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ISOBEL MCARTHUR

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Polyester

and Pearls

Revisits the Pop Standards of Another Era

By Adam Goldstein

The Great American Songbook isn't inscribed in stone.

What was once musically new is now vintage; what was once the fare of Top 40 radio now has a place in the collective pop culture consciousness. Jeremy Reger and the cast of the upcoming musical revue *Polyester and Pearls* are more than happy to celebrate that changing of the musical guard.

The new, original show—written and arranged by Reger, associate professor of vocal coaching at the CU Boulder College of Music—features music by the pop impresarios of the 1970s, specifically the songwriters behind the era's hits. Burt Bacharach, Jimmy Webb, Laura Nyro, Carole King, the Carpenters and others all figure into the soundtrack of this cabaret show which offers audiences a stage plot partly inspired by the dynamic of the New York City venue 54 Below and the over-the-top, boisterous aesthetic of the era.

"We'll be performing on a cabaret stage in the College of Music's theatre with suggestions of the time period. We'll take the same approach with the costuming," Reger notes. "We're going to take the audience back to an era, one of the *Gong Show* and Carol Burnett."

This setting will help bring the most important element of the show—the music—to life in the proper context, Reger adds. For those who lived through the soundtrack of the '70s, the revue will offer a fresh take on familiar material. For those unfamiliar with the era, the production will serve as a crash course into a

specific chapter in the history of American music—one where songwriters and performers expanded on the folk/rock cues of the 1960s and found a new direction.

That instructive quality isn't just for young audiences, Reger shares. The show also serves as an educational experience for the cast of about 10 performers who are presenting the soundtrack of a specific era.

"We've written this show specifically for our students. In the musical theatre program, we're always trying to think of ways to help students with things they're going to encounter in their professional lives," Reger says, adding that songs like "Moon River," "Say a Little Prayer for You" and "Alfie" could very well be standard tunes for a performer tackling what he calls a "cruise ship revue." "We wanted to open it up and find pieces by all songwriters—women and non-white composers included."

The result is a one-act featuring a live band that will offer audiences and performers alike an important lesson in the shifting topography of what's considered the "classic" era in American songwriting.

"These songs, they're now what we would call the Great American Songbook," Reger says. "That used to be music by the Gershwins and Cole Porter—as time moves on, these take their place. This music is 50 years old now, and they're still such great songs."

*The CU Boulder Musical Theatre Program presents **Polyester and Pearls** Nov. 12-15 in the Music Theatre, Imig Music Building.*



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Artist Series 90th Season

Balances Past Masterworks and Future Innovation



By Adam Goldstein

Tradition has its roots in innovation, especially when it comes to the arts.

In assembling the lineup for the 90th season of CU Presents' Artist Series, Rudy Betancourt wanted to explore that link between established masterworks and the bold reinvention that's always marked great art. For Betancourt, who will begin his second season as the Artist Series director in the fall, that throughline is critical to understanding the history of the concert series as well as its future.

"Across the seven performances this season, we'll experience different performing arts forms—from dance to music to dramatic monologue. We'll be spotlighting music from the Baroque and modern eras, we'll be taking well-established cultural heritage and mixing it with technology. We'll be making it evident that there is an evolving relationship between tradition and innovation."

Adds Betancourt, "This season, we are combining innovation with respect for the past in order to create a new tradition."

Indeed, over nearly 100 years, the Artist Series has mixed the old and new, the cutting edge and the undisputed classics. For its 90th season, Betancourt builds on that foundation, relying partly on the works of Ludwig Van Beethoven as a connecting thread.

The season kicks off with Pinchas Zukerman and Shai Wosner performing Beethoven's violin sonatas. Victor Quijada's dancer-athlete troupe returns in November for a dynamic performance by RUBBERBAND. Mariachi Garibaldi de Jaime Cuéllar and Ballet Folklórico del Río Grande will celebrate the holiday season with *Campana Sobre Campana: Christmas in México!* in December. Australia cirque troupe Circa will unite with pianist Vitaly Starikov to perform Bach's *The Art of Fugue* in time for Valentine's Day 2027.

In March, renowned actor John Malkovich will lead *Roll Over Beethoven*, a theatrical portrait of the late composer from a crucial stage in his life. April will feature a performance from percussion ensemble Third Coast Percussion and Pulitzer Prize-finalist composer/performer/electronic musician Jlin. And the 90th season will wrap with a visit from jazz masters Stanley Clarke and Hiromi celebrating the music of Chick Corea and beyond.

It's a lineup that fuses classical masters, contemporary dance icons and a towering figure from the stage and screen. For Betancourt, these diverse experiences point to a common theme of artistic progress, struggle and reinvention.

