

January, 2012

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! We hope that your holidays were peaceful and healthy. The Thirty-Fifth Season of Chamber Music Rochester will continue on Sunday, January 22, at 7:30 PM at the Memorial Art Gallery with a concert performed by the brilliant Amenda Quartet. Named after Karl Friedrich Amenda (1771-1836), one of Ludwig van Beethoven's closest friends and companions, this ensemble has dedicated itself to the study and performance of the string quartets of Beethoven. The Quartet's lively website tracks their progress through this daunting undertaking on the "Project Ludwig" page. Violinists David Brickman and Patricia Sunwoo, violist Melissa Matson, and cellist Mimi Hwang have brought their passion for Beethoven, their close personal friendships, and their impressive chamber music backgrounds together to form an exciting and truly unique musical partnership.

The Amenda Quartet will come one Beethoven quartet closer to fulfilling its mission with a performance of the **String Quartet, Op. 59, No. 1**. This is the first quartet to be considered part of the composer's so-called "middle period". A radical departure from its predecessors in terms of length and technical difficulty, this forty-minute masterpiece must have caused an absolute sensation when it first appeared in 1808.

The year 2012 marks the 150th birthday of one of history's most influential composers, the great French Impressionist, Claude Debussy. The Amenda Quartet will help celebrate this milestone with a performance of his masterful **String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10**. Written in 1893, it was considered to be revolutionary in its day for its sensual string writing, its cyclical structure with recurring leitmotifs, and its exotic color reminiscent of Indonesian gamelan music. The distinguished conductor and composer Pierre Boulez credited Debussy with freeing chamber music from "rigid structure, frozen rhetoric and rigid aesthetics."

The program will also include **Variations on a Theme for String Quartet** by the winner of the 2011 CMR Young Composers Competition (High School Division), Justin Jaramillo. Justin studies composition with Margaret Henry at the Eastman Community Music School. A polished and mature composition, Justin describes the overall mood of the piece as "pensive and intense". It is a dream come true for a young composer to hear his work performed by an ensemble of the caliber of the Amenda Quartet. It will be a joy to share this auspicious occasion with him.

The pre-concert chat, which will begin at 7:00 PM, will feature interviews with members of the Amenda Quartet and Justin Jaramillo. Intermission will include another popular docent-led gallery tour. We look forward to seeing you on January 22 at the Memorial Art Gallery!

Sincerely,

Stefan Reuss and Joseph Werner, Co-Artistic Directors