Student quartet to open Sac State faculty gala

The Valhalla Quartet, composed of Sacramento State students, took first place in November’s inaugural A.J. and Susana Watson Student Chamber Music Competition, and will receive a unique honor for their achievement.

The group will open the New Millennium Concert Series Faculty and Friends Gala at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 27, in Sacramento State’s Music Recital Hall.

Valhalla Quartet members are Sarena Hsu (first violin), Vijay Chalasani (violist), Jennifer Jim (second violin) and Alex Winter (cellist). They’ll open the Gala with the finale to Mendelssohn’s “Quartet in D major opus 44.”

“The judges were deeply impressed by the level of their playing as well as their infectious enthusiasm,” says Sacramento State Music Professor Andrew Luchansky, director of the New Millennium Series.

Luchansky is part of the University’s acclaimed faculty Sun Quartet, which also features Ian Swensen, Anna Kruger and Anna Presler. Given its presence at Sacramento State, Luchansky says it seemed apt that a competition be created for the students.

Eight Sacramento State student groups took part in the competition. Judges were cellist Alan Clarke, who taught for 30 years in the Sacramento area, and violist Randy Fisher, a chamber music coach and orchestra director in the region and formerly with the Denver Symphony. A.J. and Susanna Watson are board members for the New Millennium series.

The Sun Quartet will perform Shostakovich’s “Eighth Quartet” for the March 27 concert. The evening also includes clarinetist Deborah Pittman, French-hornist Pete Nowlen and pianist Eric Zivian performing Karl Reineke’s “Trio in B flat Major.” Saxophonist Keith Bohm and pianist John Cozza will present Wijnand van Klaveren’s “Sonate a la Maniere de Francis Poulenc.”

Concert tickets are $15 general admission, $10 for seniors and $5 for students, and are available at the University Ticket Office, (916) 278-4323, or www.tickets.com.

For more information, visit www.csus.edu/music or call (916) 278-5155. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.
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