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Saint Paul String Quartet Competition

Year
19

April 20, 2024

SENIOR DIVISION

~ Final Rounds ~

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Final Round Jury
Heath Quartet
Sara Wolstenholme, violin
Juliette Roos, violin
Gary Pomeroy, viola
Christopher Murray, 'cello



The Heath Quartet's participation today is made possible by the Schubert Club.

Selection Jury
Sibbi Bernhardsson, violin Pacifica Quartet
Jonathan Swartz, violin Madeline Island Artistic Director
Lesley Robertson, viola St. Lawrence String Quartet
Raman Ramakrishnan, 'cello Daedalus Quartet



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Artaria String Quartet

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Rebecca Hall, Artaria Chamber Music School
Jen Peterson, Artaria Chamber Music School

The 2024 Saint Paul String Quartet Competition is grateful to the generous individual and corporate sponsors that have made this event possible.

SPSQC welcomes Tommy Barbarella as Sundin Music Hall's new Music Director.

The **HEATH QUARTET** formed in 2002 at the Royal Northern College of Music. They were selected for representation by YCAT, awarded a Borletti-Buitoni Special Ensemble Scholarship and in 2012 won the Ensemble Prize at the Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern where they are now regular visitors. In 2016 they won the Gramophone Chamber Award for their recording of the complete string quartets of Sir Michael Tippett, and in May 2013 became the first ensemble in fifteen years to win the prestigious Royal Philharmonic Society's Young Artists Award. Their award-winning release of the Tippett was followed by two discs recorded for the Harmonia Mundi/PIAS label featuring Tchaikovsky's first and third quartets (November 2016) and the complete Bartók quartets (June 2017), the latter of which won the 2017 Limelight Chamber Music Award and was nominated for the 2018 Gramophone Chamber Music Award – both projects were part-funded by the Quartet's Borletti-Buitoni Trust Special Ensemble Scholarship 2011. Their most recent release on Signum Records with Carolyn Sampson features works by Berg, Webern and Schoenberg. The 2022/23 season found the quartet on a tour to the US with music of Ravel, Britten, Haydn, Fanny Mendelssohn and Schubert. They continue their longstanding relationship with Mecklenburg Vorpommern summer festival and the Wigmore Hall, opening their Coffee Concert season. Other highlights include recitals with the Manchester Chamber and Bollington concert societies, Brighton Dome Coffee Concerts, St George's Bristol and Britten Pears Arts. Recent highlights include the completion of two season residency at the Boulez Saal Berlin, their Barcelona debut in Palau de la Musica Catalana with soprano Carolyn Sampson, a Beethoven series at Bath Festival, debuts at Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Saffron Hall and Cheltenham Festival, as well as returns to Handelsbeurs Ghent, Aldeburgh and Norfolk & Norwich festivals.



Sara Wolstenholme violin



Juliette Roos violin



Gary Pomeroy viola



Christopher Murray cello

SELECTION JURY

SIBBI BERNHARDSSON Icelandic violinist Sibbi Bernhardsson joined the Oberlin Conservatory faculty in 2017 after performing for the previous 17 years with the Pacifica Quartet, with which he won a Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance, Musical America Ensemble of the Year honors, and the Avery Fisher Career Grant. As a member of the Pacifica Quartet, Bernhardsson appeared in more than 90 concerts worldwide each year, including engagements in Wigmore Hall (London), the Vienna Konzerthaus, Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Suntory Hall (Tokyo), Alice Tully Hall and Carnegie Hall (New York), and other major venues. He has performed at the Edinburgh Festival, Ravinia, Music@Menlo, and the Reykjavík Arts Festival, and has collaborated with Menahem Pressler, Yo-Yo Ma, Jörg Widmann, Lynn Harrell, Leon Fleisher, the Emerson String Quartet, Johannes Moser, and members of the Guarneri and Cleveland quartets. His television appearances include The Tonight Show, Saturday Night Live, and the MTV Europe Music Awards with Icelandic artist Björk. He appears on 16 recordings with the Pacifica Quartet and has recorded the violin music of Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson and the sonatas for violin and piano by Franz Schubert.



Bernhardsson serves as director of the Cooper International Violin Competition at Oberlin and as artistic director of Iceland's Harpa International Music Academy. He gives regular concerts and master classes in the United States, Europe, and Asia, and has appeared as a soloist with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, the Reykjavík Chamber Orchestra, CityMusic Cleveland, and other ensembles. Bernhardsson is a 1995 graduate of Oberlin Conservatory. His teachers include Guðný Guðmundsdóttir, Almita and Roland Vamos, Mathias Tacke, and Shmuel Ashkenasi. He previously served on the faculty of the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University.

