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For immediate release:

Kronos Quartet Brings New Music to the Mondavi Center

March 18, 2008; Davis, California—The world-famous **Kronos Quartet** will perform new works written especially for the group by acclaimed contemporary composers **Steve Reich** and **John Adams**, a classic ballad by jazz master **Thelonious Monk**, and more in a special concert at the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, UC Davis**. The event will also feature the United States premiere of *Encandilado (Blinded by Light)* by contemporary composer **Felipe Pérez Santiago**, a work that was written for Kronos and co-commissioned by the Mondavi Center.

The performance will begin at 8 pm on April 18 in the Mondavi Center's Jackson Hall on the UC Davis campus. Tickets are available from the Mondavi Center Ticket Office at 530.754.ARTS (2787) or online at MondaviArts.org. The event is presented as part of the Mondavi Center's **Creativity Project**, a year-long series of performances, panel discussions, and other events examining the creative process.

For more than 30 years, Kronos Quartet—**David Harrington**, **John Sherba** (violins), **Hank Dutt** (viola), and **Jeffrey Zeigler** (cello)—has pursued a singular artistic vision, combining a spirit of fearless exploration with a commitment to expanding the range and context of the string quartet. In the process, Kronos has become one of the most celebrated and influential instrumental ensembles of our time, performing thousands of concerts worldwide, releasing more than 40 recordings of extraordinary breadth and creativity, collaborating with many of the world's most eclectic composers and performers, and commissioning hundreds of works. The group has garnered numerous awards, including a Grammy for Best Chamber Music Performance (2004) and being named Musicians of the Year (2003) by *Musical America*.

“In its 30-odd years before the public the Kronos Quartet has shown little interest in conserving masterpieces,” wrote *The New York Times* regarding one recent concert. “With its American tilt toward casual, sometimes-funky clothes and lighting effects, and its natural ease with electricity-induced sounds, the Kronos has kept its ear open to whatever composers happen to have on their minds at the time.”

The emphasis on contemporary composers and new compositions has long been a hallmark of the ensemble, says Harrington. “I’ve always wanted the string quartet to be vital, and energetic, and alive, and cool, and not afraid to kick ass, and to be absolutely beautiful and ugly if it has to be,” Harrington has said. “But it has to be expressive of life, to tell the story with grace and humor and depth. And to tell the whole story, if possible...”

Kronos' story dates back to 1973, when Harrington was inspired by a performance of **George Crumb's** *Black Angels*, a highly unorthodox, Vietnam War-inspired work, and formed an ensemble dedicated to expanding the range of the traditional string quartet. Kronos quickly built a compellingly eclectic repertoire, performing

and recording works by 20th-century masters such as **Bela Bartók**, **Dmitri Shostakovich**, and **Anton Webern**, as well as contemporary composers such as **Sofia Gubaidulina**, **Arvo Pärt**, and **Alfred Schnittke**. Not content with merely exploring the cutting edge of the classical repertoire, the ensemble took to performing works by the likes of avant-garde jazz saxophonist **Ornette Coleman** and rock guitarist **Jimi Hendrix**. Integral to Kronos' work is a series of long-running, in-depth collaborations with many of the world's foremost composers, including **Phillip Glass**, **Oswaldo Golijov**, and **Terry Riley**.

The program for Kronos' April 18 performance reflects this eclectic approach. The event will begin with *Nomatophobis*, a piece by Australian-born composer **J.G. Thirlwell**; followed by 35-year-old Mexican composer and sound artist Felipe Pérez Santiago's *Encantilado (Blinded by Light)* in its U.S. premiere; jazz master Thelonious Monk's classic ballad "Round Midnight" in a string quartet arrangement by **Jacob Garchik**; Six Bagatelles, Op. 9, by Anton Webern, who along with **Arnold Schoenberg** and **Alban Berg** defined classical music's Second Viennese School during the early part of the 20th century; acclaimed minimalist composer Steve Reich's Triple Quartet; *Fellow Traveler* by John Adams, who won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2003 for *On the Transmigration of Souls*, his work commemorating the victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks; Garchik's arrangement of a traditional lullaby; and *hold me, neighbor, in this storm* by **Aleksandra Vrebalov**. Except for the compositions by Webern and Monk, all works were written or arranged especially for Kronos.

The Kronos Quartet has been especially active in the Mondavi Center's Creativity Project. On November 29, 2007, Harrington talked about and played recordings of a wide variety of recent musical favorites in a **Forum@MC** presentation entitled *What David is Listening To*. Around that time, members of Kronos Quartet began work with a quartet of UC Davis students including **John Abdallah**, violin; **Yosef Farnsworth**, violin; **Kim Uwate**, viola; and **Lucas Chen**, cello, teaching them a set of contemporary works from the Kronos repertoire. The student quartet will perform at the Mondavi Center during the venue's "open house" on April 19 as part of UC Davis' Picnic Day. In addition, Kronos Quartet will perform *MiniEvent* with the **Merce Cunningham Dance Company** in the Mondavi Center's Jackson Hall on April 25. All of these activities fall under the umbrella of the wide-ranging Creativity Project, which has also included performances by **Mala Punic**, **Sideshow Physical Theatre**, and **Empyrean Ensemble**. For more information on the project, and to hear related podcasts and view the Creativity Project blog, please visit www.MondaviArts.org/aboutus/creativityproject.

"The Kronos Quartet has redefined the string quartet repertoire by not defining it, by crossing the boundaries between classical, popular, and world music," said **Don Roth**, the Mondavi Center's executive director. "We would like to thank the ensemble for being such a significant part of our Creativity Project, and look forward to hosting what should be another extraordinary performance from this remarkable ensemble."

What: Kronos Quartet
When: Friday, April 18 • 8 pm
Where: Jackson Hall
Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts
University of California, Davis
Admission: \$36/\$31/\$26 Adults • \$16/\$14/\$12 Students, Children
Tickets/Info: 530.754.ARTS (2787)
866.754.ARTS (toll-free)
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