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Shanghai Quartet

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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September 25, 2002 at 7:30 pm

Modlin Center for the Arts

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

Shanghai Quartet

Weigang Li, *violin* Honggang Li, *viola*
Yiwen Jiang, *violin* Nicholas Tzavaras, *cello*

with

Ida Kavafian, *viola*

String Quintet No. 4 in g minor, K. 516

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Allegro

(1756-1791)

Menuetto (Allegretto)

Adagio ma non troppo

Adagio - Allegro

—*Intermission*—

String Quintet No. 1 in F major ("Spring"), op. 88

Johannes Brahms

Allegro non troppo ma con brio

(1833-1897)

Grave ed appassionato—Allegretto vivace—Tempo I—Presto

Finale: Allegro energico

Tonight's concert is being recorded by MobilMaster for possible
future broadcast on National Public Radio.

*Modlin Center residency activities for 2002-2003
are underwritten by a grant from the Robins Foundation.*

About the Artists

Shanghai Quartet

Weigang Li, *violin*

Yiwen Jiang, *violin*

Honggang Li, *viola*

Nicholas Tzavaras, *cello*

Since its New York debut at Town Hall in the spring of 1987, the **Shanghai Quartet** has been hailed by the press and the public alike as one of the leading quartets of its generation. It now performs annually to exceptional critical acclaim in major music centers throughout the United States and abroad.

Formed at the Shanghai Conservatory in 1983, the quartet took second place representing its country at the Portsmouth International Quartet competition. In 1987 the ensemble won the prestigious Chicago Discovery Competition and embarked on an extensive touring career. It has been ensemble-in-residence at the Tanglewood and Ravinia Festivals and has appeared on three occasions at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival.

The quartet has played at Lincoln Center on the "Great Performers" series, in addition to appearing in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Detroit, Toronto and many other cities. Its annual appearances in New York City have included a sold-out three-concert series with pianist Ruth Laredo at the Metropolitan Museum. The quartet's other distinguished collaborators include pianists Peter Frankl and Lillian Kallir, guitarist Eliot Fisk, flutist Eugenia Zukerman, violist Arnold Steinhardt and cellist Carter Brey. The ensemble has also



made several tours of Europe, giving concerts throughout Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom.

The Shanghai Quartet may be heard on Delos International compact discs. Its 1994 debut release, featuring works of Grieg and Mendelssohn, received exceptional critical acclaim. Recent releases feature quartets by Alan Hovanes and the "Song of the Ch'in" by Chinese composer Zhou Long, as well as works for strings and flute with Eugenia Zukerman. Since 1989, the Shanghai Quartet has been ensemble-in-residence at the University of Richmond.

A native of Shanghai, **Weigang Li** began violin studies with his parents at age 5 and went on to attend the Shanghai Conservatory at age 14. He came to the United States in 1981 to study at the San Francisco Conservatory. He has been a soloist with the Shanghai Conservatory Orchestra, the Shanghai Symphony, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Scottish Symphony. Upon graduating from the

Shanghai Conservatory in 1985, he was appointed assistant professor of violin there. Shortly thereafter he left China to continue his education at Northern Illinois University. From 1987-1989, Mr. Li studied and taught at the Julliard School as teaching assistant to the Julliard Quartet. His other teachers have included Shmuel Ashkenasi, Pierre Menard, Shu-Chen and Isadore Tinkleman.

Born in Beijing, **Yiwen Jiang** began his violin studies with his father at age 6. In 1981 he was accepted into the class of Professor Han Li at the Central Conservatory of Music. In 1985 he came to the United States where his teachers have included Taras Gabora, Jaime Laredo, Michael Tree, Pinchas Zukerman, and Arnold Steinhardt of the Guarneri Quartet. A prize winner at the Mae M. Whitaker and Montreal competitions, he has appeared at many international music festivals. He also appeared with the Central Opera House Orchestra in China, the Victoria Symphony and the Montreal Symphony. Mr. Jiang has performed for NBC and PBS television specials, National Public Radio, CPB in Beijing, WQXR in New York and KFUO in St. Louis. He has recorded for the Record Corporation of China.

Honggang Li began his musical training studying violin with his parents at the same time as his brother, Weigang. When the Beijing Conservatory reopened in 1977 after the Cultural Revolution, Mr. Li was selected to attend from a group of over 500 applicants. He continued his training at the Shanghai Conservatory and was appointed a faculty member there in 1984. He has also served as a teaching assistant at the Julliard School. Mr. Li has appeared as soloist with the Shanghai Philharmonic

and the Shanghai Conservatory Orchestra. In 1987, he won a violin as a special prize given by Elisa Pegreff of the Quartetto Italiano at the Paolo Borciani competition in Italy. Mr. Li joined the Shanghai Quartet as a violinist and became its violist with the addition of Yiwen Jiang in the summer of 1994.

