

Celebrity Series is now VIVO PERFORMING ARTS

SAT APR 11, 2026 8PM
NEC'S JORDAN HALL

TAKÁCS QUARTET WITH JORDAN BAK

Edward Dusinberre violin

Harumi Rhodes violin

Richard O'Neill viola

András Fejér cello

with

Jordan Bak viola

Franz Schubert *Quartettsatz* in C minor, D. 703

W.A. Mozart String Quintet No. 3 in C Major, K. 515

Allegro

Andante

Menuetto. Allegretto

Allegro

INTERMISSION

W.A. Mozart String Quintet No. 4 in G Major, K. 516

Allegro

Menuetto and Trio. Allegretto

Adagio ma non troppo

Adagio — Allegro

This evening's program will run approximately 90 minutes, including intermission.

The Takács Quartet appears by arrangement with Seldy Cramer Artists, and records for Hyperion and Decca/London Records.

The Takács Quartet is Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Colorado in Boulder and are Associate Artists at Wigmore Hall, London | takacsquartet.com

Jordan Bak is represented by Arts Management Group, Inc

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Vivo Performing Arts is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

***Quartettsatz* in C minor, D. 703**

Franz Schubert played string quartets with his family as a teenager, and a flurry of novice quartets were among the hundreds of compositions that he created before the people of Vienna had seen or heard a note of his music. After a gap, he began another quartet when he was 23, but he set it aside after completing a very strong first movement and the start of a slow movement. We don't know exactly why he started it or why he gave up, but in general it was a time that the frustrated young composer was jumping quickly from project to project, chasing dead-end leads and testing new approaches. (His "Unfinished" Symphony met a similar fate two years later, and the list of opera misfires in that period is too long to enumerate.)

The one complete movement of the String Quartet in C minor, known to musicians as the *Quartettsatz*—German for "Quartet Movement"—only saw the light of day long after Schubert's death, in an edition that his great admirer Johannes Brahms edited for publication in 1870. This quirky quartet is unsettled and tremulous, both on its surface and within its deeper architecture. The fluttering opening music makes a frightful climb to a bracing, unexpected chord, without ever landing on a real melody in the home key of C minor. The sweetest tune arises in a detour to A-flat major, and then it breaks off suddenly, as if a pleasant daydream snaps back to a harsh reality. For listeners versed in the tidy architecture of sonata-allegro form, this music frustrates all the normal expectations without quite breaking any rules. It took decades for tastes to catch up, but now we rightfully celebrate Schubert's idiosyncratic genius.

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W.A. MOZART (1756-1791)
String Quintet in C Major, K. 515
String Quintet in G minor, K. 516

PLEASE NOTE: This program note is written as if K. 516 were being performed first; it was composed first but will be performed following K. 515 (and intermission) on today's program.

Mozart took a big chance when he left his hometown of Salzburg in 1781 to try his luck as a freelancer in Vienna, and it paid off—for a while. Capitalizing on his dazzling talents at the keyboard, he gigged constantly, including the self-produced subscription concerts where he premiered many of his new piano concertos and pocketed healthy profits. But then concert life in Vienna cratered amid escalating tensions with the Ottoman Empire (and soon the latest eruption of that intermittent war), and Mozart found himself responsible for feeding a growing family on a dwindling income.

The two new string quintets that Mozart composed in 1787 were intended to help plug that gap, along with a quintet arrangement of an earlier wind serenade. He advertised their upcoming publication in a Vienna newspaper and even borrowed money against his expected earnings, but the publishing fell through, in one of the many dead ends from that trying period.

Mozart had plenty of experience with string quintets, dating back to the one he wrote as a 17-year-old in Salzburg. His choice to include two violas in that fledgling quintet (as opposed to two cellos) followed the lead of Michael Haydn, Joseph's younger brother and the court Konzertmeister in Salzburg. Mozart returned to the same format in all of his later string quintets, which makes sense given his own predilection for taking the viola part when playing chamber music.

The String Quintet in G minor (K. 516) is in many ways a precursor to the iconic Symphony No. 40 that Mozart wrote the next year in the same stormy key. Starting on the anticipatory upbeat, the upward thrust of an arpeggio launches the main theme of the *Allegro* with the kind of kinetic energy Mozart picked up years earlier from the famed court composers in Mannheim, Germany; that type of arpeggio was in fact known as the "Mannheim rocket," and Mozart used another just like it in the finale of the forthcoming symphony. After having the first violin take its usual role of voicing the melody, the next phrase exploits the quintet's sonic range and moves the theme to viola, supported only by the second viola and cello.