"The theme of the season from a high altitude is transformation through artistic reinvention," Betancourt notes, specifically highlighting the reappearance of Beethoven throughout the series. In addition to the season debut—featuring Zukerman, a returning master musician performing the violin sonatas—and *Roll Over Beethoven* which will frame the composer's loss of hearing in a dramatic framework, there are other nods to the late composer woven throughout the season.

Just as Beethoven had to evolve over his creative life—most notably, dealing with the loss of his hearing—the artists featured in the 90th season have drawn from established norms to create new directions. It's a season that offers what it means to make art—discovering and rediscovering the intricate balance between respect for the past and an unyielding commitment to pushing the boundaries of what's next.



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Artist Series

Events 2026-27

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 8
OCT | Pinchas Zukerman
& Shai Wosner
Beethoven Violin Sonatas |
| 8
NOV | RUBBERBAND
Ever So Slightly Redux |
| 18
DEC | Christmas in Mexico!
Mariachi Garibaldi de Jaime Cuéllar
& Ballet Folklórico del Río Grande |
| 13
FEB | J.S. Bach's The Art
of Fugue by Circa |
| 21
MARCH | Roll Over Beethoven
with John Malkovich
Orchester Wiener Akademie
Martin Haselböck, conductor |
| 2
APRIL | Jlin + Third Coast
Percussion
Vernacular |
| 17
APRIL | Stanley Clarke & Hiromi
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Chick Corea and Beyond |

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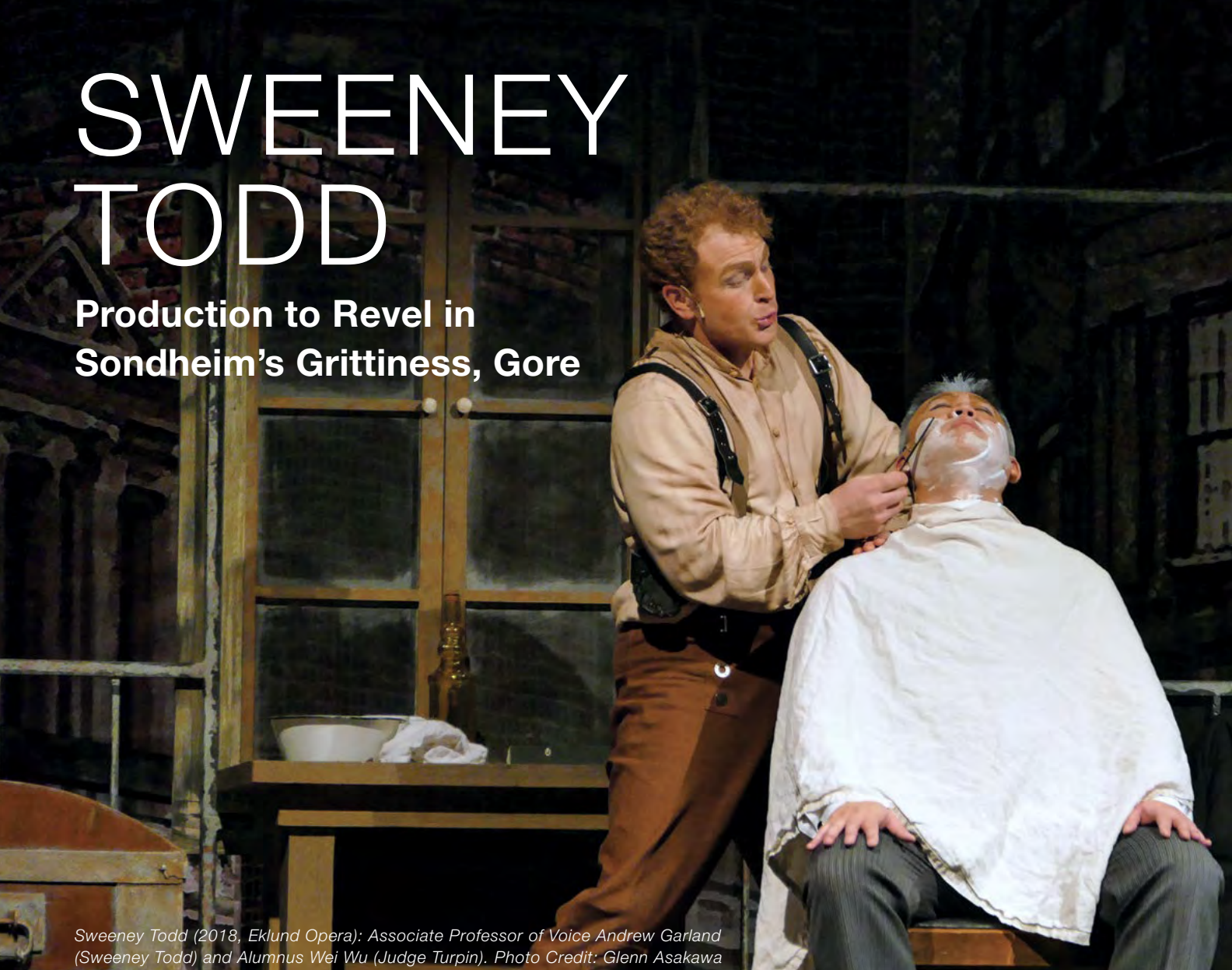


