

camera lucida

chamber music concerts at UC San Diego
sponsored by the Sam B Ersan Chamber Music Fund

Monday, February 8th 2009

tonight's concert will be broadcast saturday, february 13 at 7 pm on
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UC San Diego | **Department of Music** **KPBS**

Dear Musical Friends!

This June Robert Schumann will turn 200, and his music continues to inspire us, whether as musicians studying and interpreting his work, or as listeners, dwelling in the unique sound-world of his creations. For the musicians of Camera Lucida, it is a special joy to spend this much time with Schumann's music. His chamber music is the quintessence of the Romantic experience, intensely private, even confessional, yet giving way to a kind of enthusiasm or charisma which borders on the ecstatic, not to say manic. The Andante and Variations presents a perfect example of a salon-music, a music of the personal, intimate sphere of friends, family, musicians and music-lovers, amateurs in the literal sense; and this notwithstanding the extreme virtuosity of the piano parts. This work would have been made for Robert's wife Clara and their friend, Felix Mendelssohn, as a specific celebration of the intense private world of family and close friends which formed an almost obsessive interest of Robert, despite his very public life as critic, composer and teacher. The shadowy timbres of viola and clarinet in the Fairytale Stories move this intimate sphere into the realm of the imagination, a child's fantasy world that Robert never outgrew. And the Piano Quartet is one of his magisterial works, written to endear and to seduce, capturing for the ages the fleeting glimpses of unmediated euphoria which were uniquely Schumann's.

Camera Lucida looks forward to monthly concerts, now through May 24! As always, we thank Sam Ersan for the generous gift which makes these concerts possible, and we hope to see you at again and again at our upcoming concerts.

Charles Curtis
Artistic Director

Andante & Variations, op. 46 (1843)

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

- I. Sostenuto
- II. Più lento
- III. Doppio movimento

Märchenerzählung (Fairy Tale), op. 132 (1853)

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

- I. Lebhaft, nicht zu schnell
- II. Lebhaft und sehr markiert
- III. Ruhiges Tempo, mit zartem Ausdruck
- IV. Lebhaft, sehr markiert

- intermission -

Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major, op. 47 (1842)

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

- I. Sostenuto assai - Allegro ma non troppo
- II. Molto vivace
- III. Andante cantabile
- IV. Vivace

Aleck Karis, piano
Katalin Lukács, piano
Jeffrey Thayer, violin
Che-Yen Chen, viola
Charles Curtis, cello
Benjamin Jaber, horn

About Tonight's Program by Jeffrey Treviño

The future monument stands vividly before me already; a moderately high pedestal, a lyre upon it with the dates of birth and death, heaven above, and a few trees about it. When a Grecian sculptor was spoken with, regarding the plan of a monument to Alexander the Great, he proposed to cut down Mount Athos to a statue of him, the statue to hold out, in one hand, a city. The sculptor was pronounced insane. Hey may have been so, but his plan was more sensible than these German penny subscriptions.

— Robert Schumann on a proposed monument to Ludwig van Beethoven (1845)

Poetry.

Schumann was raised in books: His father made the family wealthy with good taste – he translate Walter Scott and Byron into German – his own fiction (chivalric romances), his book dealing, and his obsessive lexicography; Schumann was assured an idyll for wandering the classics. By age nine, he had studied Latin, Greek, and French. To be sure, Schumann approached the piano at seven, and even composed music at twelve, but, at thirteen, he devoted himself to literature, when, then a mediocre pupil at Zwickau Gymnasium, Schumann collected his poems, dramatic fragments, and biographical sketches (some of famous composers) into a book entitled *Blätter und Blümchen aus der goldenen Aue* (Leaves and Florets from the Golden Meadow) and signed the volume with a pseudonym, “Sküländer.” In 1825, at fifteen, he formed a literature club with ten of his schoolmates, to share both original creations the German canon.

