester, and leading quartets, the Tokyo String Quartet, Juilliard String Quartet, Budapest String Quartet and Cypress String Quartet. Honors awarded to Benjamin Lees include two Guggenheim Fellowships, the Sir Arnold Bax Medal, Fulbright Fellowship, Copley Foundation Award and the Fromm Foundation Award of which he was the first recipient in 1952. He received his first Grammy Nomination in 2004 for his *Symphony No. 5* and his second Nomination in 2008 for his *Violin Concerto*.



"The completion of the Cypress Quartet's Beethoven cycle is not only the capstone of the cycle itself but also an absolutely fitting, crowning achievement of the quartet's remarkable two-decade performing history."
-INFODAD.com

"The Op. 18 quartets are full of harmonic riches, rhythmic intricacy, and emotional complexity, all fully evident under these musicians' expert fingers."
-BlogCritics



Cypress String Quartet

In 20 years on the concert stage, the four members of the San Francisco-based Cypress String Quartet (CSQ) have played thousands of concerts together throughout North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America. Praised by Gramophone for their “artistry of uncommon insight and cohesion,” and by the NY Times for “tender, deeply expressive” interpretations, they have recorded over 15 albums and are played regularly on hundreds of radio stations throughout the world. They have also been heard on the Netflix original series “House of Cards” and have collaborated with leading artists ranging from Michael Franti of Spearhead to modern dance companies.

*“This young quartet is among the most impressive
I have heard in modern sound”*
-Stereophile

Since its inception, the CSQ has created a niche in the world arts community as one of the most passionate, insightful, and innovative ensembles of our time. Whether performing for seasoned concert-goers or people being exposed to classical music for the first time, the CSQ has a unique ability to articulate what is enthralling about the masterpieces they perform.

In addition to definitive interpretations of masters such as Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert, the CSQ has commissioned some of the most important composers of our time including Kevin Puts, Philippe Hersant, Jennifer Higdon, George Tsontakis, and Elena Ruehr.

*“The Cypress brought a combination of tenderness and urgency
to the music, expertly rendering the piece’s delicate weave.”*
-San Francisco Chronicle

CSQ members were educated at the world’s most prestigious conservatories including the Juilliard School, the Royal College of Music and Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Indiana University-Bloomington, and the Eastman School of Music. Early in their musical career, the CSQ mentored with members of the Amadeus Quartet in London.

Dedicated to mentoring and training the next generation of exceptionally talented individuals, the CSQ has been visiting artist at Harvard, MIT, Stanford, University of California Berkeley and other elite universities. The CSQ’s 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 CSQ creates unforgettable experiences for those fortunate enough to participate. At the heart of all CSQ residencies is the belief that music enriches learning and living.

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

We are grateful for the support from the individuals, foundations, and corporations below who have collectively made the Cypress String Quartet's 20th Anniversary Season a wonderful success.

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*This list reflects donations through
June 16, 2016*

In Honor of the Cypress String Quartet

I have been a fan and champion of Cypress for 20 years, since you came to Merit School of Music. It has been a great gift to bear witness to your evolution as musicians and agents of cultural and educational influence and impact. As a board member, I am very proud to have taken part in this culturally first class effort. Your captivating art has transformed the way that I see the world. Your playing soothes my soul and brings me to new levels of thoughtfulness and peace. Being a member of the Cypress community has not only given me a space to commune, bring my friends, and meet new people, but it has also made me feel like I am contributing to a higher level of discourse. I wish each of you a great success on this next journey as individuals. Cypress is coming to a close, but this community and the impact you have had in the lives of thousands will live on. Thank you for sharing your great gifts of passion and artistry with us all.

-Julie Abrams

Some of the happiest times I have had since I first became acquainted with the Cypress String Quartet have been when I was a fortunate member of the audience. I listened to some of my favorite Beethoven Quartets along with many other old and new pieces to open my ears to a wonderful variety of quartets, and an occasional quintet. To my joy, I felt close to each of the quartet players as I watched them listen to each other to perform the music that the composer intended. I feel richly blessed to have had this privilege.

I wish Cecily, Tom, Ethan and Jennifer only the very best as they move up in their chosen fields of interest. Thank you to each of you for enhancing my love of music. I will miss you.

Elizabeth Wolf

Carolyn and I have greatly enjoyed the Quartet's music since its inception twenty years ago. It has been exciting to see them develop as an ensemble to where they have become absolutely world class and where critics write about one of their Beethoven recordings that it is "the best, bar none".

Particularly rewarding are the many friends whom we introduced to the Quartet and who became enthusiastic fans and in many cases generous supporters. We are most grateful to them.

Over the many years of working with the Quartet, we have come to love them as dear friends. We are sorry to see them stop working as a Quartet and wish them Godspeed and success and happiness as they embark on the next steps in their careers.



-Carolyn & Tony Tucher

(Tony Tucher & the CSQ)

Twenty years ago you began a wonderful journey to make music together. You have performed in exciting venues around the world, bringing joy to countless audiences. Your success endures in the memories you have made for yourselves and those who have heard you. Through your outreach to schools, you opened the ears of young students to classical music and inspired the rising generation. Your commissions of new music are a valuable addition to the quartet repertoire and audience enlightenment. Thank you for your tireless work in the recording studio. You leave behind a treasured collection of masterworks we can all enjoy time and time again. As you part ways, best wishes to each of you in your future endeavors. I'd like to give a special commendation to my daughter whose talents, hard work, and total dedication are exemplary to all. You have my admiration.