Praised by The Strad for his "impeccable playing" and "gorgeously viola-like tone," violinist **JONATHAN SWARTZ** enjoys a multi-faceted career. His recent solo CD, Suite Inspiration (Soundset Recordings), received much critical acclaim. John Terauds of Musical Toronto comments, "Swartz sounds as if his bow were strung with threads of silk rather than horsehair," and calls his performance of Bach's Chaconne "something to treasure." A devoted pedagogue, Swartz serves on the faculties of Arizona State University and Madeline Island Chamber Music. He has previously taught at the University of Texas at El Paso, Domaine Forget Academy, Round Top Festival, Interlochen Arts Camp, Innsbrook Institute, and the Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory. Sought after as a master clinician, and frequent presenter at the American String Teachers Association National Conferences, his approach to bow technique was featured in a STRINGS magazine article in 2006. Swartz is the founder and artistic director of the Visiting Quartet Residency Program at Arizona State University, a chamber music program that integrates visiting resident artists with a comprehensive chamber music curriculum. He has also been instrumental in shaping the curriculum for the violin program at the Domaine Forget Academy. He presently serves as artistic director for Madeline Island Chamber Music, and as president for ASTA-AZ.





LESLEY ROBERTSON, A graduate of both the Curtis Institute and the Juilliard School, Lesley Robertson, viola, hails from Edmonton, Alberta and currently lives in California where, along with the St. Lawrence String Quartet she is Artist-in-Residence at Stanford University. A founding member of the SLSQ, Lesley has been privileged to perform in some of the world's most renowned concert halls including Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, New York's Lincoln Center, and Paris' Theatre de la Ville, as well as more unusual venues such as Hanoi's "The French Opera House," Luxembourg's Bourglinster Castle and at the White House for President and Mrs. Clinton. Upcoming tours feature performances in New York, Berlin, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Toronto, Sydney, and Christchurch - and quite possibly a tavern, school cafeteria or university dormitory near you. Under exclusive contract with EMI Classics, the SLSQ's recordings have received notable acclaim including Canada's Juno Award, Germany's Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik and two Grammy nominations. Apart from the SLSQ, Ms. Robertson has recently appeared as soloist with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and as a guest with the Tokyo String Quartet, the Ying Quartet, the Pacifica String Quartet, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and Music from Marlboro. She has been honored to serve on various juries including the Melbourne, Banff and Wigmore Hall International String Quartet competitions. Ms. Robertson also holds a degree from the University of British Columbia where she studied with Gerald Stanick. She plays on a viola made in August 1995 by fellow Canadian John Newton. Away from the viola, Lesley gleefully enjoys motherhood, the great outdoors and the antics of her extended family..

As a member of the Horszowski Trio, cellist **RAMAN RAMAKRISHNAN** has performed across North America, Europe, India, Japan, and in Hong Kong, and recorded for Bridge Records and Avie Records. For eleven seasons, as a founding member of the Daedalus Quartet, he performed around the world. Mr. Ramakrishnan is currently an artist member of the Boston Chamber Music Society. Mr. Ramakrishnan has given solo recitals in New York, Boston, Seattle, and Washington, D.C., and has performed chamber music at Caramoor, at Bargemusic, with the Chicago Chamber Musicians, and at the Aspen, Bard, Charlottesville, Four Seasons, Kingston, Lincolnshire (UK), Marlboro, Mehli Mehta (India), Oklahoma Mozart, and Vail Music Festivals. He has toured with Musicians from Marlboro and has performed, as guest principal cellist, with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. As a guest member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, he has performed in New Delhi and Agra, India and in Cairo, Egypt. He has served on the faculties of the Taconic and Norfolk Chamber Music Festivals, as well as at Columbia University.

Mr. Ramakrishnan was born in Athens, Ohio and grew up in East Patchogue, New York. His father is a molecular biologist and his mother is the children's book author and illustrator Vera Rosenberry. He holds a Bachelor's degree in physics from Harvard University and a Master's degree in music from The Juilliard School. His principal teachers have been Fred Sherry, Andrés Díaz, and André Emelianoff. He lives in New York City with his wife, the violist Melissa Reardon, and their young son. He plays a Neapolitan cello made by Vincenzo Jorio in 1837.



2024-2025 SEASON

Chiaroscuro Quartet

Sun, Oct 27, 2024 • 4:00 PM

Espressivo! Piano Quartet

Sun, Nov 24, 2024 • 4:00 PM

Tommy Mesa, cello

Michelle Cann, piano

Sun, Jan 26, 2025 • 4:00 PM

Jerusalem Quartet

Shostakovich Quartet Cycle Concert I

Sun, Mar 23, 2025 • 4:00 PM

Jerusalem Quartet

Shostakovich Quartet Cycle Concert V

Sun, Apr 27, 2025 • 4:00 PM

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A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.” ~ Steve Jobs

Dear friends of chamber music,

The music you hear today is filled with Love. From the first notes that captured the imagination of humanity to the exquisite playing you are hearing today, these fine young players are filling their hearts and minds with new ideas and a longer vision of possibilities. Guided by wisdom and trust in their elders, and accompanied by the love of their parents, teachers, and friends, I truly believe they love what they are doing.

The Saint Paul String Quartet Competition brings people together to celebrate beauty in the intimate environs of chamber music broadcast to the world. The Final Rounds of the competition showcase the finest college and young professional string quartets in the country. These five superb quartets will share with us today some of the most beautiful music ever composed.