In these high school years, Schumann discovered what became a lifelong passion for the novels of J.P.F. Richter (a.k.a. Jean Paul). Paul’s style oozes adolescence without apology: Deformed, episodic cobblings bid for a story built on death-assuring doppelgangers, revoked pseudocides, and their warehouse of assorted contrivance, while human intercourse inflates with poetic outpouring, Wanderlust, platonically sentimental friendships, and heroic-romantic disregard for a practically vetted life. Writing under the influence, young Schumann authored forgeries:

Were I a smile, I would play about her eyes; were I a spirit of joy I would gently course through her veins; yes, and were I a tear I would weep with her, and when she smiled again gladly melt away on her eyelashes and die—gladly cease to be...

—Schumann, *Jugendbriefe*, p. 2.

Schumann went so far as to call his early piano works a musical translation of Paul’s style, but even the most uncompromising bohemians might at this point expect, even advise, the youth to get over this as soon as possible, and the usual story of the maturing

composer mirrors the next chapter of Schumann's life: Forced to study law in Leipzig by the dead hand of his father's last testament in 1828, all signs pointed to a life that would button these adolescent sentiments down.

Emil Flechsig wrote in his diary that his roommate never set foot in a lecture hall. He preferred instead to stay home and study Jean Paul, writing in his diary of the "ice-cold definitions" of law. Flechsig repeated the same when he lived with Schumann during an exchange year in Heidelberg: Failing to attend the ecclesiastical and international law courses in which he was ostensibly enrolled, Schumann studied French, Italian, English, and Spanish privately, running up quite a local debt while experimenting with the composition of both poetry and music. He elaborated his idea that the composition of music is essentially a poetic activity in his essay, "Die Tonwelt." He travelled to Munich and met Heine, and to Bayreuth, to visit the widow of Jean Paul. In 1831, Schumann decided in favor of a musical career.

At a party on March 21st, 1850, Schumann, now twenty years a professional composer and music critic, five years from the grave, offered a toast to the shared birthday of J.S. Bach and Jean Paul, the peering of which elicited objection from the director of the Hamburg singing conservatory: "How dare one mention them in the same breath!" Schumann insulted him and left the room. Shortly before his death, Schumann's last material request was his favorite Jean Paul novel, *Die Flegeljahre* (The Teenage Years).

As John Daverio has argued in *Robert Schumann: Herald of "A New Poetic Age"* that Schumann pursued to his end his youthful ideal of a "poet and composer in one person"; that, in the same year Schumann decided in favor of a musical career, he outlined a novel, *Die Wunderkinder* (The Child Prodigies), about the troubles of an artist's life, possibly as a reaction to his first encounters with the work of a child prodigy born also in 1810, Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin, whose opus two even Schumann could not master; that, upon hearing the bell tower of Ivan the Terrible on tour in Moscow in 1846, Schumann gave April not to composition but instead to poems about the bell tower; that he asserted that the composition of music was essentially that of poetry, tangles his works in philosophy and reassesses Schumann's compositions as a fundamentally literary undertaking.

I note, Dinocrates, the unusual formation of your plan, and am pleased with it, but I perceive that if anyone leads a colony to that place, his judgment will be blamed.

—Alexander the Great, quoted in Vitruvius, *De architectura*, vol. 2

The four-movement **Piano Quartet in Eb Major, op. 47** was composed in November of 1842, after the summer in which Schumann drafted all three of his op. 41 string quartets. The first movement begins with a slow, groping introduction that recalls Beethoven's late string quartets, which Schumann studied the previous spring. The first movement unfolds in sonata form and redeploys twice, in sudden reverie, the introductory material, first as a transition into the development and again as a transition into the coda. In a characteristic digression, the cello plays a previously unheard theme in the coda. The second movement is a scherzo with two trios, the first of which comes from the scherzo's theme, the second of which is a non sequitur of syncopated chords in varying register. The tripartite andante cantabile bookends a somber interlude with imitations and variations of a romantic melody, and the contrapuntally virtuosic finale synthesizes ideas from the previous two movements: The principal theme makes sense of the scherzo's second trio with its disjunct and syncopated chord texture, and a second, lyrical theme recalls the andante cantabile.

Between.

