

Programmes | 2027/2028

Sarah Ying Ma | violin
Coco Mi | violin
Jasper de Boor | viola
Drew Dansby | violoncello

Program I | Resilient City

Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson (1932-2004)
Jeff Scott (*1967)

String Quartet No. 1 *Calvary*
Tapestry of the Beloved Beatified (2026)
(Commissioned by the Poiesis Quartet & Caramoor Center)

Pura Fé (* 1959)
Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

Rattle Songs (arr.Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate)
String Quartet No. 6 in D major

Program II | Critical Canon

Florence Price (1887-1953)
Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

String Quartet No. 1 in G major (1929)
5 Fantasiestücke for String Quartet (1894)

Pura Fé (* 1959)
Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Rattle Songs (arr.Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate)
String Quartett No. 1 in B minor, Op. 50

Program III | Journey to Belonging

Iván Enrique Rodríguez (*1990)

Roy's Address: Proclamation for String Quartet (2026)
(Commissioned by the Poiesis Quartet and Nova Linea Musica)
Tapestry of the Beloved Beatified (2026)
(Commissioned by the Poiesis Quartet & Caramoor Center)

Jeff Scott (*1967)

Peter I. Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

String Quartet No. 3 in E flat minor, Op. 30

Program I Resilient City

This program explores New York as a city shaped by migration, memory, resistance, and reinvention, a place where artists and communities have continually transformed struggle into cultural expression.

The program opens with Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson's String Quartet No. 1, "Calvary," a work premiered at Carnegie Hall in 1956 that transforms the spiritual tradition into a powerful meditation on suffering, resilience, and liberation. Born and raised in New York City, Perkinson studied extensively at New York University and Manhattan School of Music, later serving as faculty at Brooklyn College. Drawing on the spiritual "Calvary," Perkinson reframes pain through a lens of resistance, defiance, and celebration, connecting sacred tradition to the broader struggle for Black dignity and freedom in America. Rooted in

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both classical form and Black vernacular traditions, the quartet establishes the program's central themes of endurance, collective memory, and cultural transformation.

The first half concludes with Jeff Scott's *Tapestry of the Beloved Beautified*, a work that expands the program's exploration of remembrance and activism into the story of New York's LGBTQ+ liberation movement. Inspired by figures including Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and Jeanne Manford, Scott creates a musical ritual honoring lives and movements that reshaped American cultural history and redefined community, visibility, and belonging. Through its blending of lyricism, ceremony, and emotional intensity, the work affirms the transformative power of chosen family, activism, and artistic witness.

Following intermission, Pura Fé's *Rattle Songs in Jerod Impichchaachaaha'* Tate's arrangement grounds the second half in Indigenous musical traditions deeply connected to New York's Urban Indian community. A Tuscarora artist and founding member of the groundbreaking Native women's group Ulali, Pura Fé emerged from a network of Indigenous artists and activists centered around the American Indian Community House in New York City. Her work carries forward traditions of ancestral song, storytelling, and cultural survival while reimagining them within contemporary American music. Tate's arrangement amplifies the music's rhythmic vitality and spiritual resonance, centering Indigenous presence within the broader story of the city.

The evening concludes with Bartók's *String Quartet No. 6*, one of the twentieth century's great works of farewell and survival. Written on the eve of Bartók's flight from fascist Europe to New York City, the quartet carries the weight of exile, grief, and cultural rupture. Each movement begins with the mournful "Mesto" theme, gradually overtaking the entire work until lament becomes unavoidable. In the context of this program, Bartók's final quartet becomes both an elegy and a testament: a meditation on what artists carry with them across borders, across generations, and through the resilient life of a city shaped by continual transformation.

Program II Critical Canon

Throughout this program, we critically reframe the idea of 'canonization' and its connections with Westernization. Centered around the iconic Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev and his first *String Quartet*, we look towards the folk and cultural roots of various composers' musical language to challenge its historic and contemporary attempts towards Westernization, including music by Pura Fé, Samuel Coleridge Taylor, and Florence Price.