Today’s jury is the excellent Heath Quartet. They will listen to and score each performance with detailed written comments in the following categories: Tone Quality, Intonation, Ensemble & Balance, and Musical Ideas.

The 2024 event begins with a compulsory work by renowned American composer Billy Childs followed by a quartet curated Recital Round. Each chamber music masterpiece they perform will reveal the skill and level of preparation of these aspiring ensembles. It will also present a challenge for our esteemed jury as they search for today’s prizewinners.



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SPSQC



Artaria String Quartet

The Saint Paul String Quartet Competition’s primary mission is to celebrate excellence in string quartet performance, foster increased awareness and participation in the chamber music art form, and enhance chamber music culture and appreciation. Diversity and Inclusion are now at the forefront of our concerns, and we have created required competition rounds for Women composers and Composers of Color.

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The Awards

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2nd Prize - \$1600 Silver Medal Award

BIPOC Prize - \$800

Audience Prize - \$400

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Masumi Per Rostad, viola
Dr. Melissa Kraut, cello

January 2025 - Brass

Spring 2025 - Woodwinds

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BILLY CHILDS has emerged as one of the foremost American composers of his era, perhaps the most distinctly American composer since Aaron Copland – for like Copland, he has successfully married the musical products of his heritage with the Western neoclassical traditions of the twentieth century in a powerful symbiosis of style, range, and dynamism.

A native of Los Angeles, Childs grew up immersed in jazz, classical, and popular music influences. A prodigious talent at the piano earned him public performances by age six, and at sixteen he was admitted to the USC Community School of the Performing Arts, going on to earn a Bachelor of Music degree in Composition under the tutelage of Robert Linn and Morten Lauridsen.



By the time of his graduation from USC, Childs was already an in-demand performer in the L.A. jazz scene. Soon thereafter he was discovered by trumpet legend Freddie Hubbard, with whom he embarked on a successful performing and recording tour. He recorded and performed with a number of other influential jazz musicians including J.J. Johnson, Joe Henderson, and Wynton Marsalis before landing a record deal with Windham Hill Records in 1988, when he released *Take For Example*, *This...*, the first of four critically acclaimed albums for the label. The albums *Twilight Is Upon Us* (1989), *His April Touch* (1991), and *Portrait Of A Player* (1992) followed, each expansive contributions of depth and virtuosity. Since then Childs has written and produced *I've Known Rivers* (1995) on Stretch/GRP, *The Child Within* (1996) on Shanachie, and two volumes of “jazz/chamber music” (an amalgam of jazz and classical music) – *Lyric, Vol. 1* (2006) and *Autumn: In Moving Pictures, Vol. 2* (2010); the recordings earned him two GRAMMY awards and five nominations.

Simultaneously with his recording career, Childs has occupied a parallel niche as an in-demand composer. His orchestral and chamber commission credits include Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Leonard Slatkin, The Los Angeles Master Chorale, The Kronos Quartet, The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, The American Brass Quintet, The Ying Quartet, and The Dorian Wind Quintet.

Thus far in his career, Childs has garnered thirteen GRAMMY nominations and five awards: two for Best Instrumental Composition (*Into the Light* from *Lyric* and *The Path Among The Trees* from *Autumn: In Moving Pictures*) and two for Best Arrangement Accompanying a Vocalist (*New York Tendaberry* from *Map to the Treasure: Reimagining Laura Nyro* and *What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?* from *To Love Again*). In 2006, Childs was awarded a Chamber Music America Composer's Grant, and in 2009 was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship. He received the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award in 2013, the Music Award from The American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2015, and most recently, for his album *Rebirth*, was honored with his fifth GRAMMY Award – for Best Jazz Instrumental Album.

Most recently, Childs has recorded a collection of re-imagined Laura Nyro compositions for Sony Masterworks, released in September 2014. *Map to the Treasure: Reimagining Laura Nyro* was produced by Larry Klein and features guest artists: Renee Fleming, Yo-Yo Ma, Wayne Shorter, Alison Kraus, Dianne Reeves, Chris Botti, Esperanza Spalding, Lisa Fischer, Susan Tedeschi, Rickie Lee Jones, Shawn Colvin, Ledesi, Becca Stevens, Chris Potter, Brian Blade, Steve Wilson and Jerry Douglas. In 2016, Childs was appointed President of Chamber Music America.

As a pianist Childs has performed with Yo-Yo Ma, Sting, Renee Fleming, The Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Chick Corea, The Kronos Quartet, Wynton Marsalis, Jack DeJohnette, Dave Holland, Ron Carter, The Ying Quartet, The American Brass Quintet, and Chris Botti.

