

Sunday
OCT 17
2:00 pm

Tesla String Quartet
with special guest
Alexander Fiterstein
clarinet



This event is made possible through the generous support of
the Raymond Stuhl Chamber Music Fund.

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HIEBERT**

The Hieberts are pleased to sponsor this afternoon's performance.

Ross Snyder, violin

Michelle Lie, violin

Edwin Kaplan, viola

Serafim Smigelskiy, cello

Alexander Fiterstein, clarinet

PROGRAM

Five Bagatelles, Op. 23 Gerald Finzi (1901–1956), arr. Christian Alexander

Soliloquy John Corigliano (b. 1938)

Ius in Bello Carolina Heredia (b. 1981)

20-Minute Intermission

Clarinet Quintet in A Major, K. 581 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

The **Tesla String Quartet** is known the world over for their “superb capacity to find the inner heart of everything they play, regardless of era, style, or technical demand” (*The International Review of Music*). From cutting-edge contemporary works to established masterpieces, the Tesla Quartet’s emotive and thoughtful interpretations reveal the ensemble’s deep commitment to the craft and to their ever-expanding repertoire. The quartet recognizes the power of their platform to amplify underrepresented voices and to encourage the proliferation of an equitable and just future for society as well as a hospitable climate for posterity.

Now entering its second decade, the quartet performs regularly across North America and Europe, with recent highlights including their debut at New York’s Lincoln Center, a return to London’s Wigmore Hall and performances at Stanford University’s Bing Concert Hall as winners of the prestigious John Lad Prize. Other recent international engagements include tours of Brazil, China and South Korea. Notable festival appearances include the Banff Centre International String Quartet Festival; the Joseph Haydn String Quartet Festival at the Esterházy Palace in Fertőd, Hungary; the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Festival in Germany; and the Festival Sesc de Música de Câmara in São Paulo, Brazil. Having served as the Marjorie Young Bell String Quartet-in-Residence at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, Canada from 2016 to 2017, the ensemble also recently completed a four-year community residency in Hickory, North Carolina, which included performances and workshops at local colleges, universities and in the public school system as well as a dedicated chamber music series.

Remaining true to their ethos, the Tesla Quartet has proved unwavering and resilient in the face of global depression. From the safety of their own homes, they overcame technological hurdles in order to cheer on the healthcare heroes of the New York Presbyterian Hospital network with weekly concerts throughout the city's darkest hours. Addressing the needs of those within the music community, the group commissioned 12 works by composers from across North America for their online series *Alternating Currents*, an homage to Beethoven and a celebration of diverse voices. The Tesla Quartet has also helped pioneer ImmerSphere, an immersive augmented reality virtual concert experience, bringing familiar community stages directly into the homes of concert-starved audiences. With renewed hope for a brighter future, the quartet is focusing its efforts in the coming seasons on inspiring climate action with the commissions of several full-length works for string quartet that touch on different aspects of the climate crisis and recovery, in addition to premiering Jeff Nytch's piece decrying deforestation, *Song of the Lorax*.

In 2018, the Tesla Quartet released its debut album of *Haydn, Ravel, and Stravinsky* quartets on the Orchid Classics label to critical acclaim. *BBC Music Magazine* awarded the disc a double five-star rating and featured it as the "Chamber Choice" for the month of December, and *Gramophone* praised the quartet for its "tautness of focus and refinement of detail." They released their second disc on the Orchid Classics label in October 2019, *Joy & Desolation*, a collaboration with clarinetist Alexander Fiterstein, featuring quintets by Mozart, Gerald Finzi, John Corigliano and Carolina Heredia. *The Classic Review* raved, "From the outset, the quartet plays as a single instrument. Their sound is balanced across registers, their timbres and articulations matched," and *The ArtsFuse* called it "a compelling, diverse album from one of the best chamber ensembles (and clarinetists) out there."

The ensemble builds upon years of early success at numerous competitions, including multiple top prizes at the prestigious 2016 Banff International String Quartet Competition, 2015 International Joseph Haydn Chamber

Music Competition and 2012 Wigmore Hall London International String Quartet Competition. The group originally formed at The Juilliard School in 2008 and quickly established itself as one of the most promising young ensembles in New York, winning Second Prize at the J.C. Arriaga Chamber Music Competition only a few months after its inception. From 2009 to 2012, the quartet held a fellowship as the Graduate String Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Colorado-Boulder, where they studied with the world-renowned Takács Quartet. They have also held fellowships at the Aspen Music Festival's Center for Advanced Quartet Studies, the Britten-Pears Young Artist Program and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival.

