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Shanghai Quartet with Miró Quartet

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Dr. Susan A. Cole, President
Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts
Jedediah Wheeler, Executive Director, Arts & Cultural Programming

Quartet-in-Residence

Shanghai Quartet

Wen-Qiang Li, violin
Yi-Wen Jiang, violin
Honggang Li, viola
Nicholas Tzavaras, cello

Guest Artists

Dan Welcher, violin
William Fedkenheuer, violin
John Largess, viola
Joshua Gindele, cello

PROGRAM

Two Pieces for String Octet, op. 11

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)

Prelude: Adagio

Scherzo: Allegro molto

I. Prologue: Introduction of the Rival Teams

Dan Welcher (b. 1948)

II. The Challenge: Introduction and Barcarolle

III. The Battle—Epilogue

---Intermission---

Octet in E-Flat Major, op. 20

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Allegro moderato ma con fuoco

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro leggierissimo

Presto

Dan Welcher's Museum Polymors for double quartet was commissioned by Texas Performing Arts, made possible by a gift from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. It was premiered by the Shanghai and Miró Quartets at The University of Texas at Austin on September 28, 2012.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes, including one 15-minute intermission.

In consideration of both audience and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.
The dynamic Miró Quartet, one of America’s highest-profile chamber groups, enjoys its place at the top of the international quartet scene. Since its founding in 1990, the quartet has achieved world-class status, and in the 21st century, the quartet continues to captivate audiences and critics around the world with its startling intensity, fresh perspective, and mature approach.

Founded in 1993 at the Oberlin Conservatory, the Miró Quartet met with immediate success, winning first prize at the 50th annual Coleman Chamber Music Competition in April 1994 and taking both the first and grand prizes at the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition two months later. Earning both the first prize and the Piatto de Concetti prize at the 1996 Barbier International String Quartet Competition, the Miró Quartet also won the prestigious Naumburg Chamber Music Award in 2000. In 2005, the quartet received the Cleveland Quartet Award and was ensemble-in-residence to be awarded the coveted Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Recent Miró Quartet seasons have included concerts in some of the world’s most important concert venues, such as Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, the Berlin Philharmonie’s Kammersaal, the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Italy’s Festival Internazionale Quartett Ogré, Reggio Emilia, the London Drugs Festival, London’s Wigmore Hall, and Palacio Real de Madrid, as well as performances in Stockholm, Brussels, and Athens. In recent seasons, the ensemble has collaborated with such artists as John Adams, Mitsuko Uchida, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Elit Fisk, Lynn Harrell, Midir, Jon Kimura Parker, and Prisca Zunhammer. The Miró Quartet is also a favorite of opera performances, having appeared regularly at Orca Island Chamber Music Festival, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Music@Menlo, and Chamber Music Northwest, among others.

In summer 2012, the Miró Quartet returned to the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and Orca Island Chamber Music Festival, where the quartet was the recipient of Chamber Music America’s annual Quartet String Quartet-Residency Award. Other highlights of the summer included a performance under the auspices of the New York Philharmonic at Avery Fisher Hall honoring the company’s 100th anniversary, as well as the Miró Quartet’s debut at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara.

Highlights of the Miró Quartet’s 2011–12 season included performances in New York, Montreal, Chicago, Cleveland, Phoenix, and Miami, among others. The season also brought successful collaborations with the celebrated pianist Shai Wosner and cellist Lynn Harrell. The 2012–13 season featured the Miró Quartet’s return to Carnegie Hall, as well as a performance of Congress in Washington, DC, at their collection

Stavinsky’s aesthetic. Other highlights included performances in Boston, Chicago, Denver, San Antonio, Los Angeles, and Fort Worth. The Miró Quartet also toured with the renowned percussionist Colin Currie, as well as with the acclaimed mezzo-soprano Sabine Kuegler. In addition to a mainstay of the standard repertoire, the quartet maintains a fierce devotion to contemporary music. The Miró Quartet has commissioned and performed music by such composers as Brent Michael Davis, Leonardo Balada, Kevin Puts, Chen Guo, David Scholer, and Gunther Schuller.