-Janeen Ward

Twenty years ago, a call came from Jennifer (residing in NYC) telling us she felt she should move to San Francisco to help form a new string quartet. It meant she would be giving up the career she was establishing on the East Coast. A difficult decision but... 20 years later, we parents have heard wonderful music: both live and recorded, attended concerts in many places (for one year traveling with the CSQ for Leo's first year and being named "Granny Nanny"), seen them "turn on" students in a middle school at an educational event before a Call & Response Concert, attended almost all 17 of the Call & Response concerts seeing noisy students quiet down the minute the quartet sat down to play and remain quiet through out long concerts, seen audiences delight in the Inspired By America (unique film with live music), sat behind a 6th grade boy and his mother in a concert near San Jose who had never heard this type of music until the quartet came to his school, who insisted his mother had to bring him to this concert and she was also overwhelmed with being introduced to this music.

And we could go on...this group of 4 have inspired so many young and old and now we wish each one of them joy in their separate ventures.

Judith & John Kloetzel



Our All-Star Hockey Player, turned into our All-Star Violinist and, best of all, an All-Star Human Being.

-Tom & Donna Stone



Your pieces are so amazing and I heard them before I was born.
Good luck!
-Leo Needleman (age 9)

I've known Cecily all her life because I'm her older sister! I have watched her grow from a pig-tailed 3 year old pianist to a virtuoso violinist! Interlochen summer camp, then Interlochen High School then to Eastman and Cleveland – all places where my husband Paul, and I traveled to hear and see Cecily play. Now we come to see her perform the final concert in her 20-year career with the Cypress Quartet.

*We will miss the quartet's trips to the East coast which included late night visits and rehearsals in our basement. Now we'll look for new ventures in both music and life - perhaps the shared stories of Mark and Cecily!
Bravo Cecily for a brilliant career (so far).--From, Deni McMurray (Cecily's sister)*

Cecily, it has been an amazing journey over almost twenty years with you and the quartet. From our first recordings together in Banff, to completing the Beethoven set, you have challenged me to be a better engineer and musician. For work and pleasure we have travelled large swaths of the planet together - experiences that have made me a better person. I don't know where the next twenty years will take us, but I know that together it will be amazing. All my love, always, Mark

Ethan, we have had quite the journey. It has made you stronger, it has made us realize what is important in life. The kids and I are excited for you to join us on the next adventure. Together more than apart. We will all be OK. We love you!

-Elisabeth Mellinger

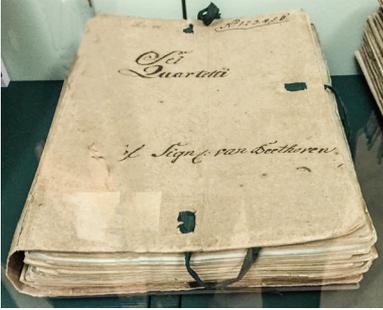


Cheers to four of the best musicians and best people I know!
Now, let's drink up!
--Maggee



Not only a good violinist, but also a super fun uncle and brother.
Kim, Ken, Gabe and Raif

Without you it is Just Paper!



(Original manuscript of Opus 18)

Thank you for the trip of a lifetime
and 20 years of music.

Amy, Shanti, Elena & Bob

On this occasion marking the closure of an extraordinary musical journey, I write with fond memories and best wishes for all the members of the Cypress Quartet, the dedicated staff members and loyal supporters who made the trip possible. As one of the many whose lives have been enlarged by the “Cypress Experience”, I cannot find the words to adequately express my thanks to the Quartet for bringing understanding to beautiful music in such a gracious way, and for sharing, always, a generous and welcoming spirit. Beethoven, your muse, has this to say to each of you: “Off with you! You're a happy fellow, for you'll give happiness and joy to many other people. There is nothing better or greater than that!”

-Diana Filner

Dear CSQ - It's been a privilege to see and hear you many times and in many venues/states over the past two decades! It's also been a privilege to get to know you all a bit along the way. You're leaving us with great memories and an impressive body of work. Best to you all in your future endeavors!

~ Jeff Kloetzel

I had hardly arrived in the Bay Area 16 years ago when I found myself in Tom Stone's basement looking over the Cypress Performing Arts Association's new bylaws and articles of incorporation. In the years since, I've gotten to listen to a lot of great music, and do a bit of work here and there to support the organization behind it. Now the quartet's recordings, videos, and commissioned pieces get to take wing and set off on a life of their own. All of us who helped support and create them are going to be left behind as spectators. I'm excited to see where they go.

—John David Duncan

Dear Cypresses,

What a pity we can't be present at your farewell concert. As enthusiastic listeners of your wonderful performances, we would have appreciated to be near you at your final – what a horrible word – “show”. But ... you know that better than the two of us – the show must go on. And in this case that means that the lovely friendship we have developed since you first came over- will not come to an end. Nobody can take away our sweet memories of exciting moments during the concert or later at the dining table. The wonderful sound you have created on the CDs will help us overcome our sadness and help us to remember four great musicians we have the honor to know personally.

Euch allen wünschen wir alles, alles Gute
and be sure: we don't give up our hope
of meeting you somewhere sometime.

Christa and Caspar Wassermeyer



(The CSQ, Tony Tucher, & the Wassermeyers)

