

JUPITER STRING QUARTET

“The Jupiter String Quartet, an ensemble of eloquent intensity, has matured into one of the mainstays of the American chamber-music scene.”

—THE NEW YORKER



PHOTO BY SARAH GARDNER

JUPITERQUARTET.COM



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PROGRAMS

Renewal

In times of great uncertainty, unrest, and isolation, the Jupiter Quartet offers Renewal. Renewal takes inspiration from a few basic humanitarian ideas that we crave in these trying times: conversation, inclusion, diversity, and hope. The program begins with the final quartet from the Op. 20 set by Haydn. Some of the earliest and most inspired examples of conversational part-writing can be found in Haydn's quartets. The strikingly soft fugal finale captures this democratic sharing of ideas best of all. Following Haydn, the Jupiter Quartet features fresh and often underrepresented voices. Michi Wiancko's *To Unpathed Waters, Undreamed Shores* is a new commission for the Jupiter Quartet that explores humans' relationship with the natural world. About her new work, Wiancko writes, "I believe that a musical work that engages with regeneration, resilience, and collective humanity has the potential to be a powerful and unique contribution to the string quartet repertoire." The second half of the program offers Ben Johnston's tender and unique set of variations on "Amazing Grace" and the intricate and rhythmically charged second quartet of Jamaican-born composer Eleanor Alberga. The program closes on a contemplative note, with the achingly beautiful "Lyric" movement from Black-American composer George Walker's first string quartet.

Haydn: String Quartet in A Major, Op. 20 No. 6

Michi Wiancko: *To Unpathed Waters, Undreamed Shores**

Ben Johnston: String Quartet No. 4, "Amazing Grace"

Eleanor Alberga: String Quartet No. 2

George Walker: "Lyric" from String Quartet No. 1

*commissioned by Bay Chamber Concerts, in partnership with the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts/University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

American Prism – A Community Experience

American Prism is a continuous, evening-length presentation by the Jupiter String Quartet, inspired by America's wonderfully diverse and unique musical traditions as they are brought to life in the string quartets of some of the country's most beloved composers from the last 125 years. The performance begins at the turn of the twentieth century with Charles Ives, and journeys through contemporary re-imaginings of popular music from the 1910s and 1920s, the pioneering string quartet (1931) of Ruth Crawford Seeger, the gorgeous "Lyric" from George Walker's first string quartet, Florence Price's complex and rich interpretations on simple folk tunes, and Ben Johnston's beautiful and inventive variations on "Amazing Grace." Then, the audience experiences the upbeat dances from John Adams, and the tragedy and shared grief embodied by Joan Tower's 9/11 tribute, *In Memory*, and Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. Finally, the Jupiter Quartet features voices from the current generation of musicians, including works from Jessie Montgomery, Michi Wiancko, and Judd Greenstein.

(Program subject to change)

Charles Ives: selection from String Quartet No. 1, "The Salvation Army"

William Bolcom: selections from *Three Rags for String Quartet*

Dan Visconti: "Humble Pie" from *Ramshackle Songs***

George Walker: "Lyric" from String Quartet No. 1

Ruth Crawford Seeger: String Quartet

Ben Johnston: String Quartet No. 4, "Amazing Grace"

Florence Price: *Five Folksongs in Counterpoint*

John Adams: selections from *John's Book of Alleged Dances*

Joan Tower: *In Memory*

Samuel Barber: *Adagio for Strings*

Jessie Montgomery: selections from *Break Away*

Michi Wiancko: selection from *To Unpathed Waters, Undreamed Shores**

Judd Greenstein: *Four on the Floor*

Amy Beach: Piano Quintet, Op. 67 (with pianist **Gloria Chien**)

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**commissioned by Jupiter Quartet

The Jupiter String Quartet's 20th Anniversary: From Our Beginnings

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of their formation, the Jupiter Quartet comes full circle, performing works that they programmed during their first season in 2001-2002. Mozart's "Dissonance" quartet is referred to as such because of its divergence from the standard rules of harmony followed by composers of the Classical era. It is the last of Mozart's six quartets dedicated to Haydn. Shostakovich also veered from traditional string quartet structure by composing five movements for his third string quartet. He originally gave titles to each of the five movements, commonly viewed as a reflection on WWII, but retracted them for unknown reasons immediately after the premiere in 1946. These titles, "Calm unawareness of the future cataclysm;" "Rumblings of unrest and anticipation;" "The forces of war unleashed;" "Homage to the dead;" and "The eternal question: Why? And for what?" contribute to the overall character of the work. Brahms' Second Quartet was inspired by his good friend Joseph Joachim's motto, "frei, aber einsam," or, "free, but lonely." To counter the melancholy character, Brahms adapted the motto to "frei, aber froh," or, "free, but glad," and used the corresponding pitches F-A-E and F-A-F in the work's motif.

