



IN CONCERT
Classical Music in the Valley

Veronika
String
Quartet

2:00 Sunday, February 13, 2011

Jones Theater at the Westcliffe Center for the Performing Arts

www.inconcertwestcliffe.org

IN CONCERT: PO Box 1484, Westcliffe, Colorado 81252

In Concert: *Classical Music in the Valley* presents

Veronika String Quartet

February 13, 2011

Quartet No. 1 in A Major

Alexander Borodin (1833 – 1887)

Intermission

Three Pieces for String Quartet

Igor Stravinsky (1882 – 1971)

String Quartet No. 1, Op. 11, in D Major

P.I. Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

Veronika Afanassieva, violin
Karine Garibov, violin
Ekaterina Dobrotvorskaia, viola
Mary Artmann, cello *

Since its formation in Moscow twenty years ago the award-winning Veronika String Quartet (VSQ) has established itself as an outstanding ensemble, known for its versatility and extraordinary musicianship. The unique sound of this quartet has led to success in international competitions and in concert halls throughout the U. S. and abroad. Recognized throughout the state of Colorado, the quartet has appeared frequently on NPR's Colorado Spotlight Series. Known for its innovative programming, the VSQ is committed to performing a wide range of repertoire, from beloved classics to neglected masterpieces. The Quartet has recorded for Warner Brothers, Narada, and Northword Press. Future projects include CD of Russian masterworks and CD of American Women composers.

The cellist for this concert will be **Katharine Knight. She will be taking the place of quartet member Mary Artmann, who recently suffered an injury to her arm.*

On view in Studio 2, Charting the Sage is a collaboration by Renee Alpert and Douglas Kahn. The project started with a photograph of 700 Russian Sage plants during a hoar frost and evolved into a mixed media installation that maps the growth and structure of the sage viewed as a diorama.

Alpert and Kahn have worked collaboratively since the 1980s. Their work has been shown in galleries and museums from San Francisco, California, to Moscow, Russia, and is in the Jane Reese Williams collection at the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, as well as in private collections. Renee Alpert has a Master of Fine Arts from Yale and Douglas Kahn is an architect with a degree from Pratt Institute.

You are invited to a reception to meet the performers after the concert.

Quartet No. 1, in A Major by Alexander Borodin

A scientist by day and a composer by night, Borodin was the illegitimate son of a Russian noble who, as was the custom, baptized him into the family of a serf, but who also provided for his future, eventually freeing him from serfdom. As a child he learned to play several instruments and tried his hand at composing, but other aptitudes directed his formal education. His interest in medicine and chemistry rivaled that of his music: he taught, did research and founded a school of medicine for women. When Borodin began sketching out his *Quartet No. 1 in A* (completed in 1879), he wanted to produce something identifiably Russian, but he was not fully committed to the musical nationalism of Mussorgsky and other members of the “Mighty Handful.” The resulting quartet contains many Slavic touches, but it takes a predominantly Classical form. This work shows “consummate craftsmanship, using all four instruments skillfully and idiomatically. It contains contrapuntal ingenuity, a brilliant gossamer Scherzo, harmonics and left hand pizzicato.” (Groves) Though his total output was only 21 works, Alexander Borodin nevertheless earned a secure place in the history of Russian music.

Three Pieces for String Quartet by Igor Stravinsky

Best known for his ballet *Firebird Suite* and the controversial *Rite of Spring*, Stravinsky was born in 1882 in Russia and brought up in Saint Petersburg. Although his father was an opera singer and his mother an amateur pianist, Stravinsky received only cursory musical training as a child and was expected to be a lawyer. He was, however, ill-suited to that course of study, and after the closure of his school in the aftermath of “Bloody Sunday” made it impossible for him to complete his exams, he devoted himself to his music. *Three Pieces for String Quartet* was composed in 1914 in only four days. Musicologist Eric White notes, “Stravinsky intended them as studies in ‘popular, fantastic, and liturgical moods.’ The music is difficult to play, as Stravinsky’s score calls for some extreme effects, and the rhythmic vivacity and disjunctness add a further element of challenge.” Although his work was not always well received by critics or the public, Stravinsky is widely acknowledged as one of the most important and influential composers of 20th century music. Stravinsky’s work took him to Switzerland, France and in 1939 finally to America, where he spent most of the rest of his career, becoming a naturalized citizen in 1945.

String Quartet No. 1, Op. 11, in D Major by P. I. Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky’s superb gift for melody, flair for the dramatic, use of grand musical gestures, and mastery of lyrical effects assure him a revered place among all composers. One can only assume the difficulties of his life, which caused him so much personal anguish, were somehow transmuted into a source of unbelievable strength and beauty in his music. As a composer, Tchaikovsky considered himself a Russian nationalist, strongly influenced by folk melodies and rhythms of his native land. Much of the fame of the *String Quartet No. 1* comes from the second movement, the “*Andante cantabile*,” which has been arranged for every conceivable instrumental combination. Tchaikovsky based his opening melody on the folk song, “*Sidel Vanya*,” which begins simply enough: “Vanya sat on a couch and smoked a pipe of tobacco.” It was a tune he had heard while visiting his sister in the Ukraine during summer of 1869. Tchaikovsky wrote relatively little chamber music -- three string quartets, a piano trio, and a sextet for strings, the famous *Souvenir de Florence*. Among them the *String Quartet No. 1* is the most intimate, “chamber” in writing. It was composed during the month of February 1871 and premiered on March 28 in Moscow.

