# VIVO PERFORMING ARTS

**PRINTABLE/SCROLLABLE PROGRAM**

SUN NOV 15 3PM
NEC'S JORDAN HALL

## DOVER QUARTET

**Joel Link*** violin
**Bryan Lee** violin
**Julianne Lee** viola
**Camden Shaw** cello

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| **Johannes Brahms** | Quartet No. 3 in B-flat Major, Op. 67<br>Vivace<br>Andante<br>Agitato (Allegretto non troppo)<br>Poco Allegretto con Variazioni |
| **Pura Fé** | Rattle Songs (arranged for string quartet by Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate) |

INTERMISSION

| | |
|---|---|
| **Antonín Dvořák** | Quartet No. 11 in C Major, Op. 61, B. 121<br>Allegro<br>Poco adagio e molto cantabile<br>Scherzo. Allegro vivo — Trio<br>Finale. Vivace |

This afternoon's program will run approximately two hours, including intermission.

The Dover Quartet appears by arrangement with Curtis Artist Management at Curtis Institute of Music.

*On the advice of his doctor, Joel Link is taking a temporary break from all performances to recover from a pinched nerve. He looks forward to returning to the stage with his Dover Quartet colleagues as soon as possible. Violinist **Adam Barnett-Hart** will perform in his place for this performance.

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**NOTES ON THE PROGRAM**

**Quartet No, 3 in B-flat Major, Op. 67**
**Johannes Brahms** (1833-1897)

Brahms felt such reverence for Beethoven that it could be crippling, especially in two of his hero's signature genres: symphonies and string quartets. Brahms broke through his hesitancy around quartets first, releasing two as a pair in 1873, after eight years of work, and in the wake of many earlier efforts that he destroyed. Having slain that ghost, the next quartet was a much happier affair, composed during Brahms' 1875 summer vacation in a charming German town nestled between a river and forests. He published it the next year with a dedication to a noted scientist (and amateur cellist) who hosted him during a visit to the college town of Utrecht. In a letter to the dedicatee, he joked, "This quartet rather resembles your wife—very dainty, but brilliant!"

The quartet may not have the gravitas of the First Symphony that Brahms was slogging through in the same period, but it is hardly "dainty," starting with a first movement that shows off Brahms' sleight-of-hand with contrasting meters, shifting effortlessly between a triple meter (i.e. each beat subdivided into three parts) for the main theme and a duple meter (with beats subdivided into two) for the contrasting theme. With its singing melody set over a pulsing accompaniment, the second

movement Andante updates the spirit of a Mozart slow movement. The agitated third movement shines a spotlight on the viola's melody by having the three other instruments play with mutes. The finale takes the form of a theme with variations, building to a conclusion that cleverly incorporates the first movement's theme.

**Rattle Songs**
**Pura Fé** (b. 1959)
(arranged for string quartet by Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate)

Pure Fé was the driving force behind the all-female a cappella trio Ulali, which released the groundbreaking album Mahk Jchi in 1994, showcasing a range of Indigenous vocal styles. Born in New York City and raised as a theater kid who sang and danced in Broadway shows, she embraced the legacy of her mother's roots in the Tuscarora people from North Carolina, and the many generations of female singers that had preceded them in their family. As a solo recording artist and activist, and most recently as a member of the multicultural collective Silkroad, Fé continues to use her voice as a vehicle for social change.

This version of *Rattle Songs* was arranged for the Dover Quartet by Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate, a member of the Chickasaw nation in Oklahoma who creates classical compositions rooted in Indigenous traditions. He experienced Ulali's breakthrough album as "a unique work of genius, where Native songs are modernized through innovative arrangements and stunningly rich harmonies," he explained in the liner notes for the Dover Quartet's recent album, Woodland Songs. "Their work had a powerfully deep impact on my personal vision as a Native composer and I am privileged that they are my friends."

