



Ronald Leonard

Pre- and Post-Classical Strings

UO brings innovative ensembles to town

If it's strings you love, this is the week for you as two great cello players grace our fair city. On Nov. 8 guest artist **Ronald Leonard** (former principal cellist of the L.A. Philharmonic) joins the Oregon String Quartet in one of the greatest of all classical chamber works: Franz Schubert's magnificent C major *String Quintet*. And the UO's Victor Steinhardt will join Leonard on piano for a sonata by Brahms and a toccata by Frescobaldi.

On Nov. 5 and 6, Leonard will be the soloist in Tchaikovsky's lilting *Variations on a Rococo Theme* with the Oregon Mozart Players. The concert features one of the Mozart symphonies (K. 248 in D) you don't hear so often. Mozart drew the music from one of his great serenades, which is still, to my mind, the superior version, but the symphonic incarnation works just dandy as a symphony, too, and teems with the usual surfeit of memorable Mozartean melodies. The concert also includes a superficially unassuming orchestral suite that is in fact one of the most poignant of the 20th century: Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin*, which started out as a tribute to one of the composer's celebrated predecessors (and French Baroque music in general) and wound up being a tribute to Ravel's

friends who'd died during the first World War, which was raging while Ravel (who drove an ambulance during many battles) was writing it. With our own country embroiled in another senseless military folly, it's easy to hear this plangent masterpiece as an elegy to the latest victims of political arrogance and aggression.

The **Mozart Players** perform another wartime classic on Oct. 29 and 30, when they join the Eugene Concert Choir and a quartet of professional soloists in Joseph Haydn's *Mass in Time of Tribulation* (later nicknamed the "Lord Nelson" mass), which he composed while Napoleon's armies rampaged through Europe. The concert also includes a Baroque beauty: Vivaldi's most popular *Gloria*.

Baroque fans should on no account miss the most important concert of the season: the **English Concert's** appearance at the UO's Beall Hall Oct. 30. Led by the greatest fiddler in classical music, Andrew Manze, this formidable period-instrument ensemble will play music by J.S. Bach, Heinrich Biber, Henry Purcell, and other Baroque masters. See our preview at <http://www.eugeneweekly.com/2005/09/22/bravo.html> and this issue's story, page 35. **EW**

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