Veronika String Quartet

Veronika Afanassieva, Violinist, began violin studies at age seven. She holds a



Bachelor of Music degree from Novosibirsk Music College and a Master of Music degree from Gnessin's Academy of Music in Moscow. Her principal teachers in Russia include Mark Meinbach and Alexei Kiselev. Ms. Afanassieva completed her studies with Ralph Evans and Kurt Sassmannshaus upon moving to the United States. She is a founding member of the Veronika String Quartet, which began its career in 1989 under the tutelage of the Borodin String Quartet cellist Valentin Berlinsky. She is featured on a CD of Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" with the Veronika String Quartet that is available on the NorthSound label.

Recently, she performed the "Four Seasons" with the Lancaster Chamber Orchestra under Gary Sheldon. Ms. Afanassieva has performed with numerous groups, including the Moscow Conservatory Opera Orchestra, the Kremlin Chamber Orchestra, the Skylight Opera Theater of Milwaukee and Colorado Springs Philharmonic Orchestra. Ms. Afanassieva has been an Artist-in-Residence at Colorado State University-Pueblo and Concertmaster of the Pueblo Symphony since 1999. A dedicated teacher, she maintains a private studio for both violin and piano in addition to her teaching duties at the University.

Karine Garibova, Violinist, was born and raised in Moscow. At the age of



five she started playing piano. She started playing violin at the age of six, when Karine was accepted at the Gnesin's Moscow Special Music School studying with Irina Svetlova and Helen Mazor. In 1985 she was accepted to Gnesin's Academy of Music, where she studied with Khalida Akhtyamova. In school and college Karine has shown a great interest in chamber music. As a teenager she participated in the Concertino Prague Festival. During her college years her group won a first prize in Russian National competition of student string quartets. Karine is a founding member of the Veronika String Quartet, which started

its career in 1989. Since 1999, Karine has been an artist-in-residence at the Colorado State University – Pueblo, formerly the University of Southern Colorado, and at the Pueblo Symphony, where she serves as Principal of Second Violins. Since 2000 Karine is also playing with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, where she became an Associate Principal Second Violins in 2004. Karine enjoys teaching very much. She maintains her private studios in Pueblo and Colorado Springs. She is also coaching a student string quartet at Young Peoples Orchestra in Colorado Springs. Karine is also performing outside of the Veronika String Quartet. She participated in a Lawrence Leighton Smith and Esteemed Friends recital in Colorado Springs. Karine is particularly interested in performing of new music, and enjoys working with living composers. Her most recent work is a recording of the Dinner Music of Charles Eakin with pianist Juanita DeHeart. Karine is also planning to record a Sonata for violin solo of the composer.

Ekaterina Dobrotvorskaia, Violist, was born in the historic Russian town of Vladimir to a family of musicians. She started playing violin at age five, and at age ten was accepted to the Central Music School for musically gifted children at the Moscow State Conservatory. Ms. Dobrotvorskaia graduated from the Central Music School in viola performance in 1993. She received a M.M. in music performance from the Moscow Conservatory in 1998, with certificates in solo, chamber, and orchestral performance. Her education also includes special training in music pedagogy. She studied viola with Galina Vakhromeeva-Odinetz, one of the leading viola



professors in Moscow. Additionally, Ms. Dobrotvorskaia pursued chamber music studies with Alexander Korchagin of the Shostakovich String Quartet. She has received numerous scholarships and awards and was selected by the Moscow State Conservatory to attend master classes in Russia and Europe. Ms. Dobrotvorskaia's active performing career has included extensive tours of Australia, Israel, Cyprus, Switzerland, France and Germany. She has performed as a member of the Tempera String Quartet. This quartet was selected from an international pool of applicants to represent Russia for a competition in Melbourne, Australia. Ms. Dobrotvorskaia served as Principal Violist of the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra in Moscow. Other performing credits include the Moscovia Chamber Orchestra and the Russian Philharmonia Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Dobrotvorskaia joined the Veronika String Quartet in November of 2000. She is an Artist-in-Residence at Colorado State University-Pueblo and Principal Violist of the Pueblo Symphony. She frequently makes solo appearances and collaborates with local musicians in chamber music performances.

The cellist chair for this concert will be filled by Katharine Knight who will be taking the place of quartet member Mary Artmann, who recently suffered an injury to her arm.

Katharine Knight, Cellist, was a co-founder of the former Da Vinci Quartet in 1980. She has performed across the United States, as well as in Russia, England and Canada. She has recorded extensively; and, with abundant teaching credits to her name, is also a veteran of many international competitions. A native of Baltimore, she attended the Peabody Institute where she studied with a succession of proteges of the great Russian cellist, Gregor Piatigorsky - principally Stephen Kates and Laurence Lesser, whom she followed to the New England Conservatory in Boston for graduate studies. She received a Master of Music degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where she served as teaching assistant to Wolfgang Laufer, cellist of the Fine Arts Quartet. In addition to her near quarter century with the Da Vinci Quartet, Ms. Knight performs regularly as a recitalist, with the Colorado Chamber Players, guest artist with other chamber ensembles, and as a member of Hot Celli - a duo with husband and fellow cellist, Richard Slavich. Ms. Knight joined the music faculty of the Colorado College in 1999 as cello instructor, and is a member of the chamber music faculty and Director of Career Development at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music.



IN CONCERT: *Classical Music in the Valley* was formed in 2003 to support and promote classical music in the Wet Mountain Valley. The mission of the group is to provide cultural and educational opportunities for residents of the area by presenting an annual series of live classical music performances and youth workshops. IN CONCERT is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible.

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