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SWEENEY TODD

**Production to Revel in
Sondheim's Grittiness, Gore**



Sweeney Todd (2018, Eklund Opera): Associate Professor of Voice Andrew Garland (Sweeney Todd) and Alumnus Wei Wu (Judge Turpin). Photo Credit: Glenn Asakawa

By Adam Goldstein

It would be easy to make the antics of the macabre musical *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* cartoonish in terms of its gore and melodrama.

After all, the iconic 1979 musical with words and music by Stephen Sondheim centers on a murderous barber bent on revenge—one who acts as judge, jury and executioner of his victims. The musical, set in 19th-century London, features a title character drawn from Victorian penny dreadfuls who turns his victims into literal fodder for meat pies.

Plenty of directors have made the choice to push the dark drama to almost farcical levels—including Harold Prince who directed the original, 1979 Broadway production. In Prince's conception, characters stepped out of the brutal onstage action of the piece,

offering asides and shifting the dynamic toward the gruesome comedy of caricature.

Associate Teaching Professor of Musical Theatre Robert Westenberg doesn't want to take that approach for the production of *Sweeney Todd* that will run in Macky Auditorium in October. Westenberg, an accomplished performer and educator who's directing the production, is intent on drawing on the gritty reality of the setting, the premise and the characters to find the show's full impact.

"I think the show should stay connected and grounded the entire time. The songs, the scenes, the scope—I think that all needs to be deeply, humanly motivated and entirely believable," Westenberg maintains. "We mean what we say and we say what we do. I love the bloody, macabre, thickness of the plot. The stakes are high and we never step outside of that."

Plenty of artistic experience undergirds Westenberg's creative decisions. His credits speak for themselves—from his Tony Award-nominated role in the original production of *Into the Woods* on Broadway to his stint replacing Mandy Patinkin in the title role of *Sunday In the Park with George*. An impressive roster of national tours, film and television credits also make up his substantial resume.

Now dedicated to teaching, Westenberg is excited to bring his insights to bear on *Sweeney Todd*—a production he calls “a great show for the university level.” With a doubled cast that includes graduate students, Westenberg marvels at the artists he has on hand to bring his vision to life: “That speaks very highly of the College of Music program and the depth of talent here.”

The performers will have the chance to benefit from Westenberg's years of experience on stage and film as well as the insights gleaned from a personal friendship with Stephen Sondheim.

“I worked with Stephen and I got to know him very well,” Westenberg says. “It's going to be fun to bring that inside track to Steve and Steve's mind to the students, to offer perspective on what he thought and what he expected with certain moments and characterizations.

“I think that's going to be a joyful experience,” he adds.

*The CU Boulder Eklund Opera and Musical Theatre programs present **Sweeney Todd** Oct. 23-25 at Macky Auditorium.*

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Opera and Musical Theatre Events 2026-27



23-25 OCT

Music and Lyrics by
Stephen Sondheim
Book by Hugh Wheeler
Macky Auditorium



12-15 NOV

A 1970s Songbook
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5-7 MARCH

Music by
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte
Macky Auditorium



14-18 APRIL

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Dual Anniversaries

Open Artist Series Season

By Henry Michaels

When the stage lights brighten and the expectant pre-concert hush falls over the audience in Macky Auditorium on Oct. 8, it will mark a significant occasion for CU Presents: The opening of the 90th Anniversary of the Artist Series. And just in case one momentous anniversary is not sufficient, this concert actually marks *two*. That's because for organizations around the world, the 2026-2027 season is being dedicated to the bicentennial of Ludwig van Beethoven's death in March 1827.

There are no finer artists with whom to celebrate these dual anniversaries than violinist Pinchas Zukerman and pianist Shai Vosner. Over the course of his more than half-century career, Zukerman has cemented a legacy as one of the world's preeminent musicians. Whether it be as a virtuoso violinist and violist, a devoted pedagogue, a conductor or a recording artist—his more than 100 albums have resulted in an impressive 21 Grammy nominations and two wins—Zukerman is a musician whose reputation precedes him in any venue. He also has a long history with this venue, having performed on the Artist Series in 1978, 1986 and 1994. A fitting choice for this anniversary season!