This quintet places its unusually stern and severe *Menuetto* movement next, characterized by stabbing accents and slippery chromatic passages. Mutes add extra warmth to the slow movement in the consoling key of E-flat major, a contrast that becomes even more stark when the finale enters with its own slow music in a pulsing G minor. That brooding music proves to be a rather

substantial introduction to the body of the finale, which dispels the quintet's tension with chipper, dance-like music in a bouncy triplet meter.

Mozart completed the String Quintet in C Major (K. 516) a month before the G-minor example, and it shows him working through similar ideas about the medium. This quintet also uses rising arpeggios to create propulsive energy, and it also engages in conversational exchanges between voices, this time starting with the first violin and cello in the leading roles. Any expectation that this work in the sunny key of C major might offer unclouded, easy listening is dispelled in the first minute, when the ensemble resumes after a measure of silence by rehashing the main theme in C minor.

Mozart's manuscript shows the *Andante* coming next, but early publications swapped the inner movements to have the *Menuetto* appear first, and it still gets played both ways. In this period when Mozart was fresh off of *The Marriage of Figaro* and already plotting *Don Giovanni*, his operatic tendencies really shine through, especially in the mellifluous phrases for violin and viola in the slow movement. In the boisterous finale, one key to the ceaseless forward drive is the counterpoint that tosses motives and fragments among the voices, a skill that Mozart honed in Vienna after a deep dive into the fugues of Bach and Handel.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

TAKÁCS QUARTET

In recognition of its fiftieth anniversary, the world-renowned **Takács Quartet** was recently the subject of an in-depth profile by the *New York Times* and featured on the cover of *Strad* magazine. The Takács released two anniversary-season albums in 2025 for Hyperion Records to glowing reviews. 'Flow' by Ngwenyama, composed for the ensemble, was followed by an album of piano quintets by Antonín Dvořák and Florence Price with Marc-André Hamelin. In August 2025 for Musica Viva in Australia, the ensemble played a new work 'Sonnet of an Emigrant' for quartet and narrator by Cathy Milliken with texts by Bertolt Brecht.

Edward Dusinberre, **Harumi Rhodes** (violins), **Richard O'Neill** (viola) and **András Fejér** (cello) are excited about upcoming projects including performances throughout the USA of Mozart viola quintets with Jordan Bak and a new string quartet, NEXUS, written for them by Clarice Assad, co-commissioned by leading concert organizations throughout North America. The group's North American engagements include concerts in New York's Carnegie

Hall, Vancouver, Philadelphia, Boston, Princeton, Ann Arbor, Washington, DC, Duke University, Los Angeles, Berkeley, Cleveland, Phoenix, and Portland.

The Takács enjoys a busy international touring schedule. As Associate Artists at London's Wigmore Hall, the group presents four concerts featuring works by Haydn, Assad, Debussy, Beethoven, and two Mozart viola quintets with Timothy Ridout that will also be recorded for Hyperion. Other European appearances include the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, Konzerthaus Berlin, Florence, Bologna, and Rome.

The members of the Takács Quartet are Christoffersen Fellows and have been Artists in Residence at the University of Colorado, Boulder since 1986. During the summer months the Takács join the faculty at the Music Academy of the West, running an intensive quartet seminar. This season the ensemble begins a new relationship as Visiting Artists at the University of Maryland.

The Takács has recorded for Hyperion since 2005 and all their other recordings are available to stream. In 2021 the Takács won a Presto Music Recording of the Year Award for their recordings of string quartets by Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn, and a Gramophone Award with pianist Garrick Ohlsson for piano quintets by Amy Beach and Edward Elgar. Other releases for Hyperion feature works by Haydn, Schubert, Janáček, Smetana, Debussy, and Britten, as well as piano quintets by César Franck and Shostakovich (with Marc-André Hamelin), and viola quintets by Brahms and Dvořák (with Lawrence Power). For their CDs on the Decca/London label, the Quartet has won three Gramophone Awards, a Grammy Award, three Japanese Record Academy Awards, Disc of the Year at the inaugural *BBC Music Magazine Awards*, and Ensemble Album of the Year at the Classical Brits. Full details of all recordings can be found in the recordings section of the Quartet's website.

