

CU ★ PRESENTS



September-November 2023

-  Takács Quartet Sept. 17-18
-  Lila Downs Sept. 22
-  When You Wish Upon a Star Oct. 6
-  Falstaff Oct. 27 and 29
-  Nobuntu Nov. 2



—Julez Bryant

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Nobuntu performs Nov. 2 as part of the Artist Series.

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SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2023

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Artist Series: Lila Downs performs on Sept. 22.
Photo provided by artist's management

Takács Quartet: *Photo by Amanda Tipton*

College of Music: The Eklund Opera's 2012-
13 season production of *Falstaff*.
Photo provided by Eklund Opera

The University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado's flagship university, honors and recognizes the many contributions of Indigenous peoples in our state. CU Boulder acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute and many other Native American nations. Their forced removal from these territories has caused devastating and lasting impacts.



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CU Presents is the home of performing arts on the beautiful University of Colorado Boulder campus. With hundreds of concerts, plays, recitals and more on our stages each year, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

- ★ Artist Series
- CU Colorado Shakespeare Festival
- 🎷 Takács Quartet
- CU CU Performing Arts, including the **College of Music**, **Department of Theatre & Dance** and the **Holiday Festival**.

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Artist Series and Center for African and African American Studies Forge Dynamic Partnership

CU Presents Staff

The University of Colorado Boulder's cultural landscape is set to receive a vibrant and enriching boost as CU Presents' Artist Series and the Center for African and African American Studies (CAAAS) join forces in an exciting new partnership. This collaboration will support an inspiring array of performances and events that celebrate the richness of African and African American arts and culture.

The CAAAS's dedication to promoting awareness and understanding of the African diaspora unites with the Artist Series' mission to bring world-class performances to the campus community. As part of this collaboration, the CAAAS will proudly co-sponsor two Artist Series events in Macky Auditorium during the 2023-24 season: the electrifying harmony of *Nobuntu* on Nov. 2 and the captivating movement of *Step Afrika!* on Feb. 2.

"The Center for African & African American Studies is thrilled to partner with CU Presents' Artist Series. "This partnership means that the Boulder campus and Boulder community will be able to witness wonderful performing artists from Africa and throughout the African diaspora on a regular basis," according to the CAAAS founder and director Reiland Rabaka.

"I am excited by this partnership and the opportunity to engage more deeply with the communities we wish to serve. As one of our renowned faculty experts, Rabaka's expertise will help inform future Artist Series programming and outreach activities," adds Joan McLean Braun, Executive Director of CU Presents.

Nobuntu, an all-female a cappella quintet hailing from Zimbabwe, promises to mesmerize audiences with their harmonious melodies and

powerful storytelling on the stage. This unique group embodies the resilience and creativity that characterizes so much of African and African American cultural expressions.

Step Afrika!, the renowned dance company rooted in the traditions of stepping, will grace the CU Boulder campus with a performance that fuses percussive dance, engaging choreography and vibrant rhythms. Their captivating show not only celebrates the dynamism of African American dance but also invites audiences to partake in an exhilarating interactive and cross-cultural experience.

As part of their joint efforts, the Artist Series and the CAAAS are also thrilled to announce an interactive workshop with Ghanaian musician and storyteller **Okaidja Afroso** on September 26 at CU Boulder's Center for Community. Through the collaborative efforts of both organizations, Afroso will welcome participants on a journey including stories, songs, dances and a Q&A. This workshop is also made possible by Denver's Newman Center for the Performing Arts, where Afroso will perform live on Sept. 27.

The partnership between the Artist Series and the CAAAS exemplifies CU Boulder's commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive campus environment. By bringing together the power of performance and the rich cultural expression of African and African American studies, this collaboration promises to enrich the university community and beyond.

(Photo: Okaidja Afroso)





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Song of Pueblo

Thursday, Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m.
 Grusin Music Hall, CU Boulder

Join us for “Song of Pueblo,” a folk oratorio by Daniel Valdez. World premiere performances of the orchestrated version of “Song of Pueblo”—created by College of Music alumni—will feature the CU Boulder Chamber Orchestra alongside Pueblo musicians.

A second performance of “Song of Pueblo” will be held Oct. 21, 2 p.m. at Memorial Hall, Pueblo. Performances are free + open to the public. colorado.edu/amrc/pueblo.

These performances are made possible through The Roser Visiting Artist Endowment.



CU ★ PRESENTS

UPCOMING EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

TICKETED EVENT KEY

- ★ Artist Series
- 🎷 Takács Quartet
- CU CU Boulder Performing Arts



Scan this QR code or visit cupresents.org/performances to explore the full season.



Lila Downs

Friday, Sept. 22, 7:30 p.m.

- ★ Macky Auditorium



When You Wish Upon a Star

A Jazz Tribute to 100 Years of Disney

Friday, Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m.

- ★ Macky Auditorium



Falstaff

An opera by Giuseppe Verdi

Oct. 27 and 29, 2023

- CU Macky Auditorium



Nobuntu

Thursday, Nov. 2, 7:30 p.m.

- ★ Macky Auditorium



Working, A Musical

A musical from the book by Studs Terkel

Nov. 3-12, 2023

- CU Roe Green Theatre



Takács Quartet

Nov. 5-6, 2023

- 🎷 Grusin Music Hall

Streaming Nov. 5-13



9 to 5, The Musical

Nov. 9-12, 2023

 Music Theatre



Holiday Festival 2023

Dec. 8-10, 2023

 Macky Auditorium



Christmas with the Canadian Brass

Wednesday, Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m.

 Macky Auditorium



Joyce Yang, piano with the Takács Quartet

Friday, Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m.

 Macky Auditorium



Takács Quartet

Jan. 14-15, 2024

 Grusin Music Hall

Streaming Jan. 14-22



MOMIX

Alice

Saturday, Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m.

 Macky Auditorium

Good to know for the show:

Accessibility

The University of Colorado is committed to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities.



For more information, scan this QR code or visit cupresents.org/accessibility.

Late Seating

Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the house manager.