Zukerman's partner for this performance is Shai Vosner, a pianist who has been lauded by NPR's *All Things Considered* for



Pinchas Zukerman

his "keen musical mind and deep musical soul." An avid recitalist and chamber musician, Vosner performs regularly on stages spanning the globe. His lengthy list of orchestral appearances includes performances with the BBC orchestras, LSO Saint Luke's, the Vienna Philharmonic and the orchestras of Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Toronto. Particularly noteworthy during this Beethoven bicentennial season are Vosner's chamber arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies which have been performed and recorded by Emanuel Ax, Leonidas Kavakos and Yo-Yo Ma.



Shai Vosner

In honor of the Beethoven bicentennial season, Zukerman's and Vosner's program will feature three violin sonatas by the man himself. Beethoven composed a total of 10 violin sonatas and this concert will feature a symmetrical selection: The First, Fifth and Tenth Sonatas. The Violin Sonata No. 1 in D Major and Violin Sonata No. 5 in F Major, Op. 24—known by the nickname of "Spring"—both date from Beethoven's Early Period, while the Violin Sonata No. 10 in G Major, Op. 96 is widely considered to be the final work of his Middle Period. These three remarkable works are suffused with all the beauty, the drama and the wit that is to be expected from the man who is perhaps classical music's most revered composer.

Pinchas Zukerman and Shai Vosner perform on the Artist Series at Macky Auditorium on Oct. 8.



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Program

String Quartet in C Major, Op. 20, No 2

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

- I. Moderato
- II. Capriccio
- III. Menuetto: Allegretto
- IV. Fuga a quattro soggetti: Allegro

Quijotadas

Gabriela Lena Frank (b. 1972)

- I. Alborada
- II. Seguidilla para La Plancha
- III. Moto Perpetuo: La Locura de Quijote
- IV. Asturianada: La Cueva
- V. La Danza de los Arrieros

String Quartet in D minor, D.810

“Death and the Maiden”

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Scherzo: Allegro molto
- IV. Presto

The Grammy Award-winning Takács Quartet welcomes renowned cellist **Mihai Marica** for his debut season.

Program Notes

String Quartet in C Major, Op. 20, No 2

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Program note by Henry Michaels

Laus omnip: Deo / Sic fugit amicus amicum. With these peculiar, remarkable words, “Praise to Almighty God / Thus one friend flees another,” Joseph Haydn autographed the score of an equally peculiar (at least as it pertains to its one-of-a-kind-ness) and remarkable work: his String Quartet in C Major, Op. 20, No. 2. By itself, the first half of the inscription is nothing new; Haydn frequently manifested his devout Catholicism through similar phrases (*In nomine Domine* or *Laus Deo*) jotted down at both the beginnings and ends of his musical manuscripts. The continuation of the phrase, however, displays a keen sense of humor, another quality for which Haydn was known and yet one which seems a trifle out of place alongside its pious precursor.

The striking juxtaposition of these two phrases – one steeped in religiosity, the other the product of a jester’s instincts – evidences a certain duality within the venerable composer, one which neither starts nor stops with his religion or his sense of humor. Haydn was for most of his life a servant, obliged to dress in the fashion of the household staff, compose and organize music in accordance with his patron Prince Nicholas Esterhazy’s needs and cede ownership of his published music to his employer. And yet his later years saw Haydn afforded the opportunity for a true star turn, composing music solely for public consumption and reveling in his well-earned reputation as one of the musical world’s greatest celebrities.

Throughout his many years in the employ of the Esterhazy family, Haydn embraced another duality: the need to meet the requirements of a demanding job and the desire to push himself beyond the boundaries

of those requirements. There is perhaps no better example of this than the Op. 20 string quartets, a set of six extraordinary, genre-defining offerings. There is no indication that Prince Esterhazy ever requested any string quartet from Haydn, nor is there any evidence of string quartet performances at or around the time when this set was composed in 1772. Instead, it seems that Haydn wrote these quartets for himself as a vehicle to hone his craft and break new ground. And break new ground they did. While earlier string quartets most often favored the first violin above the other instruments, in the Op. 20 quartets Haydn took pains to ensure the equal treatment of each instrument's voice. The cello, in particular, plays a more musically interesting role than simple harmonic underpinning, for example at the opening of Op. 20, No. 2, when the cello has the melody while the viola provides the "bass" and the second violin fills out the harmony. (The first violin, meanwhile, patiently awaits their turn.)