Writing twenty years after the composition of the evening's program, Walter Pater, father of the aestheticist movement and mentor of Oscar Wilde, describes in his essay on the Giorgione School of Renaissance painters a German aesthetic condition known as *Andersstreben*:

But although each art has thus its own specific order of impressions, and an untranslatable charm, while a just apprehension of the ultimate differences of the arts is the beginning of aesthetic criticism; yet it is noticeable that, in its special mode of handling its given material, each art may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art, by what German critics term an Anders-streben — a partial alienation from its own limitations, through which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of each other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces.

— Walter Pater, *Studies in the Renaissance*

Schumann lives in bridges, in adolescent and intermediate states of all kinds. The most extreme consequence of Schumann's ideal balance between literary and musical pursuits treats his oeuvre as a series of translations from literature into sound; Schumann applied this label explicitly to at least his early works. This is not music. This is something between music and literature. Ironically, but unsurprisingly, Jean Paul, the son of an organist, cared deeply for music and improvised regularly at the piano, frequently in order to stir his

muse, and Schumann's channeling of Paul can be seen also as a closed circle or symmetrical mediation, converting back into music what came from music through literature; in this way, Schumann owes even the poet-composer ideal itself to Paul. Given the intermediate techniques assumed in the work, the stylistic predilections of Schumann can be traced with at least intentional stability back to their literary progenitors, making Robert L. Jacobs' description of Jean Paul's literary style an apt characterization of Schumann's music:

[Paul's novels] are full of intolerable digressions— long, satirical Tristram-Shandyish harangues, packed with irrelevant learning, obscure and confusing to a degree. Still more intolerable is the crass sentimentality: Jean Paul seems to write himself into a state of auto-intoxication, to become less interested in telling a story than in using the novel for a luxurious display of personal emotion.

— Robert L. Jacobs

This was also the reception of many of Schumann's works during his lifetime, and his friends and family urged him through numerous letters to revise his style toward clarity, away from enigmatic self-indulgence.

Schumann himself seems to express reservations with Paul: "Jean Paul always enchants but seldom satisfies me: through all the enchantment there is a feeling of dissatisfaction, an eternal sadness...." Squared with the music, however, this statement explains an essential affect of Schumann's music – transcendent melancholy. To arrive there, consider Schumann's description of a pet technique: "If you want to develop, then really make something out of an otherwise ordinary passage.... In this, Beethoven, like Jean Paul, offers a splendid ideal." The "something," however, never seems to depart especially far from its birth as an "otherwise ordinary passage," and even the culminations of gradual burgeonings in, for example, the **Andante and Variations, op. 46** (1843) for two pianos, two cellos, and French horn, while sublimating from their seeds, remain naked, composed only of an increasing quantity of still more Pauline motivic cobblings, stacked, expanding and reversing in register and dynamic, but always haunted by the gravity of their mundane origins as that most romantic of atoms, the fragment; these fragments, however, have built into them turning dissonances and sentimental curls that beg to be carried upward, and, even as their quantity mutates their quality, they remain beggars. Pater's explanation of *Andersstreben* follows and clarifies his most famous statement, that, "All arts aspire to the condition of music." In Schumann, the bottom looks ever upwards, the top, downwards, and music aspires to the condition of Music.

Schumann had no choice but to focus on composition after he destroyed his career as a pianist with a chiroplast, a machine intended to enlarge the ambitus of a pianist's

hands by stretching; the barely failed reach, across and above, is the central gesture of Schumann's music.

Schumann's forms and instrumentations also reside in an intermediate state. Formally, apropos Paul's negligence regarding "telling a story" in favor of "auto-intoxication," Schumann, again in opus 46, loses interest altogether in the conventional development of a "theme" at several points in the piece, either reducing the initial fragment to a harmonic skeleton decorated by hocketed instrumental colorations or buried in dissonant, frenetic chromatic ornament and arpeggios, in either case marching steadfastly only to repeat the same marching fragment several times with increasing magnitude, like a swelling barberpole illusion – twice, at his taste, he abandons the theme and variation form altogether, once for a bout of resonant fanfare initiated brusquely by the French horn, and again for a string of hushed cello-horn chorales between rapt piano responses, their flailing rhetoric soothed into reverent imitation, as though pianos longed to be cellos. (Debussy once said that he regarded the piano as an instrument without hammers.)

