

Canadian-based St. Lawrence String Quartet to perform Jan. 15 in Mandeville Auditorium at UCSD

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"It requires no more than two hands to count those young ensembles that so energize a performance as to leave the listener in a state of nervous and thoroughly satisfying exhaustion," writes the Washington Post. "The St. Lawrence String Quartet is one such ensemble."

The St. Lawrence String Quartet will perform at 8 p.m. Jan. 15 in Mandeville Auditorium at the University of California, San Diego.

"What sets apart great performances from merely good ones," the Post continues, "is conviction. Like partners in a high-wire act, the St. Lawrence has complete faith in its skills and vision. By listening intently, we for a minute can share that thrill."

Ensemble members are Geoff Nuttall, first violin; Barry Shiffman, second violin; Lesley Robertson, viola, and Marina Hoover, cello. The Jan. 15 program will include Haydn: String Quartet in D Major, Opus 76, No. 5; Schafer: String Quartet No. 3, and Beethoven: String Quartet in A minor, Opus 132.

The Toronto Globe & Mail describes the quartet as "first and foremost about risk taking: about playing on the emotional edge; about performing, not to 'get it right,' but because the music has something to tell us that we cannot live without; something that could make you change your life."

The quartet was formed in 1989 under a program jointly sponsored by the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. It takes its name from the St. Lawrence River which, along with the Great Lakes basin where it begins and the Gulf of St. Lawrence where it ends, provides a 2,342-mile link between Canada and the United States. Three of the four members received their musical training in both countries.

In 1992, the group won both the Fourth Banff International String Quartet Competition and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, followed by debuts in New York City, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and the Paris Opera.

At the invitation of Isaac Stern, the ensemble performed for President and Mrs. Clinton at the White House in October 1993 during an evening honoring the recipients of the National Medal of the Arts. Since then it has been performing in cities and music festivals throughout North America, South America, Europe, Japan and Vietnam.

In addition to a concert schedule, the St. Lawrence String Quartet commissions and performs new works by composers who are incorporating multi-media collaborations especially for the members.

"Spontaneous precision reign(s) from this Canadian-based ensemble of consummate musicians," writes the Salt Lake City Tribune, with "an incredible virtuosity of dazzling dynamics, fingers and bows."

Tickets for the St. Lawrence String Quartet are \$20 general admission and \$10 for students. Tickets are available at the UCSD Box Office, 534-8497, and at Ticketmaster outlets at 220-8497. The concert is sponsored by the UCSD University Events Office. For information on the entire season of events sponsored by the University Events Office, visit the website, <http://ueo.ucsd.edu>, or call the UCSD University Events Office at 534-4090.

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