The Takács Quartet is known for its innovative programming. In July 2024 the ensemble gave the premiere of *Kachkaniraqmi* by Gabriela Lena Frank, a concerto for solo quartet and string orchestra. Since 2021/22 the ensemble has partnered regularly with bandoneon virtuoso Julien Labro in a program featuring new works by Clarice Assad and Bryce Dessner, commissioned by Music Accord. In 2014 the Takács performed a program inspired by Philip Roth's novel *Everyman* with Meryl Streep at Princeton, and again with her at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto in 2015. They first performed *Everyman* at Carnegie Hall in 2007 with Philip Seymour Hoffman. They have toured 14 cities with the poet Robert Pinsky, and played regularly with the Hungarian Folk group Muzsikás.

In 2014 the Takács became the first string quartet to be awarded the Wigmore Hall Medal. In 2012, *Gramophone* announced that the Takács was the first string quartet to be inducted into its Hall of Fame. The ensemble also won the 2011 Award for Chamber Music and Song presented by the Royal Philharmonic Society in London.

The Takács Quartet was formed in 1975 at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest by Gabor Takács-Nagy, Károly Schranz, Gabor Ormai, and András Fejér, while all four were students. The group received international attention in 1977, winning First Prize and the Critics' Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France. The Quartet also won the Gold Medal at the 1978 Portsmouth and Bordeaux Competitions and First Prizes at the Budapest International String Quartet Competition in 1978 and the Bratislava Competition in 1981. The Quartet made its North American debut tour in 1982. Members of the Takács Quartet are the grateful beneficiaries of an instrument loan by the Drake Foundation. We are grateful to be Thomastik-Infeld Artists.

FROM THE ARCHIVES...

VIVO PERFORMING ARTS & THE TAKÁCS QUARTET

The Takács Quartet was first presented by Vivo Performing Arts (then Celebrity Series) in March 2000 and has appeared many times since, often in collaborative situations: with U.S. Poet Laureate and BU faculty member Robert Pinsky (April 2002); with pianist Andreas Haefliger (February 2004); with traditional Hungarian folk ensemble Muzsikás and Marta Sebestyén (November 2008); with violist James Dunham (December 2005); and with pianist Marc-André Hamelin (November 2012). Among their quartet-only programs were two in the 2013/14 season over which they performed all six of Bartók's quartets. They participated in the virtual season during the pandemic shutdown by streaming a performance from Colorado in October 2021. Their most recent engagement was in February 2024, a live performance in Jordan Hall that was also recorded for that season's digital series as the world transitioned back into in-person performances. The group's founding cellist András Fejér has announced his retirement at the end of this season, and it was recently announced that cellist Mihai Marica will replace him.

Vivo Performing Arts presents violist Jordan Bak for the first time today.

EDWARD DUSINBERRE

VIOLIN

As first violinist of the Takács Quartet, Edward Dusinberre has won a Grammy and awards from *Gramophone* magazine, the Japanese Recording Academy, Chamber Music America, and the Royal Philharmonic Society. Combining an international career with his longstanding appointment as artist-in-residence at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Dusinberre performs as a member of the Takács in the USA, United Kingdom, Europe and Asia, and is an associate artist at London's Wigmore Hall.

Dusinberre's first book, *Beethoven for a Later Age: The Journey of a String Quartet*, melded music history and memoir to illuminate the circumstances surrounding the composition of Beethoven's quartets and the Takács Quartet's experiences playing this music. For this work Dusinberre won the Royal Philharmonic Society's 2016 Creative Communication Award: 'Few have told so well of the musician's life, or offered such illuminating insights to players and listeners alike.' In June 2020 Dusinberre and the Takács were featured in the BBC television series *Being Beethoven*. Dusinberre's latest book *Distant Melodies: Music in Search of Home* was published by Faber and The University of Chicago Press in 2022.

HARUMI RHODES

VIOLIN

Harumi Rhodes is the second violinist of the internationally renowned Takács Quartet, performing 80 concerts a year worldwide. Acclaimed by the *New York Times* as a "deeply expressive violinist," Rhodes has gained recognition as a multi-faceted musician with a distinctive musical voice. She is associate professor of violin, artist-in-residence and Ralph E. and Barbara L. Christoffersen Faculty Fellow at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Rhodes combines her performing career with a passionate commitment to guiding young instrumentalists, composers, and chamber ensembles.

