

# THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

CHRISTOPH VON DOHNÁNYI · MUSIC DIRECTOR

December 1995

Dear Friends,

I was fortunate to meet the original members of the Cleveland Quartet at the time of their formation in 1969. Over the past 26 years, some of the most poignant and moving experiences of my life have involved them, either as a quartet or as individual teachers (which they are without peer).

Over the years, as founding viola player Martha Strongin Katz was replaced, first by Atar Arad in 1980 and then by James Dunham in 1987, and when founding first violinist Don Weilerstein retired and was succeeded by Bill Preucil in 1989, significant changes in the Quartet's personal chemistry and, therefore, in their musical offerings took place. Each time, while things were different, they were nonetheless always consistently wonderful.

There is a dedication to their art form that drives the Cleveland Quartet to a level of excellence that tolerates no human frailties.

They have a unique knowledge and understanding of their instruments, which they have been able to impart to others, both through their playing and through their teaching.

They bring enormous intensity, vibrant energy and drive, yet with a sense of polished refinement, to their performances, setting them apart from the other great quartets of our time.

They work so hard at preparing their music so as to enlighten for each audience the true intent and meaning of each composer's work. Yet, every performance is a demonstration in risk-taking, in pushing themselves to the outer limits, because they are never satisfied.

But what really sets them apart — because it permeates everything they do, whether on or off the stage — is their rare sense of humanity and caring. Nothing better illustrates this more than the number of young string quartets they have mentored and nurtured throughout the country, or the number of new works they have caused to be written, or the enormous impact they have had on the whole field of chamber music through Chamber Music America (where Paul Katz served as visionary board member for more than a decade and as president from 1987-93), and now, as they depart, the creation of the Cleveland Quartet Award, which will be of immeasurable help in building careers for worthy young string quartets.

It has been said that the greatest legacy one can leave is a good name. If that is true, then the Cleveland Quartet — Don, Paul, Peter, Martha, Atar, James, and Bill — are leaving behind such a legacy.

With warmest regards,

Richard J. Bogomolny

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, Chamber Music America

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD, The Musical Arts Association



## LYNN HARRELL

December 1995

I have always been inspired by the commitment and dedication of the Cleveland Quartet. Their playing has moved me deeply, and I will always carry with me memories of some of the most wonderful performances I have been privileged to hear.

I am so glad for us all that the wonderful document of their years together stands in their recording history, and just feel so sad that more will not come to delight us.

I wish you all well, my friends.

Sincerely,

Lynn Harrell  
CELLIST

### *Bernard Greenhouse* Wellfleet, Massachusetts 02667

I recall many exciting musical experiences with my performances as guest of the Cleveland Quartet, and my first reaction to their decision to disband was one of great sadness. However, looking back on my own decision to leave the Beaux Arts Trio after thirty-two years, I fully well understand the need for a new lifestyle.

All the members of the Cleveland Quartet are superb artists, and I wish them well in their future musical lives.

The Cleveland Quartet Award is a beautiful way to continue the highest standards of chamber music, which they have so exemplified throughout their long career.

Bernard Greenhouse  
FOUNDING CELLIST  
Beaux Arts Trio

## OBERLIN

Oberlin College Conservatory of Music

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I am one of the early musical children of the Cleveland Quartet, having started violin study with Don Weilerstein as a high school junior in 1969. Martha Strongin Katz was our quartet coach in 1970 and 1971. How fortunate we were! Cleveland, at least from our perspective, was ahuzz about the New Cleveland Quartet (their first name), and here we were, studying with them while still in high school. We were in heaven.

Then DISASTER! The Cleveland Quartet was leaving Cleveland! We were invited to a farewell party at David Klein's house, and he played a tape of the Quartet rehearsing the slow movement of the Tchaikovsky E-flat minor Quartet. This is another one of those Cleveland Quartet sounds that I have carried with me for years . . . hauntingly beautiful and absolutely gorgeous — pure human emotion expressed through music.

I went to the Philadelphia Musical Academy to study with Charlie and Heidi Castleman and switched to viola. I was so excited when the Cleveland Quartet's recording of the Brahms Quartets came out. It was wonderful to hear their sound in my room! I rushed over to play it for Karen Ritscher (now the viola teacher at Manhattan School of Music), and we played Martha's solo in the third movement of the B-flat Quartet over and over again. Those of you who are not violists may not know that Martha's recording of this solo is legendary in the viola world.

Time for graduate school, and I was off to Buffalo, where I heard the Quartet perform every Beethoven Quartet, heard Don play the Cavatina from Op. 130 (incredible!), and found good people with whom to form a quartet of my own. Then DISASTER again! Now they're going to Eastman. This time, however, I go with them and my quartet wins the first Cleveland Quartet Competition. PARADISE! Rehearsing four hours a day, studying with Martha, coaching with everyone in the Cleveland Quartet, and playing concerts! What a life!

