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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Del Sol String Quartet premieres a
retrospective of music composed by and about women from the past 111 years**

Umbilical Chords: Women Composers & the Creative Process

May 27 (Point Reyes Station)
May 30 (Berkeley)
May 31 (San Jose)
June 3 (San Francisco)

Detailed calendar listing on last page of release

(San Francisco, CA - May 4, 2007) The vibrant **Del Sol String Quartet** is a leading force in advancing the classical music tradition. For their spring Bay Area home season, the Del Sol String Quartet shines their spotlight on women composers to examine how motherhood has affected and shaped their music and careers. Aptly titled *Umbilical Chords: Women Composers & the Creative Process*, this concert series will feature works by women composers spanning the 19th through the 21st centuries: **Kui Dong, Linda Catlin Smith, Teresa Carreño, Sally Beamish, and Ruth Crawford**. It also features a world premiere of a piece by local composer **Mark Fish**, inspired by the life and work of Ruth Crawford.

The centerpiece of the program is **Ruth Crawford's *String Quartet*** (1931). This is still considered to be one of the most "modern" works composed in the 20th century. It stands out as both revolutionary and prophetic for the direction of contemporary music, as it explores complex rhythmic concepts and uses techniques based on sound and texture, rather than traditional harmonic and melodic structures. Ironically, soon after completing this groundbreaking quartet during the Depression of the 1930's, Crawford turned her attention to political activism and raising her family. Once she had married Charles Seeger in 1932, adopted his children, and had two of their own children, Crawford began focusing on ethnomusicology, collaborating with the Lomax brothers to collect and transcribe folk songs, particularly children's songs. While music was central to the lives of the Seeger family, Crawford soon relinquished her composing career, not to take it up again until close to her death in 1953.

Inspired by Crawford's life and work, Bay Area composer **Mark Fish** composed an epilogue to Crawford's *String Quartet* entitled *Whatever Happened to the Fireside Fancies?* (2007), which will have its world premiere on this concert series. In another tribute to Crawford, Fish has arranged short, light pieces for string quartet from Crawford's collection of American children's folk songs, which will be juxtaposed with the serious works throughout the program. Mr. Fish will discuss his new quartet and these new arrangements at all four concerts. In addition to Crawford's *String Quartet* (1931) and the works by Mark Fish, the Del Sol String Quartet will perform the following compositions:

Teresa Carreño (1853-1917, Venezuela) - selection from *String Quartet in B Minor* (1895)

Linda Catlin Smith (b. 1957, U.S.A.) - *As you pass a reflective surface* (1991)

Sally Beamish (b. 1956, Great Britain) - *String Quartet No. 2 "Opus California"* (1999)

Kui Dong (b. 1966, China) - *Spring* (2006)

Presenting programs devoted to works by women composers is not new for the Del Sol String Quartet, which frequently has commissioned and performed works of outstanding women composers. Despite the growing popularity of websites devoted to women composers and an increase in the percentage of women in composition departments at conservatories and universities, there is still an enormous disparity between the amount of music by women composers that is available and the amount that is programmed. The Del Sol String Quartet's concerts give audiences a seldom-heard opportunity to experience the compositional voices of women. By melding the theme of women composers and motherhood in this particular program, Del Sol aims to provoke deeper thought into the creative process as well as the scope and intensity of life that women artists experience as they choose careers *and* family.

ABOUT THE ENSEMBLE: Founded in 1992, the Del Sol String Quartet specializes in partnering with living composers from around the world to create relevant, responsive, and passionate performances of contemporary music. Del Sol's innovative programming won First Prize for Adventurous Programming (Mixed Repertory) from Chamber Music America/ASCAP in January 2006. The quartet was profiled in April 2007 on KQED's "SPARK," the acclaimed arts program broadcast weekly by the Bay Area's leading PBS TV station. Del Sol's collaboration with hip-hop violinist/composer Daniel Bernard Roumain in March 2006 was featured on the *CBS Evening News* for a national television audience. Del Sol has released two critically acclaimed CDs: *Tear* (2002) and the *Complete String Quartets of George Antheil* (2005).



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: CALENDAR LISTING

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retrospective of music composed by and about women from the past 111 years**

Umbilical Chords: Women Composers & the Creative Process

May 27 (Point Reyes Station)
May 30 (Berkeley)
May 31 (San Jose)
June 3 (San Francisco)

WHEN: Sunday, May 27 @ 4:00pm
WHERE: The Dance Palace (503-B Street, Point Reyes Station)
TICKETS: \$20 general, \$15 seniors, \$7 students and children under 12
Dance Palace members: \$15, \$13, \$7
INFORMATION: (415) 374-0074 or www.delsolquartet.com

WHEN: Wednesday, May 30 @ 8:00pm
WHERE: Ashby Stage (1901 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley)
TICKETS: \$20 general, \$15 senior, \$7 students and children under 12
INFORMATION: (415) 374-0074 or www.delsolquartet.com

WHEN: Thursday, May 31 @ 7:00pm
WHERE: Le Petit Trianon (72 North Fifth Street, San Jose)
TICKETS: \$20 general, \$15 senior, \$7 students and children under 12
INFORMATION: (415) 374-0074 or www.delsolquartet.com

WHEN: Sunday, June 3 @ 2:30pm
WHERE: Koret Auditorium, de Young Museum (Golden Gate Park, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive, San Francisco)
TICKETS: \$20 general, \$15 senior, \$7 students and children under 12
INFORMATION: (415) 374-0074 or www.delsolquartet.com

Contact NEQA/PR for interviews with the Del Sol String Quartet and high-resolution jpegs (images can also be downloaded online at www.delsolquartet.com/press.html).

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