"Chickasaw music is based in turtle shell shaking," he continued, "as is our percussion for stomp dancing and social songs. The Tuscarora people share a very similar shell-shaking tradition, as do most Native woodland tribes. In Rattle Songs, Ulali brought together songs from different parts of Indian Country and brilliantly couched them in traditional woodland shell-shaking styles. Camden Shaw, cellist of the Dover Quartet, also happens to be a fan of the Mahk Jchi album. Upon his discovery that I have an affinity for Ulali, he asked if I might be interested in orchestrating Rattle Songs for string quartet. My immediate acceptance and enthusiasm could not be overstated. After consulting with Pura Fé, I have created these orchestrations that are classically impressionistic in a post-modern style. I make no deliberate attempt to imitate the exact sound of rattles from the original songs; rather, I have created a new home for them in the string quartet. Pura Fé created Rattle Songs as a homage to her Native North American cousins and it is my hope that my orchestrations create another layer of honoring our people.

**Quartet No. 11 in C Major, Op. 61, B. 121**
**Antonín Dvořák** (1841-1904)

After growing up in a small Bohemian village where his father was the butcher and innkeeper, Antonín Dvořák made it to the big city of Prague and was pursuing his dreams as a freelance musician. That might have been as far as he ever got if not for a lucky break: he entered a composer's competition, and one of the judges turned out to be none other than Brahms, who was impressed enough to convince his own publisher to take on Dvořák. Before long, a set of Slavonic Dances rooted in Czech folk music made him an international star.

Overnight success introduced a new problem for Dvořák: he was getting pigeonholed as a provincial composer of spruced-up folk music, when really he had spent years honing the meticulous craft of composing "pure" music in the Classical lineage centered in Vienna, from Haydn and Beethoven through to Brahms. As a gigging violist himself, Dvořák proved to be especially adept at crafting chamber music with strings, including nine quartets, a quintet and a sextet that all preceded his sudden fame. It was a great honor when a German violinist and quartet leader commissioned Dvořák's Tenth Quartet, but he specifically requested a "Slavonic" quartet, underscoring the problem.

When a prominent string quartet in Vienna commissioned his next work in the genre in 1881, Dvořák made a purposeful shift away from folk material. He clearly had Beethoven on the brain, judging from the opening phrase that veers away from the home key of C major within a few seconds to inject the instability of C minor, complete with a short-short-short-long rhythmic motive—a nod to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in that same key. Dvořák's command of the traditional sonata-allegro structure never wavers across the movement's abundant length, and he maintains a Beethoven-like obsession on small motives, with a dash of Brahms in the energy drawn from an ongoing conflict between flowing triplets and the snap of dotted rhythms with their alternating long and short notes.

Another hallmark of Beethoven and Brahms was the art of achieving cohesion across a multi-movement work through subtle thematic relationships; in this case, the rub between triple and duple rhythms persists as a unifying factor, first in the slow movement that uses misaligned rhythms to enhance the textural richness and preserve the independence of the four parts. The Scherzo plays its own games with triplets, dotted rhythms and other time-based tomfoolery, like when the first violin ends a phrase with the three quick notes of a triplet—in this case spelling out a descending triad—and then repeats those same pitches stretched into smooth quarter-notes, flipping our ears into a whole new perspective of tempo.

With a theme built around the gesture of three notes rising stepwise, the finale calls back the quartet's first movement, which begins with a related four-note gesture (a leap down, followed by three notes rising stepwise). With this transformation, and having established his Viennese bona fides in no uncertain terms, Dvořák allows the finale to indulge in the sorts of dancing rhythms and folk-like fiddling that always coursed through his Bohemian blood.

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### DOVER QUARTET

Praised for its "sublime playing" by the *New York Times,* the Dover Quartet has earned a place among the defining string quartets of its generation. Its performances unite extraordinary depth, precision, and power with the "full and glowing sound" admired by BBC Music magazine, which named it one of the greatest string quartets of the last 100 years.

