**Alexander String Quartet**

**MONDAY, MAY 20, 2019**

**11AM | Jackson Hall**

*Recommended for grades 6–12*

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**Common Core**

The Common Core broadens the definition of a “text,” viewing performance as a form of text, so students are experiencing and interacting with a text when they attend a performance. Seeing live performance provides rich opportunities to write reflections, narratives, arguments, etc.

4-12.RL2-3; 4-12.RL.6; 4-12.RI.2; 4-12.RI.3; 4-12.SL.2

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**About Alexander String Quartet**

Combined with a thoughtful sharing of insights on their musical selections and stringed instruments, the Alexander String Quartet will play a variety of works to highlight the musical career of Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975), which mirrored exactly the rise and history of the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1975. These friendly, informative and gifted musicians return to our school matinee program to share their love of classical music with students of all ages. Students are encouraged to ask questions and examine the instruments following the matinee.

A major artistic presence in San Francisco, the Alexander String Quartet was formed in New York City in 1981 and captured international attention as the first American quartet to win the London International String Quartet Competition in 1985. Since 1989, the quartet has served as ensemble-in-residence for San Francisco Performances and directors of the Morrison Chamber Music Center in the College of Liberal and Creative Arts at San Francisco State University.

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**Zakarias Grafilo – Violin 1**

Zakarias Grafilo received his early musical training at the preparatory division of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies from San Francisco State University.

**Frederick Lifsitz – Violin 2**

Frederick Lifsitz studied violin in his native Boston with Marylou Churchill and at Indiana University with Paul Biss.

**Sandy Wilson – Cello**

A native of Northumberland, England, Sandy Wilson completed his graduate studies at the Royal Danish Conservatory in Copenhagen. In 1979, Wilson moved to the United States, completing a degree at Yale University.

**Paul Yarbrough – Viola**

Paul Yarbrough is a native of Clearwater, Florida. His teachers have included Elaine Lee Richey, Lillian Fuchs, Raymond Page and Sally Peck.

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**Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)**

Dmitri Shostakovich was a survivor and a great composer, and his fear and self-loathing, his courage and experience found their way into his music. As such, Shostakovich is not just the most important composer of string quartets and symphonies from the 1920s to the 1970s; even more, he and his music stand as witnesses to the rise and failures of the Soviet Union, one of the defining events of the 20th century.
Think About It

Dear Students,

1. Describe what you heard. Did the music seem to tell a story or set a mood?

2. A string quartet doesn't include a conductor. How do the artists communicate with each other while playing?

3. Is this your first time watching and listening to a string quartet play? Was it what you expected?

What is expected of student audiences at the matinee:

- To facilitate starting the performance on time, get a drink of water and use the restroom before entering the seating area.
- Enter the auditorium quietly and take your seats immediately (note that all matinees have reserved seating).
- Show courtesy to the artists and other guests at all times.
- Demonstrate appreciation for the artists' work by applauding.
- Refrain from making unnecessary noise or movements.
- Please eat lunch before or after the performance. Food is not allowed in the theatre.
- Use information learned from the pre-matinee discussion to enhance the performance experience.
- Please do not photograph or record the artists.

What your students can expect of their experience at the Mondavi Center:

A theatre is a charged space, full of energy and anticipation. When the house lights (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, the excitement level goes up! Theatres are designed so that the voices of the singers and actors and the music of the musicians can be heard. But this also means that any sound in the audience, whispering, speaking and moving about, can be heard by other audience members and by the performers. Distractions like these disrupt everyone’s concentration and can spoil a performance.

The performers on stage show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their very best work. By watching attentively the audience shows respect for the performers. Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form and the culture(s) of the people in the audience. For instance, while the audience at a dance performance may sit quietly, other types of performances may invite audience participation.

Applause is the best way for audience members to share their enthusiasm and to show their appreciation for the performers. Applaud at the end of a performance! Sometimes the audience will clap during a performance, as after a featured solo. Audience members may feel like laughing if the action on stage is funny, crying if the action is sad, or sighing if something is seen or heard that is beautiful.

Mondavi Center Arts Education

Arts Education provides CueSheets for all performances in the Mondavi Center 2018–19 School Matinee Series. They are intended to help teachers prepare their students for the school matinee that they will attend at Mondavi Center, UC Davis.

Support provided by

mondaviarts.org | 530.754.5431