There is no late seating in the Music Theatre (Imig Music Building) or Loft Theatre (University Theatre Building).

Photos and Recordings

Photography and video recordings of any type are strictly prohibited during the performance.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere. CU Boulder is a smoke-free campus.

Ticket Sales

Ticket sales are final; no refunds. Exchanges are subject to availability and must be made at least one business day prior to the day of performance.

Subscribers may exchange tickets for free. Single-ticket exchanges are subject to a \$3 exchange fee. Upgrade fees may apply in all cases.

Please return your tickets to the box office prior to the performance if you are unable to use them.



The Center for African and African American Studies (acronym: the CAAAS, and commonly called the Cause) is the focal point for Black community and Black culture at the University of Colorado Boulder. It is a co-curricular and community-building space where students, staff, faculty, alumni, artists, activists, allies, and community members come together to critically study the historical, cultural, and artistic experiences of Africans, African Americans, and the African diaspora.

The Center has three major programs: the CAAAS Research Program, the CAAAS Visual and Performing Arts Program and the CAAAS Student Services Program. As a result, it is simultaneously a research center, cultural arts center, and student services center.

For further information and/or to join the CAAAS/the Cause community visit our website at colorado.edu/center/caaas or contact us at caaas@colorado.edu.



Center for African and
African American Studies
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

CU ★ PRESENTS

“Nobuntu” — an expression meaning feminine familial love, humility and kindness — is a female a cappella quintet from Zimbabwe that draws international acclaim for its breathtaking performances of traditional Zimbabwean songs, afro jazz and gospel.

Nobuntu

Thursday, Nov. 2, 7:30 p.m.

Macky Auditorium

★ Tickets and more at cupresents.org.



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Verdi's Falstaff is a comic masterpiece

By Henry Michaels

The name Giuseppe Verdi is likely to conjure up in the mind of the opera lover images of intense—even gritty—dramas. But his final masterpiece, *Falstaff*, comes from a far different realm: the world of comedy.

The titular character of Verdi's compositional coup de grâce is Sir John Falstaff, a loud, drunken buffoon of a man who features in three Shakespeare plays: *Henry IV* parts one and two, as well as *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Although his appearances are always played for a laugh, Falstaff is a character with real human dimension, something at which Shakespeare excelled and that Verdi and librettist Arrigo Boito carried through into the opera. Macky Auditorium will play host to that signature blend of comedy and depth on October 27 and 29. This production of the College of Music's Eklund Opera Program is overseen by Director Leigh Holman and Music Director Nicholas Carthy.

Verdi's *Falstaff* is based primarily on *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, although it does draw a few scenes from *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2*. "Falstaff is a knight who needs more money for food and beer," says Eklund Opera Program Director Leigh Holman. "What does he do? He decides to woo Alice Ford, a very wealthy woman in hopes of securing some dough for food and wine."

Deciding two women are better than one, Falstaff additionally sets his sights on Alice's friend, Meg. "Comedy ensues when Falstaff mistakenly thinks he's as smooth as Don Juan and he goes after these rich women," says Holman. "These women are sick and tired of being hit on and they make a game out of getting their revenge. It's a comedic commentary on misogyny, power dynamics and girl-power! You've gotta love that."

It's a work that has much to offer for seasoned operagoers and newbies,

alike. "For operatic veterans, you will see one of the most brilliant operas written by Verdi," says Holman. "For newcomers to opera: You are going to have fun. You will have a rollicking good time, hear beautiful voices with athletic magnitude, a student orchestra that rivals any collegiate orchestra, lights, colors, and hilarity culminating in an epic experience. No other live performance genre can rival opera, and this is a great one to cut your teeth on."

"In this comedy, Verdi's last opera before his death, you will experience the brilliance of his musical magic and theatrical acumen come together in one comedic work. It is not to be missed."

FALSTAFF

Oct. 17 and 19
Macky Auditorium
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2023 Holiday Festival

Dec. 8-10, 2023

Macky Auditorium

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Joyce Yang captivates audiences with her virtuosity, lyricism and interpretive sensitivity. The first half of this concert features Yang in a solo recital. Local favorites, the Takács Quartet, join her on the second half to perform Dvorák's lyrical Piano Quintet in A Major.

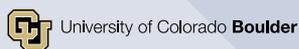
Joyce Yang, piano with

the Takács Quartet

Friday, Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m.

Macky Auditorium

★ Tickets and more at cupresents.org.

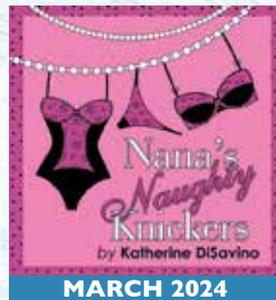
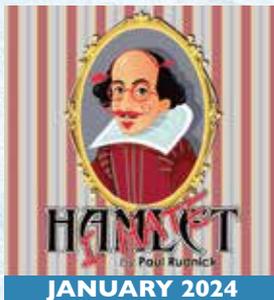
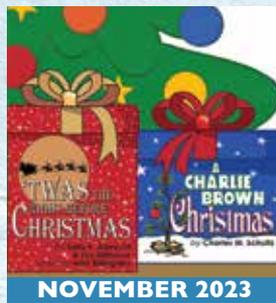
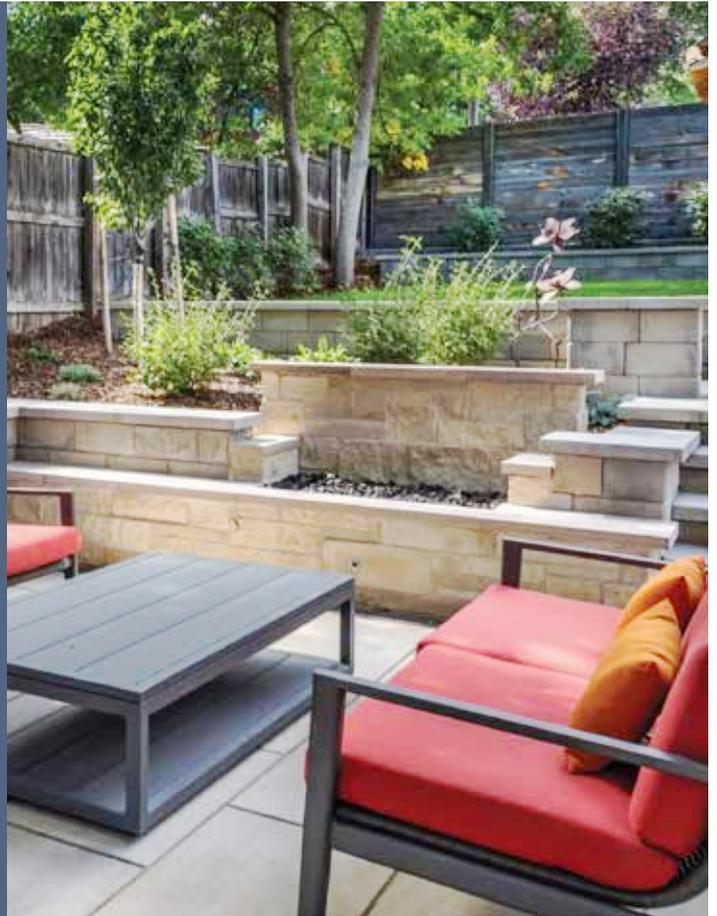




