

CU ★ PRESENTS

2020-21 Season  
Digital program



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**CU ★ PRESENTS** is the home of performing arts  
at the University of Colorado Boulder.

*The Grammy Award-winning **Takács Quartet** has  
been moving audiences and selling out concerts  
for three decades at CU Boulder.*

## 2020-21 Digital Programs

*August-October 2020*

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# Richard O'Neill's time has arrived

*By Becca Vaclavik*

People often wonder how great talents come to fall in love with their craft. Most assume it's generational, raising questions of nature versus nurture. Are we born with our gifts? Or do the people we love instill their own dreams and desires within us?

"I believe it has to come from somewhere, right?" muses Richard O'Neill, the newest member of the Takács Quartet.

O'Neill doesn't come from a family of musicians. But the love and appreciation for music, at least, is in his blood. Growing up in his grandparents' home in rural Washington, he often had to find ways to occupy himself. From a very young age, O'Neill would spend hours every day making his way through their massive record collection and listening to various LPs.

Nurture, then. And nature, too.

"My mom wasn't a musician; she was never given the chance. But she could sit down at a piano and play church hymns without anyone showing her how.

She had perfect pitch. I think I got my gifts from her.”

The music of his childhood stuck with him. In the years since, O’Neill has built a career teaching and playing the viola internationally. Throughout it all, he confesses, he had his eye on the Takács Quartet. In fact, he first auditioned for the quartet in 2005, but Geri Walther was destined for the group at that time.

“I was deeply disappointed,” O’Neill confesses. “I took it very hard. I remember getting the call from them, but they said, ‘This is not the right time in your life.’”

The right time, as it turns out, is now. Last fall, O’Neill flew out to Boulder to audition once again for the group. “We dove into Bartók, Beethoven, Mozart and Brahms. It was like a dream.”

The rest is history, though a curious one. O’Neill was invited to join, as he puts it, one of the greatest string quartets of all time in one of the most beautiful communities in the world. But he officially took up rehearsals in June, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to rehearse, the group had to live very closed lives, hardly going out, except to one another’s homes.

The chaotic start has only reiterated that O’Neill is exactly where he was meant to be, where his childhood dreams have always been leading.

“For a lot of artists this has been a cataclysm—no concerts, no traveling, no music making. So to be in the quartet at this time, it’s fortuitous.

“Making music is sacred. It is one of our great gifts to be together and to share this sublime music with people. I can’t imagine anything more wonderful.”

*While campus remains closed to audiences, this fall the Takács Quartet will livestream their Grusin Hall series concerts to subscribers in the comfort and safety of their own homes.*



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# Takács Quartet

Takács Quartet and Ivalas Quartet!

Streaming Oct. 4-12, 2020  
Virtual performance streamed from  
Grusin Music Hall

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## 5 Fantasiestücke for String Quartet, Op. 5

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

- I. Prelude
- II. Serenade
- III. Humoresque
- IV. Minuet
- V. Dance

*Takács Quartet*

## Strum

Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

*Ivalas Quartet*

## An Elegy: A Cry from the Grave

Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

*Ivalas Quartet*

## String Quartet No. 5 “Parks”

Daniel Bernard Roumain (b. 1970)

- I. “I made up my mind not to move.”
- II. Klap Ur Handz

*Ivalas Quartet*

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# Bachianas brasileiras No.9, W449, arranged for string octet

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

I. Preludio, Vagaroso e Místico

II. Fuga (Pouco apressando)

*Takács Quartet and Ivalas Quartet*

## About the performers

The **Takács Quartet**, now entering its 46th season, is renowned for the vitality of its interpretations.

The Guardian recently commented: “What endures about the Takács Quartet, year after year, is how equally the four players carry the music.” BBC Music Magazine described the group’s recent Dohnányi recording with pianist Marc André Hamelin as “totally compelling, encapsulating a vast array of colours and textures.” Based in Boulder at the University of Colorado, Edward Dusingberre and Harumi Rhodes (violin), Richard O’Neill (viola), and András Fejér (cello) perform 80 concerts a year worldwide.

In June 2020, the Takács Quartet was featured in the BBC television series *Being Beethoven*. The ensemble also released an album of piano quintets by Amy

Beach and Edward Elgar, a fitting way to celebrate Geri Walther's 15 years as the Takács' violist before her retirement from the group. The members of the quartet welcomed Richard O'Neill as their new violist in June and are looking forward to many exciting projects during their first season together.

The Takács records for Hyperion Records, and its releases for that label include string quartets by Haydn, Schubert, Janáček, Smetana, Debussy and Britten; piano quintets by César Franck and Shostakovich (with Marc-André Hamelin); and viola quintets by Brahms (with Lawrence Power). For its albums 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 at [\*\*takacsquartet.com\*\*](http://takacsquartet.com).

The members of the Takács Quartet are Christoffersen Faculty Fellows at the University of Colorado Boulder. The quartet has helped to develop a string program with a special emphasis on chamber music, where students work in a nurturing



environment designed to help them develop their artistry. Through the university, two of the quartet's members benefit from the generous loan of instruments from the Drake Instrument Foundation. The members of the Takács are on the faculty at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, where they run an intensive summer string quartet seminar, and are Visiting Fellows at the Guildhall School of Music.

The **Ivalas Quartet**, founded in Ann Arbor in 2016, is composed of violinists Reuben Kebede and Anita Dumar, violist Aimée McAnulty and cellist Pedro Sánchez. Currently the quartet serves as the graduate quartet-in-residence at the University of Colorado Boulder where the ensemble studies under the renowned Takács Quartet. Ivalas has performed with artists such as the Calidore String Quartet, Imani Winds, Danielle Belen, David Ying and Patricia Terry-Ross. In January 2020 the group had its Carnegie Hall debut when it participated as a young artist at the 2020 APAP conference in New York. The quartet has also been heard on WRCJ 90.9 FM's Classical Brunch series and appeared at the inaugural Detroit Music Weekend. Maintaining their commitment to community engagement,

members of Ivalas have also represented the Sphinx Organization, playing for students in Flint and the Metro Detroit area. The quartet was awarded first prize in the 2019 WDAV Young Artists Chamber Music Competition as well as first prize in the 2018 Briggs Chamber Music Competition and was named a semifinalist group at both the M-Prize competition and Concert Artists Guild competition in New York. Ivalas has been a fellowship quartet at festivals such as the Aspen Music Festival and School, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, Colorado Music Festival, Crested Butte Music Festival and the Anchorage Chamber Music Festival. Ivalas has been coached by members of the Emerson, Pacifica, American, Escher, Calidore, Brentano, St. Lawrence, Ying, Turtle Island and Jupiter string quartets; as well as Paul Katz, Jeffrey Zeigler, Mikhail Kopelman, Kirsten Docter, Richard Aaron, Danielle Belen, Stephen Shipps, Meta Weiss, Erika Eckert, Andrew Jennings and Kathryn Votapek.

Ivalas would like to extend a special thank you to the following organizations and individuals for their generous support of the quartet's endeavors through travel funding and scholarships: The University of

Colorado Boulder; the Dorothy Richard Starling Foundation; the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance; Center Stage Strings; the Sphinx Organization; EXCEL; the Mandell Collection of Southern California; Maurice Binkow and Freyja Harris at the SMTD Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.



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