These strange interludes within the form point to interlocking, Romantic ambiguities between the piece's large-scale form and its unorthodox instrumentation: The two cellos and the horn inhabit an endlessly sonorous world, as dictated by the sustaining nature of their respective technologies; pianos, however, with their percussive striking mechanisms, remain doomed to issue a series of points, usually in the shape of speaking. The piece begins with an enigmatic introduction, in which the horn and cello expose a sonic shadow government, after which the pianos begin the unwitting tasks of formal convention.

The horn itself embodies Schumann's intermediate ideals: As acoustically long as a tuba, performance practice only dictates that the tones commonly played are much, much higher than the natural resonating frequencies of such a long tube – imagine, for example, only playing very, very high notes on a trumpet, and you have an idea of what it feels like to play most "middle" register French horn writing. Schumann realized the most poetic expression of this philosophical congruence with his opus 86, the *Konzertstück* for four horns and orchestra, in which the stratospheric lead horn takes on the role of a protagonist striving heroically against the adversity of an impoverished medium. Composers in tweed jackets have diligently kept alive the debate regarding the writing's competence.

In Schumann's poetry, repentance and transcendence are the most common themes.

The state of chamber music genres at the time provides another layer of ambiguity to the work, as chamber music was undergoing a kind of adolescence in the public eye.

Formerly performed in homes with variable instrumentation, chamber genres gradually made their way to the public stage, eventually codifying a repertoire of standard chamber ensembles. Instrumentations correspondingly indicated varying degrees of domesticity – the string quartet solidified relatively early, for example, whereas Schumann’s instrumentation in opus 46, in its diversity, seems to refer to an improvised domestic gathering. Other compositions for winds and piano (the op. 70 *Adagio and Allegro*, op. 73 *Phantasiestücke*, op. 94 *Drei Romanzen*, and op. 132 *Märchenerzählungen*) similarly evoke casual music making with unorthodox instrumentations of the kind one might assemble in the home.

And none can doubt Schumann’s frank, noble, disinterested admiration of Mendelssohn.... Base envy of gifts differing from his own had no place in Schumann’s mind. On the contrary, he seems rather to overrate the talents of others, and to esteem them far beyond his own....

The silence of Mendelssohn (in his “Letters,” &c.), with regard to his friend appears inconceivable; the most liberal construction we can place on this apparent want of appreciation in Mendelssohn, is to suppose that his artistic eye and judgment were unaware of the extent of Schumann’s genius.

— Fanny Raymond Ritter, in her 1877 translation of Schumann’s collected essays

Schumann even placed himself in an intermediate state, looking toward genius without attaining it: “I am excellent in music and poetry – but not a musical genius; my talents as musician and poet are at the same level.”

Even the codified instrumentation of this work exists only between. After the composition’s first performance, Mendelssohn judged the novel instrumentation absurd and convinced Schumann to rescore the piece immediately for two pianos; this is the version that existed for the duration of Schumann’s life, for fifty years after its composition. Brahms’ fondness for the original version yielded publication in 1893, almost forty years after the composer’s death; however, the duo version for two pianos is still often performed instead of the original instrumentation.

After bowing to his friend, he wrote that he preferred the first instrumentation, his “delicate plant” – and that the composition would have been a success had a fire alarm not interrupted its premiere.

In 2002, the Greek-American Alexandros foundation announced a thirty-million euro

plan to carve Mount Athos into a seventy-meter high likeness of Alexander the Great. Internationally, archaeologists and environmentalists responded with outrage.

In 2009, Macedonia erected a 4.5-million euro monument to Alexander the Great. It is a modestly high likeness of Alexander, on a horse, surrounded by eight lion statues, and several bronze soldiers.

Composed in February of 1843, the **Andante and Variations, op. 46** steers a theme in Bb through fifteen variations after a misty, Beethovenian introduction like that of the quartet. Schumann assessed, "The work is very elegiac. I believe I was somewhat melancholy while composing it." The cello and horn color the pianos in the first variations, after which they insist upon equal footing, with moments of domination and initiation in variations five (the cellos' recollection of the introduction, in the manner of the quartet's reuse of the introductory material) and seven (the horn's fanfare).