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Deck the Halls with the Canadian Brass

By Henry Michaels

In the world of brass quintets, there is one name that stands above all others: the Canadian Brass.

From Carnegie Hall to Sesame Street, the Canadian Brass has been entertaining audiences around the globe for more than 50 years. Few musical groups are known so equally for their musicianship and their charisma, but this potent combination of impeccable playing and magnetic stage presence has become the hallmark of the Canadian Brass. Their more than 130 albums—totaling more than 2 million albums sold worldwide—is a testament to their immense musical impact.

A veritable musical force of nature, the Canadian Brass have left the landscape of brass chamber music forever altered. Their jam-packed schedule of traveling, performing, recording and outreach means the group goes through a *lot* of music—and in so doing, they have almost single-handedly transformed the brass quintet repertoire. Between commissions for new music and transcriptions and arrangements of existing works, the Canadian Brass are responsible for adding more than 600 musical works to a repertoire that once could have been described as limited.

Throughout the course of the 53-year history of the Canadian Brass, there has been one constant: tubist and founding member Chuck Daellenbach has served as the foundation—musically and otherwise—of the group since 1970! But new faces do join the Canadian Brass from time to time, and this fall marks the debut of new

trumpet player Ashley Hall-Tighe. Ashley brings a wealth of playing experience to the group, both as an internationally acclaimed soloist and as a chamber musician. She serves as principal trumpet of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and is on the faculty at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. And this won't be her first experience with the Canadian Brass, having first worked with the group as a student in 2001 as part of their chamber music residency at the Music Academy of the West. With an almost 20-year international performing career, Ashley Hall-Tighe is sure to fit right in with one of the world's busiest and most storied brass ensembles.

Although it may feel strange to refer to a group as well known as the Canadian Brass as being famous for any one particular thing, they are justifiably renowned for their Christmas concerts. With decades of holiday-themed programming and more than 10 Christmas albums, the Canadian Brass are sure to present a Yuletide musical extravaganza that will have visions of sugar plums dancing in *everyone's* heads.

CANADIAN BRASS

Dec. 13, 2023
Macky Auditorium
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Takács Quartet

4 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023

7:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 18, 2023

Grusin Music Hall

Program

String Quartet in D Major, Op. 71, No. 2

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

- I. Adagio - Allegro
- II. Adagio cantabile
- III. Allegro - Trio
- IV. Finale. Allegretto

String Quartet No. 5

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio molto
- III. Scherzo. Alla bulgarese (vivace)
- IV. Andante
- V. Finale. Allegro vivace - Presto

— Intermission —

String Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

- I. Allegro
- II. Molto adagio
- III. Allegretto - Maggiore (Thème russe)
- IV. Finale. Presto

NEED TO KNOW FOR THE SHOW

- Sunday's performance is recorded and streamed through Monday, Sept. 25.
- Photography and video recordings of any type are strictly prohibited during the performance.
- See **Page 9** of this publication for additional show and venue policies.

Program Notes

By Marc Shulgold

String Quartet in D Major, Op. 71, No. 2 Joseph Haydn

Let us pause and give thanks to two oft-neglected men who inspired musical masterpieces in the late 18th century. First off is Johann Peter Salomon (1745-1815), a violinist born in Bonn (Beethoven's hometown) who'd settled in London and enjoyed success as a soloist and leader of a string quartet—and who, more significantly, dabbled in concert promotion. He was keenly aware of Londoners' fondness for Haydn, an infatuation that had developed back in the early 1780s, leading Salomon to recognize an opportunity. Traveling to Vienna in late 1790, he made his pitch to the composer, who was recently released from his longtime employment at the Esterháza Palace. Come with me to London, Salomon proposed, you'll love it there—and they'll love you. Now free to move about the continent, Haydn packed his bags, tossing in six new symphonies (Nos. 93-98) and some of the string quartets from Opus 64. Salomon was right: The tour was a smash, leading to a return engagement in 1794-95. During the interim, Haydn wrote six more symphonies along with six string quartets. And that's where our second unsung hero emerges: Count Anton Georg Apponyi (1751-1817). A relative of the Esterházy and, like Haydn, a Freemason, the Count was a well-respected lover of music both old and new (he had joined the circle of Viennese dilettantes enthralled with the works of Bach and Handel). Apponyi encouraged his composer friends to write chamber music, prodding young Beethoven to try his hand at string quartet-writing and, with a purse of 100 ducats, inspiring Haydn to write six string quartets in 1793.