The Dover Quartet's 2026/27 season brings the ensemble to leading stages and series across the country, including Chamber Music Northwest, the National Gallery of Art, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and Cal Performances, in addition to tofsy'd Vivo Performing Arts performance. The season also includes collaborations with Edgar Meyer, Michelle Cann, and Marc-André Hamelin.

The Quartet enters its next era with renewed purpose. Following first violinist Joel Link's 2025 appointment as concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra, where he holds the Blossom-Lee Concertmaster Chair, the Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to continuing together in its current configuration and to performing chamber music at the highest level, without compromise. Across the ensemble, the members' individual careers also encompass roles with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Escher Quartet, as well as extensive work in chamber music and teaching. These distinct musical lives deepen their shared work, and the Dover remains a central artistic commitment for all four musicians.

At the center of the Quartet's recent work is Woodland Songs, released in 2025 on Curtis Studio. The album features the world-premiere recording of Abokkoli' Taloowa' ("Woodland Songs"), commissioned by the Quartet from Chickasaw composer Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate, and Tate's string-quartet

orchestration of “Rattle Songs” by Indigenous singer-songwriter Pura Fé. Dvořák’s “American” Quartet completes an album that illuminates connections among Indigenous traditions and American musical life — a story profiled by NPR Music.

The Quartet’s acclaimed discography includes two Grammy-nominated recording projects: the three-volume Beethoven Complete String Quartets for Cedille Records and the Schumann Quartets for Azica Records. The Strad praised the Beethoven cycle as “meticulously balanced, technically clean-as-a-whistle and intonationally immaculate.”

The Quartet’s distinctions include a sweep of all prizes at the 2013 Banff International String Quartet Competition, the Avery Fisher Career Grant, and Chamber Music America’s Cleveland Quartet Award.

The Dover Quartet’s artistic identity is rooted in a living tradition of American quartet playing, passed directly from one generation of musicians to the next. Formed at the Curtis Institute of Music in 2008 and further shaped by intensive study at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music, the Quartet worked closely with Shmuel Ashkenasi, James Dunham, Norman Fischer, Kenneth Goldsmith, Joseph Silverstein, Arnold Steinhardt, Michael Tree, and Peter Wiley. Through these relationships, the Dover developed deep connections to the traditions of the Guarneri, Cleveland, and Vermeer quartets.

In 2020, the Dover was named the inaugural Penelope P. Watkins Ensemble in Residence at Curtis, establishing a new model that brought together teaching, performance, and technology. The Quartet’s members continue their relationship with Curtis as faculty members, helping to pass the traditions that shaped them to a new generation of chamber musicians. The Quartet takes its name from Dover Beach by fellow Curtis alumnus Samuel Barber.

**ADAM BARNETT-HART**
VIOLIN

Violinist Adam Barnett-Hart is the first violinist and a founding member of the Escher String Quartet, an ensemble celebrated for its profound musical insight and rare tonal beauty. A former BBC New Generation Artist and recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, the quartet performs regularly at Wigmore Hall and the BBC Proms and serves as season artists of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York.

With the Escher Quartet, Barnett-Hart has performed across the United States and Europe, with debuts at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Berlin Konzerthaus, and the Auditorium du Louvre, and festival appearances ranging from Aspen and Ravinia to Hong Kong and Perth. A recent highlight was the complete cycle of Béla Bartók's string quartets in single-concert format, featured in the *New Yorker* by Alex Ross. His extensive discography on the BIS and Naxos labels spans the complete quartets of Mendelssohn, Janáček, Zemlinsky, Ives, and Barber, and has drawn the highest critical acclaim.

Barnett-Hart studied with Pinchas Zukerman and Joel Smirnoff at the Juilliard School.

***FROM THE ARCHIVES...***

The Dover Quartet's Boston debut in December 2018 was presented by Vivo Performing Arts (then Celebrity Series). The group returned in February 2025 and make their third appearance today.

Vivo welcomes violinist Adam Barnett-Hart for the first time today.