

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



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Paul Pulford
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String quartets gather for QuartetFest '94 at Wilfrid Laurier University

Waterloo, Ont. (May 10) — QuartetFest '94 will be eclectic in both the ensembles and repertoire it presents from June 9 to 18 in Waterloo.

The six concerts in this third annual celebration of string music will range from the Penderecki String Quartet's opening gala concert of Beethoven, Brahms, and Shostakovich to the "Bending the Bows" program of symphony concertmaster Eduard Minevich and Canadian fiddle champion Frank Leahy. The Lafayette Quartet, hailed among the leading quartets of its generation, will also be featured.

New to QuartetFest this year will be the Saint John String Quartet, which has just released its first CD and completed a tour in Japan, and the Bartholdy Quartet, a young group working with the Penderecki String Quartet for the past three years.

One of the highlights of this year's QuartetFest will be the presentation of three octets and one sextet. "It's a rare opportunity to hear the extended repertoire performed by world-class ensembles," says Paul Pulford, cellist of the Penderecki String Quartet and artistic director of QuartetFest.

The opening gala on June 10 will feature the Penderecki String Quartet, the internationally acclaimed quartet now in residence at Wilfrid Laurier University, with the Saint John Quartet. The concert will open with "Fanfare" for String Octet by Canadian composer Murray Adaskin.

(More)

On June 11, Leahy and Minevich will duel through jazz, gypsy, and country music on a program ranging from the Grand Ole Opry to Carnegie Hall.

The Bartholdy Quartet will present a program of music by Ludwig van Beethoven, Harry Freedman, and Felix Mendelssohn on June 12.

On June 15, the Saint John Quartet will present works from their CD and the Penderecki Quartet will contribute a memorial performance of the "String Quartet" by Witold Lutoslawski, who died earlier this year.

The June 17 concert by the Lafayette String Quartet with the Penderecki Quartet will feature the famous "Souvenir de Florence" by Tchaikovsky for two violins, two violas, and two cellos.

For the grand finale on June 18, the Lafayette Quartet will join the Penderecki Quartet for a program including W. A. Mozart, Maurice Ravel, and the Octet in D minor Op. 65 by Louis Spohr.

All concerts will be recorded by the CBC for broadcast.

All but two of the concerts will be held in the recital hall of Laurier's John Aird Centre. The concerts on June 12 and 15 will take place at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo.

In conjunction with QuartetFest, the gallery will present a show of artists from New Brunswick, the home province of the Saint John String Quartet. The exhibition will open June 9 with a performance by the Penderecki and Saint John quartets of "Fanfare". The event, which begins at 7 p.m., is free.

Individual ticket prices range from \$10 to \$20 for the gala; the complete series of six concerts is \$75 or any four concerts may be purchased at a 20-per-cent discount. Individual concert tickets for students and seniors are \$7 each. To arrange for tickets, contact Laurier's faculty of music office at (519) 884-0710 ext. 2432.

Quartetfest is being sponsored by the university, the Penderecki String Quartet, and the Ontario Arts Council.

Wilfrid Laurier University



Founded 1911

The Penderecki String Quartet

Jerzy Kaplanek, violin
Yariv Aloni, viola

Piotr Buczek, violin
Paul Pulford, cello

The Penderecki String Quartet was founded in 1981 at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, Poland. In 1986 the quartet gained recognition at the Polish National Chamber Music Competition, where it won first prize and the Krzysztof Penderecki Special Award. It was following the quartet's performance at this festival that Maestro Penderecki suggested that the quartet could use his name.

During the past few seasons, the quartet has been featured at the Berliner Philharmonie Hall, MIDEM in Cannes, the Oregon Bach Festival, the Houston Lyric Arts Festival, the Mediterranean Festival in France, and the Merano Festival in Italy. The Penderecki Quartet performs regularly in New York and received a standing ovation at its Kennedy Center debut in 1991.

Since 1991, the Penderecki String Quartet has been quartet-in-residence at Wilfrid Laurier University, where the members co-ordinate the chamber music and string programs.

A new CD release of the quartet titled POLSKA! was recorded live by the BBC at a concert in London earlier this year. In addition to this CD, United Records will also be issuing two more CDs of the Penderecki Quartet in May and August of 1994. These recordings will include works by Penderecki, Britten, and Shostakovich. Two other CDs, the Brahms Piano Quintet (Tritonus), and "Tango" from *Smoked Lizard Lips* by Randolph Peters (NamEditions) are available with the Penderecki Quartet.

The Lafayette String Quartet

Ann Elliott-Goldschmid, violin
Joanna Hood, viola

Sharon Stanis, violin
Pamela Highbaugh, cello

The Lafayette Quartet, formed in 1984, has gained recognition as one of America's most exciting chamber ensembles. The musicians met when they were members of a Detroit-based chamber orchestra, and today the group is hailed among the leading string quartets of its generation at performances in North America, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, England, and the Netherlands.

In 1988 the quartet won the Grand Prize at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. Additional prizes were awarded at the 1988 Portsmouth (England) International String Quartet Competition and the 1980 Chicago Discovery Competition. They were also cited among the "Young Artists to Watch" by Musical America.

The Lafayette Quartet has worked extensively with the Cleveland Quartet — a relationship that began after the group won the Cleveland Quartet Competition at the Eastman School of Music. Other renowned coaches have included Rostislav Dubinsky, Lynn Blakeslee, and members of the Alban Berg and Amadeus quartets. The musicians of the Lafayette Quartet are artists-in-residence at the University of Victoria School of Music.

The Saint John String Quartet

David Adams, violin
Christopher Buckley, viola

Joanne Buckley, violin
Sonja Adams, cello

The Saint John String Quartet, formed in 1988, is a talented young ensemble based in Saint John, New Brunswick. The quartet released its first CD, *Hidden Treasures*, last year and recently completed its first tour to Japan. The group forms the nucleus of the New Brunswick Chamber Orchestra and the Saint John Symphony and is the main feature of the symphony's popular Virtuoso Series. The quartet is the first group to have been appointed as the quartet-in-residence at the University of New Brunswick-Saint John Campus.

Bartholdy Quartet

Heather Schnarr, violin
Judith Davenport, viola

David Gillham, violin
Cynthia Martens, cello

With the exception of newcomer David Gillham, the members of the quartet are students of the Penderecki String Quartet and have played together for several years. Martens and Davenport, a native of St. John's, are entering their fourth year in the honors music program at Laurier and Schnarr, her second. Gillham is entering the second year of the music program at Brandon University, where he plays with the Brandon Quartet.

Frank Leahy and Eduard Minevich

Canadian fiddle champion Frank Leahy and concertmaster Eduard Minevich take their audiences from the Grand Ole Opry to Carnegie Hall with their "Bending the Bows" program. Drawing on their Irish and Russian heritages, the two musicians engage in an energetic and playful duel that crosses musical boundaries and embraces different styles — from jazz to country and classical. They recently released a CD together, *Bending the Bows*.

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, Minevich studied violin at the prestigious Leningrad Conservatory before joining the Leningrad Concert Orchestra as soloist and concertmaster. He came to Canada in 1975 and accepted the position of concertmaster with Orchestra London, a post he held for 11 seasons. In 1987, Minevich was appointed concertmaster of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony and first violin of the Canadian Chamber ensemble.

Classically trained, Leahy won the 1984 Canadian national fiddling championship and has been a session fiddle player for the nationally syndicated radio show *Prime Time Country* since 1990. He recently earned a bachelor of music degree from Wilfrid Laurier University, where he studied violin under Minevich and chamber music with members of the Penderecki String Quartet.