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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2025



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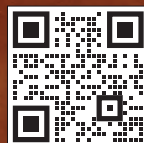
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NOV 28-29



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NOV 30

WELCOME



In addition to the many inspiring events featuring our students, faculty and guest artists every year, the University of Colorado Boulder College of Music is pleased to bring the world-class Artist Series to our campus and community since 1937.

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CU ★ PRESENTS

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2025

CU Presents is the home of performing arts on the beautiful University of Colorado Boulder campus. With hundreds of concerts, plays, recitals and more on our stages each year, there's something for everyone to enjoy:

- The **College of Music** including the Artist Series; Takács Quartet; Eklund Opera Program; Holiday Festival; Musical Theatre Program; and hundreds of free events featuring faculty, students and guest artists.
- The **Colorado Shakespeare Festival**.
- The College of Arts and Science's **Department of Theatre & Dance**.

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“Culture does not create humanity; humanity creates culture and our humanity is embodied in what we create and share, not in what we consume.”

—Ted Gioia

Friends,

For almost 90 years, the Artist Series has been a beacon for global artistry at Macky Auditorium, enriching our cultural landscape. As director and curator of the series now entering a second season, I am thrilled to bring you our 2025-26 season—one that celebrates the cultural fabric of Boulder and our university community.

The season begins with **Aristo Sham**, this year’s Cliburn Piano Competition Gold Medal winner, followed by **Ballet Hispánico**’s *CARMEN.maquia* on Oct. 9, a powerful reimagining of the classic tale through Latin and flamenco culture. On Nov. 7, **Cirque Kalabanté** presents *Afrique en Cirque*, a stunning blend of acrobatics, West African rhythms and dance. The holiday season heats up with the **Bria Skonberg** Sextet’s *Jingle Bell Swing* on Dec. 11, bringing jazz joy to Boulder.

In 2026, we welcome Baroque ensemble **Ruckus** on Jan. 23 performing *The Edinburgh Rollick* with violinist **Keir GoGwilt** and featuring folk music from the Niel Gow Collections. **Versa-Style Street Dance** from Los Angeles pays tribute to the guardians of street dance on Feb. 11. On March 11, by popular demand, **Danú** returns to share the traditional music of Ireland.

On March 28, **Bang on a Can All-Stars** perform Ryuichi Sakamoto’s *1996*, a rare live performance of the legendary composer’s works for film. The season concludes on April 11 with **Michael Feinstein and the Carnegie Hall Ensemble** in *Big Band Broadway* celebrating the *Great American Songbook*.

I invite you to join us and be part of these transformative experiences this season. Please consider becoming a subscriber or supporting the Artist Series with an additional gift as ticket sales cover only a portion of the costs of bringing these world-class artists to Boulder.

Rudy Betancourt
Director, CU Artist Series and Macky Auditorium

BETC

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Are we all met?

THE THIN



PLACE

By Lucas Hnath

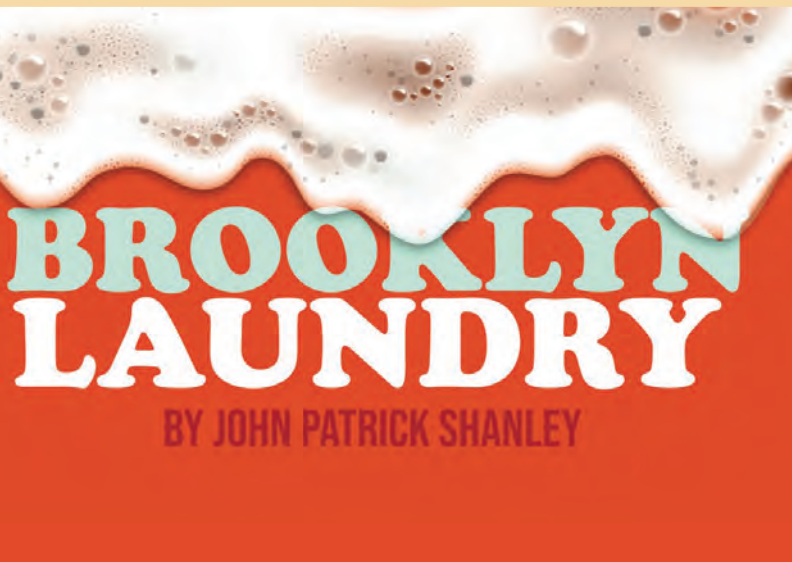


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Dec. 5-28



Feb. 20 - March 15



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UPCOMING EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

