



**MONTALVO**  
ARTS CENTER

## THE CYPRESS STRING QUARTET



Tuesday, October 23, 2007  
9:30am & 11:30am

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**AUDIENCE:** Grades 3+, students who have varying degrees of music experience.

**PRESENTATION:**

What is a string quartet? Why is each instrument so important and what are their roles in making music in a quartet? How do the musicians work together to make the best sound they can? The program will include demonstrations that answer these questions, and more.

The presentation will include excerpts from:

- Charles Tomlinson Griffes’ “Two Sketches for String Quartet Based on Indian Themes,”
- Antonin Dvorak’s “American” Quartet,
- and Benjamin Lees’ Quartet No. 6.

Featured composers all created these pieces in the United States. The pieces may serve as examples of their reflections on different aspects of American culture from their respective time period. Two of them feature reflections on Native American music and culture.

This program is an exciting and joyful experience, which relates to subjects across the curriculum including: Social Studies, Geography, Math and Vocabulary.

**VOCABULARY:**

- *Quartet:* a group of four
- *Syncopation:* rhythmic accent or emphasis where you don’t expect it.
- *Dissonance:* a group of notes or a chord that is jarring to the ear.
- *Harmony:* the simultaneous sounding of notes, which supports a melody. For example, chords.
- *Folk Songs:* songs of unknown authorship passed down from generation to generation. (Ex. “Turkey in the Straw”)

**SOME ITALIAN VOCABULARY WORDS**

- *Forte* – loud
- *Piano* – soft
- *Legato* – smooth
- *Staccato* – detached

**EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS**

- Classical music opens up pathways to learning and stimulates the brain in ways that other subjects do not
- Teaches focus, listening skills, teamwork and community participation
- Motivates kids to be inquisitive and participate\*
- Encourages students to seek multiple interpretations to questions, rather than simple right or wrong answers (critical thinking skills)\*
- The effects of listening to classical music are long lasting\*
- Learning in the arts can lead to improved achievement in other academic subjects\*

(\*from California Arts Council’s “An Arts in Education Research Compendium”)

## **HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE?**

Let's take a minute to think about concert manners. If you're watching a movie or television, you could be talking or eating and wouldn't disturb the performers. This is not the case with a live performance! It requires your attention – especially since you will be participants in the performance.

## **PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES**

- Ask the students to pick a favorite song. Either discuss it or have them write why they enjoy it. Do they like it because of the lyrics, or the music? How old or new is the song? Where did they first hear it?
- Play a variety of songs from different genres (i.e., rock and roll, pop, folk, country, jazz, blues, classical) and ask the student to identify specific instruments. What instrument families are represented? (Strings, brass, percussion, etc.) How do the different songs from different genres make you feel? Ask students to draw a picture the feelings each song evokes.
- Students are very familiar with the “team” mentality, especially in regards to sports. The string quartet is also a “team,” a musical one. Discuss what makes a team successful. What responsibilities each position need to uphold in order to win? How are the roles of the instruments in a quartet or other musical ensemble similar to sports positions? How are the different?
- Ask students to identify tempos of songs.
- Play music from various countries around the world. Discuss their similarities, and their differences. Does Native American music share any qualities with African music? Does jazz share any similarities with hip hop?

## **Music “Exploration”**

Listen to a short excerpt of any music you have available. Have kids to this same excerpt a few times together as a class. Each time the music is played, ask students what they “notice” about the music. Teacher and students should simply make observations first about what they hear, without making any hypotheses or conclusions about the music. Record these observations on the board for all to see.

Examples: “I notice a screechy sound,” or “there are many sounds at once,” etc.

After you have spent considerable time observing the piece with the students, ask them to look at the list of observations and ask them to name some things about the music that puzzle them, or that they don't understand.

By the end of this exploration, you may have several ideas emerge from students about different parts of the music, such as the following and more:

- Lower sounding instruments or sounds
- A pulse in the music, or beat
- A melody they notice
- How to relay certain simple ideas through music (ie. happy or sad)
- Repeating themes

The observations and ideas generated by this exploration will connect with the Cypress String Quartet's presentation. It will also help the students develop a curiosity and interest before hand. Exploring their own music will enhance the experience for your students.

### **Research the culture and history of Native Americans**

Native American Explore traditional music and dance of the Chippewa (also "Ojibwe") Indians.

