

THE ENSŌ
STRING QUARTET

Maureen Nelson, violin

Tereza Stanislav, violin

Robert Brophy, viola

Richard Belcher, cello

Thursday, October 30, 2003

8:00 p.m.

Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

String Quartet in D Major, Op. 2 No. 6 *Ignaz Pleyel*
(1757-1831)
Allegro
Variations: Allegretto
Presto

Langsamer Satz *Anton Webern*
(1883-1945)

String Quartet in F Major, *Ludwig van Beethoven*
(1770-1827)
Op. 18 No. 1
Allegro con brio
Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato
Scherzo: Allegro molto
Allegro

INTERMISSION

String Quartet in A Major, *Robert Schumann*
(1810-1856)
Op. 41 No. 3
Andante espressivo – Allegro molto moderato
Assai agitato
Adagio molto
Finale: Allegro molto vivace

The reverberative acoustics of Duncan Recital Hall magnify the slightest sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.

THE ENSŌ STRING QUARTET

Applauded by Costa Rica's La Nacion as "lucid and penetrating, combining lyricism and rigor" and The Ann Arbor News for "crisp, incisive playing with just the right quotient of sass," the ENSŌ STRING QUARTET is quickly becoming one of America's leading young ensembles. In spring 2003, the quartet was a winner of the 2003 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, and they also earned top prizes at Chamber Music Yellow Springs (Ohio) Competition and the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. In April 2004, the Ensō Quartet will make its New York debut on the Concert Artists Guild series at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall with guest pianist Gilbert Kalish.

Future engagements include concerts at New York's Merkin Concert Hall, the Pittsburgh Chamber Music Society, the Chautauqua Institution, Brooklyn Friends of Chamber Music, Chicago's Music in the Loft series, Market Square Concerts, Newtown (Connecticut) Friends of Chamber Music, and the Bedford (New York) Chamber Music Series with pianist Anthony Newman. In addition, the quartet is planning a CD recording for the NAXOS label.

The Ensō String Quartet has performed throughout the United States and abroad since its inception in 1999, including featured appearances at such music festivals as La Jolla SummerFest and the Great Lakes Music Festival. Other highlights from previous seasons include appearances on the Mostly Music and the Dame Myra Hess Series of Chicago, the SYZYGY: New Music at Rice series, and a concerto with the Rockford Symphony Orchestra and with the Champaign Urbana Symphony at the Krannert Center for Performing Arts. Internationally, the quartet has toured Costa Rica as guest artists in the Twelfth International Costa Rica Music Festival, and they have also performed in England and Canada, where the group was a Finalist in the Banff Seventh International Quartet Competition.

Currently the graduate Quartet-in-Residence at the Shepherd School of Music, the Ensō Quartet has also held a graduate residency at Northern Illinois University, where the group was mentored by the Vermeer Quartet. Recently the ensemble held a winter residency at the Britten-Pears Young Artists Program in Aldeburgh, England. In addition to extensive residency work at the university level, the ensemble is committed to bringing classical music to the community, and offers numerous programs geared for children that emphasize interaction between audience and the quartet. Most recently, the group brought their educational programs to Mark O'Connor's Fiddle Camp in California and to thousands of children and teachers in schools throughout Illinois under the auspices of the Chicago-based International Music Foundation. In addition, the group performs extensively in Texas schools under the auspices of Houston Friends of Music.

The Ensō String Quartet draws together four young musicians from around the world. Its members hold degrees from the Juilliard School, the Curtis Institute of Music, the University of Indiana, the Royal Northern College of Music (United Kingdom), and the University of Canterbury (New Zealand). In addition, the group has worked with Joseph Silverstein, composer Joan Tower, and members of the Cleveland, Alban Berg, and Takacs Quartets. The group has been featured in Chamber Music Magazine's "American Ensembles" column, and their performances have been broadcast on PBS, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation-ABC Classical FM, WGBH Boston Public Radio, Chicago's WFMT, and Canada's CBC radio.

The ensemble's name, ensō, is derived from the Japanese zen painting of the circle, which represents several things – perfection and imperfection, the moment of chaos that is creation, the endless circle of life, and the fullness of the spirit.



RICE