Alas, my quartet separates after graduation. I've done much more teaching than quartet playing since that time. I still keep a copy of those first Brahms recordings in my studio. Just today I listened to a wonderful young quartet at Oberlin. Their violist is terrific, but sounded a little thin, so I asked if she had ever heard the early Cleveland Quartet recordings. She hadn't, but she sounded interested.

Jeffrey Irvine  
PROFESSOR OF VIOLA  
Oberlin Conservatory

## LIBBY LARSEN

To my good friends and wonderful collaborators. I wish you all the best in the future and thank you for your wonderful talent.

Libby Larsen  
COMPOSER

## JUILLIARD School of Music

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A career to celebrate! More than 26 years of inspired music making — quite a gift to have offered all of us. As a musician, I thank you for the concerts and recordings that have nourished me; as a teacher, I thank you for the power of your example to open students to chamber music's possibilities. Many wonderful dreams have been kindled by the Cleveland Quartet. Your gifts will live on with us. Congratulations, and may your next chapters bring you all the happiness and fulfillment each one of you deserves.

With affection and admiration,

Heidi Castleman  
VIOLIST AND TEACHER  
Juilliard School of Music

December 1995

Dearest Cleveland Quartet,

For over 26 years, your artistry and personal commitment have earned you a unique place in our profession. Now, through the Cleveland Quartet Award, young players will benefit from your vision and generosity. My heartiest congratulations on your great career and the certain success of this new project.

Michael Tree  
VIOLIST  
Guarneri String Quartet

## WEILERSTEIN

We remember most vividly the trip of the Cleveland Quartet on the music cruise of the S. S. Marmoz, through the Mediterranean Sea, where they played concerts in the Roman temples of Italy, in the ruins of a Greek castle, and in the oldest amphitheater in Sicily, and in the concert hall of Dubrovnik, as well as in the resplendent churches and other magnificent sites, and aboard ship. It was in the theater at South Bank in London where we had the thrill of hearing them play. We followed them through Australia and New Zealand. Everywhere they were received with acclaim and respect for their great musical talents and performances. We had the privilege of watching their progress from the early rehearsals in 1969 as they worked diligently on the interpretation of every bar, to world-wide esteem, and enjoyed it all.

Wishing the quartet all the best!

Sincerely,

Rose and Ralph Weilerstein

No Cleveland Quartet anymore!?! To me, unthinkable.

But the legacy of 26 years of inspiring, distinctively original music-making remains.

The memory of your commitment to nothing but the highest standards remains.

Your love and zeal for passing along the joy of music to generations of students remain.

Most importantly, the four of you still remain active and committed, and in your new lives your infectious enthusiasm will continue to be a blessing to us all.

I salute you, dear friends and colleagues, and wish you continued success and happiness.

With much love from Ann and me . . .

Earl Carlyss  
FORMER VIOLINIST  
The Juilliard Quartet

## Interlochen

Dear Members of the Cleveland Quartet,

The Interlochen Center for the Arts community sends thanks and best wishes to you for all you have given to the world since your first professional engagement in 1969 at Interlochen. We are proud and privileged to have been part of such a wonderful organization.

Ironically, as Interlochen prepares for its 69th season, we will, for the first time, offer a four-week high school chamber music ensemble. Hopefully, our program will nurture the next generation of "Cleveland Quartets." There is no better model.

Richard F. Odell  
PRESIDENT  
Interlochen Center for the Arts

In our childhood, we Klein girls . . . Dehby, Betsy, and Susan . . . often went to bed with the sounds of the Cleveland Quartet rehearsing downstairs. We all have memories of finding them practicing in our living room when we returned home from school, and finding them as regular dinner guests in our kitchen. I remember one dinner spent deciding what to name the quartet, and I remember thinking the Cleveland Quartet was a very boring name compared to the other ideas mentioned that night. It seemed to make life more exciting to have a concert going on and guests in the house on a regular basis. I especially remember my Dad forever recording them on reel-to-reel tapes. In addition to music, these early recordings also included a lot of talking, breathing loudly, dropping music and bows, and breaking strings. I also remember the little treats the Quartet members used to bring us, particularly my dinosaur candle from Martha and Paul, and the shiny pennies for my new loafers which appeared with Peter one day. The sounds of the Cleveland Quartet bring back wonderful childhood memories for all three of us; we will miss those "live" sounds in the future, but wish all the Quartet members good luck and success in their new ventures.

Susan Klein, YOUNGEST FIRST LISTENER

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## CHAMBER MUSIC AMERICA

December 1995

We were there for the heady times and high aspirations of the New Cleveland Quartet. Soon they were no longer "new," and those aspirations were brilliantly realized in the elegance, scholarship, dedication, and virtuosity of The Cleveland Quartet.