- What instruments did they use?
- What did they sound like?
- Use the following links as resources:

<http://www.glitc.org/>

<http://www.lib.washington.edu/subject/History/tm/native.html>

<http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/indices/NAhistory.html>

<http://www.tolatsga.org/Compacts.html#Ojibwe>

The concept of Native Americans as a dying race has been popular throughout American history, and it was revived in the early twentieth century.

- What was the status of the Native Americans' rights and treatment during the period these pieces were composed?

Consider the images and descriptions below in discussing the events that were happening around the time the music was written.

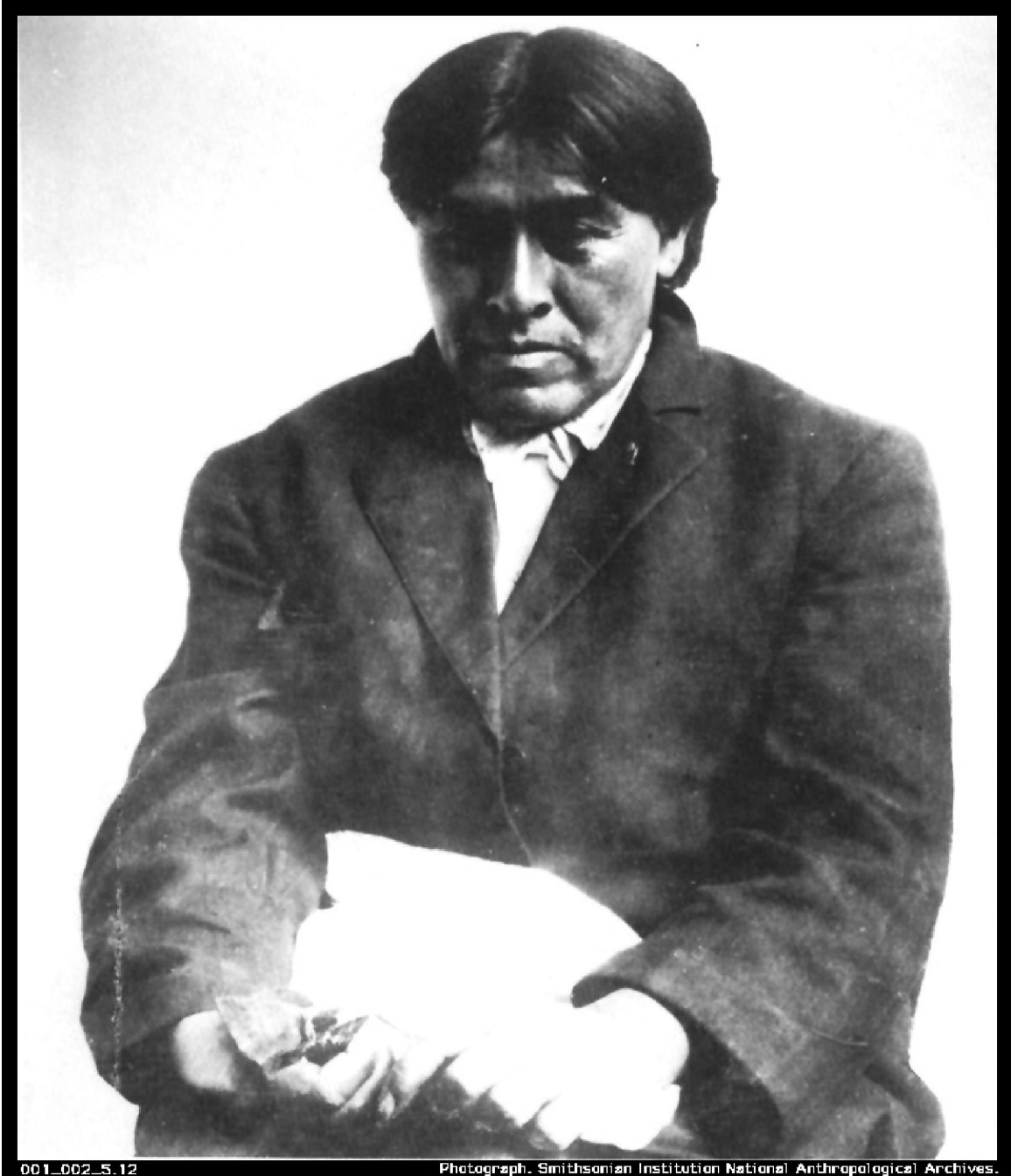
### **THINGS TO LISTEN FOR**

- At one point in the piece, Griffes instructs the lower instruments to make their pizzicato notes sound "like Indian drums." Can you hear the Indian drums? Which instrument/musician is making these sounds? How?