One of the most remarkable features of these quartets—and another method of ensuring equality among the four instruments—is Haydn's use of counterpoint, particularly fugues. One of the defining genres of the Baroque period, fugues had fallen out of favor by the early-to-mid-1770s, replaced by a simpler, more melody- and harmony-driven style dubbed *galant*. Centering fugue was an act of compositional virtuosity on the part of Haydn; fugue was a learned, academic genre whose intricate complexities required a deft hand. Three of the six Op. 20 quartets have fugues for their final movements, each one more elaborate than the last. The final movement of No. 2 – which, despite its traditional numbering, was composed last among the set – is a tour de force. The fugue subject is fast, jaunty, and offered Haydn plenty of opportunity to exercise his compositional might (Haydn at one point even introduces the fugue's theme *al rovescio* or turned upside down).

Nearly throughout the movement, these fugal machinations are heard sotto voce, quietly. Nearly throughout. In one final outburst stretching out alongside a line scrawled in Latin, Haydn brings the work to a dramatic close not with the conclusion of a fugue, but with something more like his more "typical" compositional style. In so doing, Haydn resolves a stylistic duality of his own making in the same manner in which he resolved his others: by not resolving it. Not either/or, but both/and. *Laus omnip: Deo / Sic fugit amicus amicum.*

Quijotadas

Gabriela Lena Frank (b. 1972)

Program note by Gabriela Lena Frank

Quijotadas (2007) for string quartet is inspired by *El Ingenioso Hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616). Widely considered the first modern novel, this tale satirizes post-Conquest Spain by relating the tale of a middle-aged lesser nobleman who undertakes absurd adventures in pursuit of romantic—and seriously outdated—knightly ideals. Cervantes' brilliant and colorful resulting social commentary still reverberates for us today in the arts and popular culture at large. *Quijotadas*, which is the Spanish word for extravagant delusions wrought in the Quixotic spirit, is in five movements. They are:

- I. *Alborada*: Traditionally a Spanish song of welcome or beginnings, this is in the style of music for the *chifro*, a small high-pitched wooden panpipe played with one hand. It is often employed by a traveling guild worker to announce his services as he walks through the streets of town.
- II. *Seguidilla*: This free interpretation of the spirited dance rhythms of Don Quijote's homeland of La Mancha also evokes two typical instruments—the six-stringed guitar, and its older cousin, the *bandurria*, which finds its origins in Renaissance Spain.
- III. *Moto Perpetuo: La Locura de Quijote*: This movement is inspired by an early chapter in the novel that describes Don Quixote sequestering himself in his hacienda, reading nothing but novels of chivalry, the pulp fiction of his time. The teasing promises of grandeur make him dizzy and he eventually goes mad.
- IV. *Asturiana*: *La Cueva*: The style of this traditional mountain song (whereby a young male singer issues forth calls that rise and fall with great emotion and strength) is used to paint a portrait of the Cave of Montesinos. In an important episode of the novel, Don Quijote fantasizes about the legendary hero Montesinos trapped under enchantment in a highland cave.
- V. *La Danza de los Arrieros*: Throughout the tale, Don Quijote is constantly rubbing up against *arrieros* (muleteers) who, for Cervantes, are the embodiment of reality in contrast to Don Quijote's fantasy world. The encounters with these roughnecks are always abrupt and physical, usually resulting in a sound thrashing for Quijote. Each beating brings him closer to reality, and in the end, he must poignantly reconcile himself to the fact that his noble ideals do not find a hospitable home in the contemporary world.

String Quartet in D minor, D.810

“Death and the Maiden”

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Program note by Henry Michaels

In 1821, the publisher Anton Diabelli and his partner Pietro Cappi published a set of *Lieder* by Franz Schubert, his Op. 7. By far the most revered of this set was “Der Tod und das Mädchen,” or “Death and the Maiden,” which he had composed in 1817. In it, the titular maiden begs the visage of death to spare her from his touch:

The Maiden:

Pass me by! Oh, pass me by!

Go, fierce man of bones!

I am still young! Go, dear,

And do not touch me.

And do not touch me.

Death:

Give me your hand, you beautiful and tender form!

I am a friend, and come not to punish.

Be of good cheer! I am not fierce,

Softly shall you sleep in my arms!

This set of songs was one of a number of Schubert’s works published by Diabelli, a minor composer himself who recognized the prodigious talent – and potential marketability – of the young Schubert (he was in his mid-twenties when Op. 7 was published). But if Diabelli was a boon for Schubert’s chances of achieving great renown, he wasn’t, unfortunately, a boon for his finances. Schubert’s Op. 7 and other of his early works were published by Cappi & Diabelli on commission, meaning that *Schubert* paid the upfront costs, the firm bore none of the financial risk inherent in publication, and Schubert was paid a small fee but no royalties. This was, obviously, not a lucrative arrangement for Schubert. While he did manage to live off the proceeds of his publications – no small feat for the time – it required him to work tirelessly to release new compositions for the music-buying public.

