

## 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 Grumb.

**Alexander Tutunov** is one of the most outstanding virtuosos recently emerged from the former Soviet Union. His playing was described by *Soviet Culture*, Moscow, as exhilarating and inspired, and which demonstrated a unique talent. A native of Belarus, he entered the Central Music School of the Moscow Conservatory at age 7, one of three chosen out of 200 applicants, to study with Lev Naumov and Victor Merzhanov, where he graduated magna cum laude. He also holds diplomas in concert performance, with honors, from the Minsk Musical College (Belarus), University of North Texas (piano studies with Joseph Banowetz), and the Belarussian National Academy of Music. Tutunov was awarded the highest post graduate degree in concert performance from the Belarussian State Conservatory in Minsk.

\* \* \*

104th Season, 102nd program



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON • SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Beall Concert Hall  
8:00 p.m.

Thursday evening  
April 29, 2004

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***

with guest artist

***Alexander Tutunov, piano***



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

PROGRAM

- Unfinished Quartet in  
C minor, D. 703** (1820) Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)  
*Allegro assai*  
*Andante*
- String Quartet No. 1 in B minor, Op. 50** Sergei Prokofiev  
(1897-1953)  
*Allegro*  
*Andante molto; Vivace*  
*Andante*
- Quintet in F minor, Op. 34** Johannes Brahms  
for piano and strings (1833-1897)  
*Allegro non troppo*  
*Andante, un poco Adagio*  
*Scherzo: Allegro*  
*Finale: Poco sostenuto–Allegro non troppo*  
Alexander Tutunov, piano

\* \* \*

*If you are in the company of a small child or someone who may inadvertently cause distractions, kindly sit near a rear exit and be prepared to leave in a timely fashion. Please respect our artists and your fellow concert goers. House management reserves the right to request exiting the Hall when appropriate.*

\* \* \*

The *Allegro non troppo* is indeed serious, a strong and darkly beautiful piece in which Brahms's ability to make his ideas grow and change within a thoroughly coherent discourse is at its height. The quiet opening phrase is immediately answered by a turbulent outburst in the piano; it may not be obvious that the piano here repeats the opening phrase twice as fast. The two-note figure with which the strings accompany the piano's outburst gives rise in its turn to several important themes during the course of the movement. After the first few measures, almost nothing is completely new. All this ingenuity, however, only serves to heighten the expressive quality of the music, which stays mostly in minor mode with only a hint of relenting in brief passages in major near the ends of exposition and reprise. The closing pages, however, return to the mood of the opening.

The *Andante* contrasts in every way, most obviously in its serene, tender character, which Brahms reinforces by frequent sensuous parallel thirds and sixths. The simple three-part form and regular four-bar phrases are also worlds apart from the complex first movement.

The *Scherzo* starts quietly but gradually resumes the vigor of the *Allegro*. It is marked by strong contrasts of dynamics and meter (6/8 alternating with 2/4) and rhythms that clash between different groups of instruments. The thematic treatment is as ingenious and as well concealed as in the first movement. A broadly singing Trio section contrasts with the agitated *Scherzo*.

The *Finale* begins with a slow introduction that gropes chromatically towards the light, it would seem, but instead arrives at the main theme of the *Allegro non troppo*, still in minor. This movement seems somewhat relaxed for a time, both in its jaunty first theme and its quieter, constantly falling second theme. The moderate tempo remains through the entire movement until the coda, where Brahms lets momentum build gradually until the movement ends with a thrilling grand rush.

\* \* \*

playful, even sardonic. Rhythms are frequently energetic and driving. With all this, the quartet is a serious, deeply felt piece, especially in the closing *Andante*, which many writers take as an expression of Prokofiev's longing to return to his Russian roots, which he did only a few years after composing the quartet.

The first movement loosely follows traditional sonata form. The whimsical first theme is soon followed by a more serious, reflective second theme, for which the tempo slows. The third theme is faster again, a march tune accompanied by vigorous dotted rhythms. A return of the first theme signals the beginning of the development. The brief reprise reworks all three themes further. The second movement begins as if it will be a slow movement, but that music turns out to be only a short introduction to a scherzo with two trios. Prokofiev's typical motor rhythms are much in evidence through this movement. The *Andante* is a rare example of a slow finale. Its broadly lyrical outpouring does not easily fit into a standard formal scheme, but this hardly matters when one considers the quality and sincerity of the musical thought through every minute of the piece.

### ***Quintet F Minor, Op. 34 for piano and Strings***

#### **Johannes Brahms**

Brahms's Piano Quintet had probably the most curious genesis of any work in the chamber music repertory. He first conceived it as a string quintet (with two cellos, not the more usual two violas), then converted it into a sonata for two pianos, and finally combined those two conceptions into the final version as a quintet for piano and strings. When the string quintet was nearly finished, Clara Schumann wrote him in September 1862 that she was delighted with the first three movements and looked forward to receiving the finale. After Brahms sent it to her, she wrote in December that "the work is a masterpiece." Brahms's friend Joseph Joachim, the great violinist, was similarly impressed, although he expressed reservations about the seriousness of the piece and a certain lack of charm. Brahms came to the conclusion that he had asked too much from the stringed instruments, and in 1864 rewrote the quintet as a sonata for two pianos. Clara Schumann was again delighted with it, but commented that it sounded like an arrangement of an orchestral work and urged him to remodel it once again. The result was the piano quintet as we now know it. Brahms destroyed the string quintet version, but the two-piano sonata still exists as Opus 34b. As a piano quintet, the music has the best of both worlds, retaining and building on the strengths of both of its predecessors, and it is justly considered one of the finest compositions for its medium.

## *PROGRAM NOTES*

### ***Unfinished Quartet in C Minor, D. 703***

#### **Franz Peter Schubert**

Schubert's Quartet Movement (Quartettsatz) is the first and only completed movement of a quartet that he began in December 1820. He continued with forty-two bars of a promising slow movement, but no trace of a scherzo or finale exists. Here Schubert for the first time wrote a completely mature instrumental work, no longer reminiscent of Haydn or Mozart; in it he combined the forcefulness of Beethoven with his own intensity of expression and harmony. As with the Unfinished Symphony of two years later, one wonders why Schubert did not complete a work that had begun so magnificently. The reasons are probably similar: he may have felt unable to continue in this new manner through a complete quartet, or perhaps a concert or other occasion for which he began the work fell through. Whatever the reason may be, he left us with a magnificent first movement in which the agitated opening theme is sharply contrasted with the lyrical melodies that follow. The conflict between the two moods is not resolved; the agitation continues as an undertone even when the surface is brighter, and the opening measures are repeated literally to close the movement.

As a world premiere for today's performance, we offer the Quartettsatz with the completed fragment (*Andante*) originally intended as the second movement as "Schubert's Unfinished Quartet." The *Andante* fragment was complete by Livingston Gearhart in 1990 and never publicly performed until today. Gearhart was a student of Nadia Boulanger, Igor Stravinsky and Darius Milhaud.

### ***String Quartet No. 1 in B Minor, Op. 50***

#### **Sergei Prokofiev**

After the Russian Revolution, Prokofiev chose to go into exile for almost twenty years, at first living briefly in the United States, then settling in Paris. During this period he toured extensively as a piano soloist, at the same time continuing to compose. While on a tour of America in 1930 he received a commission for a string quartet from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation of the Library of Congress. He completed the First Quartet that year, and it was premiered on April 25, 1931. The quartet is typical of Prokofiev in many ways. Its harmony is sometimes harsh and biting, but a tonal center in the traditional sense is always present. Harmonic shifts can be brusque and startling. The melodic character ranges from warmly rhapsodic to