- In the case of the "American" Quartet, Dvořák said that the title meant that he was sending "impressions and greetings from the New World." What "impressions" of America does Dvořák have? How does he feel about the New World?



001\_002\_5.10 Photograph. Reproduced from The Dictionary of American Portrait (Dover Publications, 1967).

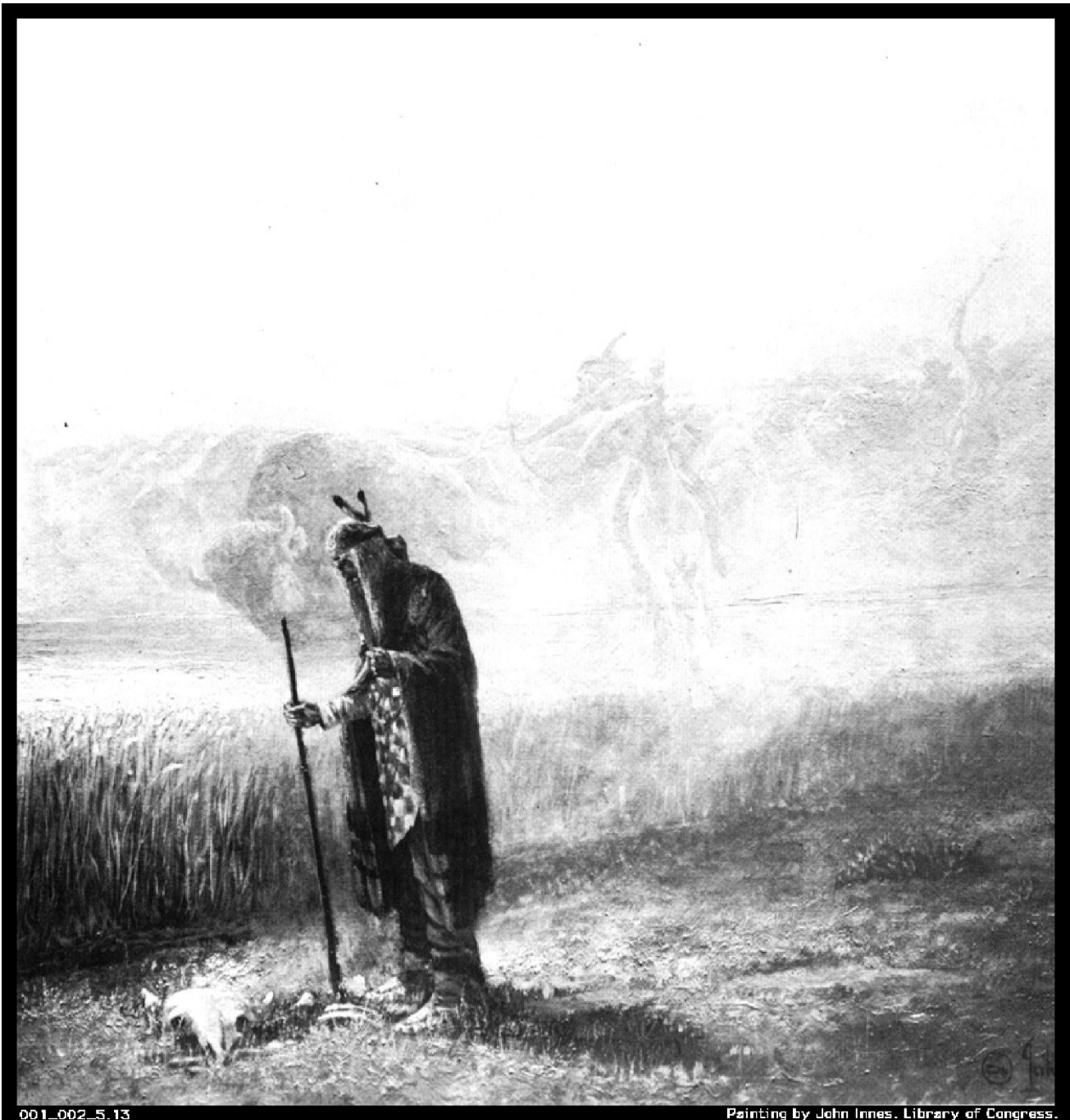
**Charles Eastman (1858-1939) was a Wahpeton (Santee) Sioux who attended Dartmouth College and Boston University Medical School.** He was the first Native American to hold a position of authority at the Pine Ridge Agency, where he was a doctor. While working at the reservation, he witnessed the **Ghost Dance movement**, and he was one of the first people to visit Wounded Knee after the massacre. Active in the YMCA and **one of the founders of the Boy Scouts of America**, Eastman's civic-mindedness (and his ability to move comfortably in both white and Indian society) led him to **co-found the Society of American Indians in Columbus, Ohio, in 1911.**