Schumann with his taste, which was fundamentally a small taste..., going constantly to the side, timidly excusing himself and retreating, a noble, tender creature....

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

Size.

In cherishing and elevating the mundane, Schumann provokes a diversity of emotions joined by common modesty; he is a painter with a favorite color. (A kind of historical weather, composers end up inevitably with their own natural realms of precise affect: Shostakovich could nail sarcasm, and Chopin's sense of morbid tragedy was impeccable.) The second movement of the op. 113 *Märchenbilder* (1851) is a rare instance of a modestly heroic affect, possessed of the same kind of head-bobbing determination to be found in the piano quartet's scherzo. A rondo form, a forthright and determined march asserts its boundless optimism and capability with a half-cadence that unexpectedly climbs through the ceiling, to find itself suddenly marching again through perilous episodes. The later style relocates difficulties: Although simpler in material, the music has grown formally and metrically complex. The fragments have somehow stopped begging, but Paul still has his say when, say, seemingly mundane, arpeggiated accompaniments mutate grotesquely with octave inversions, causing the pianist's hands to spider-climb upwards.

Schumann's compositional technique also rested on a certain modesty, and a reverence for the past was the cornerstone of his compositional efforts. Schumann worked in

periods of genre; apropos the current evening, all of his string quartets were written in the summer of 1842, after a spring of studying those of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, and his piano quartet and quintet subsequently. Only after these did he venture the bold and romantic proposition of an ensemble made of two pianos, two cellos, and one French horn. He methodically addressed each of the major genres of his time, extending after acquainting himself with the basics. The progression from the mundane to the strange and new shows itself within any of Schumann's generic pursuits, as well as within single works, and Schumann's innovations exist modestly as the natural outcome of examined convention.

The late style in a duo context, here like in the violin sonata of the same time, consist of agreeable, repetitive banter between instruments, appropriate for new officiousness of Schumann's post as a music director in Düsseldorf beginning in 1850. But this productive time was to be cut tragically short by final illness: Schumann was dismissed from his post two years after op. 113, when he perplexingly continued conducting long after a composition's end. By 1854, he reported auditory hallucinations: fully orchestrated compositions for distant wind bands, and a theme "dictated by the angels" that became in the following days a mocking chorus of "tigers and hyenas." He dove headlong into the Rhine River the next week, survived thanks to witnessing fishermen, and asked to be institutionalized.

Schumann spent his final years in an asylum, in Enderich, just outside of Bonn, the birthplace of Beethoven. When his health permitted, Schumann would play the piano, receive visitors, and stroll into town, to visit the Beethoven monument.

About the Performers

Anthony Burr has been an assistant professor of music at the University of California, San Diego since 2007. As a clarinetist, composer and producer, he has worked across a broad spectrum of the contemporary musical landscape with groups and artists including: Alvin Lucier, Jim O'Rourke, John Zorn, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Laurie Anderson and many others. Ongoing projects include a duo with Icelandic bassist/composer Skúli Sverrisson, The Clarinets (a trio with Chris Speed and Oscar Noriega), a series of recordings with cellist Charles Curtis and a series of live film/music performances with experimental filmmaker Jennifer Reeves. Since 2000, he has created series of epic scale mixed media pieces, including Biospheria: An Environmental Opera (a collaboration with artist Steve Ausbury, performed in San Diego in 2001 and featured in the 2003 Cinematexas Festival); and The Mizler Society, a burlesque on early modern music theory, J.S. Bach and the Art of Fugue (a collaboration with John Rodgers, presented by the Australian Art Orchestra at the Melbourne Museum in 2002 and currently being developed further). He has produced and/or engineered records for La Monte Young, Charles Curtis, Skúli Sverrisson, Ted Reichman and many others. Upcoming releases include a new Anthony Burr/Skúli Sverrisson double CD with guest vocalists Yungchen Lamo and Arto Lindsay and a recording of Morton Feldman's Clarinet and String Quartet. His primary clarinet teachers were Chicago Symphony principal Larry Combs and David Shifrin.