Schubert’s persistent financial struggles were just the tip of the iceberg, however, when it came to the increasing difficulties of his life. Far more dire was his rapidly declining health. It is speculated that Schubert contracted syphilis in 1822, and the next few years would be marked by health-related ups and downs. By 1823 he was apparently suffering from the secondary stage of the disease and was even hospitalized for a brief period in the spring or summer of that year. A brief respite in late 1823 was followed by an intense relapse in January of 1824. A few months later, Schubert wrote to a friend:

I find myself to be the most unhappy and wretched creature in the world. Imagine a man whose health will never be right again, and who in sheer despair continually makes things worse and worse instead of better; imagine a man, I say, whose most brilliant hopes have perished, to whom the felicity of love and friendship have nothing to offer but pain at best, whom enthusiasm (at least of the stimulating variety) for all things beautiful threatens to forsake, and I ask you, is he not a miserable, unhappy being? ‘My peace is gone, my heart is sore, I shall find it nevermore’. I might as well sing every day now, for upon retiring to bed each night I hope that I may not wake again, and each morning only recalls yesterday’s grief.

February and March of 1824 also saw Schubert choosing to revisit a genre that he had not explored since 1820 when in quick succession he produced two iconic works: the String Quartet No. 13 in A Minor, “Rosamunde,” and the String Quartet No. 14 in D Minor, “Death and the Maiden.” Both works draw their posthumous nicknames from Schubert’s quotation of his own music, and in both cases these quotations can be connected to his circumstances. While there is a certain danger in over-biographizing when it comes to great musical works, in this case the connections between art and life are obvious. Schubert himself even confided in his diary around this time: “all that I have created is born of my understanding of music and my own sorrow.”

While its sibling the Rosamunde Quartet might best be described as agitated and melancholy, the Death and the Maiden Quartet is deeply despondent. From the dramatic opening to the blistering tarantella – traditionally a dance to ward off death – of the finale, the work is suffused with anguish nearly throughout (the lyrical middle section of the scherzo provides the only real relief). The second movement, a theme and variations based on the dirge-like piano accompaniment to “Der Tod und das Mädchen,” is the beating heart of this profoundly moving work.

Franz Schubert succumbed to the effects of his illness in November of 1828. He was 31 years old. When Schubert died, he left behind an abundance of unpublished music. His brother, Ferdinand, later sold much of this to a Viennese publisher: Anton Diabelli, who also acquired the rights to much of Schubert’s other music by purchasing rival publishing houses. Diabelli’s firm would continue to release “new” Schubert works for decades, including the Death and the Maiden Quartet in 1831.

About the Takács Quartet

In the 2026-2027 season the world-renowned Takács Quartet welcomes new cellist **Mihai Marica**. The ensemble that comprises **Edward Dusinberre**, **Harumi Rhodes** (violins) and **Richard O'Neill** (viola), are excited about varied projects that include a recording project of works by Gabriela Lena Frank and a tour of César Franck's piano quintet with Jeremy Denk. For Hyperion Records the Takács will release an album of two Mozart viola quintets with violist Timothy Ridout.

The Takács maintains a busy international touring schedule. As Associate Artists at London's Wigmore Hall, the group will play four concerts that include performances with pianist Steven Osbourne and works by Haydn, Schubert, Carlos Simon, Gabriela Lena Frank, Mendelssohn and Brahms. During the season the ensemble will play at other prestigious European centers including the Konzerthaus Vienna, Vilnius, Bergen and Utrecht.

The group's North American engagements include concerts in New York at Carnegie Hall and for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, University of Chicago, Pittsburgh, Santa Monica, Vancouver, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Berkeley, Ann Arbor, Portland and at the University of Maryland where the quartet continues its position as Visiting Artists. The quartet will become the Official Chamber Music Ensemble at the Segerstrom Center.

The members of the Takács are Artists in Residence at the University of Colorado Boulder and during the summer months join the faculty at the Music Academy of the West, running an intensive quartet seminar there.

The Takács has recorded for Hyperion since 2005 and all their other recordings are available to stream at hyperion-streaming.co.uk. 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 Beach and 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.