001\_002\_5.12

Photograph. Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives.

**Ishi was the last surviving member of the Yahi tribe.** He was born about 1862. The Yahi were related to the Yana Indians who once **lived in northern California.** Contact with whites began with the California Gold Rush of 1849, which led to struggles over land, raids on white settlements, and devastating counterattacks. Two massacres of Yahi Indians at Mill Creek in the 1860s all but wiped them out. The remaining survivors hid themselves away completely and were thought to have died until Ishi, starving and alone, appeared at the town of Oroville in 1911. News of his appearance reached two anthropologists, Alfred Kroeber and Thomas Waterman, who came to Oroville to learn more about him and his people. Ishi showed how the Yahi survived in the wilderness and shared with them the songs and stories of his ancestors. Kroeber brought Ishi to San Francisco, where he lived in the Museum of Anthropology. Ishi died of tuberculosis in 1916. ([http://www.csulb.edu/~aisstudy/nae/chapter\\_5/001\\_002\\_5.12.jpg](http://www.csulb.edu/~aisstudy/nae/chapter_5/001_002_5.12.jpg))



Many painters of the time depicted Native Americans in a way that suggested nostalgia for the way of life the Indians had lost. In this **1922 oil painting by John Innes**, an elderly Indian is looking at a buffalo skull, while the ghosts of hunters and buffalos—**symbols representing the lost Native American way of life**—appear in the sky above him. In the course of the nineteenth century, certain tribes became extinct or suffered severe depopulation as a result of disease, conquest, and poverty, but it was a common misconception among whites that the Indians were vanishing as a whole. ([http://www.csulb.edu/~aisstudy/nae/chapter\\_5/001\\_002\\_5.13.jpg](http://www.csulb.edu/~aisstudy/nae/chapter_5/001_002_5.13.jpg))



001\_002\_5.11

Photograph. National Archives.

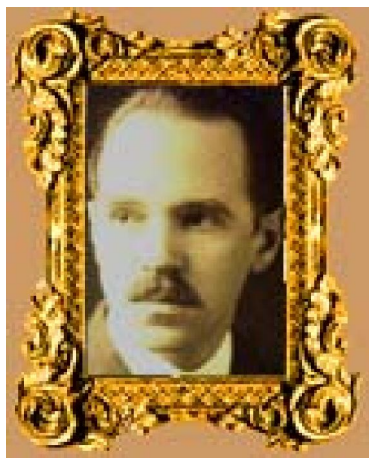
Founded by a group of Indians who possessed both strong tribal loyalty and important connections with the white world, the **Society of American Indians was founded in 1911** with the belief that "race leadership" could build a legal division. Almost immediately, however, problems developed within the group as different factions formed over such sensitive issues as Indian assimilation into white culture and the future role of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In the end, the society lacked the resources and the broad public support needed to make its promises reality. This photograph is of a society banquet attended by both whites and Indians in Philadelphia in 1914. ([http://www.csulb.edu/~aisstudy/nae/chapter\\_5/001\\_002\\_5.11.jpg](http://www.csulb.edu/~aisstudy/nae/chapter_5/001_002_5.11.jpg))

## **POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES**

Use the following questions to create a discussion about the performance.

