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COLBURN SCHOOL HOSTS TRIBUTE FOR RETIRED FACULTY MEMBER RON LEONARD

Colburn School students, alumni, faculty and staff, as well as many of Ron Leonard's peers, come together to celebrate the cellist's contributions and career.

April 9, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at Zipper Hall

To reserve seats, please visit <https://www.colburnschool.edu/calendar/events/ron-leonard-retirement-celebration/>

(Tuesday, March 6, Los Angeles) – After an almost thirty-year tenure, cellist Ronald Leonard has retired from the Colburn School. While his contributions to Colburn have been extraordinary, the impact he has had on his colleagues and generations of young artists worldwide has been beyond measure. The Colburn School will celebrate Leonard's six decades as a distinguished orchestral performer, chamber musician, and educator with a special tribute on April 9, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. in Zipper Hall.

Friends from throughout Leonard's career will come together to recognize his incredible contributions to the world of classical music and education, with video tributes and performances from his many students, colleagues, and supporters.

The award-winning **Calidore String Quartet**, will perform Beethoven's String Quartet, Op. 59, No. 3, 3rd & 4th movements, in honor of Leonard, their teacher and mentor, who played an instrumental role in the ensemble's formative years at the Colburn School. Through his coaching and mentorship in the early stages of the quartet, Leonard helped shape the ensemble's musical approach to chamber music. Winning virtually every chamber music competition in the U.S., including the inaugural \$100,000 M-Prize in 2016, the Calidore String Quartet's career has been on a rocket trajectory with no signs of slowing down.

Members of the **Los Angeles Philharmonic cello section**, Ben Hong, Dahae Kim, Jonathan Karoly, Barry Gold, Jason Lippmann, Gloria Lum, and Vardan Gasparyan, will also perform in tribute to the leadership and legacy of its former principal. Karoly, Lum, and Gasparyan were former students of Leonard; Ben

Hong, Associate Principal Cello, spent five years as Leonard's stand partner; and Barry Gold played with Leonard for over 15 years.

Leonard's former students, alongside Clive Greensmith and his students, will perform as a **mass cello ensemble** comprised of over 20 musicians, conducted by Ben Manis, a 2016 Colburn Conservatory of Music graduate. From 1999 until 2013, Greensmith was a member of the world-renowned Tokyo String Quartet, and he is currently a cello and chamber music faculty member at the Colburn School. As a former student of Leonard's, Greensmith credits a significant part of his success as a musician and pedagogue to Leonard's teachings. Manis, currently a Master of Music candidate at the Rice University Shepherd School of Music, studied with Leonard at the Colburn School from 2012-2016, and owes much of his musical and personal growth to Leonard's mentorship and teaching. The ensemble will perform expanded versions of the *Pavane* for Cello Octet by Gabriel Fauré and the *Jelačić-Marsch* for Cello Quartet, Op. 244 by Johann Strauss, Sr.

Leonard's most recent **Colburn School Conservatory and Music Academy students** will come together to perform Julius Klengel's *Hymnus for 12 Cellos*. The students in this ensemble consist of students who were studying with Leonard when he retired from Colburn School at the end of the Fall 2017 semester. Whether they had studied with him for one semester or for years, Leonard's impact has been similar across the board, as his devotion to his studio and the Colburn School has made a profound impact on the hearts and lives of these students. The performance of this gorgeous and deeply moving piece will be dedicated to the legacy of "Mr. Leonard" as a teacher, mentor, and performer, and the students would like to take the opportunity to show him all that they have learned from him.

Husband and wife pianists, **Kevin Fitz-Gerald** and **Bernadene Blaha**, who will contribute to the celebrations with a special encore piece, have enjoyed a 30-year association and friendship with Leonard. First meeting and performing at the Round Top Summer Music Festival, then being faculty colleagues at the USC Thornton School of Music, both pianists have collaborated numerous times with Leonard in recital, chamber ensembles and concerti. It would be safe to say that between the three of them, they have performed the entire cello and piano repertoire.

Colburn School President and CEO Sel Kardan will host this special celebration, and will be joined by **Carol Colburn Grigor**, Life Chairman Emeritus, Colburn School Board of Directors and Chairman of the Colburn Foundation; **Toby Mayman**, Founding Executive Director of the Colburn School who welcomed Leonard onto the faculty in 1989; **Joseph Thayer**, former Dean of Colburn School's Community School of Performing Arts and Executive Director of the Colburn School; **Yehuda Gilad** and **Robert Lipsett**, co-founders of Colburn School's Conservatory of Music, along with Leonard and Warren Spaeth; **Arnold Steinhardt**, first violinist of the Guarneri String Quartet who attended Curtis Institute of Music with Leonard; **Daniel Rothmuller**, who had the privilege and pleasure of being Leonard's stand partner for over 20 years during his tenure as Principal Cellist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and **Clive Greensmith**.

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About Ron Leonard

Ronald Leonard is widely regarded as one of America's finest cellists, teachers, and chamber musicians. After a tenure of nearly three decades, Ron stepped down from his post as cello professor at the Colburn School to retire in December 2017. His contributions to Colburn have been extraordinary, and the impact he has had on his colleagues and generations of young artists worldwide has been beyond measure.

