

CHAMBER MUSIC
N O R T H W E S T
DAVID SHIFRIN - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

presents

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CHAMBER MUSIC NORTHWEST'S JANUARY 30 CONCERT WITH
DAVID SHIFRIN AND THE MIAMI STRING QUARTET HONORS
MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS OF MOZART, SHOSTAKOVICH

Critical praise for

David Shifrin

"A revelation in just how beautifully the clarinet can be played."

"One of the greatest clarinetists alive."

– *San Francisco Chronicle*

– *The Oregonian*

Miami String Quartet

"Everything one wants in a quartet: a rich, precisely balanced sound, a broad coloristic palette, real unity of interpretive purpose and seemingly unflagging energy"

– *New York Times*

"Like light playing on a fine jewel, the players brought to the music a luster that results only from careful listening and collegial ensemble."

– *Hartford Courant*

CHAMBER MUSIC NORTHWEST's first 2006 concert – Monday, January 30 with Artistic Director **David Shifrin**, clarinet, and the **Miami String Quartet** – honors the 100th birthday of **Dmitri Shostakovich** (September 15, 1906 – August 9, 1975) and the 250th birthday of **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (January 27, 1756 – December 5, 1791). Mozart is included in all of CMNW's remaining 2005 – 2006 season concerts (Zukerman Chamber Players, March 5, and two all-Mozart concerts on April 21 and 22, with the Borromeo String Quartet, violinist Ani Kavafian and pianist André-Michel Schub as part of Portland's citywide Month of Mozart celebration, April 19 – May 20, 2006), and his work will be prominently featured in the 36th annual Summer Festival, June 26 – July 30, 2006. Shostakovich, often programmed at CMNW, will also be given special attention in the presentation, this summer and next fall, of his complete cycle of 15 String Quartets performed by the Emerson String Quartet.

In addition to the 2006 birthday celebrants, **Carl Maria von Weber** (November 18, 1786 – June 5, 1826) is represented on the January 30 program with "one of the most infectious and enjoyable entries in the clarinet's chamber repertory." (Dr. Richard E. Rodda). The complete January 30 program comprises:

- Carl Maria von Weber, Quintet in B-Flat Major for Clarinet and Strings (1811-12 and 1815)
- Dmitri Shostakovich, String Quartet No. 9 in E-Flat Major (1964)
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Quintet in A Major for Clarinet and Strings (1789)

The concert takes place at 8 PM, Kaul Auditorium/Reed College, SE 28th and Woodstock. Tickets at \$10 (students)/\$21/\$28/\$40 may be purchased from the CMNW box office, by phone, 503-294-6400, or in person, 522 SW Fifth Avenue, Ste 924, from 10 AM – 4 PM Monday – Friday. Program notes, artist bios and music samples can be found at www.cmnw.org.

Works for particular instruments are often inspired by a composer's admiration for a specific musician and this is certainly true of the von Weber and Mozart clarinet pieces on the January 30 program. Von Weber's Quintet was written for Heinrich Bärmann, 19th century master of the instrument only recently introduced into the orchestra's regular roster. The dark-hued and expressive clarinet quickly became von Weber's favorite wind instrument. Earlier, Mozart was impressed by the technical mastery and expansive playing of Anton Stadler, a colleague and close friend. The von Weber and Mozart Clarinet and String Quintets are ranked at the apogee of each composer's chamber works. With its "brilliant instrumental writing," the von Weber includes "nimble, showy figurations, liquescent agility and wide dynamic range." It concludes with "a jolly rondo of rhythmic drive." The Mozart, "chaste in its purity, deeply introspective and immediately touching... is one of the most precious treasures in Mozart's peerless musical legacy."

Shostakovich's 9th String Quartet was premiered in 1964, 10 years after Stalin's death and the resultant freeing of the composer's complete musical expression. Like Beethoven, "Shostakovich used the medium of the string quartet as the bearer of his most intimate and deep-seated feelings, a musical window into his soul." Ten of his 15 string quartets were written after Stalin's death. The 9th Quartet is marked by its compositional unity, each of five movements with shared thematic fragments and uninterrupted connection from one to the next. Its qualities includes "a doleful, wandering motive, an incessantly murmuring figure, a grotesque little march, a dance-like strain and a cheeky tune with a good number of nose-thumbing, intentional wrong notes." It concludes with "music of stone and ice, undulating sighs, angry snappings" and a return to themes from earlier movements (all program quotes by Dr. Richard E. Rodda).

DAVID SHIFRIN has been the artistic director of Chamber Music Northwest since 1980. From 1992 - 2004, he also served as artistic director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He tours widely as a soloist and he is a member of the recently formed Kavafian-Schub-Shifrin Trio. Mr. Shifrin has been principal clarinetist with the Cleveland Orchestra, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the American Symphony, and the Dallas and Honolulu Symphony Orchestras. On the faculty of the Yale School of Music, he was awarded the coveted Avery Fisher Prize in 2000, won an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 1987, and is a Grammy-nominated recording artist.

The players of the **MIAMI STRING QUARTET** (**Ivan Chan** and **Cathy Meng Robinson**, violins; **Chauncey Patterson**, viola; **Keith Robinson**, cello) have been together since 1990. Faculty members and Quartet-in-Residence at Kent State University since fall 2004, MSQ has also been visiting Quartet-in-Residence at the Hartt School of Music and Quartet-in-Residence at Florida International University. From 1999 – 2001, the MSQ was the resident ensemble of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Society Two, and in September 2000 it was awarded the prestigious Cleveland Quartet Award. The MSQ tours extensively throughout the United States and Europe and has recorded three CDs with the music of Ginastera, Saint-Saëns and Fauré, and Peteris Vasks. They were last at Chamber Music Northwest in April 2004.

At **CHAMBER MUSIC NORTHWEST** (founded in 1971), internationally acclaimed soloists and ensembles come together for a fall-winter-spring concert series and a summer festival to explore the beauty and endless variety of chamber music, in performances of rare commitment and supreme artistry. Performances of CMNW are heard on National Public Radio "Performance Today," and CMNW has six compact discs commercially available on the Delos International label, as well as annual season highlight recordings. In 2004, CMNW became a presenter when David Shifrin led a concert tour in Japan.

CHAMBER MUSIC NORTHWEST's 36th Summer Festival takes place from **June 26 – July 30, 2006**. Details will be announced in March.