ARTIST SERIES

Macky Auditorium

Sept. 26: **Aristo Sham**, piano

Oct. 9: **Ballet Hispánico**

Nov. 7: **Cirque Kalabanté**

Dec. 11: **Bria Skonberg**

Jan. 23: **Ruckus Early Music and Keir GoGwilt**

Feb. 11: **Versa-Style Street Dance Company**

March 11: **Danú**

March 28: **Bang on a Can All-Stars**

April 11: **Michael Feinstein in Big Band Broadway**



*Bria Skonberg.
Photo by Shervin Lainez.*



Photo by Ken Jacques.

TAKÁCS QUARTET

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March 8-9 • April 26-27

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EKLUND OPERA AND MUSICAL THEATRE AT THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC

*Fall 2025 • Macky Auditorium
and the Music Theatre*

Oct. 24 and 26: **Dead Man Walking**

Music by Jake Heggle, Libretto by Terrence McNally

Nov. 13-16: **Cabaret**

Book by Joe Masteroff, Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fred Ebb

DEAD MAN WALKING: Based on the novel by Sister Helen Prejean; commissioned by the San Francisco Opera. CABARET: Based on the play by John Van Druten and Stories by Christopher Isherwood; presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Tams-Witmark LLC. concordtheatricals.com.





TICKETS AND MORE AT **CUPRESENTS.ORG**

THEATRE & DANCE EVENTS

Fall 2025 · University Theatre Building

Oct. 3-12: **Pride and Prejudice**

By Kate Hamill

Oct. 17-19: **An Offering in Time**

MFA Thesis Works

Nov. 7-16: **The Olive Tree**

By Satya Chávez

Nov. 14-15: **Revel**

An evening of works presented
by MFA candidates in Dance

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*Holiday Festival (2023).
Photo by Glenn Asakawa.*

HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

Macky Auditorium

Friday, Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 6, 1 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 6, 4 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 7, 4 p.m.

FREE EVENTS AT THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC

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*Latin American Ensemble (2023).
Photo by Erika O'Connor.*

Cabaret

to Examine Questions of Creative Expression

By Adam Goldstein

The power of art, expression and self-acceptance underlies the historical cues in *Cabaret*.

The 1951 musical by John Kander, Fred Ebb and Joe Masteroff is set in Berlin in the waning days of the Weimar Republic as the Nazi party rose to power and violently shifted the course of German culture and world history. Many of the show's main characters are the final refugees of the Jazz Age, artists condemned and crushed under the weight of authoritarianism and fascism.

It's a very specific moment in time, one brought to life by Masteroff's richly drawn character—the cabaret performer Sally Bowles, the American writer Clifford Bradshaw and the anonymous Master of Ceremonies of the Kit Kat Club—a larger-than-life narrator whose arc in the show neatly sums up the tragic arc of German history in late 1929 and early 1930.

While the musical operates in a distinct historical moment, its timeless themes have made it a mainstay of the musical theatre genre. The story captures important questions about the value of self-expression and art's importance in the face of censorship, brutality and iron-fisted rule. *Cabaret* is about Germany in the throes of a violent transformation, but it's also about artists who stay committed to their craft—no matter the price.

"The artist raises a mirror to society, the arts have power," says Kristel Jelinek Brown, who is directing the University of Colorado Boulder Musical Theatre Program's production of *Cabaret* Nov. 13 to 16. "It's a show that's very on the nose about fascism—and what that does to artists. It's also about a

freewheeling, wild, hedonistic celebration of self and sexuality and identity."