Opening the program is Florence Price's first string quartet. Perhaps the most well-known Black woman composer in American history, Price wrote her *String Quartet No. 1* in 1929, during the height of the Great Migration. Price grounded her music in distinctly African folk songs and dances – her *String Quartet No. 1* exemplifies this, containing influences from spirituals and blues. Her interest in composing was to unite people of the African diaspora in the U.S. around a single musical identity, with a foundation in folk music. She wrote in a 1938 essay: "We are even beginning to believe in the possibility of establishing a national musical idiom. We are waking up to the fact...that we already have a folk music in the Negro spirituals—music which is potent, poignant, compelling."

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Like Florence Price, Afro-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor – famously dubbed the ‘African Mahler’ by White audiences in New York City – is often celebrated for his integration of Western European form alongside African-American musical traditions. Instead, we honor Coleridge-Taylor’s unique compositional style by approaching and understanding his work primarily through an African perspective. As a political activist whose art was deeply inspired by pan-Africanism, Coleridge-Taylor used musical influences not only from African American spirituals, but also from the African continent and other parts of the African diaspora.

Pura Fe is an Indigenous (Tuscaroran) activist, storyteller and musician who founded the A Cappella Indigenous women’s group Ulali. Jerod Impichchaachaaha’ Tate, who arranged her Rattle Songs for string quartet, is a Chickasaw composer living in Oklahoma. Tate acknowledges Ulali as the original inspiration for his work: “They are the reason I do what I’m doing. And now I am transcribing the most influential piece in my life – Rattle Songs – literally 30 years after originally hearing it.” Through music rooted in cross-collaboration between various Indigenous traditions, Tate’s music takes an open, cyclical approach in both form and harmony, reflecting the continuous renewal of life, land, and the seasons. In the classical repertoire, many important composers – notably Antonin Dvorak – have integrated Indigenous traditional music and aesthetics in their writing, often with minimal acknowledgement of the sources of this material. Looking towards a future of respect and collaboration, we believe that Indigenous songs, tunes, and arts hold important and personal stories which should be told and written by Indigenous authors, storytellers, and composers.

Prokofiev was one of a large collection of composers – alongside Igor Stravinsky, Dmitri Shostakovich, and Aram Khachaturian – who lived in the USSR and incorporated Eastern European folk music influences into their work. Following the outbreak of the Cold War, American media, such as the Voices of America radio programme, started to broadcast music of some of these composers, subtly reimagining folk music from Eastern Europe as a Western “modernist” genre. This was an example of soft power in foreign policy, a cultural initiative that aided anti-communist efforts during the Cold War. As a result, many folk-inspired composers were both culturally and politically integrated into the Western canon, while the original roots of their music became semi-ambiguous. Prokofiev wrote this quartet during an extensive concert tour of the U.S., where he was often severely homesick. Prokofiev’s angst and longing for home can be heard clearly in this quartet, with his distinctive catchy and easily accessible melodies pointing towards the Russian folk music that was the basis for much of his work.

Program III Journey to Belonging

This program brings together LGBTQ+ figures of the past and the present, inspiring a future forward by creating conversations about belonging. Featuring the iconic Peter Tchaikovsky’s third string quartet, we explore a composer whose life was spent hiding in the shadows and keeping his sexuality and love entirely private, only revealed to researchers after his death due to a series of letters between himself and his brother. From Tchaikovsky, we build a bridge to two of our own commissioned works, including a composer taking inspiration from historical figures. In Tapestry of the Beloved Beatified, Jeff Scott tells the stories of four proudly queer revolutionary figures, including Harvey Milk, Xulhaz Mannon, Jeanne Manford, and Marsha P. Johnson, whose activism paved the path for LGBTQ+ communities to fight for inclusive policies and create stronger communities. Puerto Rican composer Iván Enrique Rodríguez builds on this work

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further through his piece, which he says is written in the form of a journey: "Family becomes accepting or chosen; we find community, and we are part of the whole on our own terms."