BIPOC ROUND

1 1:00am Introduction by
Master of Ceremonies

Performances begin at 1 1:05pm

▼ TRELIS QUARTET ▼

▼ NOX QUARTET ▼

▼ KATARINA STRING QUARTET ▼

▼ FORST QUARTET ▼

▼ MIA QUARTET ▼

String Quartet No.2 “Awakening”
I. Wake-up Call
Composer: Billy Childs

“ Joshua McClendon (SPSQC '16) cellist of the Banff International String Quartet Competition Grand Prize winning Isadore Quartet described the piece as divided into three movements, each describing a different part of one overarching story. “The first movement is this sort of anxiety-fueled, very fast and very harsh movement that details Billy getting the phone call that his wife was in the hospital, suffering from pulmonary embolism.” Pulmonary embolism is a life-threatening disease that often appears with no warning, causing a terrifying experience for anyone. The music mirrors this fear with fast and frantic notes. ”

Winner of the BIPOC Round will be announced
at the Awards Ceremony which follows
immediately after the Final Round.



RECITAL ROUND

12:30pm

Steve Staruch - Master of Ceremonies



◀ TRELLIS QUARTET ▶

HAYDN: String Quartet in C major, Op.33 No.3 "Bird"
II. Scherzo - Trio
III. Adagio ma non troppo
IV. Rondo.

RAVEL: String Quartet No.1 in F major
I. Allegro moderato - Très Doux
II. Asset vif - Très Rhythmé

▶ NOX QUARTET ▶

HAYDN: String Quartet in D major, Op.20 no.4
I. Allegro di molto
IV. Presto e scherzando

BRAHMS: String Quartet in a minor, Op.51 no.2
I. Allegro non troppo
IV. Finale - Allegro non assai



▶ KATARINA STRING QUARTET ▶

HAYDN: String Quartet in G Major Op.33 no 5
I. Allegro vivace
II. Largo e cantabile
III. Scherzo - Trio
IV. Finale - Allegretto - Presto

BARTÓK: Quartet No.1
I. Lento



◀ FORST QUARTET ▶

WALKER: String Quartet No.1, Lyric
I. Allegro
II. Molto adagio

BRAHMS: String Quartet in a minor, Op51/2
I. Allegro non troppo
IV. Finale. Allegro non assai

▶ MIA QUARTET ▶

MENDELSSOHN: String Quartet in F minor, Op.80
I. Allegro vivace assai
III. Adagio
IV. Finale: Allegro molto

WIJERATNE: 2 Pop Songs on Ancient Poems
I. "A letter from the After-life"



TRELLIS QUARTET



Dallas Noble, violin (Hopewell, NJ)
Leo Matsuoka, violin (Los Angeles, CA)
Zach Levin, viola (Vancouver, Canada)
Priscilla Kim, cello (Los Angeles, CA)

Formed in the fall of 2023 at the University of Delaware, the Trellis String Quartet is composed of violinists Dallas Noble and Leo Matsuoka, violist Zach Levin, and cellist Priscilla Kim. Recruited for the University's Graduate String Quartet Fellowship, they are currently pursuing their Master's in Performance under the mentorship of the Calidore String Quartet. They have presented interactive performances at Brandywine Baroque Society and Newark Charter School and performed at several events hosted by the University, including their State of the College of Arts and Sciences presentation. Recently, they participated in the Calidore String Quartet Seminar and presented their second full recital. They have been honored to collaborate with and receive instruction from many illustrious artists including David Finkel, Elicia Silverstein, Eric Nowlin, Elias Goldstein, Adriana Linares, and Larry Stomberg. The group takes their name from the architectural structure, trellis, which is a framework of interwoven materials onto which plants grow. Like a trellis, the quartet hopes that their group will provide a foundation on which to help each other grow, and that collectively, their work and music will help the community around them to grow too.

Competition Repertoire:

HAYDN: String Quartet in C Major, Op. 33 No. 3
RAVEL: String Quartet in F Major

Dallas Noble is a violinist from Hopewell, New Jersey and a recent graduate of the Colburn Conservatory, where they studied with Robert Lipsett. Dallas is a passionate believer in the power of music to heal, empower, and deconstruct prejudice, and they are deeply committed to facilitating collaborative engagement between musicians and audience members of all walks of life. They are an enthusiastic chamber and orchestral musician and have worked closely with two organizations serving the Skid Row community in Los Angeles, Urban Voices Project and Street Symphony. During their time at Colburn, Dallas served as the inaugural Urban Voices Project-Colburn Connection intern, as an author of program notes for the school, and as a private teacher in the Jumpstart Program. Dallas has appeared as a soloist with multiple orchestras in the greater Philadelphia area and has been honored to receive many awards over the years, including a 2017 Anthony Quinn Foundation Scholarship. They have played under the baton of such conductors as Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Gustavo Dudamel, and Marin Alsop, among others.

Leo Matsuoka, aged 23, is a recent graduate of the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Oleh Krysa and Robin Scott. An avid chamber musician, he has performed as a member of Chamber Music OC's distinguished Pre-college program and participated in master classes with Phil Setzer, Robert DeMaine, the Jupiter String Quartet, Julian Martin, and Margaret Batjer. In addition Leo is a founding member of the Genesee Piano Trio and was a recipient of the John Celentano Award for Excellence in Chamber Music upon graduation from the Eastman School of Music. Leo also has extensive experience participating in orchestras, serving as principal second violinist and concertmaster of the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra and associate concertmaster of Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra. His previous teachers include Iryna Krechkovsky and Ayako Sugaya. Leo began formal training at the age of 10 and attended the Orange County School of the Arts Instrumental Music program.

