

premiere taking place in Moscow, although Prokofiev wrote the piece for *Triton*, a Parisian society devoted to the performance of new chamber music. The composer wrote to Myaskovsky in Russia that the new sonata would be spare and lean—"When they play it, you'll have to leave the hall"—and that "there are hardly any double-stop-pings or chords." The latter statement is certainly an exaggeration, but the piece is decidedly linear, usually emphasizing melody more than harmony. Its four movements recall the typical Baroque sonata plan, slow-fast-slow-fast, with the outer movements centered on C major, the inner ones on G minor. The two violins share equally in the main melodies, so that calling them "first" and "second" is only for convenience of reference. They take turns leading and accompanying in the slow movements, while in the fast dancelike movements, their vigorous interplay proceeds at a rapid pace indeed, with only brief pauses or quiet interludes.

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ABOUT TONIGHT'S ARTISTS

The **Oregon String Quartet**, formed in 1982, is in residence at the University of Oregon School of Music. Committed to excellence in performance and music education, the members teach while maintaining busy concert schedules with the quartet and as soloists. They bring together a wide range of musical experiences, including years of chamber music collaborations with world-renowned artists, solo appearances with major orchestras and festivals, and principal positions with major symphonies. They have recorded on the Koch International, CRI, Centaur, and Albany labels. The Oregon String Quartet most recently recorded a compact disc, released by Koch International Classics, of works by the early 20th century African-American composer William Grant Still. The disc has been praised by the press for its beauty as well as its significant content. *Strad Magazine* hailed: "MUSICAL HEAVEN: OREGON STRING QUARTET . . . you will adore William Grant Still's 1960 string quartet, especially in a performance as sumptuously voiced and stunningly engineered as this." The Oregon String Quartet has been featured at the internationally-renowned Oregon Bach Festival, and is heard frequently on NPR. The quartet continues to enjoy performing and recording new compositions, including recently works by composers Victor Steinhardt and David Crumb.

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105th Season, 102nd program



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON • SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Beall Concert Hall
8:00 p.m.

Thursday evening
April 28, 2005

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

presents

OREGON STRING QUARTET

Kathryn Lucktenberg, violin

Fritz Gearhart violin

Leslie Straka, viola

Steven Pologe, cello



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

PROGRAM

- Four Indigenous Portraits** William Grant Still
for flute and string quartet (1895-1978)
Slowly
Gracefully
Slowly
Vigorously
Nancy Andrew, flute
- Sonata in C Major, Op. 56** Sergei Prokofiev
for two violins (1891-1953)
Andante cantabile
Allegro
Commodo (quasi allegretto)
Allegro con brio
Fritz Gearhart, violin
Kathryn Lucktenberg, violin

INTERMISSION

- String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10, No. 1** Claude Debussy
Animé et Très décidé (1862-1918)
Assez vif et bien rythmé
Andantino, doucement expressif
Très modéré; Très mouvementé et avec passion

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PROGRAM NOTES
by Peter Bergquist

String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10, No. 1

Claude Debussy

Abstract instrumental music without a descriptive title is uncommon in Debussy's output; the best known exceptions are his Quartet in G minor from 1893 and the three sonatas he composed over twenty years later, shortly before his death. The quartet is one of his first masterpieces, so much so that one regrets the lack of a successor to it. It is not so radical as the *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* that followed in 1895, which was truly revolutionary, but the quartet is highly original nonetheless. Debussy's own musical language is fully in evidence, despite occasional suggestions of César Franck and Edvard Grieg in details of form and harmony. The four movements are cyclic, with the opening theme of the quartet appearing in three of them. It dominates the first movement; other themes appear in contrast, but the continual variations of the first theme are the main element of contrast and development. The movement has the general shape of sonata form, though the harmonic details are so rich that they make the larger tonal relationships of traditional sonata forms hard to hear or establish. In the scherzo, the cyclic theme is almost lost in the rich mixture of bowed and plucked sonorities and the rhythmic complexity. The piece is almost more about texture than themes, and in this it looks well ahead to later quartet composers such as Bartók and Webern. Debussy later remarked that a piano reduction of this movement would be next to impossible. The *Andantino* is as calm as the first two movements were agitated. Since the mood is so different, the cyclic theme does not appear. The key is also very distant, D-flat major. A central section shifts towards minor mode and becomes slightly more animated but without changing the basic character greatly. The opening section is restated briefly before the movement's quiet close. The finale begins with an introduction that provides a transition from the preceding calmness into the agitation of the main movement, also changing from D-flat back to G minor. As the movement progresses, the cyclic theme increasingly asserts itself, and it remains to the fore at the end during a brilliant accelerando and a shift to G major.

Sonata in C Major, Op. 56

Sergey Prokofiev

Prokofiev composed his Sonata for Two Violins in 1932, when he resided in Paris but was increasingly moved to return once and for all to Russia. This perhaps had something to do with the sonata's