This program is available as a quartet-only performance or as a collaborative performance with pianist **Soyeon Kate Lee**.

Mozart: String Quartet No. 19 in C Major, K. 465 "Dissonance"

Shostakovich: String Quartet No. 3 in F Major, Op. 73

Brahms: String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51 No. 2

with pianist **Soyeon Kate Lee**

Mozart: String Quartet No. 19 in C Major, K. 465 "Dissonance"

Shostakovich: String Quartet No. 3 in F Major, Op. 73

Schumann: Piano Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 44 -OR- **Dvořák:** Piano Quintet No. 2 in A Major, Op. 81, B. 155

Influenced

Influenced explores the various ideas that shaped the work of composers from several eras. Haydn's Op. 20 is considered a beacon of the string quartet form, and each of the six quartets that comprise the opus utilizes different compositional techniques that influenced other composers' approach to the form for over 200 years. The final quartet of the set, the Quartet in A Major, is a whimsical yet expertly crafted work. Many years later, another expert craftsman, Alfred Schnittke, developed his own polystylistic technique, apparent in his third string quartet which employs quotations from Lasso, Beethoven, and Shostakovich. Although more standard in his approach, Tchaikovsky also employed outside influences. When composing his first string quartet, he was inspired by a Russian folk song he heard sung by a carpenter at his sister's home in the Ukraine. This work alternates between the folk theme and Tchaikovsky's own earnest theme. Michi Wiancko's *To Unpathed Waters, Undreamed Shores* explores humans' relationship with the natural world. Wiancko writes, "I believe that a musical work that engages with regeneration, resilience, and collective humanity has the potential to be a powerful and unique contribution to the string quartet repertoire."

This program is available as a quartet-only performance or as a collaborative performance with renowned pianist **Soyeon Kate Lee**.

Haydn: String Quartet in A Major, Op. 20 No. 6

Schnittke: String Quartet No. 3 -OR- **Michi Wiancko:** *To Unpathed Waters, Undreamed Shores**

Tchaikovsky: String Quartet No. 1 in D Major, Op. 11

with pianist **Soyeon Kate Lee**

Haydn: String Quartet in A Major, Op. 20 No. 6

Schnittke: String Quartet No. 3 -OR- **Michi Wiancko:** *To Unpathed Waters, Undreamed Shores**

Schumann: Piano Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 44 -OR- **Dvořák:** Piano Quintet No. 2 in A Major, Op. 81, B. 155

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Last Quartets

The Jupiter Quartet commemorates the last string quartets by three master composers. Mozart's momentous final string quartet is the third of the "Prussian Quartets," dedicated to King Frederick William II of Prussia, an amateur cellist. Mendelssohn's sixth and final string quartet was composed in 1847 and is the composer's last major work completed before his death that same year. Stricken with grief after the loss of his beloved sister Fanny, Mendelssohn wrote this dramatic and heartrending piece as an homage to her memory. Bela Bartók wrote six celebrated string quartets. The last, composed in 1939, employs a lyrical, melancholy theme which ties all four movements together. The theme is believed to be reflective of the dark events Bartók experienced during this period: the outbreak of WWII and his mother's terminal illness.

Mozart: String Quartet No. 23 in F Major, K. 590

Bartók: String Quartet No. 6

Mendelssohn: String Quartet No. 6 in F minor, Op. 80

Collaborations

Jupiter String Quartet + Roger Tapping and Natasha Brofsky

Roger Tapping, violist of the Juilliard Quartet, and Natasha Brofsky, cellist of the Peabody Trio, join the Jupiter Quartet for a program spanning the Classical, Romantic, and Modern eras. Mozart's Fourth String Quintet is colored by a dark and somber tone, which is characteristic of the composer's other G minor works. Of the work's particularly melancholic third movement, Tchaikovsky said, "No one has ever known as well how to interpret so exquisitely in music the sense of resigned and inconsolable sorrow." Widely regarded as a chamber music masterpiece, notably by Schumann and Brahms, Schubert completed this Quintet, his final chamber work, two months before his death. Schubert had offered the work to a publisher, but it was refused and it lay forgotten until it was rediscovered and had its first known public performance in 1850. It was finally published three years later. Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* is a tone poem for a small chamber ensemble, rather than a typical orchestral work. The piece is highly romantic in nature and was written before Schoenberg adopted his signature 12-tone method of composition.