Clarinetist Alexander Fiterstein is considered one of today's most exceptional artists. Fiterstein has performed in recital, with distinguished orchestras and with chamber music ensembles throughout the world. He won first prize at the Carl Nielsen International Clarinet Competition and received the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant Award. *The Washington Post* has described his playing as "dazzling in its spectrum of colors, agility and range. Every sound he makes is finely measured without inhibiting expressiveness," and *The New York Times* described him as "a clarinetist with a warm tone and powerful technique."

As soloist, he has appeared with the Czech, Israel, Vienna and St. Paul Chamber Orchestras, Belgrade Philharmonic, Danish National Radio Symphony, Tokyo Philharmonic, China National Symphony Orchestra, KBS Orchestra of South Korea, Jerusalem Symphony, Orchestra of St. Luke's at Lincoln Center, Kansas City Symphony and the Simon Bolivar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela. He has performed in recital on the Music at the Supreme Court Series, the Celebrity Series in Boston, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Kennedy Center, the Louvre in Paris, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Tel Aviv Museum and NYC's 92d Street Y.

A dedicated performer of chamber music, Fiterstein frequently collaborates with distinguished artists and ensembles, and he regularly performs with the prestigious Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Among the highly regarded artists he has performed with are Daniel Barenboim, Yefim Bronfman, Mitsuko Uchida, Richard Goode, Emanuel Ax, Marc-Andre Hamelin, Pinchas Zukerman and Steven Isserlis. Fiterstein performed with the Dover, Pacifica, Jerusalem and Shanghai String Quartets as well as with Ensemble Wien-Berlin. He spent five summers at the Marlboro Music Festival and appeared at the Caramoor, Moab, Music@Menlo, Montreal, Toronto, Jerusalem and Storioni Chamber Music Festivals.

Fiterstein is a founder of the Zimro Project, a unique ensemble dedicated to incorporating Jewish art music into chamber music programs. He performed as principal clarinet of the West-East Divan Orchestra at the invitation of Daniel Barenboim and has appeared as guest principal clarinet with the Israel Philharmonic with Zubin Mehta, KBS Orchestra with Yoel Levi, and with the St. Paul and Orpheus Chamber Orchestras.

Fiterstein has a prolific recording career and has worked with composers John Corigliano and Osvaldo Golijov and had pieces written for him by Samuel Adler, Mason Bates, Paul Schoenfield and Chris Brubeck, among others. Fiterstein was born in Belarus and immigrated to Israel at the age of two with his family. A Juilliard graduate, he won first prize at the Young Concert Artists International Auditions and received awards from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. He is currently Professor of Clarinet and Chair of Winds at the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. Fiterstein is a Buffet Crampon and Vandoren Performing Artist.

PROGRAM NOTES

The Tesla Quartet is joined by clarinetist Alexander Fiterstein in this program of clarinet quintets that span over 200 years.

Published in 1945, Gerald Finzi's *Five Bagatelles* were written over a span of 25 years. While they were originally conceived for clarinet and piano, this arrangement by Christian Alexander takes advantage of the ability of the quartet to sing, creating a rich texture around the clarinet that can transform from a somber chorus to a boisterous conversation.

John Corigliano's *Soliloquy*, originally the slow movement of his Clarinet Concerto, is dedicated to the memory of his father, violinist John Corigliano, who served as concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic for 23 years. The delicate and spare texture of this work expresses the desolation at the loss of a loved one.

The newest work on the program, Argentinian composer Carolina Heredia's *Ius in Bello*, is a reaction to the political and social upheaval in Venezuela and the repression of its citizens that has been going on since 2014.

Mozart's beloved Clarinet Quintet in A Major serves as the foundation of this collaboration and was the first piece Fiterstein and the Tesla Quartet ever played together. Such was the chemistry and ease of collaboration during these first performances that the five musicians decided to record an album together, comprising a variety of works for clarinet and string quartet.