- What instrument families did you see on stage during the show? What kind of sounds do they produce? Did these instruments ever sound like other types of instruments?
- How does a major historical event affect the music of the time? Pick a current topic or news story and create a song about it. Imagine the type of story, and what kind of music would be best suited to it.
  - § If the story is a tragedy, discuss what instruments might be appropriate to the tone of the story.
  - § If the story is comical, how might the song be constructed to best suit it?
  - § Some of the tools you could use are; a.) tempo, b.) instrumentation (what instruments are involved, c.) voices (would a female or male be best, low or high).
- If the music you heard in the performance today was a story or play:
  - § Who would the characters, or actors, be?
  - § What would the costumes, or clothing, look like?
  - § What is the setting? Where does the story take place?
- How does music impact your life today? Does it make you feel better when you are sad? Does it make you dance? Where do you listen to music? How often? How important is music to your life compared with television, or video games, or the computer?
- In the case of the “American” Quartet, Dvořák said that the title meant that he was sending “impressions and greetings from the New World.” What “impressions” of America does Dvořák have? How does he feel about the New World?
  - § Using this music as a guide, write a letter from Dvořák to his friends in Europe about Dvořák’s experience of the United States.

## **Charles Tomlinson Griffes** **1884-1920 (b. Elmira, New York)**



One of the first truly distinctive voices in American music, Charles Tomlinson Griffes was hailed as a major force in American classical music at the time of his premature death in 1920.

Born in Elmira, NY, on September 17, 1884, Griffes displayed an early interest in painting and drama. Recuperating from typhoid fever at age eleven, he grew fascinated with his sister Katharine's practicing the European classics on the piano, and he set himself about to master the instrument. At thirteen he began his studies with Mary Selena Broughton, who remained his mentor and friend throughout his life. It was in 1903, Griffes traveled to Berlin, Germany, where he studied for four years, became fluent in the language, and developed a special interest in Debussy and Ravel, as well as music from the Orient, or Asia.

Griffes returned to America in 1907 to take a post as music instructor at the Hackley School, a private boys' preparatory school in Tarrytown, NY. He was 23 years old, an accomplished pianist, well-trained composer, cultured, worldly, fluent in four languages, sensitive, curious and ambitious. He was a voracious reader, particularly of poetry, had a fascination with Asian art and culture, painted (mostly watercolors), and was eager to throw himself into the creative fray of nearby New York City.

Griffes was frequently unhappy in his life as a schoolmaster, and he felt increasingly isolated emotionally and artistically. With the advent of World War I's anti-German feelings, Griffes felt himself cut adrift from his European friends and ties.

His constant trips into Manhattan, however, were stimulating. He met many of the European avant-gardists and heard new scores by composers such as Debussy, Ravel, Scriabin, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Busoni, Milhaud, Prokofiev, and Varèse. He was also well aware of fellow American composers, including Ornstein, Loeffler, and Farwell. Griffes tirelessly promoted his music and these efforts, combined with the quality of the music, began to pay off.

In the remaining six years of his life, he produced his most important compositions, among them *THE PLEASURE DOME OF KUBLA KHAN*, a 1917 orchestral work inspired by Coleridge's poem which revealed the composer's orientaling inclinations; his 1918 *PIANO SONATA*; his 1919 *POEM FOR FLUTE AND ORCHESTRA*; and the unfinished *FIVE PIECES FOR PIANO*. His new works were played by the New York Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra. His music was greeted with encouragement from musicians and critics and met with audience success.

In 1919, just before he died, he was becoming established as one of the most gifted and creative American composers of his generation. The victim of lung and heart problems as well as overwork and emotional strain, he collapsed at Hackley in December 1919. Neither a sanitarium stay nor surgery could cure him, and Griffes died at New York Hospital on April 8, 1920.

(<http://www.naxos.com/composerinfo/433.htm>) & (<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/ihas/composer/griffes.html>)

## Two Sketches for String Quartet Based on Indian Themes

*Lento e mesto*  
*Allegro giocoso*

Charles Tomlinson Griffes  
b. 1953

### *Two Sketches for String Quartet Based on Indian Themes*

- premiered by the Flonzaley Quartet in April 1919 for the Modern Music Society of New York.
- not published until 1922, after Griffes' death.
- edited by Adolfo Betti, the first violinist of the Flonzaley.