Primarily focused on classical viola, **Zach Levin** has amassed a wide array of experience in both orchestral and chamber music. He has performed with Symphony Nova Scotia as part of their season-long apprenticeship program, as well as in NYO Canada's "Frenergy" collaboration tour with the European Union Youth Orchestra in 2019. Zach received his Bachelor of Music from Dalhousie University in 2019, having studied with Leo Perez, Philippe Djokic, and Mark Lee. Previous teachers include Andrew Dawes and Nicki Stieda, from his days in Vancouver, BC. In his free time, Zach enjoys watching baseball, exploring his local food scene, and brewing good coffee.

Born in Los Angeles, California, **Priscilla Kim** began her musical studies at age 8. She is a recent graduate of the University of Michigan, where she studied with Richard Aaron. Along with leadership roles in youth orchestras, Priscilla has held principal positions in the University of Michigan's Symphony and Philharmonia Orchestras, as well the Conducting Academy Orchestra at Aspen, receiving fellowships to attend the festival in 2019 and 2021. Her notable performances include playing with Johannes Moser for the Philharmonic Society of Orange County, alongside her former piano trio at Carnegie Weill Hall, as well as in orchestra performances in historic halls abroad such as the Rudolfinum, Musikverein, and Glinka Capella. Upcoming concerts include a recital with the Trellis Quartet and a concerto performance at the University of Delaware as winner of the concerto competition. Her former teachers include Pacific Symphony cellist Laszlo Mezo and Joonsung Jun.

NOX STRING QUARTET



Ava Kenney, violin (Madison, WI)
Eleanor Markey, violin (Wayland, MA)
Yu-Heng Wang, viola (Clifton Park, NJ)
Ari Freed, cello (New York City)

The Nox Quartet is composed of New England Conservatory freshmen violinists Eleanor Markey and Ava Kenney, violist Yu-Heng Wang, and cellist Ari Freed. The members found each other through a mutual love of connecting with fellow humans through chamber music. They derive their name from the Latin word ‘nox’—translating to ‘night’— as the quartet found the greatest productivity with the lights in the rehearsal space turned off, where listening becomes the central mode of communication and cohesion. They have been mentored by the wonderful Merry Peckham and Mai Motobuchi. Through NEC, the Nox Quartet is a part of the Community Performances and Partnerships Program, where they have enjoyed performing for a variety of audiences throughout Boston, including guests at the Women’s Lunch Place and students at the Boston String Academy and Conservatory Lab Charter School.

Competition Repertoire:

HAYDN: String Quartet No.27 in D major, Op.20 No.4
BRAHMS: String Quartet No.2 in A minor, Op.51/2

Violinist **Ava Kenney** made her solo orchestral debut at age 13 with the Madison Symphony Orchestra, and has since performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, La Crosse Symphony, Concord Chamber Orchestra, Middleton Community Orchestra and WYSO Youth Orchestras. As a member of the Pondrom Quartet, she won the silver medal and BIPOC performance prize in the Saint Paul String Quartet Competition Junior Division, along with honorable mention in the Chicago National Chamber Music Competition. Ava has also been featured on NPR’s From the Top, WPR’s Midday Show, and WMVO Live with Buzz Kemper. She has spent her summers at Morningside Music Bridge, Center Stage Strings, Colburn’s Sounding Point Academy, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Northwestern Summer Violin Institute, and Heifetz International Music Institute, and will attend the Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival in 2024. Ava began her musical studies through Suzuki Strings of Madison with Heidi Kenney and University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Music faculty Eugene Purdue. She is currently pursuing an undergraduate degree in violin performance with Donald Weilerstein and Kim Kashkashian at the New England Conservatory.

19 year old violinist **Eleanor Markey** began her violin studies at the age of three with Suzy Perelman in New York City. Since moving to Boston in 2012, she has studied at NEC Preparatory School with Magdalena Richter, with whom she remained until December 2019, with Robyn Bollinger from January 2020 - June 2022, and with Isabelle Durrenberger from June 2022 - June 2023. She began her studies with Soovin Kim in June of 2022 and is currently studying with him at NEC. She won the Highland Glee Club high school music competition in 2023. She has also won first place in NEC Prep’s open concerto competition, once in 2018 and again in 2019. Eleanor was a part of NEC Prep’s orchestral program for many years. She was also a member of NEC Prep’s Chamber Music Intensive Performance Seminar— also known as “CHIPS” — from its inception in September of 2018 to May of 2023. Her former chamber group Trio Giocoso was featured on the NPR program From the Top.