These works (divided into two sets of three by a publisher) may bear the benefactor's name, but they were clearly written with London in mind. In fact, they're sometimes referred to as the Salomon Quartets. Opus 71 and 74 mark a huge change in the composer's approach. As we'll hear right at the start of the second quartet of Opus 71, the music was now bigger with bold, fresh ideas. Notice, too, the prominence of an ever-busy first violin

part—written, no doubt, for the considerable skills of Johann Salomon. Each of the six in Opus 71 and 74 begins with a powerful opening statement, usually a single unison chord. In this D-Major quartet, we're instantly drawn in by a brief, dramatic slow introduction. Such devices were designed to quiet the chatty crowd of 800 or so Londoners who'd gathered in the Hanover Square theater. Things were changing as the 18th century drew to a close. The old days of informal chamber performances by ad hoc groups sight-reading in some Viennese patron's home would be replaced with advertised public concerts by well-rehearsed, professional ensembles. And, as usual, Haydn was standing proudly at the forefront of the new.

String Quartet No. 5 Béla Bartók

A half-dozen years, 1928-1934, separate the fourth and fifth of Bartók's six string quartets, a period that saw the creation of such works as the Second Piano Concerto (1931) and the 44 Duos for Two Violins (1931)—the latter serving to enhance the composer's interest in the folk music of Eastern Europe. Despite the passage of time, the fourth and fifth quartets share a kinship: Each is built on five movements, laid out in an arch-like symmetry. The opening and closing movements mirror each other, as do the second and fourth, with the third standing alone as the centerpiece (a concept continued a decade later in his Concerto for Orchestra). Not that Bartók was out to repeat himself. Not a chance. For example, the fourth quartet's mirror-image second and fourth movements are quick Scherzos, surrounding a slow middle movement—the exact opposite of how the fifth quartet is constructed. The String Quartet No. 5 was written in late summer of 1934 and premiered by the Kolisch Quartet in Washington, DC in April of the following year. The work resulted from a commission by the American arts patron Elizabeth Sprague-Coolidge (1864-1953), who also financed numerous chamber and orchestra works by European and American composers, most famously Copland's *Appalachian Spring*.

Bartók begins this quartet with a furious, repeating statement of B-flat, the work's principal tonality. Yet, far from being another angry and violent piece, as was the case with many of his compositions that preceded, the fifth is welcoming in its clearly delineated construction and occasional folk-like touches —plus a hilarious surprise near its conclusion. In the two slow movements, each a reflection of the other, we get a taste of the composer's so-called "night music." Here, the atmosphere is calm and quiet, suggesting the sounds of insects and the occasional bird call—though at times the mood turns a bit creepy.

String Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 Ludwig van Beethoven

Consider, if you will, the leap from Beethoven's first collection of string quartets to the next. It's quite a jump. The six of Opus 18 were penned in the final years of the 18th century, an era known for producing classically polite and mostly predictable music. The threesome of Opus 59 emerged a mere six years later—but what extraordinary years they were. The world was undergoing massive changes politically, socially and, in Beethoven's case, musically. For one thing, in 1803 he had written the "Eroica" Symphony, a massive, revolutionary work that, in retrospect, served to separate the Old from the New. But there was more going on in his wildly creative mind in the early 1800s: An evolving view of composition permitted not only an expansion of ideas, but an unbridled experimentation with them, in which mighty oaks could grow from tiny musical acorns. Motifs such as the four notes launching the Symphony No. 5, premiered in 1808, could provide more than enough material. Significantly, the three quartets of Opus 59 were published that same year. In such a fruitful period, Beethoven was able to allow his imagination to freely explore all sorts of unexpected twists and turns—most visibly in the development section of a work's opening movement.

Opus 59's E-minor quartet provides a perfect illustration. It kicks off with a pair of brief, explosive chords and pregnant silences. Pure Beethoven. Once we'd become familiar with the two contrasting themes that follow, he develops and guides them into new and potentially dangerous territory. Keep

in mind, these amazing journeys of discovery back then must have proved quite a ride for listeners trying to comprehend this brand new music. Yet, the composer was still mindful of long-established rules: Once the wonderfully inventive development is completed, we hear those two emphatic introductory chords and the recapitulation dutifully unfolds. But notice how the familiar scenery has changed. In a way, the string quartet's opening movement demonstrates how vividly the composer's range of possibilities had opened up—and in a span of only a half-dozen years.

There is much more happening in this second of the three so-called "Razumovsky" Quartets of Opus 59 (the nickname given in honor of Count Andrey Kirillovich Razumovsky, the Russian ambassador to Vienna, who commissioned them). The solemn *Adagio* seems almost motionless. The composer's friend Carl Czerny recounted that the hymn-like melody came to Beethoven one evening while "contemplating the starry sky and thinking of the music of the spheres." Perhaps in a moment of dark reflection, he suddenly interrupts this quiet meditation with two forceful, long-held chords. The following *Allegretto* introduces a respectful nod to his patron with a pleasant Russian tune (marked *Thème russe*). Departing from standard practice in such *Scherzos*, Beethoven instructs the players to repeat yet again that Russian theme and, one more time, the deliciously syncopated opening section. The quartet's finale lightens things up as it gallops along, ending with a full-throttle coda which must have dazzled that first audience, while demonstrating the prowess of the original foursome led by Beethoven's dear friend and lifelong champion, Ignaz Schuppanzigh.

About the Performers

The world-renowned Takács Quartet is now entering its 49th season.

Edward Dusinberre, Harumi Rhodes (violins), Richard O'Neill (viola) and András Fejér (cello) are excited about the 2023-2024 season that features varied projects including a new work written for them. Nokuthula Ngwenyama composed *Flow*, an exploration and celebration of the natural world. The work was commissioned by nine concert presenters throughout the U.S. July sees the release of a new recording of works by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Dvořák for Hyperion Records, while later in the season the quartet will release works by Schubert including his final quartet in G major. In the Spring of 2024 the ensemble will perform and record piano quintets by Price and Dvořák with long-time chamber music partner Marc-Andre Hamelin.