It was at the premiere performance that critics began to hail Griffes as the new voice of American music. *The Musical Leader*, April 10, 1919 wrote that Griffes was the "...manifestation of a school of American composition with the courage of its convictions, sincere and of high ideals".

The first sketch, titled "Lento e mesto" is based on a "Farewell Song of the Chippewa Indians." It is not known how Griffes would have heard the music of the tribes of Wisconsin and Minnesota, or how he would have known music of such a private ceremony, but it was memorable enough for him to create this hauntingly beautiful movement.

- At one point in the piece, he instructs the lower instruments to make their pizzicato notes sound "like Indian drums".

The second movement, "Allegro giocoso" is his impression of a Native American dance.

**Antonín Dvořák**  
**1841-1904 (b. Nelahozeves, Czechoslovakia)**



Antonín Dvořák began taking voice and violin lessons at the age of six. He took to the violin quickly and soon began playing in church and village bands. By the time he was twelve years old, his parents sent him to the Czech town of Zlonice to continue his education in learning German as well as music. Joseph Toman and Antonin Leihmann continued to teach Dvořák violin, voice, organ, piano, and music theory.

At age 16, Dvořák moved to the Prague Organ School where he continued to study music on a deeper and more complicated level. During this time, he played the viola in the Cecilia Society. He played works by such composers as Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Wagner. While in Prague, Dvořák was able to attend concerts of new works by Liszt conducted by Liszt himself. Dvořák left the school in 1859, second in his class.

By the time Dvořák was 18 years old, he was hired to play viola in a small band, which later became the building blocks of the Provisional Theater Orchestra. In 1865, Dvořák taught piano to the daughters of a goldsmith; one of whom later became his wife (Anna Cermakova). During these years, Dvořák was privately composing music.

Because his early works were too demanding on the artists who performed them, Dvořák evaluated and revamped his work. He turned away from his heavy German style to a more classic Slavonic, streamlined form. Besides teaching piano, Dvořák applied to the Austrian State Stipendium for income. In 1877, Brahms, very much impressed by Dvořák's works, was on the panel of judges who awarded him a financial prize. A letter written by the prominent composer Johannes Brahms about Dvořák's music brought him much fame. Brahms convinced his publisher Simrock to publish a few of Dvorak's works – and he became a success overnight. He composed music of a truly 'nationalist' character – infusing his compositions with folk melodies and rhythms.

During the last 20 years of Dvořák's life, his music and name became internationally known. He earned many honors, awards, and honorary doctorates. At the age of 51 years old, Dvořák moved to America to work as the artistic director for the National Conservatory of Music in New York for \$15,000 (nearly 25 times what he was earning in Prague). His first performance was given in Carnegie Hall. Dvořák's *New World Symphony*, one of his most famous orchestral works, was written in America. On May 1, 1904, Dvořák died of illness.

(<http://classicalmusic.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=classicalmusic&zu=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.naxos.com%2Fcomposer%2Fdvorak.htm> )

**Quartet No. 12 in F, Op. 96, “American”**

*Allegro ma non troppo*

*Lento*

*Molto vivace*

*Finale : vivace ma non troppo*

Antonín Dvořák

1841-1904

*Quartet No. 12 in F, Op. 96, “American”*

- Dvořák’s twelfth String Quartet.
- written in June of 1893.
- written during a vacation with his family in the Czech community of Spillville, Iowa.
- described by Dvořák as “impressions and greetings from the New World”, not “American” music.
- premiered in Boston by the Kneisel Quartet in 1894.

The composer was at the height of his fame, with all of Europe waiting anxiously for his next work, when he was invited to the United States for one of his two stints as director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York.

- The first work he wrote in Spillville was the “New World” Symphony where he used elements from Native American and African-American melodies.
- In the case of the “American” Quartet, Dvorak said that the title meant that he was sending “impressions and greetings from the New World”, and not that the music was American.

The F Major Quartet, Op. 96 was composed quickly; Dvořák sketched the entire piece in three days and completed it in fifteen days. At the end of the manuscript, he wrote: “Thank God! I am content: it has gone very quickly.” Dvořák had not written any chamber music in three years. The “American” Quartet was premiered in Boston by the Kneisel Quartet in 1894. Instantly popular, the work reflects Dvorak’s contentment and pleasure of his holiday among his countrymen in a place so far away from home.