After December 17, 1995, I imagine we'll have the "old" Cleveland Quartet, but thanks to the generosity of so many, including those "old" members, the Quartet's legacy of superb performances, generosity of spirit, and distinguished teaching commitment will continue.

My personal loss is beyond measure or description. But I am thrilled by the manner in which the Quartet members have chosen to disband, finding it altogether unique and spiritually uplifting. It should serve as a future education in this country.

I congratulate all my Cleveland Quartet colleagues on a career of unparalleled accomplishment, and wish them *Bon Voyage* and *Welcome to the Next Chapter!*

David E. Klein, M.D.  
PAST CHAIRMAN  
Chamber Music America

## eunice podis

When Victor Babin was president of the Cleveland Institute of Music, we were discussing the selection of faculty, and I recall his saying, "I am like a fisherman who casts his net into the water and never knows what he will bring up!"

I was one of those he fished out of the water, and the members of the Cleveland Quartet also were caught in his net.

One of my favorite memories is that of performing the Brahms F-minor Piano Quintet with those marvellous young musicians — a truly unforgettable experience.

I have followed the illustrious career of the Quartet with pleasure, and with pride in the knowledge that it all began right here in Cleveland at the Institute of Music.

Eunice Podis  
PIANIST





Dear CQ,

How gratifying to be able to say that I knew you when . . .

How thrilling to have watched your emergence into the magical circle of ensembles that changed the course of music in our time . . .

And now, how joyfully sad to be with you at the closing of an era, balancing our sense of loss by sharing your own contentment at moving on to new musical challenges.

May each of you find personal and professional happiness in the same full measure that has marked your collective gift to us for so many wonderful years.

With love . . .

Bob Sherman  
New York City

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## CHAMBER MUSIC AMERICA

My most heartfelt congratulations are with the Cleveland Quartet on this occasion. Their contribution to the chamber music world has been enormous; with the rich memories of hundreds of concerts, the training of wonderful young musicians, and their beautiful recordings . . . altogether a great career.

The imagination and vision that has created the Cleveland Quartet Award as a living legacy for future quartets and chamber music lovers expresses so well the integrity of the Quartet's entire musical journey.

The Cleveland Quartet represents the fruition of American culture and training at its finest. This is important for us to recognize and appreciate as we move into a new century and as the Quartet's members move into the next chapter of their own musical lives. They have shown us in a magnificent way what the finest talent in our society can achieve.

Bonnie Hampton, *CELLIST*  
PRESIDENT  
Chamber Music America

Ever since I can remember, it has seemed to me that Josef Haydn's idea of combining two violins, a viola, and a cello in a motivically interactive texture was a stroke of real genius. And, from the time I was an adolescent, the string quartets of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, and Bartók have seemed to me one of the two or three repertoires of western art music worth walking many miles to listen to.

Thus, I suppose it shouldn't surprise anyone that, shortly after my appointment as Eastman School director in 1973, my first long-term plan for the School included as a cornerstone the idea of appointing a world-class quartet to the Eastman faculty — an ensemble that could play several annual concerts in one of the world's great auditoria for string quartet performances, Kilbourn Hall, dedicated to the memory of George Eastman's mother, Maria Kilbourn Eastman. The reader can only begin to imagine my joy in an endowment gift of \$1 million from Mrs. Samuel Durand in memory of her mother, Mrs. Robert Ranlet, which made it possible to bring such a quartet to Eastman, or my pride in the 1973 announcement that the Cleveland Quartet, then members of the faculty at SUNY-Buffalo (where earlier in the 1970s they had succeeded the Budapest Quartet), were to be our resident quartet.

Donald Weilerstein, Peter Salaif, Martha Strongin Katz, and Paul Katz were not only a wonderful string quartet — I can still remember the goose bumps I experienced in listening for the first time to their prize-winning RCA Red Seal recording of the Brahms B-flat Quartet — but four very gifted teachers and chamber music coaches who were, at the same time, marvelous human beings, fine colleagues, and trusted friends. As everyone knows, there have been, in the meantime, several important personnel changes within the Quartet — from Martha Katz to Atar Arad to James Dunham in the viola chair, and from Donald Weilerstein to William Preucil in the first violin position. But, while the character of the ensemble changed over the years, the high musical quality of the group did not. Nor did their dedication to teaching — at Eastman during the academic year and at Aspen during the summer-time. At Eastman, over nearly 20 years as faculty members, they not only played more than 75 concerts in Kilbourn Hall, where the 450 seats were always in high demand, but also taught several hundred young string players, including the winners of the Cleveland Quartet competition, among them the Chester Quartet, the Meliora Quartet, the Cavani Quartet, the Lafayette Quartet, the Anderson Quartet and the Ying Quartet — among whom were winners of the Fischhoff Competition and the Naumburg Award.