As Associate Artists at London's Wigmore Hall the Takács will perform four concerts featuring works by Hough, Price, Janacek, Schubert and Beethoven. During the season the ensemble will play at other prestigious European venues including Berlin, Geneva, Linz, Innsbruck, Cambridge and St. Andrews. The Takács will appear at the Adams Chamber Music Festival in New Zealand. The group's North American engagements include concerts in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington DC, Vancouver, Ann Arbor, Phoenix, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Portland, Cleveland, Santa Fe and Stanford. The ensemble will perform two Bartók cycles at San Jose State University and Middlebury College and appear for the first time at the Virginia Arts Festival with pianist Olga Kern.

The members of the Takács Quartet are Christoffersen Fellows and Artists in Residence at the University of Colorado Boulder. For the 23-24 season the quartet enter into a partnership with El Sistema Colorado, working closely with its chamber music education program in Denver. During the summer months the Takács join the faculty at the Music Academy of the West, running an intensive quartet seminar.

In 2021 the Takács won a Presto Music Recording of the Year Award for their recordings of string quartets by Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn, and a

Gramophone Award with pianist Garrick Ohlsson for piano quintets by Amy Beach and Elgar. Other releases for Hyperion feature works by Haydn, Schubert, Janáček, Smetana, Debussy and Britten, as well as piano quintets by César Franck and Shostakovich (with Marc-André Hamelin), and viola quintets by Brahms and Dvořák (with Lawrence Power). For their CDs 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 in the Recordings section of the Quartet's website.

The Takács Quartet is known for its innovative programming. In 2021-22 the ensemble partnered with bandoneon virtuoso Julien Labro to premiere new works by Clarice Assad and Bryce Dessner, commissioned by Music Accord. In 2014 the Takács performed a program inspired by Philip Roth's novel *Everyman* with Meryl Streep at Princeton, and again with her at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto in 2015. They first performed *Everyman* at Carnegie Hall in 2007 with Philip Seymour Hoffman. They have toured 14 cities with the poet Robert Pinsky, and played regularly with the Hungarian Folk group Muzsikás.

In 2014 the Takács became the first string quartet to be awarded the Wigmore Hall Medal. In 2012, Gramophone announced that the Takács was the first string quartet to be inducted into its Hall of Fame. The ensemble also won the 2011 Award for Chamber Music and Song presented by the Royal Philharmonic Society in London.

The Takács Quartet was formed in 1975 at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest by Gabor Takács-Nagy, Károly Schranz, Gabor Ormai and András Fejér, while all four were students. The group received international attention in 1977, winning First Prize and the Critics' Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France. The Quartet also won the Gold Medal at the 1978 Portsmouth and Bordeaux Competitions and First Prizes at the Budapest International String Quartet Competition in 1978 and the Bratislava Competition in 1981. The Quartet made its North American debut tour in 1982. Members of the Takács Quartet are the grateful beneficiaries of an instrument loan by the Drake Foundation.

