

**Friends of Chamber Music present the Pacifica Quartet in concert  
at the Vancouver Playhouse, Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 7:30pm**

**PACIFICA QUARTET**

**Simin Ganatra – violin**  
**Austin Hartman – violin**  
**Mark Holloway – viola**  
**Brandon Vamos – cello**



With a career spanning three decades, the award-winning Pacifica Quartet has achieved international recognition as one of the finest chamber ensembles performing today. The Quartet is known for its virtuosity, exuberant performance style, and often-daring repertory choices. Having served as quartet-in-residence at Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music for over a decade, the Quartet was also previously the quartet-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 2021, the Pacifica Quartet received a second Grammy Award for *Contemporary Voices*, an exploration of music by three Pulitzer Prize-winning composers: Shulamit Ran, Jennifer Higdon, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

Formed in 1994, the Pacifica Quartet quickly won numerous chamber music competitions, including the 1998 Naumburg Chamber Music Award. In 2002 the ensemble was honored with Chamber Music America’s Cleveland Quartet Award and an appointment to Lincoln Center’s Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two). In 2006, the Pacifica was awarded a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. With its powerful energy and captivating, cohesive sound, the Pacifica has established itself as the embodiment of the senior American quartet sound.

The Pacifica Quartet has proven itself to be a preeminent interpreter of string quartet cycles, harnessing the group’s singular focus and incredible stamina to portray each composer’s evolution, often over the course of just a few days. They have given highly acclaimed performances of:

- the complete Carter cycle in San Francisco, New York, Chicago, and Houston;
- the complete Mendelssohn cycle in Napa, Australia, New York, and Pittsburgh; and
- the complete Beethoven cycle in New York, Denver, St. Paul, Chicago, Napa, and Tokyo (in an unprecedented five concerts in three days at Suntory Hall),
- the complete Shostakovich cycle in Chicago, New York, Montreal, and at London’s Wigmore Hall.

The Quartet has been widely praised for these cycles, with critics calling the concerts “brilliant,” “astonishing,” “gripping,” and “breathtaking.”

An ardent advocate of contemporary music, the Pacifica Quartet commissions and performs many new works, including those by Keeril Makan, Julia Wolfe, and Shulamit Ran, the latter in partnership with the Music Accord consortium, London’s Wigmore Hall, and Tokyo’s Suntory Hall.

In 2008, the Quartet released its Grammy Award-winning recording of Carter’s Quartets Nos. 1 and 5 on Naxos; their 2009 release of Quartets Nos. 2, 3, and 4 completed the set. Cedille Records released the group’s complete Shostakovich quartet cycle, paired with other contemporary Soviet works, to rave reviews. Other recordings include Leo Ornstein’s rarely heard piano quintet with pianist Marc-André

Hamelin, the Brahms piano quintet with legendary pianist Menahem Pressler, the Brahms and Mozart clarinet quintets with clarinetist Anthony McGill, and its second Grammy Award-winning album, *Contemporary Voices*.

The Pacifica Quartet members live in Bloomington, IN, where they serve as quartet-in-residence and full-time faculty members at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. Prior to their appointment, the Quartet was on the faculty of the University of Illinois at Champaign Urbana from 2003 to 2012. The Quartet also served as resident performing artist at the University of Chicago for seventeen years.

The Pacifica Quartet is represented by MKI Artists.

## **Programme**

### ***String Quartet in B Minor, Opus 11***

***Samuel Barber (1910-1981)***

**Molto allegro e appassionato  
Molto adagio; Molto allegro (come prima)**

Samuel Barber was one of the most distinguished members of the generation of American composers who came to maturity shortly before the Second World War. Born in Westchester, Pennsylvania, he began piano lessons at age six and started composing music a year later. He entered the Curtis Institute at age fourteen as a member of the first class of 1924. There he studied piano and became a fully fledged composer. His music is rich in texture, always melodic, and rooted in traditional compositional techniques. Because of his fondness for rich Romantic textures and lyricism, Barber was not an innovator but he produced music of beauty and substance with a distinct personal stamp.

Barber composed this quartet in 1936 while he was on a Pulitzer Traveling Scholarship. The Pro Arte String Quartet first performed the work in Rome during December that year.

The opening **Molto allegro** bursts forth with a bold unison statement, which is made more striking by its slightly awkward rhythmic pattern. This subsides into a quiet chorale-like section in a flexible tempo, which is interrupted by a short skittish transformation of the opening melody. A wide-ranging legato melody follows and finally, all three subjects return for the recapitulation.

The **Adagio** is built around one long sinuous theme which moves slowly and deliberately in a step-wise motion. Beginning calmly, the theme rises to an exciting climax with all the instruments straining at the upper limits of their ranges. The Adagio concludes with a subdued, somber coda. Then, after a brief pause, the themes of the first movement are restated, bringing the entire work back to its original character.

At Arturo Toscanini's request, Barber transcribed a string orchestra arrangement of the second movement, known as the Adagio for Strings. This version of the music has been featured in many movies over the years.