Yu-Heng Wang, viola, currently studies at the New England Conservatory with Nicholas Cords. In 2023, he was named the first place winner of the Empire State Youth Orchestra’s Lois Lyman Concerto Competition, performing Bartok Viola Concerto with the ESYO Symphony Orchestra in April. In the same year, he was also the first prize winner and recipient of the Uel Wade Music Scholarship, receiving a prize of \$6000. Previously, he has been featured as the WMHT Classical Student Musician of the Month. His chamber experiences include extensive collaboration in the Nox Quartet, created by four passionate musicians at NEC in 2023, and the founding of Tetrauq quartet in 2021, which had the distinct opportunity of working with members of the Emerson, American, and Ying String Quartets. Yu-Heng has also held a variety of principal positions in different orchestras, including in the NEC Symphony, New York All-State Orchestra for both 2021 and 2022, the NSO Summer Music Institute Orchestra in 2022, and the ESYO Symphony Orchestra for the past 3 years.

19-year-old cellist and New York City native **Ari Freed** considers collaboration, connection, and outreach to be central to his artistic purpose. He is an enthusiastic chamber musician, having spent his summers at Greenwood Music Camp and the YellowBarn Young Artists Program. He was the recipient of the 2023 NYYS Chamber Music Program Director’s Award and won First Place in the Junior Strings and Piano division of the 9th Annual Coltman Chamber Music Competition. He has participated in masterclasses with distinguished chamber musicians such as Joel Krosnick, Astrid Schween, Hsin-Yun Huang, Rebecca Fischer, Ani Kavafian, and Orli Shaham. Ari is deeply committed to community engagement and social justice—he has volunteered extensively with Music for Food and currently serves as a NEC Community Performances and Partnerships (CPP) Ensemble Fellow, where he brings chamber music out of the concert hall and into the local community. Ari is a graduate of Hunter College High School and Juilliard Pre-college, where he studied with Natasha Brofsky. He is currently pursuing an undergraduate performance certificate at the New England Conservatory under the guidance of Paul Katz. In the fall of 2024, he will return to New York to start his first semester at Columbia University. He plays on an 1830 cello by Giacinto Santagiuliana.

KATARINA STRING QUARTET



Jeanel Liang, violin (Berkeley, CA)
Jerome Chiasson, violin (Montréal, Québec)
Celia Morin, viola (Montréal, Québec)
Maya Enstad, cellist (Bellingham, WA)

Formed in 2022 at the Schulich School of Music at McGill University under Professor André Roy, the Katarina String Quartet are recent first prize winners of the Canadian Music Competition, semi-finalists of the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and grand prize winners of the 2022 McGill Chamber Music Competition. Known for their evocative interpretations and deeply personal sound, the KSQ has performed for members of the Alban Berg Quartet, Dover Quartet, and the Danel Quartet. This past year, the quartet studied extensively with Prof. Gerhard Schulz at the International Musicians Seminar, Prussia Cove as well as with the Pacifica Quartet and Atar Arad at the 2023 Professional String Quartet Studies program in Bloomington, Indiana. The quartet participated as a senior quartet at the McGill International String Quartet Academy (MISQA) in August 2023 and was most recently featured at the Robert Mann String Quartet Institute in New York City. The KSQ have also been featured artists at central classical music societies in Montreal and look forward to continued engagements in the city in 2024. The members of the KSQ aim to pursue repertoire and projects that intersect with their musical and moral values, with a focus on centering inclusivity, sustainability, and accessibility. The quartet takes its name from Katarina Guarneri, the wife of the legendary violinmaker Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù; she made violins under her husband's guise during the most productive years of his career and is rumored to be responsible for many of del Gesù's most successful violins. Inspired by Katarina, the KSQ pays tribute to the many forgotten women whose uncredited contribution to the industry paved the way for music to be shared for years to come.

Competition Repertoire:

HAYDN: String Quartet in G Major opus 33 no 5
BARTÓK: String Quartet no 1

Canadian violinist **Jeanel Liang** has appeared on stages across North America and Europe. She is a recent graduate of the Schulich School of Music at McGill University where she studied under the tutelage of Violaine Melançon and Axel Strauss. As a soloist, she has appeared with the Sooke Philharmonic Orchestra, the University of Victoria Symphony, and the McGill Baroque Orchestra. She has been a finalist at the Prix d'Europe and the Canadian Music Competition, and a semi-finalist at the Golden Violin Award. Jeanel has been a fellow at various music festivals such as Kneisel Hall, IMS Prussia Cove, MISQA, Mozarteum Summer Academy, Aspen Music Festival and School, Domaine Forget and QuartetFest West. Jeanel plays on a 1700 Carlo of Bologna Tononi violin, and a Hermann Luger bow, generously loaned by Canimex Inc.

Originally from Quebec City, violinist **Jérôme Chiasson** has performed across North America and Europe, and has been awarded several prizes and distinctions, most notably at the Prix d'Europe, the Golden Violin Award, the Canadian Music Competition Stepping-Stone, as well as the Festival-Concours de Musique in Sorel-Tracy and Sherbrooke. Jérôme has attended renowned music festivals such as Kneisel Hall, IMS Prussia Cove, Mozarteum Sommerakademie, and MISQA. He has had the opportunity to work with esteemed violinists such as Midori, Gerhard Schulz, Zakhar Bron, Pierre Amoyal, Pavel Vernikov, Cho Liang Lin, Kerson Leong, Paul Kantor, and Vadim Gluzman. Jérôme holds a Bachelor's Degree and a Graduate Diploma in Violin Performance from the Schulich School of Music at McGill University where he studied under the tutelage of Violaine Melançon. Jérôme plays on an 1858 Jean Baptiste Vuillaume violin and a François Nicolas Voirin bow, graciously loaned by Canimex Inc.