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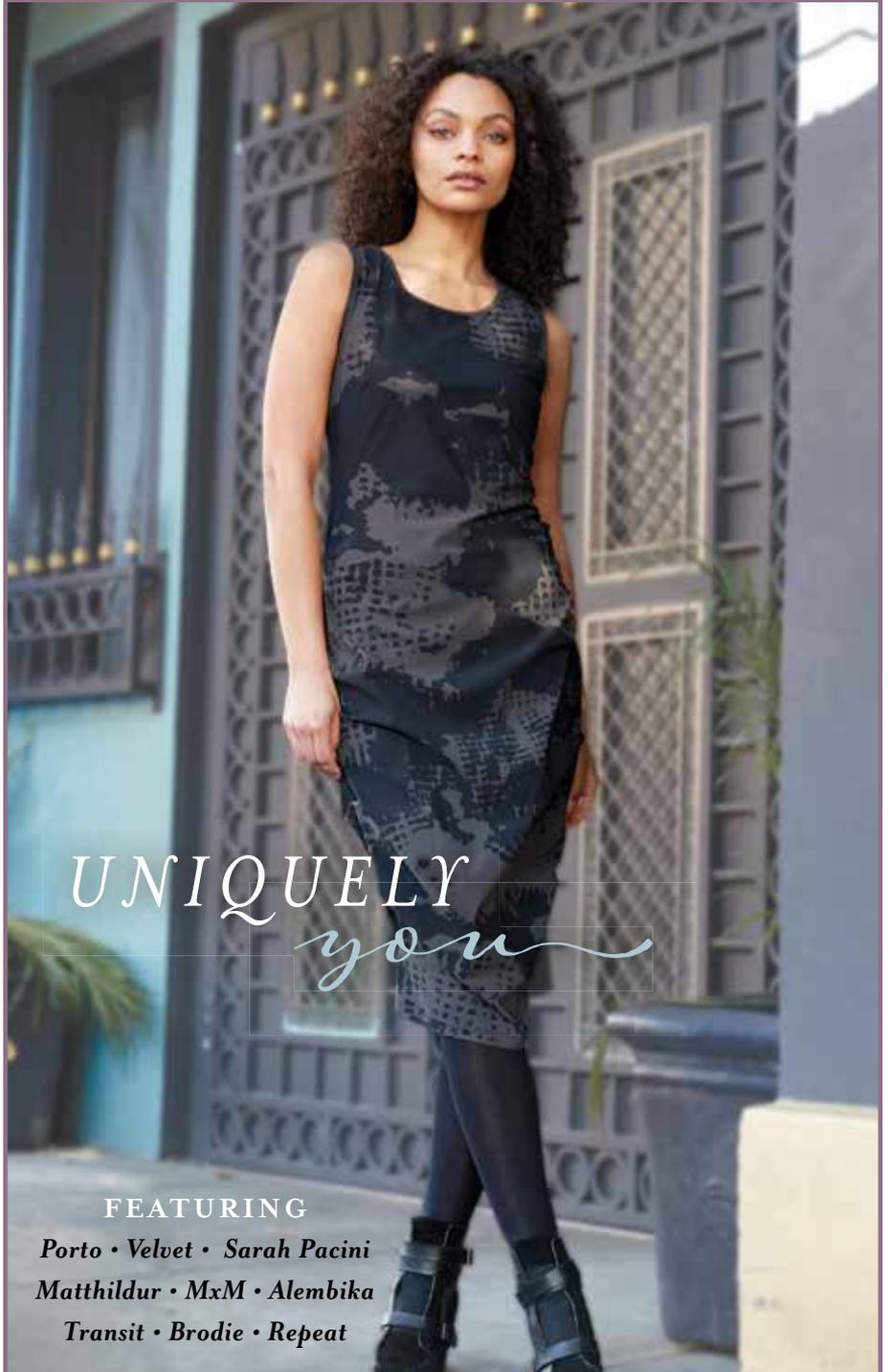
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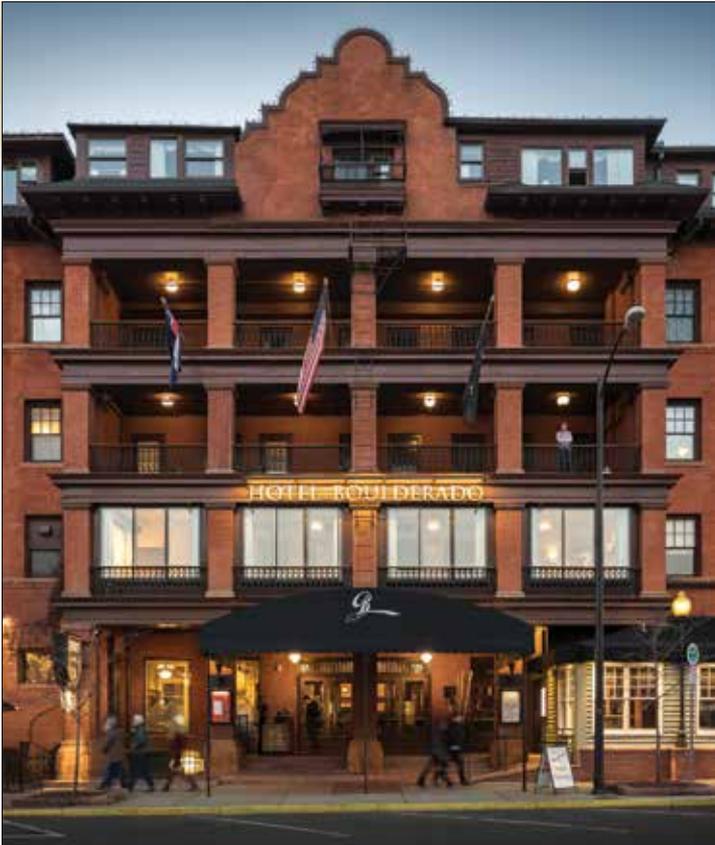
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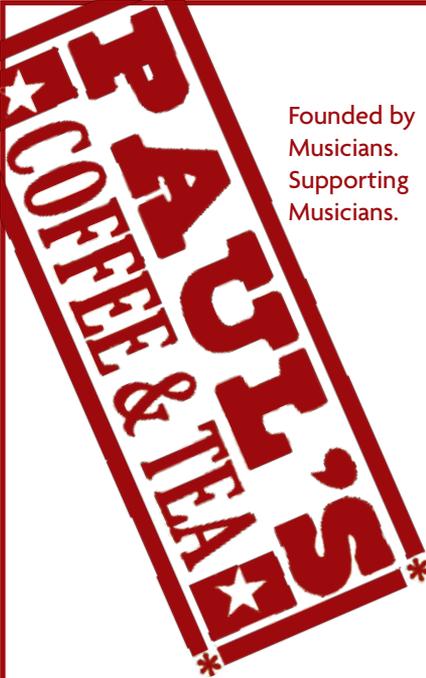
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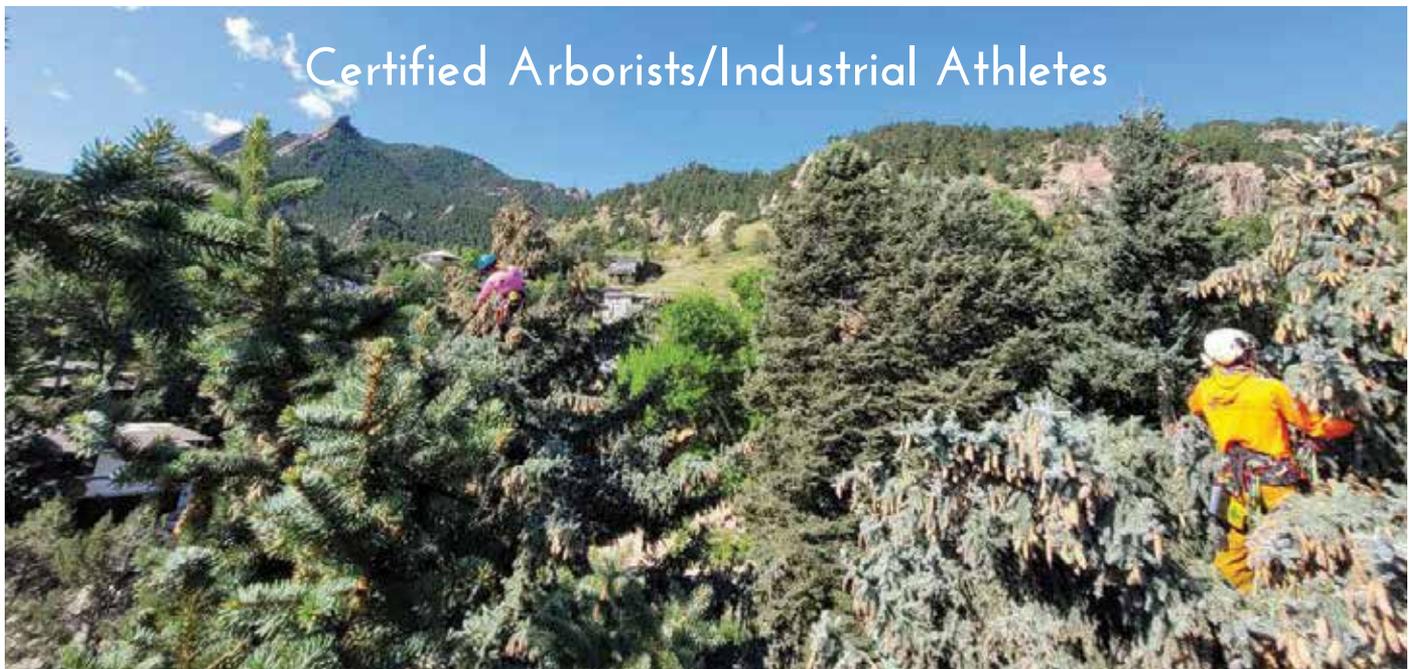
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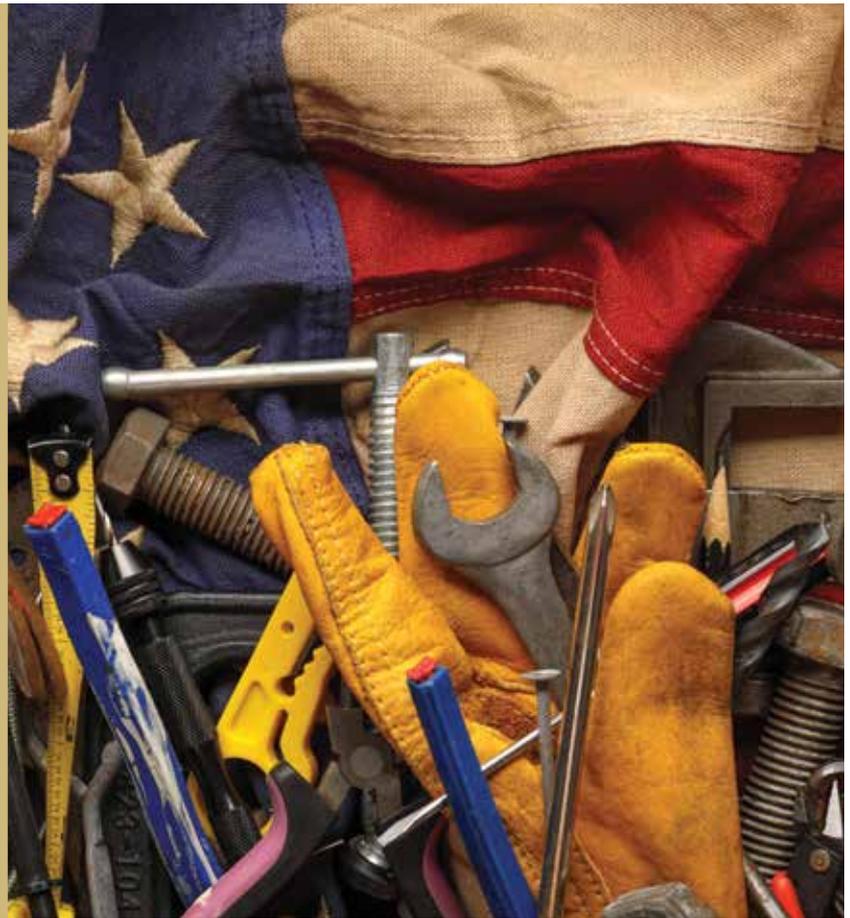
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“A Boulder treasure”