The show explores the underground cabaret culture that flourished in Berlin at the end of the Jazz Age, an environment full of experimentation, expression and creativity. It's a setting that offers stark comparisons during a time when creative expression in the United States is facing its own defining moment as venues and media outlets face seismic shifts in funding and creative control.

The students' choice to stage *Cabaret* in this modern moment seemed purposeful, says Jelinek Brown, who'll bring her training in "guerrilla theatre" to bear in a production set to feature experimentation.

"This show will explore questions like, what happens when we take art away? What happens when students take art into their own hands? We're going to play a lot with found material. It won't look like a traditional *Cabaret* staging," she says, adding that the cast will number in the dozens. "Universities are an excellent place to be experimental and try different things."

The score, the book and the characters won't change from the 1951 original, she adds. *Cabaret* will still feature the beloved tunes and familiar plot points that have long delighted audiences. Even so, present-day realities may make the 70-plus-year-old musical take on a new relevance.

*The CU Boulder College of Music Musical Theatre Program presents **Cabaret** in the Music Theatre from **Nov. 13 through 16, 2025.***





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Sunday, November 16, 3:00 pm, Mountain View UMC, Boulder

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Spoiler Alert: She Dies.

By Lisa Kennedy

At a time when classics continue to be reimagined, renovated, downright torn down and rebuilt, this may come as something of a surprise: In Ballet Hispanico's *CARMEN.maquia*, choreographer Gustavo Ramirez Sansano's take on Georges Bizet's opera, the woman who riled the besotted soldier Don José and pursued the matador Escamillo still meets a brutal end.

"I went to see a *Carmen* where Carmen is not the one who dies. And I'm like umm, okay ..." Eduardo Vilaro, the company's artistic director and CEO, shared during a video call. "It's improbable because we have a world that's dominated by men. It's misogynistic, mostly. You know, sometimes stories are meant to be told the way they were crafted to teach us lessons. We just have to show it and have people talk about it and say, 'Wow, that was wrong.'"

Carmen is in the midst of its sesquicentennial. Before Bizet made the heroine indelible 150 years ago, she appeared in Prosper Mérimée's novella, the basis for Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy's libretto. In the 20th century, a Spaniard who likened himself to a bull began evoking Carmen in his paintings. Ironically, Pablo Picasso lived in France at the time.

From the start, *Carmen* has embodied the tensions between cultural appropriation and embrace. How could anything but intriguing happen when the nation's preeminent Latiné dance company presents *Carmen*?

"It's not just a ballet that's performed externally or gesturally—it's something we feel in our bodies," Vilaro has said. "That level of authenticity gives our version a unique, nuanced energy that's distinctly ours."

And this production comes with its own feints, its own Veronicas, to borrow a bit of bullfighting patois. "There's no flamenco, no castanets," says Vilaro. "There is no" ... cue a gasp ... "red." As for Carmen, well, "This Carmen is very demure," Vilaro says. And yet, she is more aware of exploring her power and her passion. As if thinking, "Yeah, I know the danger I'm living in, but I'm still going to play with it," he says. "And that's empowering in its own way."

Set designer Luis Crespo and costume designer Delfin lean into Picasso's white, black and gray palette and his abstractions. But, "There's a moment of color," Vilaro promises, with a knowing smile.

For years, he would tell Sansano that he had to find a way to connect Carmen's passion to both men. Now, he thinks, the choreographer has.

How? "I won't tell you," he says—and then relents. But you'll get no spoiler here.

Photo credit: Laura Fuchs

Ballet Hispanico performs on the Artist Series at Macky Auditorium on Oct. 9, 2025.



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Cirque of the Diaspora

By Lisa Kennedy

As a boy, multidisciplinary performer Yamoussa Bangoura didn't have to run away from home to join the circus. At least not initially. Home—the West African nation of Guinea—has a tradition of acrobatics and a legendary circus of its own: Circus Baobab. After Sundays spent captivated by television broadcasts of European circus acts, Bangoura and other kids would head to the nearby beach in the capital city of Conakry to emulate what they'd witnessed. There, acrobatics were being performed and taught, and it's where Bangoura landed his first coaches.