Originally from Montreal, Canada, **Celia Morin** is currently completing her Graduate Diploma in Viola Performance at McGill University with André Roy. She recently obtained a Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance with Jinjoo Cho at the same institution. Celia has performed as soloist with the Lakeshore Chamber Orchestra and toured Canada as a chamber musician. She has also participated in summer festivals such as the Domaine Forget International Music Festival, ENCORE Summer Academy, Orford Music Academy and the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, and has worked with renowned musicians such as the Formosa Quartet, the Calidore Quartet, Peter Hansen, Tessa Lark and Yehonatan Berick. Celia recently attended the IMS Prussia Cove with her quartet, the Katarina String Quartet, and looks forward to participating in the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition in 2023 with the same group.

Hailing from Bellingham, Washington, cellist **Maya Enstad** is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and the Schulich School of Music where she studied with Amir Eldan and Elizabeth Dolin. Maya has appeared as a soloist at the Bellingham Festival of Music's "Welcome Home" concert series, as well as with the BayShore Symphony. She has held fellowship positions at the Marrowstone Music Festival and at Bamfield's Music by the Sea. An avid teacher, Maya has taught privately for 8 years, as well as at the Asociación Nacional de Conciertos in Panama City, Panama. Maya plays on an 1898 Carl Zach cello, generously on loan to her from the Carlsen Cello Foundation.

FORST QUARTET



Brian Zhan, violin (Charlotte, NC)
Joel Kang, violin (South Korea)
Sanford Whatley, viola (Tenafly, NJ)
Sarah Chong, cello (Cupertino, CA)

The Forst String Quartet is a quartet with violinists Joel Kang and Brian Zhan, cellist Sarah Chong, and violist Sanford Whatley. Previous prizes include the audience prize in the 2023 Saint Paul String Quartet Competition and the Glass City Chamber Music Competition. Formed at the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University, they receive coachings from Desirée Ruhstrat and the Dover Quartet.

Competition Repertoire:

BRAHMS: String Quartet no.2 in A minor, Op.51/2
GEORGE WALKER: String Quartet no. 1

Brian Zhan, age 22, is currently a dual degree student at Northwestern University studying violin performance with Gerardo Ribeiro. Brian has attended festivals across North America such as the Eastern Music Festival, Heifetz International Music Institute, the Meadowmount School of Music, and the New York String Orchestra Seminar. This past summer, Brian attended the Music Academy in Santa Barbara as a recipient of the 2023 Pamela and Russ Strobel Scholarship in violin. Brian has served as concertmaster for the Northwestern University Chamber Orchestra for the 2021-2022 season. Most recently, Brian is a concertmaster for the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra in the 2023-2024 season. Brian has appeared in masterclass and lessons with Augustin Hadelich, Miriam Fried, Paul Kantor, and Martin Beaver.

Violinist **Joel Kang** has appeared on many stages as a soloist and orchestral player, such as the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Carnegie Hall, Herbert Zipper Hall, the Alex Theatre, and Pick-Staiger Concert Hall. He began his violin studies at the age of five and has had many solo performance opportunities through orchestras and competitions. In addition to performing for audiences, he held leadership positions at Northwestern University's Symphony Orchestra and the Colburn Youth Orchestra. As an active chamber musician, he has collaborated and studied with artists such as Philip Setzer, Kikuei Ikeda, Desirée Ruhstrat, Mathias Tacke, and the Dover Quartet. Joel currently studies with Professor Gerardo Ribeiro at Northwestern University, where he is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Violin Performance. He studied previously with Margaret Batjer at the Colburn Academy.

Sanford Whatley started music from the age of three where he studied violin and piano at the JCC Thurnauer. Throughout his youth, he would go to many summer music camps including Kinhaven, Bowdoin International Festival, Green Mountain Chamber Festival, NYO USA, and Greenwood. In his sophomore year of high school, he picked up viola and started attending Juilliard Pre-college as a viola and violin student of Elizabeth Chang. Currently, Sanford is a sophomore studying at Northwestern University pursuing dual degrees in viola performance with Professor Helen Callus, and computer science. He has attended the Aspen Summer Music Festival in 2022 as a member of the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra and returned to the festival the next summer. As of 2023, Sanford is a regular member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago.

Sarah Chong, age 22, has been playing the cello since age 9 under Jihee Kim. She currently attends the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University and studies under Hans Jorgen Jensen. Sarah made her solo debut in 2018 with Haydn's Cello Concerto No. 2, and later performed with the Prometheus Symphony Orchestra as the 2019 Felix Khuner Concerto Competition winner. Other awards include the first prize winner of the 2019 MTNA CA state division and alternate winner at the regional division as well as prize winner of the 2022 and 2023 Samuel and Elinor Thaviu String Competition. Sarah currently sits as principal cellist in the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra and is a substitute cellist for the New World Symphony. An avid chamber musician, Sarah and her string quartet were finalists and audience prize winners of the 2023 St. Paul String Quartet Competition as well as the 2023 Glass City Chamber Competition. Over the summers, Sarah has attended the Meadowmount School of Music, the Aspen Music Festival and School, and the Music Academy of the West. This summer she will be attending the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan.