Cellist **Nicholas Tzavaras** has been an active soloist and chamber musician performing throughout the United States. Recent solo appearances have included concerto performances with the National Repertory Orchestra, Tanglewood Festival Orchestra, SUNY Stony Brook Symphony and at the Tonnhalle in Zurich. Mr. Tzavaras has previously appeared at the Isaac Stern International Chamber Music Encounters in Jerusalem, as well as the Marlboro, Tanglewood and Musicorda music festivals. He served as principal cellist for groups including the Tanglewood Festival Orchestra, National Repertory Orchestra and the Stony Brook Symphony. His primary teachers and coaches have included Laurence Lesser, Timothy Eddy, Felix Galimir and Alexander Schneider. Mr. Tzavaras holds a bachelor of music degree from the New England Conservatory and a master of music degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. In addition to his performing, Mr. Tzavaras is also active in music outreach and education, having taught at the Thurnauer School of Music in New Jersey and the Hudson River School of Music in Westchester, N.Y., as well as starting a cello program with his mother, Roberta Guaspari, who is the artistic director and founder of the Opus 118 Music Center in East Harlem.

Ida Kavafian, *viola*

Ida Kavafian's vast repertoire and impressive versatility have gained her a unique position in the music world. Internationally acclaimed as one of the few artists to excel on violin as well as viola, Ms. Kavafian's musical travels have taken her from solo recitals and orchestral appearances to chamber music, duos with her sister Ani, teaching, recording and a highly acclaimed career as an artistic director and administrator.

With a repertoire as diverse as her talents, Ms. Kavafian has electrified recital stages throughout North America, the Far East and Europe. She has appeared as a soloist with leading orchestras both nationally and internationally, including the orchestras of New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Saint Louis, Montreal, Minnesota, Metropolitan (Tokyo), Hong Kong, Buenos Aires and London. Her commitment to contemporary music has led to many world premieres by composers as varied as Toru Takemitsu, who wrote a concerto for her, and jazz greats Chick Corea and Wynton Marsalis, with whom she has toured and recorded. Her television credits include a solo feature on CBS Sunday morning.

Since her founding membership in the legendary and innovative group TASHI nearly thirty years ago, Ms. Kavafian's chamber music appearances have included many renowned festivals and series including Santa Fe, Tanglewood, Ravinia, Mostly Mozart and Spoleto (Italy and USA). She has toured and recorded with the Guarneri String Quartet and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, of which she is an aArtist Member. Ms. Kavafian recently co-founded a piano quartet, Opus One, with pianist Anne-Marie McDermott, violist Steven Tenenbom and cellist Peter Wiley. The group has made highly successful debuts in New York, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, San Diego, Los Angeles and Detroit. She continues to perform regularly with her sister Ani Kavafian, and together their television credits include features on "CBS Sunday Morning" and NBC's "Today Show." They have recorded *Mozart, Moszkowski and Sarasate* for Nonesuch Records (#79117-2); and have performed in duo recital and with orchestras including the Rochester Philharmonic and the symphony orchestras of Detroit, Pittsburgh, Colorado, Tucson, San Antonio and Cincinnati.

Ms. Kavafian was the violinist of the renowned Beaux Arts Trio for six years. Among their many recordings on Philips Classics is the Beethoven "Triple" Concerto with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Kurt Masur. Some of their honors during her tenure included being named "Ensemble of the Year" by *Musical America* in 1997 and a 1998 Grammy nomination.

For 18 years, Ida Kavafian has been the artistic director of the highly regarded festival, Music from Angel Fire. She also founded and guided Bravo! Colorado in Vail as music director for 10 years, building it into one of the leading



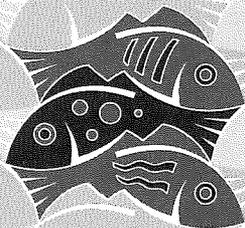
festivals in the country. Her busy schedule includes teaching violin and chamber music at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, as well as serving on many competition juries and boards for such organizations as Chamber Music America.

Born in Istanbul, Turkey of Armenian descent, Ms. Kavafian's family immigrated to the United States when she was three, settling in Detroit. She began her studies at age six with Ara Zerounian, continuing with Mischa Mischakoff, and ultimately earned her Master of Music degree with honors from the Juilliard School, where she was a student of Oscar Shumsky.

Ms. Kavafian made her New York debut at the 92nd Street Y with pianist Peter Serkin as a winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. She was a recipient of the coveted Avery Fisher Career Grant in 1988. Her violin is a J.B. Guadagnini, made in Milan in 1751, and her viola was made in 1987 by Peter and Wendela Moes.

Ms. Kavafian resides in Connecticut and Philadelphia, where she and her husband, violist Steven Tenenbom breed, raise, train and show prizewinning champion Hungarian Vizsla dogs. The name of their kennel is "Opus One Vizslas."

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Notes on the Program

Notes written by Bonny Hall

String Quintet in G minor, K. 516

W. A. Mozart

- I. *Allegro*
- II. *Menuetto: Allegretto*
- III. *Adagio ma non troppo*
- IV. *Adagio—Allegro*

String Quintet in F major, Op. 88

Johannes Brahms

- I. *Allegro non troppo ma con brio*
- II. *Grave ed appassionato—Allegretto vivace*
- III. *Allegro energico*

The “viola quintet” (string quartet with an additional viola) flowered as a genre, along with the string quartet itself, in mid-eighteenth-century Austria. Both quartets and quintets were widely composed in Mozart’s Vienna in the 1780s, and performed, not as concert music, but by musicians in their own living rooms, or in more elegant homes for the private enjoyment of aristocratic music-lovers. One gathering of the former kind is documented by the singer Michael Kelly, who lived in Vienna: he attended a “quartet party” at the home of the composer Stephen Storace where the first violinist was Joseph Haydn and W.A. Mozart played the viola.