As a teenager, Bangoura auditioned for a film about Circus Baobab, got the role and stayed on. While performing and traveling with the troupe in Spain, he was recruited by Cirque Éloize which led him to the capital of the circus arts world: Montreal.

In 2007, Bangoura founded Cirque Kalabanté (before launching his own troupe, he also performed with Cirque du Soleil, the equestrian troupe Cavalia and ArtCirq).

For years, the Kalabanté and its founder have been delivering a mix of African-infused storytelling, acrobatic feats and more to the beats and rhythms of Afro-Jazz music. In 2023, Bangoura received Canada's inaugural Circus Arts Recognition Award. In *Afrique en Cirque*, Bangoura—along with some of his siblings who are part of his company of artists—return home by immersing audiences in a vision of daily village life in Guinea. The show captures “the strength, agility and life's joys of young

Africans,” Cirque Kalabanté promises. In addition to performing, the company has a studio dedicated to teaching African and circus arts.

“The circus reminds us that it takes a community to make something truly beautiful,” wrote the late fantasy writer and circus aficionado Terry Pratchett. *Afrique en Cirque* honors the community that fed Bangoura's circus dreams and, not to be understated, its discipline.

The physical rigor required of the circus is irrepressible: From performers drumming djembes to contortionists pretzeling to acrobats constructing pyramids of sinew and muscle. In addition to his other roles, Bangoura drums and plays the tall, hybrid, 21-string instrument known as the kora. A few injuries—a strained meniscus in his shoulder and a torn Achilles—attest to the risks of the work and underline the focus required to consistently deliver joy and bravado.

“When I do circus, all the bad things go away, you're just living in the present moment,” Bangoura says in *Circus Without Borders*, a 2015 documentary detailing the work Kalabanté and Guillaume Saladin's ArtCirq were doing to bring circus arts to their communities of origin: Guinean and Inuit. “It's like when I'm drumming, all the energy changes. It becomes positive,” he adds. It's an energy Cirque Kalabanté shares show after show.

Cirque Kalabanté performs on the Artist Series at Macky Auditorium on Nov. 7, 2025.



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PROGRAM NOTES

By Marc Shulgold

Two Mozart Masterpieces

Consider yourself lucky. This program consists of two monumental works not often paired in concert—two of Mozart’s six string quintets that stand among the most celestial pieces in all music. Individually, each is magnificent, but together they become something greater than the sum of their parts. One is bright and full of life—C major always brings a smile. The other carries us into the solemn world of G minor. By pairing these works as fraternal twins (they were composed a month apart), each with that crucial viola added to the string quartet, Mozart creates a world of sound, full of color and emotional richness.

String Quintet in C Major, K515

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

The half-dozen quintets for strings cover a wide swath of Mozart’s life: from the B-flat, K.174, written in Salzburg in 1773, influenced by the two viola quintets by his friend Michael Haydn, to the final pair, K. 590, from 1790 and K. 614, the latter completed on April 12, 1791—his last major chamber work. The second of the six, K. 406/516b, arrived in 1787, the same year as today’s two masterworks. That one was an arrangement of the C minor Wind Octet, K. 388.

Life was good in 1787, when Mozart returned to Vienna after the unquestioned triumph of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Prague. Audiences went nuts for the opera, and a commission quickly followed for another (it would be a second hit: *Don Giovanni*). As he set to work that spring, the notion of two string quintets came to mind. No one knows why—no commissions emerged for either one. In fact, there were few takers when he offered for subscription the C Major Quintet, K. 515, the following June. Maybe the outbreak of war between Austria and Turkey in March 1788 depressed interest among purchasers of new music. Such was life for the freelance composer.

