

Programmes | 2027/2028

Phoenix Avalon | violin
Adrian Steele | violin
Devin Moore | viola
Clara Abel | violoncello

Program I Remembrance

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)	Madrigale (bearb. Mark Steinberg)
Thomas Adès (*1971)	<i>Arcadiana</i> , Op. 12 (1994)
Franz Schubert (1797-1828)	Lieder (bearb. Devin Moore)

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)	String Quartet No. 15 in G Major, D. 887

Program II | The Art of Counterpoint

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)	String Quartet No. 1 in A minor, Op. 41, No. 1
Béla Bartók (1881-1945)	String Quartet No. 3, Sz. 85

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)	String Quartet No. 14 in C sharp minor, Op. 131

Program III | Loss

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)	String Quartet No. 35 in F minor, Op. 20 No. 5
Kaija Saariaho (1952-2023)	<i>Terra Memoria</i> (2007)

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847)	String Quartet No. 6 in F minor, Op. 80 (November 2027)
Or	
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	String Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1 (January 2028)

Program I with Robert Neumann | piano

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)	String Quartet No. 35 in F minor, Op. 20 No. 5
Billy Childs (*1957)	String Quartet No. 4 <i>American Mosaic</i> (2026)

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)	Piano Quintet in E flat major, Op. 44
Or	
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34

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Program II with Robert Neumann | piano

Kaija Saariaho (1952-2023)

Terra Memoria (2007)

Thomas Adès (*1971)

Arcadiana, Op. 12 (1994)

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Piano Quintet in E flat major, Op. 44

Or

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Piano Quintet F minor, Op. 34

Program information

Program I: Remembrance

Memory, longing, and the passage of time unite this program, tracing echoes between composers separated by centuries. At its heart is the music of Franz Schubert, whose gift for melody and profound emotional insight continues to resonate long after his lifetime.

Mark Steinberg's Madrigal arrangements look back to the Renaissance with a sense of reverence for the polyphonic tradition while Moore's arrangement of Schubert's *Auf dem Wasser zu singen* offers a different act of remembrance, reimagining one of Schubert's most beloved songs for string quartet. Adès's *Arcadiana* expands this idea of remembrance through seven musical miniatures that evoke real, imagined, and remembered places. Drawing on paintings by Watteau and Poussin, music by Couperin and Mozart, and Schubert's *Auf dem Wasser zu singen*, the work weaves together fragments of cultural memory into dreamlike landscapes where beauty and loss exist side by side.

The program culminates in Schubert's monumental String Quartet No. 15 in G major, a work that stands among the supreme achievements of the chamber music repertoire. Composed during the final years of his life, the quartet embraces an extraordinary emotional spectrum - from radiant lyricism to unsettling darkness, from tenderness to overwhelming power. It is a work that seems to encompass the fullness of human experience, transforming memory, sorrow, love, and hope into music of timeless depth. By the program's end, remembrance is no longer simply an act of looking back, but a living thread that binds the past to the present, revealing how music continues to preserve, transform, and renew our shared humanity.

Program II: The Art of Counterpoint

Few works have shaped the history of the string quartet as profoundly as Beethoven's late quartets. This program traces the enduring influence of Beethoven's String Quartet No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 131, exploring how two later masters absorbed and transformed its contrapuntal ingenuity, motivic unity, and remarkable emotional breadth. More than displays of technical mastery, these works use counterpoint as a deeply expressive language, revealing the full range of human experience through the interplay of independent voices.

Robert Schumann's String Quartet No. 1 opens with a solemn introduction that recalls the spirit of Beethoven's Op. 131, its voices entering in imitation and unfolding with quiet intensity. Béla Bartók's Third

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Quartet likewise builds an entire musical world from a handful of tightly woven motives, its continuous, through-composed structure reflecting Beethoven's revolutionary approach while forging an unmistakably modern voice. The program culminates with Beethoven's Op. 131 itself - a monumental seven-movement journey whose seamless architecture and emotional scope continue to stand as one of the crowning achievements of the chamber music repertoire. Together, these three quartets reveal counterpoint not as an academic exercise, but as a living, evolving art capable of expressing humanity in all its complexity.

Program III: Loss

This program explores the many ways music gives voice to grief, remembrance, and the enduring presence of those who have passed. Spanning more than two centuries, these works reveal how composers transform personal sorrow into lasting artistic expression, preserving memory while giving shape to experiences of mourning, love, and remembrance.

Haydn's String Quartet in F minor, Op. 20 No. 5 opens the program with one of the most introspective and emotionally searching works of his celebrated "Sun Quartets." Its dark intensity and expressive depth foreshadow the deeply personal works that follow. Kaija Saariaho's Terra Memoria, dedicated "for those departed," contemplates the changing nature of memory, suggesting that those we have lost continue to live through recollection even as memory itself evolves, softens, and transforms over time. George Walker's deeply lyrical Molto Adagio, written in memory of his grandmother, offers an intimate elegy before the program concludes with Mendelssohn's final String Quartet, Op. 80. Composed in the aftermath of the sudden death of his beloved sister Fanny, the quartet abandons the poise and brilliance often associated with Mendelssohn in favor of music of extraordinary urgency, anguish, and emotional intensity. Together, these works affirm music's enduring power to preserve memory and to give lasting voice to love, loss, and remembrance.