Between 1862 and 1895, Dvořák wrote a total of fifteen quartets. Critics and performers alike loved them, commenting on their “remarkable freshness and lively rhythms”, as well as the innocence and transparency of the music.

## **Benjamin Lees**

**1924 - (b. San Francisco, CA)**



Benjamin Lees' musical output has followed a consistent path over four decades, since his earliest orchestra scores of the 1950s. Classical musical structures form the basis of his works, expertly crafted and honed into his own language, always tonal, but exploring the full range of tonality through development of subject matter. Inversions, strettis, canons, fugues, melodic and harmonic exploitation of intervals; all of these are ordnance in the Lees armory but Lees the technician is always the master, not the servant of his art. And it is as his art has grown that he has, as it were, "slipped the surly bonds of earth," each new work representing a graceful display of compositional flight in all its aspects.

Lees' chosen instrument has been the orchestra. The *Fourth Symphony, "Memorial Candles"* (1985), in homage to the victims of the Holocaust, with a soprano setting of poems by one of the survivors, is a "cri du coeur" of visceral and dramatic intensity. The stark realism of these poems is graphically illustrated by the orchestra which captures terror in all its aspects; fear, revulsion, anger, and finally sad resignation find voice through such devices as fluttered brass fanfares, shrieking strings, chiming celestas, and a solo violin, representing the beleaguered soul. This fifty minute work opened up new frontiers for Lees, as did *Portrait of Rodin* (1984), a suite of tonal impressions of coloristic sonority. And Lees the miniaturist is found in *Mobiles* (1989), a series of linked musical thumbprints based on moving abstract sculptural designs.

The *Fifth Symphony* (1988) is a more traditional structure, commemorating the arrival of Swedish immigrants to Delaware in the 1600s. Its hallmarks are rhythmic tension, intervallic interrelationships (especially octaves and fifths) and compactness of design. The initial mood of apprehension gradually yields to growing and expectation, culminating in a gloriously upbeat finale.

Amongst the finest of Lees' mature works is the *Concerto for Brass Choir and Orchestra* (1983), his third essay in a series of pieces for groups of concertante instruments with orchestra. Lees' skill in exploring instrumental contrasts, harmonic intervals (again fifths and octaves) while developing his materials is strongly evident here.

Of his String Quartets, the *Fourth* (1989) demonstrates a favorite Lees device: continual evolution. Classical in structure described by the composer as "a landscape of shifting meters and turbulence," it is a masterful exposition of virtuosity, elegance and poise. The second fast movement is played pizzicato throughout and the final movement with its "hurly burly" of ideas and dissonant harmonies is a model of abstract form within tonal limits.

Always a disciplined artist, Lees has kept faith with his values and beliefs. For him, music can and should be approached and appreciated on its own terms. Programmatic backgrounds, ethnic considerations and "Americana" are not germane to his musical credo. His lifetime of exploration has been dedicated to the search for his own ideal of artistic truth. The "Lees style" is instantly recognizable and every work is possessed of lofty grandeur. (<http://www.benjaminlees.com/biog.htm>)

## String Quartet No. 5

*Measured*

*Arioso*

*Quick, quiet*

*Explosive*

Benjamin Lees

1924-

### String Quartet No. 5

- completed in late summer 2001 for the Cypress String Quartet.
- commissioned by the Cypress String Quartet as part of their Call & Response series.
- For this series, the Quartet selects two works from the standard quartet repertoire and commissions a third work that is to be based on inspiration derived from the two older works. Asked to respond to the quartets of Shostakovich and Britten, Mr. Lees writes the following:

*"I was drawn to Shostakovich when I was still in my early teens. His music always contained unexpected twists and turns both harmonically and rhythmically, and his sharp sardonic wit appealed to my own sense of humor. Since my taste in painting favored the Cubists and Surrealists, his music mirrored the elements found in those two schools. Shostakovich exposes raw nerves even as he suddenly reverses field and becomes jocular, only to draw the listener up short again with thematic material of somber beauty. The element of surprise is never far away. What appeals to me about Britten is his extremely refined sense of harmony and the ability to simply suggest a tonality before sliding away from it into a hazy suggestion of another. He can, briefly, whip into a full-blown tonal scale and then, quite suddenly, slide away into a harmonic haze. It always manages to keep the listener off balance."*

Lees' Quartet No. 5 is in four movements. The first is marked *Measured* and is the most complex of the four. The movement is a continuous development of three contrasting elements.