Celebrating the illustrious career of CU Presents Executive Director Joan McLean Braun

By Sabine Kortals Stein

Boulder native and CU Boulder alumna Joan McLean Braun (BM '81 and MBA '93) has achieved an extraordinary 30-year career at her alma mater, much to the delight and deep appreciation of campus and community audiences alike.

“As executive director of CU Presents since 2001, Joan took the helm when CU Presents was still CU Concerts at the College of Music,” recalls Dean John Davis. “From the beginning—back when I directed the college’s jazz studies program in the early 2000s—Joan took the time to really listen and understand the goals, needs and performance activities of the program which opened the gates for me to achieve what I envisioned.

“She extended the same can-do, open-minded approach to all academic areas in the College of Music, quickly recognizing that she needed to closely partner with our departments and studios to develop the infrastructure of a sustainable performing arts entity that also supports our academic mission.”

Since then, Braun—who further serves as the college’s assistant dean for concerts and communications—has led the expansion of CU Presents to become what it is today: The home of all performing arts on the CU Boulder campus with hundreds of concerts, recitals, plays and other events each year, including the popular Holiday Festival and uniquely innovative Faculty Tuesdays series, as well as the much-lauded Artists Series and Takács Quartet series, the nationally acclaimed Colorado Shakespeare Festival and more.

“Joan has done a wonderful job of building and sustaining CU Presents over its long history,” says CU Boulder Chancellor Philip DiStefano. “Her dedicated work connecting the community with all that the College of Music offers has elevated the college’s reputation and strengthened the university’s relationships with the community.

“Joan’s efforts have been deeply appreciated and have laid the foundation for future success for CU performers, scholars and artists.”

Indeed, under Braun’s artistic vision—and thanks to the collaborative relationships she’s established on campus and with other Colorado arts presenters and artists’ agents worldwide—our audiences have experienced the College of Music’s many outstanding ensembles and opera/musical theatre productions, as well as CU Boulder Theatre & Dance performances and groundbreaking acts by award-winning, world-renowned icons.

“The Artist Series has been and remains an extremely prestigious and important series,” says Toby Tumarkin, executive vice president and global head of artists and attractions with IMG Artists. “Under the leadership of Joan

Braun, CU Presents has continued to bring new stars from around the globe while maintaining its traditional audiences, subtly and successfully adapting to a changing arts landscape.

“Consistently an anchor for artists and touring projects in the region and a crucial lynchpin to help to bring shows to the West Coast, Joan Braun’s work at CU Presents is a powerful example of important and thoughtful arts presenting.”