Rhodes has a vision for commissioning and programming contemporary music: her partnerships with composers of today have resulted in over 100 premieres. This season Clarice Assad wrote a three-movement suite for violin and piano, *Constelación*, that she recorded with Rhodes for Yarlung Records. With composer Gabriela Lena Frank, Rhodes co-directed the inaugural 2021/22 season of the Virtual Artist Partnership Program (VAPP). This collaboration between the Rhodes violin studio at CU-Boulder and Gabriela Lena Frank's Creative Academy of Music (GLFCAM) resulted in eight new solo works for violin. Jungyoon Wie composed a new violin duo, *Dan Poong*, for Rhodes and Edward Dusinberre. Recent concerto performances include Joseph Bologne's Violin Concerto No. 9 and Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante (with violist Richard O'Neill) with ProMusica Chamber Orchestra Colorado, as well as Florence Price's Violin Concerto No. 2 with the West Texas Symphony.

As a member of the Takács Quartet, Rhodes has shaped the Graduate String Quartet Residency at the University of Colorado. At the Music Academy of the West, Santa Barbara, Rhodes leads an intensive summer string quartet seminar with the Takács Quartet. For the 2023/24 season Rhodes is coordinating a partnership between Takács and El Sistema Colorado, working closely with its chamber music education program in Denver. Rhodes serves as artistic director of the Denver/Boulder branch of "If Music Be The Food...", a

concert series designed to build partnerships through music in order to raise awareness for food insecurity in local communities.

Originally from New Jersey, Rhodes was born into a family with Japanese, American, and Ukrainian roots. After studying at the Juilliard School and the New England Conservatory, she co-founded the Naumburg Award-winning ensemble Trio Cavatina, served as artist member of the Boston Chamber Music Society and performed extensively with Music from Copland House, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the East Coast Chamber Orchestra (ECCO), Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and Musicians from Marlboro.

RICHARD O'NEILL

VIOLA

Violist of the Takács Quartet Richard O'Neill has distinguished himself as one of the great instrumentalists of his generation.

Grammy Award winner for Best Classical Instrumental Solo Performance in 2021, O'Neill is only the second person to receive an award for a viola performance in the history of this category. Following two previous Grammy nominations, O'Neill's recent win for his recording of Christopher Theofanidis' Concerto for Viola and Chamber Orchestra also spotlights conductor David Alan Miller and the Albany Symphony. Theofanidis' composition was inspired by Navajo poetry and the composer's psychological response to the September 11 attacks.

Also an Emmy Award winner and Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient, O'Neill has appeared as soloist with the world's top orchestras including the London, Los Angeles, and Seoul philharmonics, the BBC, Hiroshima, and Korean symphonies, the Kremerata Baltica, Moscow, Vienna, and Wurtemberg chamber orchestras, and Alte Musik Köln, and has worked with distinguished musicians and conductors including Andrew Davis, Vladimir Jurowski, Francois Xavier Roth, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. An artist of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and principal violist of Camerata Pacifica, for thirteen seasons he served as artistic director of DITTO, his South Korean chamber music project, leading the ensemble on international tours to China and Japan and introducing tens of thousands to music.

A Universal Music/Deutsche Grammophon recording artist, he has made ten solo albums and many other chamber music recordings, earning multiple platinum discs. Composers Lera Auerbach, Elliott Carter, Paul Chihara, John Harbison, and Huang Ruo have written works for him. He has appeared on major TV networks in South Korea and enjoyed huge success with his 2004 KBS documentary *Human Theater*, which was viewed by more than 12 million people, and his 2013 series *Hello?! Orchestra*, which featured his work with a

multicultural youth orchestra for MBC and led to an International Emmy in Arts Programming and a feature-length film.

He serves as Goodwill Ambassador for the Korean Red Cross, the Special Olympics, UNICEF, and OXFAM and serves on the faculty of the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara.

ANDRÁS FEJÉR

CELLO

András Fejér was born in 1955 into a musical family. His father was a cellist and conductor, and his mother was a pianist. He began playing the cello at age seven, because as legend has it, his father was unwilling to listen to a violin-upstart practicing. Since an early age, his parents have held string quartet weekends, which, for the young cellist were the most memorable of occasions, if not for the music, then for the glorious desserts his mother used to prepare for those sessions.