### ***String Quartet No. 4 in C Major***

***Béla Bartók (1881-1945)***

**Allegro  
Prestissimo, con sordino  
Non troppo lento  
Allegretto pizzicato  
Allegro molto**

In his Third Quartet, Bartók reached extreme limits of experimental techniques largely borrowed from Oriental sources. In the Fourth Quartet, composed in 1928 and dedicated to the Pro Arte Quartet, there is some relaxation of tension though the entire texture consists of dissonant intervals – minor ninths, seconds, and augmented fourths, etc.

The slow movement is the keystone of the arch which forms the structure of the Fourth Quartet. The outer movements complement each other thematically in reverse order. Thus, in the finale, the rhythmic arrangement of the sequence of notes, which constitutes the thematic material of the opening movement, is altered and the sequence slightly varied, so that the opening motives do not reappear until near the end. The chromatic motive of the **Prestissimo** is also used in the penultimate movement, **Allegretto**, where the intervals are extended and the rhythmic pattern altered. These inner complementary movements are, however, wildly different in mood. The muted strings of the **Prestissimo** give that movement a shimmering colour while in the allegretto, simultaneous glissandi, guitar-like accompaniments and snap pizzicati (used here for the first time) abound.

The percussive fifth movement suggests a wild Magyar dance with powerful triple and quadruple stopping on open strings. Syncopation occurs on various off beats throughout the movement. Held notes are attacked by bowing across all open strings in the cello and second violin. A brief silence of two and a half crotchets precedes the recapitalization, which refers back to the first movement whose coda is almost literally reproduced at the close.

## **Intermission**

***String Quartet No. 2 in A Major, Opus 68***

***Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)***

**Overture: Moderato con moto**

**Recitative and Romance: Adagio**

**Waltz: Allegro**

**Theme and Variations: Adagio – Moderato con moto**

Shostakovich wrote his First Quartet in 1938. Whereas that work is witty and relaxed, the Second Quartet, which followed in 1944, is an altogether bigger piece, dogged and intense. The extensive opening movement, headed “Overture”, is constructed from terse motivic ideas with the composer obviously enjoying the possibilities of motivic interaction and combination. Closely composed, it demands close listening, and such is its staying power that not until the very end is the principal subject formally recapitulated.

The second movement, a heartfelt romance, is framed by lengthy declamatory passages (molto espressivo) marked “Recitative” in a formal experiment which Shostakovich never repeated. The scherzo is a “diabolical” waltz, haunted, as if from a distance, by the “dance of death” imagery found in so many of his wartime and post-war compositions. Here the instruments are muted throughout, but the dynamics rise to ff and the climax is strenuous.

The finale is a continuous set of variations in A Minor, introduced by a short Adagio derived from the theme, which is then stated (Moderato con moto) by each instrument in turn, beginning with the viola. The variations are both imaginative and instrumentally brilliant, with an emphasis on reiterated figures and progressive quickening of the tempo. In the final section there is a return to the Adagio introduction, and the movement ends with a broad declamatory version of the beginning of the theme.

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**Final concert at the Vancouver Playhouse at 7:30 pm**

**Isidore Quartet****Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at 7:30 pm**

Mozart: String Quartet No. 19 in C Major, K 465 “Dissonance”

Billy Childs: String Quartet No. 3 “Unrequited”

Beethoven: String Quartet No. 12 in E-flat Major, Opus 127

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**2025-2026 Friends of Chamber Music concert season**

We are thrilled to announce the groups and dates for our 2025-2026 concert series!

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Tue 14 Oct 2025 7:30 pm  | Aris Quartet (1st FCM concert)        |
| 2. Tue 28 Oct 2025 7:30 pm  | Esme Quartet (2nd FCM concert)        |
| 3. Tue 11 Nov 2025 7:30 pm  | Modigliani Quartet (2nd FCM concert)  |
| 4. Sun 01 Feb 2026 3:00 pm  | Casals Quartet (2nd FCM concert)      |
| 5. Sun 15 Feb 2026 3:00 pm  | Castalian Quartet (1st FCM concert)   |
| 6. Tue 24 Feb 2026 7:30 pm  | Takacs Quartet (28th FCM concert)     |
| 7. Sun 15 Mar 2026 3:00 pm  | Mandelring Quartet (10th FCM concert) |
| 8. Tue 24 Mar 2026 7:30 pm  | Trio Boheme (1st FCM concert)         |
| 9. Tue 31 Mar 2026 7:30 pm  | Dover Quartet (2nd FCM concert)       |
| 10. Tue 28 Apr 2026 7:30 pm | Calder Quartet (1st FCM concert)      |

Please make note of the dates (including 3 Sunday matinées) and ensembles.

\*Artists are subject to change without notice.

Programmes have not yet been set.

Subscription packages and single tickets for the 2025-2026 season will go on sale after the end of the 2024-2025 concert series.