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## CALENDAR

MUSIC REVIEW

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Calder  
crosses  
the ages  
with easeThe budding quartet  
adds splendor to Riley's  
'Cadenza' and makes a  
smooth segue from  
Glass to Schubert.By MARK SWED  
Times Staff Writer

The Calder Quartet — suave in appearance and elegantly unified in its playing — is the model of the sleek young string quartet. The ensemble's technical accomplishment is very high. The four men dress alike: fitted suits, black shirts, skinny striped ties. They have a reverence for the formal Classical style and for formal Modernism as well.

Not much appears to ruffle them, which makes the Calder's recent interest in Terry Riley both unexpected and intriguing. As part of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Minimalism festival two years ago, the group explored very early and little-known pre-Minimalist, Modernist Riley scores that it now plans to record.

Tuesday night in Zipper Concert Hall at the Colburn School, where it is the quartet in residence, the Calder took on a more characteristic Riley work, "Cadenza on the Night Plain." One movement of this fanciful 35-minute score is titled "March of the Old Timers Reefer Division." Taking old-timers, it goes without saying, don't march in lock step.

Written in 1984 for the Kronos Quartet, "Cadenza" is Riley's first large-scale string quartet. The composer of "In C" — the work that spurred the Minimalist revolution — as well as an inspired keyboard improviser and devoted student of Indian raga, a

[See Calder, Page E14]

## Unified in sound and approach

[Calder, from Page E1] reluctant Riley initially wrote for the traditional medium only because the Kronos would not take no for an answer.

He did so on his own terms, which included a close working relationship with the quartet members. Much of the expressive nature of the music was left out of the written score and conveyed instead through extensive coaching sessions. But given that Riley has now written 23 pieces for the Kronos, several of them major works, a couple downright masterpieces, they have become too big and important a body of work to be the exclusive province of any one ensemble.

The Calder, which has also begun being coached by Riley, brings something different to "Cadenza." Written in several sections and conveying Riley's interest in Native American culture, the piece evokes a peculiarly resplendent, Riley-esque Old West, one with haunting calls and responses, the gathering of a clan and that Reefer Division. Explosive, highly individual

cadenzas, fashioned for the original Kronos members, punctuate the piece.

The Calder is such a tightly-knit ensemble, so unified in sound and approach, that loose individualist aplomb is a stretch for the players. But what the group does supply is a splendid sense of lyricism and flow, along with attention to detail, all of which are also essential aspects of Riley's music. In doing so, the quartet makes "Cadenza" its own. Those reefer-smoking old-timers get a kind of deluxe accommodation they could never have imagined, and the Calder's gorgeous resonance helps reveal the spiritual glow at the heart of all Riley's music.

In fact, "Cadenza" sounded downright Schubertian on Tuesday. And for good reason. The evening began with Philip Glass' short Quartet No. 2 and then segued into Schubert's "Rosamunde" Quartet. The four tiny movements of the Glass quartet were originally stage music for a production of Beckett's "Company," and had the Calder gone straight into Schubert without a

pause, there would have been no musical disjunction. Glass' repeated figures and Schubert's accompaniment to his adored melodies here occupied the same repetitive universe.

The Calder made the connection all the more conspicuous by giving a sweet Schubertian swing to Glass, lovingly bringing out inner lines. The players then played Schubert with the directness, clarity and punch of Glass. The "Rosamunde" was dramatic and brilliant, and so was the gesture of connecting the past with the present.

The Calder Quartet is growing very quickly. Not long ago these players — violinists Benjamin Jacobson and Andrew Bulbrook, violist Jonathan Moerschel and cellist Eric Byers — were excellent, earnest students at the Colburn School and USC. Now they are a draw for the Colburn. And their concerts in Zipper, with \$10 seats in a hall just the size for a string quartet, have got to be one of the best musical bargains in the land.

mark.swed@latimes.com