But Braun—who will retire at the end of the 2023-'24 season—is quick to deflect such well-earned respect and admiration. “I have the good fortune of a brilliant team,” she says, also crediting a strong, synergistic collaboration with College of Music Dean Emeritus Daniel Sher over more than two decades. “The way I see it, my role is to empower my senior team, and to ensure they understand what I’ve learned and how I do things—especially artist management and meeting the needs of our community. That’s how we can best support the next director of CU Presents.”

Among her dedicated staff are longtime colleague Laima Haley who directs CU Presents’ marketing and public relations; CU Presents’ Operations Director Andrew Metzroth who oversees Tessitura ticketing operations; Senior House Manager Rojana Savoye; and Macky Auditorium Director Rudy Betancourt. “Boulder’s cultural scene would not have achieved its world-class reputation without Joan’s vision for what is possible, steadfast leadership and resilience in the face of challenges,” says Betancourt. “She has been a trusted mentor and a dear friend not only to me but to many at CU Presents, the College of Music and—closer to my heart—Macky Auditorium.

“Her service to the university and the surrounding area has become an unmatched legacy.”



*And it's precisely Braun's remarkable legacy that inspires our **invitation for donations to the Artist Series endowment in her honor**, with the goal of reaching \$1 million this season.*

“I’m so gratified knowing that the endowment ensures and protects the Artist Series and the overall health of CU Presents—long after I’m retired and into the future,” says Braun. “In the arts, we’re quite vulnerable to events beyond our control—like the recent pandemic or the floods in 2013 when, understandably, a lot fewer people were able to come to our performances.

“For myriad reasons, when earned revenues fall short, the endowment provides crucial funding—hopefully in perpetuity.”

“Managing a performing arts venue is an affair of the heart and mind. On one hand are the myriad logistics: Contracts, communications, transportation, finances. On the other: Human connection, the gift of beauty and meaning. At best, these all play together in a poetic rhythm, organic and natural, to create a unity that seems like it was inevitable.

But it only happens when someone has the vision to see the whole in all of its parts. For the Artist Series and CU Presents, that person is Joan who for 30 years has brought us together for encounters with beauty and meaning through music and dance. She is truly a Boulder treasure.”

—Daryl James, Artist Series Advisory Board member + former chair

Thank you!

Your annual contributions provide essential support for the Artist Series, Eklund Opera and Takács Quartet. Your gifts support concert performances, opera productions, faculty recitals, guest artist appearances, the Takács Quartet residency and many other vital projects. You make these performances possible.



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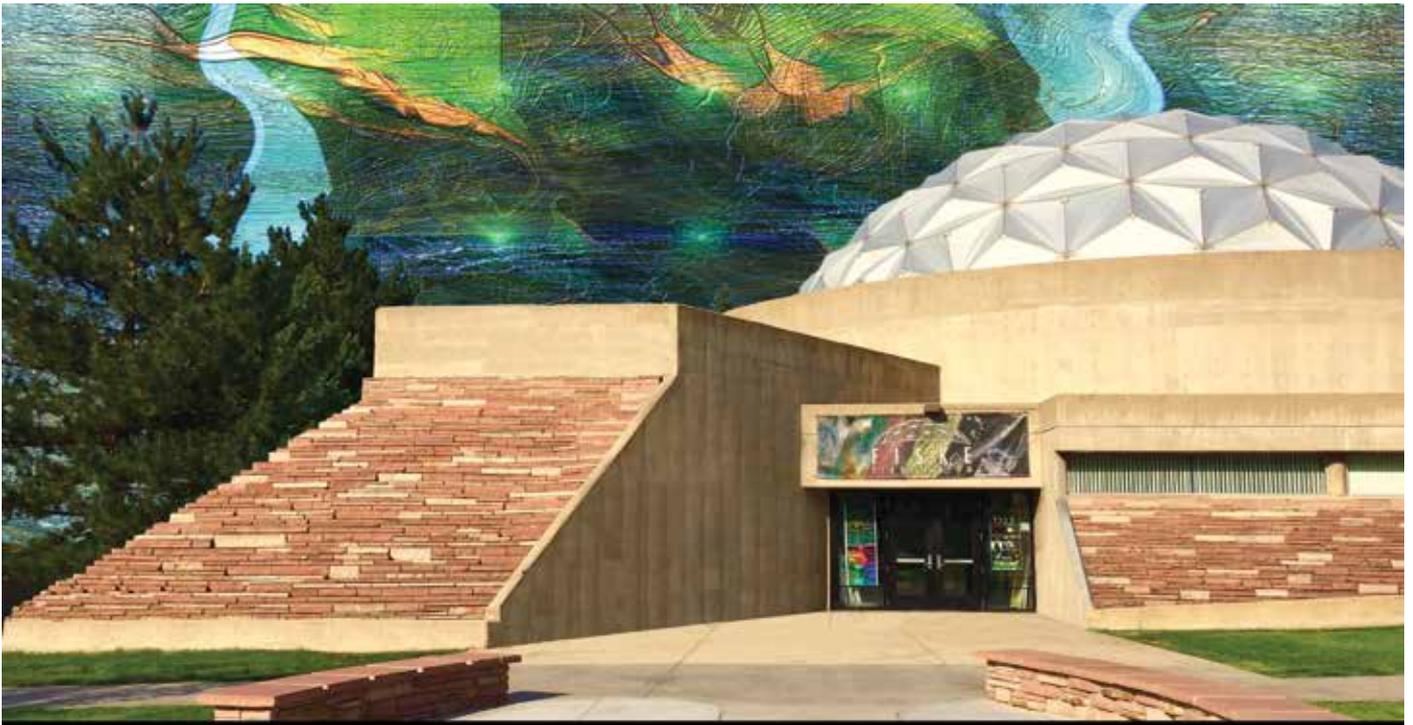
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You'll be surrounded by the amazing outdoors when you live in this Boulder County location, but your indoors will be just as spectacular:

- Open-concept floor plans, flex spaces and optional elevators
- Rooftop entertainment decks with scenic views
- Walk out to a quiet lake and Boulder County open space
- Near retail centers, restaurants and theaters
- Easy commuter access to employment hubs

Come tour new models today and ask about our generous incentives!



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