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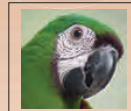


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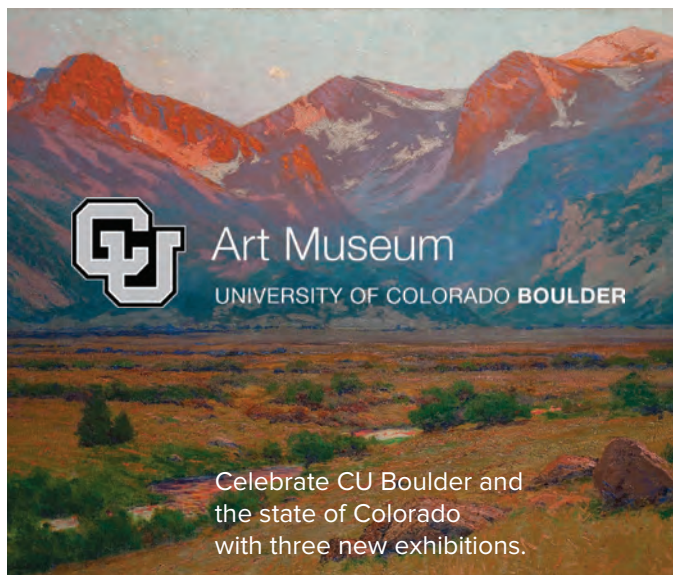
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CU Boulder Professor **Shanti Simon** Views Music As Connection

*By Christie Sounart
Originally published in the Coloradoan*

Last year, Professor of Conducting Shanti Simon joined the College of Music from the University of Oklahoma as director of bands where she oversees the band program, leads the wind conducting program and teaches undergraduate conducting. Previously, she served as flight commander and associate conductor with the United States Air Force Academy Band in Colorado Springs and the United States Air Force Band in Washington, D.C. Her leadership at CU Boulder is guided by music's power to bring people together, an insight she credits to her global travels.

You've traveled the world with the U.S. Air Force Band. What performance is among the most memorable for you?

The Air Force gave me an opportunity to do what I love as a profession and serve my country at the same time. My first performance was memorable because it was my first assignment in Washington, D.C. It was in 2011 for the National Tree Lighting at the White House with the Airmen of Note, one of the best jazz ensembles in the world. As a young trumpet player, I grew up listening to them on cassette tapes. And then, here I was, conducting this group for the president of the United States and the first family at the White House.

But what I think are the most memorable performances I did with the Air Force are the full honors funerals at Arlington National Cemetery. There are bands of all services out there 365 days

a year honoring our fallen heroes. Allowing families a space to feel emotions during a fragile time of their lives is really meaningful. I'll always remember the professionalism and care that was put into those funerals, and what it felt like to be honoring something much bigger than me or the bands.

When deployed to the Middle East, what were your main duties?

I was deployed in 2016 for six months. My job was leading a band for the Air Force Central Command, and I worked closely with the public affairs officer to determine where the band could be most helpful to meet the Air Force commander's priorities. We were stationed in Qatar and went to Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, Kuwait and Egypt.

Before I left, I wondered about the purpose of military bands in the region. It didn't take long for me to understand. The mission was twofold: First, to support the troops and bring a taste of home to the forward operating bases and second, to build relationships with our host nations and allies in the region. Every day, music was able to open doors to conversations and connections between people.

Can you give examples of this?

We would often learn the songs in the native languages of the countries that we were in. We would collaborate with other musicians, sometimes play on radio programs. We were not just representing the Air Force—we were representing the United States in these missions.

When we were at school performances, we knew these interactions with kids could have a long-term impact on how they view the United States. Once, the band was setting up in a cafeteria surrounded by windows. The kids were coming to the windows and looking in. They could not wait to get in. Then they had a wonderful experience singing along and, at the end, the kids came up and hugged the musicians, hugged someone in an American uniform. I looked at those interactions as a chipping away at the negative narrative and replacing it with a positive experience that really only music can do.

Another time, we went to a NATO base in Kabul, Afghanistan, to perform for the troops. One day, we were instructed to go to the Afghan side of the base. To do this, we had to get armored up and travel in an armored vehicle from one side of the base to the other. We set up in a hangar to create an atmosphere where the NATO and Afghan troops could share time together. When we first started the concert, the troops kept to different sides and didn't talk to each other. But by the end of the hour, people had gone to the other side and were having conversations. We gave them a chance to get to know each other as people through music.

Was there something about CU Boulder that inspired you and your family to move to Colorado?

The College of Music has a mission to develop its students as universal musicians. This resonated with me because, after my professional experience with the Air Force bands, I saw a disconnect between what I learned in my studies and what I ended up doing with the Air Force. Now, I want to try to bridge that gap so that we're preparing our students the best we can for the professional jobs that exist beyond CU Boulder.

What else should we know about your work here?

I'm thinking about crafting seamless concert experiences through innovative audience engagement. I want people to come to the concert hall and have something happen in the space that makes them want to come back. I've been exploring all kinds of things, from video to lighting to memorized performances where we take away chairs and stands.

What do you do when you're not conducting?

I have a wonderful husband, Jebodiah, who supports my career and everything I do, and two young kids. A lot of my time and joy is spending time with my family. I still serve in the Oklahoma Air National Guard as a public affairs officer. I also love hiking. I'm really excited that this will be my first full summer in this area.

