MOSTLY MOZART, TOO

Under the direction of cellist David Finckel of the Emerson String Quartet, and his wife and business partner, pianist Wu Han, the annual Music@Menlo festival has gained a reputation for excellence, both for its engaging chamber-music workshops and its brilliant performance series. The 2006 concert series, built around the 250th anniversary of Mozart’s birth, provides material for the stunning seven-CD box set Returning to Mozart. The discs pair Mozart works with various other composers grouped in themed volumes dedicated to Shostakovich, the piano, the string quartet, winds, 20th-century music, Britten, and Messiaen’s Quartet for the End of Time. Featured string players, culled from the festival’s stellar faculty, include violinists Jorja Fleezanis, Joseph Silverstein, Jennifer Frautsch, Ani Kavafian, Tien-Hsin Wu; violists Paul Neubauer and CarlaMaria Rodrigues; cellists Finckel, Colin Carr, and Peter Wiley; bassist Scott Pingel; and the Orion String Quartet, with Todd and Daniel Phillips (violins), Steven Tenenbom (viola), and Timothy Eddy (cello). Grammy Award-winning recording engineer Da-Hong Seeto handles the technical side. The result is several hours of world-class chamber music performed by top-ranked players and captured for posterity by a first-rate sound engineer. The volumes can be purchased individually or as a set, available through www.musicatmenlo.org. —G.C.