MIA QUARTET



Allyson Cohen, violin (Narberth, PA)
Bethlehem Kelley, violin (Shawnee, KS)
Katherine Moran, viola (Victoria, British Columbia)
Lauren Mathews, cello (Katy, TX)

The Mia String Quartet was formed in 2022 at the University of Michigan. They study currently with Annie Fullard of the Cavani Quartet, and have worked with the Calidore, Pacifica and Danish String Quartets among others. The Mia Quartet were also finalists in the 2022 Coltman Chamber Music Competition. Together they have received awards such as the Mary Wood Scholarship Competition and the Roseel Grant, and will be one of four fellowship quartets attending Encore this summer. The Mia Quartet loves working together and finds it particularly meaningful to learn from and be inspired by their quartet colleagues every day.

Competition Repertoire:

MENDELSSOHN: String Quartet in f minor, Op.80
DINUK WIJERATNE: 2 Pop Songs on Antique Poems

Allyson Cohen is a violinist currently studying with Professor Danielle Belen of the University of Michigan. Allyson holds a bachelor's degree from the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings of Mercer University. Allyson has performed as a substitute for the Philadelphia Orchestra, and has played under the baton of renowned conductors Marin Alsop, Simon Rattle, and Yannick Nezet Seguin, and Stéphane Denève. Allyson has a position in Lansing Symphony Orchestra and has attended Summer festivals such as The National Repertory Orchestra, NYO-USA, Bowdoin International Music Festival, The Manchester Music Festival, and in 2021 Allyson was named a young artist at Rome Chamber Music Festival. Allyson has collaborated with renowned musicians such as Lisa Batiashvili, Clive Greensmith, David Kim, and Robert McDuffie, Victoria Chiang, as well as with members of the Borromeo, Emerson, Ehnes, and Tokyo string quartets. Allyson has appeared on NPR's From the Top and has recorded for SiriusXm and PBS. Allyson is also the founder of Concert Music Outreach Collective (cmoutreachcollective.org), a nonprofit dedicated to bringing high level chamber music performances to underserved communities in the Southeastern Michigan area.

Bethlehem Kelley is an Ethiopian American violinist from Lenexa, Kansas. She is currently a Senior at the University of Michigan where she studies violin performance with Danielle Belen. Betti was awarded 3rd prize in the senior division of the 2024 Sphinx Competition, first prize in the Kansas City Symphony Young Artist Competition, and was a finalist in the University of Michigan SMTD undergraduate concerto competition. She has soloed with the Sphinx Honors Orchestra, Midwest Chamber Ensemble, Kansas City Civic Orchestra, and the Rochester Symphony Orchestra. As a recipient of the IVCI scholarship at the Encore Chamber Music Institute, she performed recitals in Cleveland and Indianapolis alongside violinist Jinjoo Cho. She has performed as a member of the National Youth Orchestra, and in the Sphinx Honors Orchestra. She has spent summers studying at the Sphinx Performance Academy, Center Stage Strings, and ENCORE chamber music.

Canadian violist **Kate Moran** is currently pursuing dual Masters degrees in both Performance and Chamber Music at the University of Michigan in the studio of Caroline Coade. She has performed with the National Arts Center Orchestra, Victoria Symphony, Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, Adrian Symphony Orchestra, and Victoria Chamber Orchestra. Kate was a regular principal in the University of Ottawa Orchestra. She has attended the Aspen Music Festival, Kneisel Hall Young Artists Program, Heifetz International Music Institute, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Center Stage Strings, Orford Music Academy, ScotiaFestival, Pacific Region International Summer Music Academy, and National Arts Centre's Young Artists Program. Kate received a Bachelors of Music from the University of Ottawa studying with Michael van der Sloot.

Lauren Mathews is a cellist in her junior year under Richard Aaron at the University of Michigan. She currently holds positions in the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Opera Orchestra. Lauren was named a 2018-2019 Texas Young Master by the Texas Commission on the Arts and received a grant to further her cello studies. She has won concerto competitions and performed with orchestras including the TASO Juanita Miller, Houston Civic Symphony, Clear Lake Symphony, Houston Youth Symphony, Energy Corridor of Houston Orchestra, Starlight Symphony, and Symphony North of Houston. She was accepted into the 2019 New York String Orchestra Seminar and performed with the orchestra in Carnegie Hall. In 2022, she attended the Aspen Music Festival and was winner of the low strings concerto competition where she performed the Shostakovich Cello Concerto with the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra. She returns in 2023 as the recipient of a Center for Orchestral Leadership Fellowship. Other summer music festivals include the Heifetz International Music Institute, the Meadowmount School of Music, and the Bowdoin International Music Festival. Previous teachers include Brinton Averil Smith and Sami Myerson-Khang.

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