The second movement is marked *Arioso*. It opens with a lengthy dialogue between the two violins in the nature of a soliloquy. The aura of lyricism permeates this mood. It begins to alter abruptly with an outburst from the cello marked "menacing". As the section loses power and grows quieter the two violins once again begin their romantic dialogue, this time at the very top of their instruments' register. It is like two swallows turning over and over in air, arcing and tumbling.

The third movement is the shortest of all, barely two minutes in duration. Marked *Quick, quiet*, it is like a zephyr, barely audible in manner. One could compare it, perhaps to a silken thread. The four players are asked to execute all this as fast and silently as possible and ending, if you will, in a puff of smoke.

Movement number four is an explosive one and is marked, appropriately, *Explosive*. It is somewhat akin to a fughetto; the first statement is by the viola, taken up by the cello, second violin and then first violin. A section marked "Slower, broader" is opened by the cello and quickly echoed by the other three members. A demonic interlude leads directly to a new section distinguished by sharp, brusque figures taken up by the viola, then cello and finally the two violins.

A re-statement of the first section with the cello coming in first followed by the other three players leads quite suddenly and abruptly into the opening fughetto. One by one the four instruments echo the subject, extend it a bit and then bring it all to an explosive close.

## CYPRESS STRING QUARTET



The Cypress String Quartet has brought audiences to their feet for over a decade with virtuoso performances at major concert venues around the world, including the Kennedy Center, Library of Congress, Detroit, Columbus and Honolulu Chamber Music Societies, Stanford Lively Arts, Krannert Center, Ravinia Festival, and many more. Widely celebrated for their passionate dedication to the genre and for the exuberance and power of their performances, Quartet members Cecily Ward and Tom Stone, violins; Ethan Filner, viola; and Jennifer Kloetzel, cello, combine technical precision with imaginative programming to create truly unforgettable concert experiences.

Singled out by Chamber Music Magazine as “a Generation X ensemble to watch,” the Cypress is reaching out in new ways to ignite interest in chamber music. In January 2007, the Quartet fused tradition with technology in its critically acclaimed world premiere of *Inspired by America*, a spirited multimedia collaboration with best-selling author Jacob Needleman and Emmy Award-winning film maker Michael Schwarz. Supported by funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, *Inspired by America* blends live music, original film and spoken word in an evocative, thought-provoking portrait of the American spirit. *Inspired by America* debuted at the Lied Center of Kansas and the Krannert Center at the University of Illinois and will be available for national touring through 2012.

Since its inception in 1996, the Cypress String Quartet has built a respected body of new music, commissioning and premiering over 25 works from many of America’s leading composers. To commemorate Felix Mendelssohn’s 200th birthday in 2009, the Cypress and the Library of Congress have co-commissioned a new quartet from brilliant young American composer Kevin Puts ([www.kevinputs.com](http://www.kevinputs.com)). Paired with Mendelssohn and Beethoven quartets, Mr. Puts’ new work will premiere in February 2009 in Washington DC as part of the “Mendelssohn on the Mall” project in conjunction with the National Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian Museum. Other recent Cypress commissions have come from 2005 Grawemeyer Award winning composer George Tsontakis, and Grammy nominees Benjamin Lees and Jennifer Higdon. Four original Cypress commissions are listed on Chamber Music America’s list of “101 Great American Ensemble Works.”

As Quartet-in-Residence at San José State University, the Cypress String Quartet’s strengths in performance and education combine to serve the University and the greater San Francisco Bay Area community. Named “Exemplary Arts Educators” by the California Arts Council, the Quartet’s groundbreaking Call & Response program has impacted thousands of students in dozens of Bay Area schools. The Cypress has reached an estimated 100,000 students nationwide through educational activities including Native Americans in rural New Mexico and inner-city students in Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Chicago. In September 2004 the Cypress was selected by the faculty of the Juilliard School for the “McGraw-Hill Companies’ Robert Sherman Award for Music Education and Community Outreach” in recognition of their national leadership in music education.

The Cypress String Quartet resides in San Francisco, California.