What else should we know about you?

I love music, I love people and I love the connection that music brings for people. I've really found my place here at CU Boulder, and I plan to spend the rest of my career building on the legacy of this incredible program.



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Mikaela Rich

Senior Program Manager for Stewardship and Donor Relations

Shih-Han Chiu

Senior Development Assistant

Christie Preston

Operations Director and Head Piano Technician

Ted Mulcahey

Scheduling Manager

Kayla Pierce

Head Recording Engineer and Technical Director

Kevin Harbison

Assistant Recording Engineer

Kristofer Twadell

Operations and Facilities Assistant

Peggy Hinton

Lead Piano Technician

Mark Mikkelsen

Media Specialist

Dustin Rumsey

Piano Technician

Phil Taylor

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Laima Haley

Director of Ticketing and Patron Services

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Front of House Director

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Marketing Manager

Elise Zabala

Multimedia Content Manager

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Publications Manager

Sabrina Green

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Maya Reno

Marketing Assistant

Maija Brandt

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Gabby Gillespie

Tessitura CRM Specialist

James Whalen

Box Office Assistants

Aubree Crisp

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Sutton Kotler

Johnette Martin

Catherine Oles

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Rudy Betancourt

Assistant Director for Administration

Sara Krumwiede

Assistant Director for Production and Technical Director

Trevor Isetts

Assistant Director for Patron Services and Stakeholder Services

Amanda Wells

Assistant Director of Operations

Paige Wiedemann

Production Managers

Richard Barrett

Scott Wickham

Front of House Director

Rojana Savoye

Senior House Manager

Devin Hegger

House Managers

Aleighya Dawkins

Pearl Enssle

Brosnan Szabo

List current as of Aug. 18, 2026.

TICKET INFORMATION AND EVENT POLICIES

The University of Colorado is committed to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities. Learn more: cupresents.org/accessibility

LATECOMERS are seated at the discretion of the house manager.

PHOTOGRAPHY and **VIDEO / AUDIO RECORDINGS** of any type are prohibited during the performance.

SILENCE CELL PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL DEVICES, and refrain from using them during the performance.

CU Boulder is a **SMOKE-FREE** campus.

TICKET SALES ARE FINAL; no refunds. Exchanges are subject to availability and must be made at least one business day prior to the day of performance.

GUARANTEED VALID TICKETS can be purchased:

- Online at cupresents.org
- At the box office
- By phone at 303-492-8008

CONTACT CU PRESENTS
cupresents.org/contact
or 303-492-8008

BOX OFFICE HOURS:

M-F, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

And at your venue one hour prior to show open. cupresents.org available 24/7



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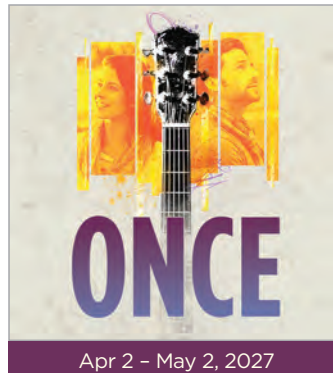
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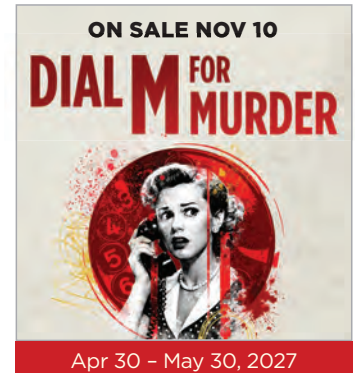
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CELLO MONK



10/3/2026 at 4pm

Dairy Arts Center

featuring **Camden Shaw with CORE**

CPE Bach's fiery Cello Concerto and trio sonata, + JSB's 6th Cello Suite & Brandenburg #4!

SWEETER THAN ROSES



12/12/2026 at 4pm

Dairy Arts Center

featuring **Taylor Raven with CORE**

Splendid arias by Vivaldi, Purcell, Händel, Bach + a Torelli concerto!

JOURNEY OF A Thousand Pipes

featuring **Christopher Holman**



Virtuoso solo tracker organ recital of JS, JC, and CPE Bach + Haydn!

2/19/2027 at 7:30pm Grace Commons (lecture at 6:30)

MESSAGE
IN A BOTTLE



4/3/2027 at 4pm

Dairy Arts Center

featuring **Vadim Gluzman with CORE**

Bach's sublime E Major Violin Concerto, + Vasks, Heinichen, and a world premiere!

SANDS OF TIME

featuring **Mina Gajic with CORE**



5/28/2027 at 7:30pm

Dairy Arts Center

Mendelssohn's blazing Piano Concerto (1822), + Graupner and J.S. Bach!