Ron studied at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he was a student of Leonard Rose and Orlando Cole. During his last year at Curtis, he won the coveted Walter Naumberg Musical Foundation Award and, immediately upon graduation, jump-started his musical career at the Cleveland Orchestra as one of the youngest members ever accepted by George Szell. After two years in Cleveland, he was appointed Principal Cellist of the Rochester Philharmonic and began teaching at the Eastman School of Music, where he served as a cello professor for 17 years.

In 1975, Ron was appointed to the prestigious position of Principal Cellist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he remained for 24 years and performed virtually the entire cello concerto literature under the direction of such conductors as Zubin Mehta, Michael Tilson Thomas, Carlo Maria Giulini, Vladimir Ashkenazy, André Previn and Esa-Pekka Salonen. He frequently appeared as a guest soloist with the orchestra, performing works by Haydn, Dvorák, Berio, Barber, Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Brahms, Lalo, Elgar, Strauss, and others. During this time, he started teaching at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music in 1987, where he held the post of the Gregor Piatigorsky Endowed Chair in Violoncello from 1993 to 2003.

Ron joined the Colburn School as a cello faculty member in 1989, nine years before the school moved to its current home on Grand Avenue. A versatile artist, he was selected to conduct the Colburn Chamber Orchestra in 2000 after being recognized for his leadership, teaching ability, and insight into issues specific to stringed instruments.

As the Colburn School continued to grow in scope and size, Ron—along with his dear friends and fellow faculty members Yehuda Gilad and Robert Lipsett—founded the Colburn Conservatory of Music in 2003. Working with Richard Colburn, Warren Spaeth, and Joe Thayer, the group spent countless hours conceptualizing and planning the ideal conservatory focused on the highest level of performer. Ron has been singularly devoted to teaching at Colburn, and even taught the first class of bass students as the conservatory expanded in its early days. In his role at Colburn, he has been an extraordinary mentor to countless young artists, and his alumni have forged major careers as soloists, chamber musicians, and orchestral players around the world.

In addition to his phenomenal orchestral and teaching careers, Ron is a critically acclaimed chamber musician, and has performed with many of the world's leading musicians including Rudolf Serkin, Leonard Rose, Isaac Stern, Jaime Laredo, Richard Goode, Peter Serkin, Joseph Silverstein, Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Yefim Bronfman, and Yo-Yo Ma. He was very active in the Los Angeles Philharmonic Chamber Music Society series. He has been a guest artist with some of the world's finest string quartets, including the Guarneri, Borromeo, Juilliard, and American Quartets, and he is a former member of the Hartwell, Eastman, and Vermeer Quartets. At Colburn, he has used his chamber music expertise to guide the careers of highly successful chamber ensembles, including the Calder Quartet and Calidore Quartet.

Ron has performed at the Spoleto (Italy) Festival of Two Worlds and the Festival Casals in Puerto Rico, and has performed and taught at the Aspen Music Festival and School, the Perlman Music Program, Bowdoin, Sarasota Music Festival, Marrowstone Summer Festival, La Jolla Summer Fest, Aria International Summer Festival, Meadowmount, the Australian Music Festival, and Musicorda. He has also been a Marlboro Music Festival participant in their tours and recordings.

On April 9, we celebrate Ron's six incredible decades as a distinguished orchestral performer, chamber musician, and educator. His deep sense of integrity, exceptionally high standards, dedication to his students, support of his colleagues, and profound commitment to his art will truly be missed at the school.

About the Colburn School

The Colburn School comprises four academic units united by a single philosophy that all who desire to study music and dance should have access to top-level training. The degree-granting Conservatory of Music, the Community School of Performing Arts, the Music Academy for pre-college musicians, and the Trudl Zipper Dance Institute provide performing arts training to over 2,000 students from the Los Angeles area and around the world. The renowned teachers, performers, and scholars that make up Colburn's dedicated faculty serve as invaluable mentors to guide students' artistic development.

The Community School of Performing Arts acts as an entry point to performing-arts education, offering beginning to pre-collegiate training in music and drama to students of all ages and skill levels. The Trudl Zipper Dance Institute includes dance instruction for young people and adults in ballet, tap, modern, and musical theater. Also part of the Trudl Zipper Dance Institute is the pre-professional Dance Academy, which prepares a select class of young dancers for careers in ballet.

Young musicians from around the world study at the Music Academy, which prepares high-school aged students for further training at the world's top conservatories. Finally, the Conservatory of Music is one of the preeminent training grounds for classical musicians, with undergraduate and advanced degrees in music performance.

A robust community engagement initiative delivers performing arts education to low-income students in the surrounding areas through outreach and scholarship programs. Located in downtown Los Angeles, the Colburn School's campus boasts state-of-the-art performance and rehearsal spaces. Each season, the school presents over 300 concerts and performances, many of which are free and open to the public, at its downtown home and throughout Southern California.

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