Although tonight's concert by the Cleveland Quartet brings us, sadly, to the end of an important era in the history of quartet performance, the recordings, the commissioned works, and the young quartets who have studied with the Cleveland Quartet live on, as do our shared musical memories of many afternoons and evenings of inspired music making.

Robert Freeman  
DIRECTOR  
Eastman School of Music

EMANUEL AX  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

To my friends, the Cleveland Quartet,

Your distinguished career and dedicated, beautiful music-making has served as an inspiration and a pleasure to all of us who have been privileged to work with you. It is completely in keeping with your characters that you have chosen the Cleveland Quartet Award as a way to mark your devotion to music and to the young. I am proud to have been a small part of your life, and know that my friendship with you will last always. I hope very much to have the opportunity to contribute a benefit concert for the Cleveland Quartet Award, and perhaps we can even participate together — in any ensemble other than Piano Quintet.

All my affection and best wishes to you and your families.

Emanuel Ax  
PIANIST



STEPHEN PAULUS

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Dear Bill, Peter, James, and Paul,

I am still basking in the glow of your most beautiful and exciting performances in Cleveland of my new work. The premiere of my *Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra* in September was most definitely one of the highpoints of my career — full of musical and personal memories which I will treasure for years. I wish you all continued success and brilliance in all of your upcoming adventures in music-making.

With gratitude and admiration,

Stephen Paulus  
COMPOSER

# Finale

"At the peak of their powers." These were the words of a wise and perceptive musician with lifelong experience in chamber music, as we left that fine hall at George Mason University in northern Virginia last April. We had just had the experience of a lifetime, a performance of transcendental beauty by the Cleveland Quartet and klezmer clarinetist Giora Feidman, an occasion of sheer perfection.

"In Praise of Perfection" were the words on a beautiful folder of a paper company bearing Rembrandt-like portraits of the Cleveland Quartet as the archetype of perfection, all by that master photographer, Jay Maisel.

These are passing but everlasting images of the fundamental qualities of excellence — setting the standards of greatness for chamber music — that have characterized the Cleveland Quartet's thousands of performances around the world.

Will all this suddenly be lost to us now with the Quartet's departure from the world's concert halls? In one sense it will, of course. But in another and much more profound sense it never will.

In an insightful and stimulating little book, *Take Time For Paradise, Americans and Their Games*, A. Bartlett Giamatti, famous Renaissance scholar, Yale President, and Commissioner of Baseball, discusses the influence and value of shared experiences. For Giamatti, the specific activity shared — "either watched or played" — was baseball, but even he notes a kinship with the arts, and it is especially in thinking of chamber music that his words resonate for me:

I argue that sports are . . . a shared moment of leisure. Sports represent a shared vision of how we continue, as individual, team, or community, to experience a happiness or absence of care so intense, so rare, and so fleeting that we associate the experience with . . . [what] was once described, when first felt, as religious. . . . If playing sport is akin to another human activity, it is akin to making art.

Somewhere I read something very similar about shared experiences, but observed in another context: "A very wise old teacher once said, 'I consider a day's teaching is wasted if we do not all have one hearty laugh.' He meant that when people laugh together, they cease to be old and young, master and pupil, workers and drivers, jailor and prisoner, and they become a single group of human beings enjoying existence."

And so it is, as these passages help to illustrate. Shared experience exerts a powerful influence on our lives. And those of us who are addicted to chamber music — "either watched or played" — know how this noble, eternal art, brought to us so profoundly by the Cleveland Quartet, has changed our lives. With them, for all of us, it has been a shared experience *par excellence*.

So, I must ask again, will all be lost to us with the Quartet's departure from the world's concert halls? In one sense, it will be lost forever, especially for those who now will never share the experience of hearing them in concert.

In another sense, however, the Quartet's lasting contribution to the world of chamber music, in addition to its treasury of invaluable recordings, is assured by the extraordinary legacy they are leaving: The Cleveland Quartet Award. Created as an endowment providing a biennial award, the Award will not only identify and promote a young quartet on the ascendancy, it will also perpetuate the Cleveland Quartet's lifelong commitment to artistic excellence in chamber music.

In the most profound sense, the Quartet's eminence will always be with us. The lives of so many people all over the world have been enriched and transformed with the innumerable masterful performances by the Cleveland Quartet. These experiences will not easily be forgotten — all occasions of excellence personified.

We are, to be sure, undeniably and deeply saddened by the Finale of the Quartet's career. But we know, from those golden times past, that its peerless voice will never be lost. It will live on within all of us always.

And so, dear friends, adieu . . . adieu.

William B. Dunham

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND — DECEMBER 1995