Listening to the C Major Quintet, it’s easy to understand the excitement Mozart had experienced with *Figaro* in Prague, for one can hear tunes suggesting arias and duets throughout this endlessly joyous work. All is sunny, right from the opening ascending phrase introduced by the cello. If you’ve heard of sonata-allegro form—an ever-present musical structure popular in Mozart’s day—it’s presented with perfect clarity in the opening *Allegro*. Following along is pretty simple, actually: A charming first theme launches the

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with Jordan Bak, viola

September 14 | 15 2025

Grusin Music Hall

PROGRAM

String Quintet in C Major, K515

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

- I. Allegro
- II. Minuetto : Allegretto
- III. Andante
- IV. Allegro

Intermission

String Quintet in G minor, K516

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

- I. Allegro
- II. Minuetto : Allegretto
- III. Adagio ma non troppo
- IV. Adagio - Allegro

“exposition,” built around that skipping cello idea, transitioning into a second relaxed little tune. Some closing ideas lead us right back to the whole opening all over again. Then, it’s on to a brief “development” section where Mozart toys with complex combinations. Amid a wave of melodic ideas, you’ll hear snippets of familiar themes that will make you smile—just as they no doubt brought delight to Mozart while he set them down on paper. Then, suddenly, we return to that familiar beginning, the “recapitulation,” it’s called. Rather than simply hear a repeat of the opening, we discover new ideas springing out of nowhere. An inventor at work. A quick wrap-up “coda” and the *Allegro* quietly ends.

The *Minuetto* flows with an inviting smoothness, despite a series of unusual phrase lengths of four and six measures (try dancing to that!). Mozart makes up for such quirkiness with multiple appearances of a charming little closing tune. The *Andante* that follows reminds us of his operatic bent. Here, we have a sublime duet between two principal characters in serious discussion, portrayed by the first violin and first viola. A phrase is begun by one voice, then completed by the other. Those roles will then be reversed. In a short episode, the two “sing” with agreement (major key), then with doubt (minor key). Mozart gently leads his listeners into a personal world, permitting us to

create our own scene with characters and situations that might mirror our own lives.

The final *Allegro* brings us back to C major with a charming rondo that's as light as a divertimento intended to entertain a sumptuous dinner gathering. The first violin dominates, though only until the other four jump in and pick up bits of the main theme, creating a dizzying counterpoint. Ever the prankster, Mozart injects moments of silence before returning to the rondo theme, even doing so just before the rollicking coda.

String Quintet in G minor, K516

Here's an odd coincidence—maybe worth a mention. One year after publishing these two quintets, Mozart once again became the father of two siblings born a month apart, giving some musicologists another mystery to ponder. On July 25, 1788, his Symphony No. 40 was published. Its key was G minor. Then, on Aug. 10, less than a month later, came his final Symphony, No. 41, the “Jupiter,” written in C major. Now, it's true that those two are linked with an earlier Symphony, No. 39 in E-flat, completed on June 26. So let's not get carried away here. Still, pairing G minor and C major, as Mozart did twice with two important late works, is worth knowing—if not fully understanding. Naturally, we can compare the two in G minor and the two in C major, but that offers few clues—though the restless, agitated opening of both G minor works speaks to Mozart's sensitivity to the inherent darkness of that key. In his later *Magic Flute*, for example, poor Pamina laments being shunned by her beloved Tamino in her melancholy G minor aria *Ach, ich fühl's*. It is also worth noting that on June 29, 1788, Mozart and Constanze lost their 6-month-old daughter Theresia (incredible to think that his final two symphonies were completed within the next two months). No need to think of symphonies here—and probably no reason to create any links between the two quintets heard on this program. One aspect of Mozart's genius was his ability to focus solely on the work before him. But let's not forget that the world of opera was still swirling in his mind as he began work on the G minor String Quintet.

The *Allegro* of K. 516 opens in starkly original fashion, with two pairs of three players handling the first theme. Watch, as two violins and first viola state the tune, which is quickly answered by two violas and cello. The theme is thus heard by high voices, then by lower voices. Each time, the melody descends, with a feeling of inescapable sadness, though small attempts to brighten things appear. Even a closing tune echoes that opening mood. A sudden stop will signal the return

to the opening “exposition” or to the “development” section (terms used in sonata-allegro form, remember). Just as we discovered in the C Major Quintet,

something comes over Mozart with the “recapitulation.” He just can't go by the rules. Instead of blindly redoing all that familiar material he carves new paths, stretching new ideas, exploring new sonorities and instrumental combinations. He is setting a course for future composers to free themselves from the restrictions of formula, to follow their own imaginations.