Taiwanese violist **Che-Yen Chen** (also known as "Brian Chen"), described by the Strad Magazine as a musician whose "tonal distinction and essential musicality produced an auspicious impression", has established himself as a prominent recitalist, chamber, and orchestral musician. He is the first-prize winner of the 2003 William Primrose Viola Competition, the "President prize" of the 2003 Lionel Tertis Viola Competition. Currently the principal violist of San Diego Symphony, Mr. Chen has appeared as guest principal violist with Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. He has performed throughout the US and abroad in venues such as Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jordon Hall, Library of Congress in D.C., Kimmel Center, Taiwan National Concert Hall, Wigmore Hall, and Snape Malting Concert Hall, among numerous others. A founding member of the Formosa Quartet, the first prize the Amadeus prize winner of the 10th London International String Quartet Competition, Mr. Chen is an advocate of chamber music. He is a member Myriad Trio, Camera Lucida, Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Two, the Jupiter Chamber Players, and has toured with Musicians from Marlboro after three consecutive summers at the Marlboro Music Festival. A participant at the Ravinia Festival, Mr. Chen was featured in the festival's Rising Star series and the inaugural Musicians from Ravinia tour. Other festival appearances include the Kingston Chamber Music Festival, International Viola Congress, Mainly Mozart, Chamber Music

International, La Jolla Summerfest, Primrose Festival, Bath International Music Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Society Summer Festival, Taiwan Connection, and numerous others. Mr. Chen has also taught and performed at summer programs such as Hotchkiss Summer Portal, Blue Mountain Festival, Academy of Taiwan Strings, Interlochen, Mimir Festival, and has given master-classes at the Taiwan National Arts University, University of Missouri Kansas City, University of Southern California, University of California Santa Barbara, and McGill University. Mr. Chen began studying viola at the age of six with Ben Lin. A four-time winner of the National Viola Competition in Taiwan, Mr. Chen came to the US and studied at The Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School under the guidance of Michael Tree, Joseph de Pasquale, and Paul Neubauer. Mr. Chen had served on the faculty at Indiana University-South Bend, San Diego State University, McGill University, where he taught viola and chamber music. Mr. Chen is currently teaching at UC San Diego.

Charles Curtis has been a professor in the Music Department of the University of California, San Diego, since Fall 2000. Previously he was principal cello of the Symphony Orchestra of the North German Radio in Hamburg, a faculty member at Princeton, the cellist of the Ridge String Quartet, and a sought-after chamber musician and soloist in the classical repertoire. He holds the Piatigorsky Prize of the New York Cello Society, and received prizes in the Naumburg, Geneva and Cassado international competitions. He has appeared as soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the National Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, the NDR Symphony, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Orquestra de la Maggio Musicale in Florence, the Janacek Philharmonic, as well as orchestras in Brazil and Chile; under the baton of distinguished conductors such as André Previn, Herbert Blomstedt, Max Rudolf, John Eliot Gardiner and Christof Eschenbach. His chamber music associations have taken him to the Marlboro, Ravinia, Wolf Trap, La Jolla Summerfest and Victoria Festivals, among many others. He has recorded and performed widely with soprano Kathleen Battle and harpsichordist Anthony Newman, as well as with jazz legends such as Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Brad Mehldau. A leading interpreter of new and contemporary music, Curtis performs a unique repertoire of major solo works created expressly for him by La Monte Young, Alvin Lucier, Éliane Radigue and Alison Knowles, rarely-heard compositions by Terry Jennings and Richard Maxfield, and works by Cornelius Cardew, Christian Wolff, Morton Feldman and John Cage. Curtis' solo performances this past year have taken him to the Angelica Festival in Bologna, the Guggenheim in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Bordeaux, the Galerie Renos Xippas in Paris, the MaerzMusik Festival in Berlin, Dundee Contemporary Arts, as well as Chicago, Austin, Hamburg and Ferrara. Last month he performed in the Auditorium of the Musée du

Louvre in Paris, in the long-awaited Paris premiere of Éliane Radigue's Naldjorlak trilogy, a nearly three-hour work for solo cello and two bassett horns.