The Miró Quartet serves as the Fauxy String Quartet-in-Residence at the Sarah and Ernest Butler School of Music at the University of Texas at Austin, where its members teach private students and coach chamber music while maintaining an active international touring schedule. With the Miró Quartet on campus, this unique collaboration in Music at the University of Texas is unique.

In the summers, the Miró Quartet has taught and performed at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Lake Tahoe Music Festival, and the Kerto Blossom Music Festival. The quartet has been heard on numerous national radio broadcasts, including American Public Media’s Performance Today and Minnesota Public Radio’s Saint Paul Sunday. Internationally, the Miró Quartet has been featured on radio networks across Europe, Canada, and Israel. They have also been seen on ABC’s World News Tonight, A&E’s Breakout with Art, and on various programs of the Canadian Broadcasting Company.

The quartet has released several recordings, most recently a disc featuring five performances of works by David Lang. Other releases include an opus 18 quartet of Beethoven on the Vanguard Classics label, as well as a disc featuring music by George Crumb and Rued Langgaard for Bridge Records. The Miró Quartet’s recording of Chris Black’s Angelos received much international acclaim, including the French Diapason d’Or. The Miró Quartet is also featured on an Onyx release entitled Evolving, performing Mendelssohn’s final string quartet (op. 116) and Schubert’s quartet with celebrated acclaimed pianist and friend, Peter Serkin. In addition, the Miró Quartet has recorded all the Bartók String Quartets on the Historia label and has released numerous recordings with the Tokyo, Juilliard, and Guarneri Quartets; cellists Yo-Yo Ma and Lynn Harrell; pianists Menahem Pressler, Yuja Wang, Peter Serkin, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet; and the San Francisco Symphony (BIS). In 2005 Decca released the Miró Quartet’s popular disc, Claviola, consisting of a collection of folk songs arranged by Wy-Min Jang reflecting on his childhood memories of living in Korea during the Korean War. In 2006, Mark Brown released the Quartet’s recording of the complete Beethoven String Quartets, a seven-disc project.

A diverse and engaging array of media projects includes PBS television’s Great Performances series and a series of television appearances playing Bartók’s String Quartet no. 4 with Rudolf Buchbinder at Zora’s Piano to an enthusiastic audience. Their recording of The Rite of Spring was performed in 2006 at the Sydney Opera House in Australia.

The Shanghai Quartet has an impressive discography of more than 30 recordings, ranging from the Schumann and Dvořák quartets to piano octets by Alexander Scriabin, as well as such works as Mendelssohn’s Octet, Schubert’s Clarinet Quintet, and Schoenberg’s String Quartet no. 2. The Shanghai Quartet is renowned for its passionate musicality, interpretive technique, and multifaceted improvements. The Shanghai Quartet has become one of the world’s foremost chamber ensembles, bringing to the standard repertoire a fresh, modern approach.

Renowned for its passionate musicality, interpretive technique, and multifaceted innovations, the Shanghai Quartet has become one of the world’s foremost chamber ensembles. Their genius draws on the musical heritage of Shanghai, its rich cultural traditions, and the volatile spirit of the city. The Shanghai Quartet has been recognized internationally for its unique perspective and mature approach.

About the Shanghai Quartet

The Shanghai Quartet has worked with the world’s most distinguished artists and regularly tours the major music centers of Europe, North America, and Asia. Recent festival performances range from the International Music Festivals of Seoul and Beijing to the Festival of Arts Canals in France, Beethoven Festival in Poland, Yevgeny Festival in Armenia, and Caragena International Music Festival in Colombia. The Shanghai Quartet is one of only a small group of ensembles whose facilities include a world-class string quartet. In the summers, the Shanghai Quartet has taught and performed at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Lake Tahoe Music Festival, and the Kerto Blossom Music Festival.

The quartet has been heard on numerous national radio broadcasts, including American Public Media’s Performance Today and Minnesota Public Radio’s Saint Paul Sunday. Internationally, the Miró Quartet has been featured on radio networks across Europe, Canada, and Israel. They have also been seen on ABC’s World News Tonight, A&E’s Breakout with Art, and on various programs of the Canadian Broadcasting Company.

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