Mozart: String Quintet No. 4 in G minor, K. 516

Schoenberg: *Verklärte Nacht*

Schubert: String Quintet in C Major, D. 956 "Cello Quintet"

Jupiter String Quartet + Jasper String Quartet

The Jupiter Quartet and the Jasper Quartet collaborate to create an extraordinary musical experience. Osvaldo Golijov's *Last Round* was composed in response to Astor Piazzolla's stroke in 1991. The piece is conceived as an idealized bandoneon, and the title serves as a boxing metaphor, prompting Piazzolla's spirit to fight one last time. Members of the Jupiter and Jasper Quartets commissioned Dan Visconti to compose his 2011 octet, *Eternal Breath*, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of Bill and Margaret Freivogel, the parents of three of the quartets' musicians. The title refers to the breath of life "passed from one generation to the next." The fourth violinist trades out their violin for the drone-like tones of the shruti box, signifying the movement of the breath. For the second half of the program, the Jupiter Quartet and the Jasper Quartet perform the monumental Mendelssohn Octet.

Osvaldo Golijov: *Last Round* for double string quartet and bass

Dan Visconti: *Eternal Breath*

Mendelssohn: Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 20

JUPITER STRING QUARTET

The **Jupiter String Quartet** is a particularly intimate group, consisting of violinists Nelson Lee and Meg Freivogel, violist Liz Freivogel (Meg's older sister), and cellist Daniel McDonough (Meg's husband, Liz's brother-in-law). Now enjoying their 20th year together, this tight-knit ensemble is firmly established as an important voice in the world of chamber music. *The New Yorker* claims, "The Jupiter String Quartet, an ensemble of eloquent intensity, has matured into one of the mainstays of the American chamber-music scene."

The quartet has performed in some of the world's finest halls, including New York City's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, London's Wigmore Hall, Boston's Jordan Hall, Mexico City's Palacio de Bellas Artes, Washington, D.C.'s Kennedy Center and Library of Congress, Austria's Esterhazy Palace, and Seoul's Sejong Chamber Hall. Their major music festival appearances include the Aspen Music Festival and School, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival, Rockport Music Festival, Caramoor International Music Festival, Music at Menlo, the Banff Centre, the Seoul Spring Festival, and many others. In addition to their performing career, they have been artists-in-residence at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana since 2012, where they maintain private studios and direct the chamber music program.

Their chamber music honors and awards include the grand prizes in the Banff International String Quartet Competition and the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition; the Young Concert Artists International auditions in New York City; the Cleveland Quartet Award from Chamber Music America; an Avery Fisher Career Grant; and a grant from the Fromm Foundation. From 2007-2010, they were in residence at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Two.

The Jupiter String Quartet feels a particular connection to the core string quartet repertoire; they have presented the complete Bartok and Beethoven string quartets on numerous occasions. Also strongly committed to new music, they have commissioned works by Michi Wiancko, Syd Hodkinson, Hannah Lash, Dan Visconti, Mark Adamo, Pierre Jalbert, and Kati Agócs.

The quartet's latest album is a collaboration with the Jasper String Quartet (Marquis Classics, 2021), produced by Grammy-winner Judith Sherman. This collaborative album features the world premiere recording of Dan Visconti's *Eternal Breath*, Felix Mendelssohn's Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 20, and Osvaldo Golijov's *Last Round*. *The Arts Fuse* acclaimed, "This joint album from the Jupiter String Quartet and Jasper String Quartet is striking for its backstory but really memorable for its smart program and fine execution." The quartet's discography also includes numerous recordings on labels including Azica Records and Deutsche Grammophon.

Amid the closures of concert halls due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jupiter Quartet remained strongly committed to bringing their music to audiences safely. In July 2020, the Jupiter Quartet gave the world premiere of Michi Wiancko's *To Unpathed Waters, Undreamed Shores*, which was commissioned for the ensemble and presented via livestream by Bay Chamber Concerts. Additional livestream concerts included performances presented by Bowdoin

International Music Festival, Asheville Chamber Music Series, CU Presents at the University of Colorado Boulder, Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, and UCLA Chamber Music at the Clark, as well as virtual residencies with the University of Iowa and Middlebury College.

The Jupiters place a strong emphasis on developing relationships with future classical music audiences through educational performances in schools and other community centers. They believe that, because of the intensity of its interplay and communication, chamber music is one of the most effective ways of spreading an enthusiasm for "classical" music to new audiences. The quartet has also held numerous masterclasses for young musicians at Northwestern University, Eastman School of Music, the Aspen Music Festival, Encore Chamber Festival, Madeline Island Music Festival, and Peabody Conservatory.

The quartet chose its name because Jupiter was the most prominent planet in the night sky at the time of its formation and the astrological symbol for Jupiter resembles the number four.



RECENT RELEASES