Benjamin Jaber has been Principal Horn of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra since May 2009, serving the same capacity since 2008 on an acting basis. He has also performed with the IRIS Orchestra, the Louisiana Philharmonic, the Houston, Richmond and New World Symphonies, and the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra. As a soloist, Mr. Jaber received first prize at the university division of the 2003 American Horn Competition and was the winner of the Aspen Music Festival's 2004 brass concerto competition. He was also a featured artist at the first-ever Conservatory Project series held at the Kennedy Center in Washington. He has spent his summers at the Aspen Festival, the National Orchestral Institute, the Pacific Music Festival, and the Marlboro Music Festival. He has also been active as a freelancer in the recording studios of Los Angeles, adding many different projects to his credit. Mr. Jaber received his training at the Interlochen Arts Academy, Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, and the Colburn Conservatory where he was the first hornist ever to be graduated from the school. He studied with William Ver Meulen, John Zirbel, David Jolley, and Bruce Henniss.

For over twenty years **Aleck Karis** has been one of the leading pianists in the New York contemporary music scene. Particularly associated with the music of Elliott Carter, Mario Davidovsky, and John Cage, he has championed their works all over the world. Among his numerous solo piano discs on Bridge Records are acclaimed recordings of Stravinsky, Schumann, Carter and John Cage. Recently, Karis performed Birtwistle's marathon solo work Harrison's Clocks in London and New York, Feldman's Patterns in a Chromatic Field in New York, and appeared at the Venice Biennale. At home with both contemporary and classical works, Karis has performed concertos from Mozart to Birtwistle with New York's Y Chamber Symphony, St. Luke's Chamber Orchestra, the Richmond Symphony and the Erie Symphony. He has been featured at leading international festivals including Bath, Geneva, Sao Paulo, Los Angeles, Miami, New York Philharmonic's Horizons Festival, Caramoor, and the Warsaw Autumn Festival. He is the pianist with Speculum Musicae. Awarded a solo recitalists' fellowship by the NEA, Karis has been honored with two Fromm Foundation grants "in recognition of his commitment to the music of our time." Karis has recorded for Nonesuch, New World, Neuma, Centaur, Roméo and CRI Records. His solo debut album for Bridge Records of music by Chopin, Carter and Schumann was nominated as "Best Recording of the Year" by OPUS Magazine (1987) and his Sonatas and Interludes for prepared piano by John Cage received a "Critic's Choice" from Gramophone in 1999. His most recent CD, on the Tzadik label, is an acclaimed recording of "Patterns in a Chromatic Field" for cello and piano, by Morton Feldman. He has also recorded solo music by Davidovsky, Babbitt, Glass, Primosch, Anderson and Yuasa. Chamber music

recordings include works by Carter, Wolpe, Feldman, Crumb, Babbitt, Martino, Lieberman, Steiger, and Shifrin. Karis has studied with William Daghlian, Artur Balsam and Beveridge Webster and holds degrees from the Manhattan School of Music and the Juilliard School. Currently, he is a Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego. Karis has studied with William Daghlian, Artur Balsam and Beveridge Webster and holds degrees from the Manhattan School of Music and the Juilliard School. Currently, he is a Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego.

Born in Romania, pianist **Katalin Lukács** received her Diploma in piano performance at the "Gh. Dima" Music Academy in Cluj where she studied with Dr. Nina Panieva Sebesi and Daniel Goiti. She has won prizes at several competitions, such as the National Competition of Young Artists, the Carl Filtsch International Piano Competition, and the Brevard Music Center's Piano Competition. Katalin has performed as a soloist with several orchestras, including the Tg-Mures Symphonic Orchestra, the Huxford Symphony, the Alabama Wind Ensemble, and the La Jolla Chamber Orchestra. In 2001 she was invited to perform as featured artist with the Brevard Music Center's Festival Orchestra, under the direction of David Efron. As an active solo and chamber music participant she has attended music festivals such as the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt, Germany, the Ostrava Days New Music Festival in the Czech Republic, SEAMUS National Conference, Eugene, Oregon; Southeastern Student Composers Symposium. She also has repeatedly served as the resident pianist of the Brevard Music Center New Music Ensemble. She has performed with ensembles as UCSD percussion group Red Fish Blue Fish, SONOR, Ostravska Banda and Ensemble Zs. Her collaborations with Red Fish Blue Fish resulted in recordings of the music of Stockhausen, Scelsi, Stuart Saunders Smith for Mode and New World Records. Katalin is currently working towards the completion of a DMA in contemporary piano performance at The University of California at San Diego where her principle mentor is Aleck Karis. She resides in San Diego, where she is active as a pianist, promoter of contemporary music, educator and accompanist.

