

Freewheeling Kronos Quartet

combines
classical
& pop

A performance by the Kronos Quartet opens the Hult Center's Blockbuster Series in Silva Concert Hall at the Hult Center on Friday, Jan. 9 at 8 pm. Devoted exclusively to the music of the twentieth century, Kronos is changing the way people think about string quartets. The program includes the works of Phillip Glass, Thelonius Monk, Terry Riley, Bill Evans, Ben Johnston, Kevin Volans and Bela Bartok.

They are attracting eager, hip young audiences who are primed to expect something exciting and fresh in their musical fare. David Harrington, first violinist of the quartet, states, "I think the people who come to our concerts have grown to expect the closest thing to a peak musical experience that we can offer them." John Rockwell of *The New York Times* stated, "if classical music is to be preserved and extended as a living thing, this is the way it must be done."

Kronos has ignored nearly every bit of conventional wisdom there is about how to build a career in classical music. Their programs include pop art classics like Jimi Hendrix' *Purple Haze* and Thelonius Monk's *Round Midnight* as well as the more standard fare of Shostakovich and Bartok.

With a free-wheeling style that has made many friends for modern musical art, the Kronos embodies everything that one might expect of an ensemble devoted to reflecting the music, culture and philosophies of our times. Looking radically different from traditional string quartets, they sport new wave clothes, modish outfits and punk hair styles.

The Kronos Quartet was first organized in Seattle in 1973 by first violinist and artistic director David Harrington. Kronos arrived at its current San Francisco-based configuration in 1977 and is made up of Harrington, second violinist John Sherba, violist Hank Dutt, and cellist Joan Jeanrenaud.

The quartet performs a busy concert schedule of 110 engagements per year. It presents a concert series in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle,

Minneapolis and New York as well as having produced a 13-part weekly radio series that is syndicated on National Public Radio.

Kronos' musical accomplishments are nothing short of Olympian. The quartet has premiered more than 200 new works of composers whose names read like a list of who's who in contemporary music. Composers like John Cage, Frank Zappa, Steve Reich, Phillip Glass, Pierre Boulez, Jimi Hendrix, Terry Riley, and Bill Evans have created the music that makes up the meat and potatoes of Kronos programs. Not to deny their zany and somewhat offbeat sense of

humor, the quartet has also performed Steve Riffkin's medley of famous television themes as well.

The dedication that Kronos shows to contemporary music is said to define an image and meet a need that has not been met elsewhere. In an age when composers rarely have heard their works performed more than once or twice in their lifetime, the dedication of this group of musical pioneers is nothing short of awe-inspiring. Harrington sums it all up with his assertion that, "With us the com-

poser is never far away—he's a fifth member." Not only has Kronos frequently performed new music, but it has recorded it as well, and very successfully.

The Kronos is no stranger to top sales of award-winning recordings. Kronos' Nonesuch Recording, *The Kronos Quartet*, is currently listed on the Top Ten Classical Chart in *Billboard* magazine. *Time* magazine listed their recording of Terry Riley's *Ca-*

denza on the Night Plain in their "Best of '85" feature. Kronos' disc of Philip Glass's *Mishima* was picked by *Stereo Review* for their Record of the Year honor for 1986.

Tickets for the event are \$10, reserved seating, and are now on sale at the Hult Center ticket office and all Hult Center outlets or by calling 687-5000.



Described as hip, punk, new-wave and freewheeling, The Kronos Quartet is all of these and more. Playing only Twentieth Century music, they cover material by classical and pop composers alike—Philip Glass, Jimi Hendrix, John Cage, Frank Zappa, Bela Bartok, Terry Riley, Thelonius Monk and many others.

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