In 1787, when K. 516 was written, **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** was 31. His success as a composer was less than brilliant, and he was gradually falling into debt. In addition, his father, with whom he had a loving if tempestuous relationship, was ill and soon to die. The Quintet in G minor seems to reflect those painful circumstances. The key of G minor is generally understood to have been the most emotionally expressive for Mozart, with this quintet and the K. 550 symphony the prime examples.

The String Quintet’s first movement immediately sets an uneasy mood, beginning softly in the upper instruments, without bass support. A desperate energy pervades the movement, with dramatic contrasts in dynamics and nervous patterns of repeated eighth notes. The second movement surrounds a calm, consoling Trio in G major with heavy, off-beat chords in the Minuet in G minor. In the slow third movement, Mozart employs mutes on all the instruments for a dark, atmospheric effect and a rich interplay among instrumental timbres. The final movement continues the grieving quality, with a slow introduction in G minor featuring an operatic-style solo in the first violin, but finally turns to a more optimistic G major for the restless finale.

Like Mozart, **Johannes Brahms** spent much of his productive life in Vienna, but his circumstances, temperament and Romantic-era influences on him, show in strong contrast to the Mozart quintet on tonight's program. The Brahms op. 88 was completed in 1882, during a stay at Bad Ischl, the composer's favorite summer resort in the Austrian Alps. Jan Swafford, in his biography, calls this piece "Brahms at nearly his most ebullient"; and the composer himself, in a letter to Clara Schumann, called it "one of my finest works." The genre, with the enriching power over the string quartet of the extra viola, is well suited to Brahms' love of rich, thick textures and skill in counterpoint. For this quintet, the composer chose a sunny F major, and a three-movement rather than the standard four-movement form.

The first movement, with its exacting tempo instructions, "Fast, not too fast, but brightly," introduces a mediant key relationship, which is exploited throughout the piece. The first theme is in F major, but the second theme, rather than going to the dominant (C major), goes instead to A major. The use of a cello drone in the development section is also a notable aspect of this movement. The second movement is a highly inventive piece of work from the classically inclined Brahms. It uses a rondo-like form of alternation between two contrasting ideas: a *grave* tempo in C# major/minor and an *allegretto/presto* section in A major. The movement ends with a gentle rocking back and forth between C# and A, settling, surprisingly, in A major. The last movement is a fast, perpetual-motion exercise in imitative counterpoint, featuring Brahms' characteristic three-against-two rhythms. The cheerful race speeds up from *allegro* to *presto* for a powerful ending.

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U p c o m i n g E v e n t s

Karen Johnson, *violin*, Mark Russell Smith, *cello*, Molly Sharp, *viola* and Joanne Kong, *harpsichord & piano*

Thursday, September 26, 2002, 7:30 pm

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

Appointed last season as the Richmond Symphony's new concertmaster, violinist Karen Johnson is featured in a program of solo and chamber works. Joining her are the symphony's music director, Mark Russell Smith, and violist, Molly Sharp, and Department of Music faculty member Joanne Kong.

Tickets are required for this free event.

Sweet Honey in the Rock

Sunday, September 29, 2002, 7:30 pm

Carpenter Center for the Performing Arts

Sponsored by the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation

This a cappella ensemble of six African-American women transcends the technologically enhanced music of the day. Sweet Honey's sound has been described as being like that of a rushing wind, the crashing of waves, an eagle's scream as it soars through the air—natural and forceful and transforming. Their sound is so true to itself that it pierces the hearts and minds of anyone who listens. It even touches those who cannot hear but who can feel and see the music as it is communicated through the fluid hands of a Sign Language interpreter.

Special seating is available upon request for hearing-impaired patrons.

Tickets: \$29 adults, \$27 seniors, \$15 children—through TicketMaster at 262-8100.

Tickets: \$22 faculty/staff, UR students FREE—through Modlin Center Box Office.

Yolanda Kondonassis, *harp*

Eugenia Zukerman, *flute*

Tuesday, October 1, 2002, 7:30 pm

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

The Modlin Center is pleased to welcome back two of today's finest musicians. Yolanda Kondonassis has become recognized as one of America's foremost harpists, performing extensively as a concert soloist and recitalist and enjoying a busy recording schedule. Eugenia Zukerman is renowned worldwide for her elegant sound, lyrical phrasing, brilliant agility and graceful stage presence. A versatile performer, Ms. Zukerman has played for over 25 years with orchestras, in solo and duo recitals and in chamber music ensembles on a regular basis. After performing together for years, this duo brings their unique talents Richmond for a return engagement.

Tickets: \$24 adults, \$22 seniors, \$12 children, \$20 faculty/staff, \$5 UR students

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