Violinist **Jeff Thayer** is Concertmaster of the San Diego Symphony as well as Concertmaster and guest artist of the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara). Previous positions include assistant concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, associate concertmaster of the North Carolina Symphony, and concertmaster of the Canton (OH) Symphony Orchestra. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the Juilliard School's Pre-College Division. His teachers include William Preucil, Donald Weilerstein, Zvi Zeitlin, and Dorothy DeLay. A native of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, Mr. Thayer began violin lessons with his mother at the age of three. At fourteen, he went to study with Jose Antonio Campos at the Conservatorio

Superior in Cordoba, Spain. He has appeared as soloist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, the Jupiter Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Pierre Monteux School Festival Orchestra, the Spartanburg Philharmonic, the Cleveland Institute of Music Symphony Orchestra, The Music Academy of the West Festival Orchestra, the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, the Nittany Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Conservatory Orchestra of Cordoba, among others. He attended Keshet Eilon (Israel), Ernen Musikdorf (Switzerland), Music Academy of the West, Aspen, New York String Orchestra Seminar, the Quartet Program, and as the 1992 Pennsylvania Governor Scholar, Interlochen Arts Camp. Other festivals include La Jolla Summerfest, the Mainly Mozart Festival (San Diego), Festival der Zukunft, and the Tibor Varga Festival (Switzerland). Through a generous loan from Irwin and Joan Jacobs, Mr. Thayer plays on the 1708 "Sir Bagshawe" Stradivarius.

Cellist **Yao Zhao**, the Cello Principal of the San Diego Symphony, is hailed in the New York Concert Review as "a superb cellist with intense and sensuous sound," and described by the Los Angeles Times as "being able to handle the most intricate musical works with unblinking ease and expressive zeal," performs with a rare and captivating dynamism that has already secured him a successful career as an artist. Mr. Zhao has held the Associate Cello Principal position from 2005 to 2007, and prior to that, he was a member of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra. Born in Beijing in 1976, Mr. Zhao began his studies on the cello and piano at the age of four under the instruction of his father, a distinguished cellist. He made his first appearance in concert at the age of five, and solo debut in the Beijing Concert Hall at age nine. That same year, he was also accepted to the China Central Conservatory of Music. For his talent and exceptional performance in a master class held by Professor Eleonore Schoenfeld, Mr. Zhao was personally chosen by the renowned pedagogue to venture to the United States and continue his education on full scholarships at the Idyllwild Arts Academy and the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California in 1991. Since winning a top prize at the First Chinese National Cello Competition in 1987, Mr. Zhao has kept a winning streak of 13 competitions, awards and honors. The successful solo debut at Weil Recital Hall of Carnegie Hall in New York has been marked as one of his career highlights. Mr. Zhao has performed at renowned concert halls in more than 40 cities around the world. Some of his festival appearances have included the Grand Teton Festival, the Ojai Music Festival, and the Asia Philharmonic Orchestra in Korea and Japan which gathers top Asian artists worldwide. Mr. Zhao has been interviewed by CNN, CBS, KTLA, GreekTV, and CCTV. As both a solo and ensemble artist on multiple recordings, his performances can often be heard on radio stations KPBS and KUSC. Beyond a busy performance schedule, Mr. Zhao continues to dedicate himself to the education of youth in the arts. This year marks his

9th season teaching at the Idyllwild Arts Academy and the Idyllwild Arts Summer Festival. His achievements and generous contributions to music performance and education have been recognized and highly commended by the City of Los Angeles. Mr. Zhao is an artist of the Asia Pacific Arts Management Ltd.

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