The *Minuetto* offers another Mozart surprise. It begins pleasantly enough, until the first nasty unison chord intrudes (there will be others). How are our imaginary dancers supposed to react to such rudeness? Was Mozart joking? Was he angry? Perhaps mocking the aristocrats whom he (secretly) despised? Thank goodness for the sweetly gentle Trio section – but be warned that the first section will return.

In the *Adagio*, all four players move their mutes in place on the bridge and offer one of Mozart's most serene journeys into pure melody, led by the first violin. Here, all those memorable arias, duets and quiet choruses of opera must have inspired the composer to combine the richness of five muted strings in harmony and counterpoint to produce music that seems to exist in a static world all its own. There are episodes in the major key, some in the minor, but none that suggest any particular scenes or dramatic tales. This *Adagio* prepares us for one of the composer's darkest, most mournful of all *Adagios*. But how can he do that? Back-to-back slow movements? Fear not. Mozart would never leave us in sadness.

The final movement opens with two and a half minutes of unrelenting despair. Music has never sounded so darkly beautiful. Glancing at your program, you'll notice there's an *Allegro*. And so we turn on the brightness, as we switch from G minor to G major for quite a lengthy finale, with laughter at every turn, one jaunty tune after another in this wild ride of a rondo. By the time we've arrived at the end, the sadness and introspection of G minor have all but vanished. It's like those New Orleans bands happily leaving the funeral behind. Mozart has brought us these two works that explore the yin and yang of life, with music so full of beauty and every emotion we can name—and some we've never imagined.

PERSONNEL

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 Dvořák and 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 U.S. 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 D.C., 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 will present 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 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.

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 will join the world-renowned Takács Quartet on a tour of rarely-performed Mozart viola quintets, in addition to making his concerto debuts with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Houston Symphony Orchestra. 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 such orchestras as 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 such esteemed conductors as Howard Griffiths, Stephen Mulligan, Keith Lockhart, Gerard Schwarz and Ewa Strusińska. As a recitalist and chamber musician, he has been heard at some of the world’s greatest performance venues including 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 U.K. 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, Bak holds a Bachelor of Music from New England Conservatory and a Master of Music from The Juilliard School where he was awarded the prestigious Kovner Fellowship. His principal teachers were Dimitri Murrath, Hsin-Yun Huang and Samuel Rhodes.

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.

Photo credit: Natalia Vilela

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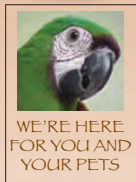


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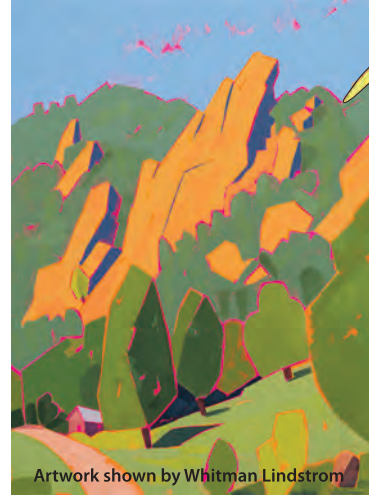
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Joy Redstone is a licensed therapist, a member of Denver's D'art 360 Gallery, and serves on the boards of both Next Gallery and the Colorado Women's Art Museum. This exhibition is an invitation to witness healing in visual form.

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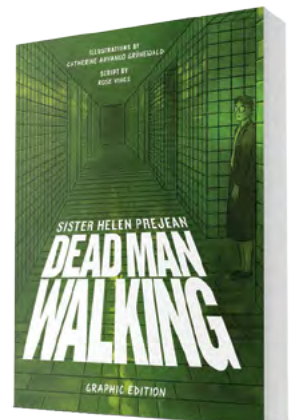


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Global Seminar livecasts piano recital from Paris to **Denver**



By Kathryn Bistodeau

Professor of Piano Andrew Cooperstock loves all things French—the art, music, food and language—and this summer he combined that passion with his love for teaching and performing.