After attending a music high school, Mr. Fejér was admitted to the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in 1975, where he was a pupil of Ede Banda, András Mihály, Ferenc Rados, and György Kurtág. That same year he founded the Takács String Quartet with three fellow classmates. Although the quartet has been his sole professional focus since then, he does perform as a soloist occasionally as well.

Mr. Fejér is married to a literature teacher. They have three children and live in the Rocky Mountains where they enjoy year-round sunshine in beautiful Boulder, Colorado. When he is not on tour he enjoys reading, photography, tennis, and hiking.

JORDAN BAK

VIOLA

Award-winning Jamaican-American violist Jordan Bak has achieved international acclaim as a trailblazing artist, praised for his radiant stage presence, dynamic interpretations, and fearless power. Critics have described him as “an exciting new voice in Classical performance” (I Care If You Listen), “a powerhouse musician, with a strong voice and compelling sound” (The Whole Note) and lauded his “haunting lyrical grace” (Gramophone). The recipient of the London Philharmonic Orchestra’s Alexandra Jupin Award and former Young Classical Artist Trust’s (YCAT) Robey Artist, Bak was also a prizewinner in the Sphinx, Lionel Tertis, and Concert Artists Guild competitions, and has received accolades from ClassicFM, MusicalAmerica, and WQXR.

For the 2025/26 season, Bak joins the world-renowned Takács Quartet on a tour of rarely-performed Mozart viola quintets, in addition to making his concerto debuts with the Detroit and Houston symphony orchestras. Bak will also give the world premiere of composer Michael Frazier's new viola concerto, *Los quetzales*, commissioned by Eastman School of Music, The Sphinx Organization, and American Composers Orchestra.

Bak's enthusiastically received sophomore album, *Cantabile: Anthems for Viola* (Delphian Records), has garnered significant international attention, featuring works by Arnold Bax, Benjamin Britten, and Ralph Vaughan Williams, paired with contemporary compositions by Jonathan Harvey, Bright Sheng, and Augusta Read Thomas. A proud new music advocate, Bak has given numerous world premieres, including Kaija Saariaho's *Du gick, flög* for viola and mezzo-soprano, Jessica Meyer's *On fire...no, after you* for viola, mezzo-soprano, and piano, Augusta Read Thomas' *Upon Wings of Words* for string quartet and soprano, and Jeffrey Mumford's *stillness echoing* for viola and harp.

Bak has appeared as soloist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, London Mozart Players, New York Classical Players, Juilliard Orchestra and Brandon Hill Chamber Orchestra among others, and has performed under conductors Howard Griffiths, Stephen Mulligan, Keith Lockhart, Gerard Schwarz, and Ewa Strusińska. As a recitalist and chamber musician, he has been heard at Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw, Wigmore Hall, Jordan Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, Perelman Theater at The Kimmel Center, Elgar Concert Hall, and Helsinki Musiikkitalo.

Bak has been a presence at numerous chamber music festivals such as Marlboro Music Festival, Tippet Rise, Chamber Music Northwest, and Newport Classical, and has appeared during the year at Chamber Music Detroit, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Emory University's Candler Concert Series, and Shriver Hall Concert Series. Bak has frequently collaborated with the Escher Quartet, Verona Quartet, Catalyst Quartet, Merz Trio, and Hermitage Piano Trio and has performed with such artists as Jonathan Biss, Lara Downes, Jennifer Frautschi, Ani Kavafian, Soovin Kim, Charles Neidich, Marina Piccinini, and Gilles Vonsattel.

Passionate about education, Bak currently serves as Assistant Professor of Viola at University of North Carolina School of the Arts and as an Ambassador for UK Music Masters in London. Additionally, he has given masterclasses at Manhattan School of Music, NYU Steinhardt, Oberlin Conservatory, Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (UK), and Conservatorio del Tolima (Colombia).

Only the third violist to earn the Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School, Jordan Bak holds a Bachelor of Music degree from New England Conservatory and a Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School where he was awarded the

prestigious Kovner Fellowship. His principal teachers were Dimitri Murrath, Hsin-Yun Huang, and Samuel Rhodes.

Jordan Bak plays on two violas both made by Jon van Kouwenhoven. He is married to violist Rubina Bak and shares two cats, Bartok and Walton.