

Four strings attached

BRENTANO String Quartet, one of the world's pre-eminent chamber music ensembles, will visit Cyprus for the first time as part of their European tour for a special performance on Monday at the Shoe Factory.

The players came together in 1992 after graduating from New York's famed Juilliard School and realising they wanted to make chamber music their career. Violinists Mark Steinberg and Serena Canin and violist Misha Amory are founding members of the quartet. In 1998, cellist Nina Lee joined the Quartet, succeeding founding member Michael Kanner. The group takes its name from Antonie Brentano, considered by many to be Beethoven's "Immortal Beloved", the intended recipient of his famous confession of love.

The Quartet first rose to prominence by winning the first Cleveland Quartet Award and the prestigious Naumburg Chamber Music Award and in 1996 the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center invited them to be the inaugural members of Chamber Music Society Two, a programme that is now a coveted distinction for chamber groups and individuals.

While they have performed in the world's most prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall and the Sydney Opera House, they have served as the first Resident

Quartet at Princeton University since 1999. During its first European tour, the Quartet was honoured with the Royal Philharmonic Award for Most Outstanding Debut.

The Quartet has also worked with the celebrated poet and winner of the Pulitzer Prize Mark Strand, commissioning poetry from him to accompany works of Haydn and Webern. For almost 20 years, they've been pushing boundaries with a high-concept repertoire, earning a reputation for performances that combine deep musical insight with stylistic elegance and technical brilliance. Don't let the concert-hall demeanour fool you; the New York-based foursome is not your average string quartet, these folks are movie stars of a sort.

The ensemble can be heard playing Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 14, Opus 131* in the critically acclaimed film *A Late Quartet* starring Hollywood heavyweights Philip Seymour Hoffman, Christopher Walken and Catherine Keener; Lee plays a cameo role as herself in the film.

In addition to standard quartet repertoire, the Brentano Quartet has performed many musical works pre-dating the string quartet as a medium, and has commissioned works from some of the most important composers of our time. The group is also interested in new music and has commissioned works by

CYPRUS MAIL

Παρασκευή, 8 Μάρτιος 2013, p. 19





contemporary composers Charles Wuorinen, Bruce Adolphe, John Mackey and Gabriela Frank.

For Monday's concert the quartet, will be performing two of Beethoven's string quartets. The music will be presented in a very unique format with each piece representing a certain era of Beethoven's life, and opens with *Op. 18 No. 2*, written in Beethoven's early career, described as fun and light.

Right afterward, at the opposite stylistic extreme, comes Béla Bartók's *Quartet No. 4*, which is based on folk tunes. The evening concludes with Beethoven's *Op. 135*, composed toward the end of

his career. This is the piece in which Beethoven inscribed the existential question, "Must it be?" and answered, "It must be!"

Brentano String Quartet

Pharos Arts Foundation presents concert with the ensemble-in-residence at Princeton University as part of their European tour. March 11. The Shoe Factory, 304 Ermou Street, Nicosia. 8.30pm. €20/15. Tel: 22-663871/70-009304. Email: info@pharosartsfoundation.org. www.pharosartsfoundation.org. www.pharostickets.org

By Ledha Socratous

CYPRUS MAIL

Παρασκευή, 8 Μαρτίος 2013, p. 19

