



January, 2008

Dear Friends,

The origins of the Paris Conservatory date as far back as the Eighteenth Century. Even a cursory listing of former students of this institution forms a veritable “who’s who” of some of history’s greatest musicians. Bizet, Berlioz, Saint-Saëns, Franck, Dukas, Debussy, and Messiaen are but a small sampling of the luminaries to call the Paris Conservatory their alma mater. The next concert of Chamber Music Rochester, entitled **The French School: Quartos Plays Fauré and Ravel**, will examine a particularly fruitful period in the school’s history by sampling the works of a master composer/teacher (Gabriel Fauré) and his very talented pupil (Maurice Ravel). The concert will take place on February 3 at 7:30 PM at the Memorial Art Gallery.

Both halves of this concert will begin with a major work from the Piano Four-Hand repertoire. This genre of chamber music is well represented in music history, with major composers such as Mozart and Schubert adding significantly to its importance and breadth. French composers from Bizet to Poulenc were especially fond of its textural and coloristic potential, and they brought the art form to its zenith. The concert will open with the familiar “**Dolly Suite**”, **Op. 56** by Gabriel Fauré. From the gentle “Berceuse” to the beguiling “Kitty-Valse” to the swirling “Le Pas Espagnole”, this work is pure joy. The second half of the concert will open with the **Mother Goose Suite** by Maurice Ravel. A composition of pure magic, Ravel captures the wonderment of childhood with charm, sensitivity, and enchantment. Pianists Michael Landrum and Joseph Werner will negotiate these “close quarter” gems.

The **String Quartet in F Major** by Maurice Ravel is a masterpiece of color and texture. This work, which catapulted the young composer to fame, literally shimmers from beginning to end and offers its performers a wealth of technical and musical challenges. Quartos, a wonderful string quartet comprised of Corinne Stillwell, Patricia Sunwoo, George Taylor, and Mimi Hwang will make their CMR debut in this performance. The concert will come to a spectacular conclusion with the powerful **Quartet in C Minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 15** by Gabriel Fauré. Brahmsian in sonority and scope, this grand and brilliant work is an irresistible crowd pleaser. Pianist Michael Landrum will join three members of Quartos for this performance.

The pre-concert chat will begin at 7:00 PM and will feature members of Quartos as well as a Piano Four-Hand demonstration by Michael and Joe. The very special intermission tour will feature the hugely popular "Wild By Design" quilt show. We look forward to seeing you on February 3 at the Memorial Art Gallery for this Gallic adventure.

Sincerely,

Stefan Reuss and Joseph Werner, Co-Artistic Directors