In partnership with CU Boulder Education Abroad, a brand new Global Seminar—Chamber Music Performance—engaged a dozen student participants in Aix-en-Provence, Marseille and Paris, France. From July 24 to Aug. 7, the seminar offered students opportunities to perform chamber music across France—including a unique occasion for a local audience to experience the performers from half a world away.

“One of the concerts in Paris is going to be at the new Steinway & Sons gallery there,” explained Cooperstock before the group’s departure. “The students will perform chamber music and then—in the second half of the program—just the pianists will each play a short piece on the Spirio Steinway.

“A signal will be livecast from Paris to the Spirio piano in the new Steinway & Sons Denver location where audience members can hear the sound actually coming out of another Spirio piano, like a player piano—not from a speaker like a Webcast or Zoomcast or something.”



He added, “The sound is extremely accurate, so it should sound pretty much exactly like the Paris concert.”

In addition to the technologically remarkable Steinway recital, participating students performed in a Baroque church in Aix-en-Provence and the American Church in Paris, among other venues, and rehearsed great chamber music by American and French composers with talented peers. Students also engaged in guest master classes, studio classes and private lessons.

The students’ cultural immersion further included French language lessons, a boat ride along the Seine, a trip to Notre Dame, a tour of the Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics/Music (IRCAM) and more.

Photos: Steinway & Sons Spirio, “the world’s highest resolution player piano.” Photo credit: Steinway & Sons; College of Music students Juhyun Hwang (MM ’26, piano) and James Morris (DMA ’25, piano) rehearse for their Spirio piano duet at CU Boulder before traveling to France for a two-week Global Seminar. Photo credit: Andrew Cooperstock

Lynn-Craig Living Music Award recipients announced

By Kathryn Bistodeau

The American Music Research Center (AMRC) awarded the 2025 Alex Craig and Christina Lynn-Craig Living Music Award to **Kristina Butler** (MM ’25, voice) and **Katiann Nelson** (MM ’25, voice). The awardees each received a \$1,000 scholarship.



Nelson’s project—“Making a Composer: Alex Craig”—involves presenting a recital of Craig’s works alongside works by composers that Craig found inspirational. “I’m really looking forward to diving into the music itself,” says Nelson. “For me, getting to know a new composer through their work is like getting to know a new friend—I’m excited to start this process with a composer who is completely new to me.”



Butler will also be organizing a recital and hopes to record the music she prepares. Her project—“Seasons of Life: Music of Alex Craig”—will explore the seasons of life in the context of the four weather seasons.

“I’m most excited to work artistically from a relatively blank slate as there isn’t a wealth of recordings of Professor Craig’s music,” explains Butler. “Learning music without a recording is an exciting challenge that frequently comes with learning contemporary works.”

The Lynn-Craig Living Music Award is open to both undergraduate and graduate students and supports the performance of works by the late composer Alex Craig, housed in the Rare and Distinctive Collections at the CU Boulder Libraries.

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Marketing Manager

Elise Zabala

Multimedia Content Manager

Sarita Narayanswamy

Publications Manager

Sabrina Green

Senior Marketing Assistant

Maya Reno

Marketing Assistant

Maija Brandt

Box Office Services Coordinator

Dylan Thierry

Tessitura CRM Specialist

James Whalen

Box Office Assistants

Caitlin Amero
Aidan Biffinger
Macy Crow
Joel Ferst
Johnette Martin
Sallu Young

MACKY AUDITORIUM

Director, Macky Auditorium and Artist Series

Rudy Betancourt

Assistant Director for Administration

Sara Krumwiede

Assistant Director for Production

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

Personnel lists current as of Aug. 20, 2025.

VENUE POLICIES

The University of Colorado is committed to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities. Visit cupresents.org/accessiblity to learn more.

LATECOMERS are seated at the discretion of the house manager.

LATE SEATING IS UNAVAILABLE IN THE FOLLOWING VENUES:

- Music Theatre (Imig Music Building)
- Loft Theatre (University Theatre Building)

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.

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PIANO SOLOIST

NURIT PACHT
GUEST VIOLINIST & ORCHESTRA LEADER

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