

STRINGWOOD

CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

FestivalConcertOne

ARTARIA STRING QUARTET u PAUL LARAIA, VIOLA



Wolfgang Mozart



Caroline Shaw



Clarice Assad

Tuesday, August 11, 2026
Sons of Norway Hall
Lanesboro, Minnesota
7pm

Program

Wolfgang Mozart (1756-1791)

String Quintet in G minor, K.516 (1787)

I. Allegro

II. MENUETTO. Allegro

III. Adagio ma non troppo

IV. Adagio - Allegro

Paul Laraia, viola

Few chamber works reveal the emotional depth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart more completely than the String Quintet in G minor, K. 516. Written in 1787—the same remarkable year as *Don Giovanni*—the quintet expands the traditional string quartet by adding a second viola, creating a richer, darker sonority that Mozart, himself a violist, clearly relished.

From its opening measures, this is music of uncommon gravity. The first movement unfolds with restless intensity, shifting between anguish and fleeting moments of consolation. Rather than following a straightforward dramatic path, Mozart allows contrasting emotions to coexist, creating a conversation that feels strikingly human in its uncertainty.

The second movement offers only partial relief. Its elegant lyricism is tinged with introspection, while the Minuet is anything but courtly entertainment. A luminous Trio briefly opens a window onto a gentler world before the shadows return.

The emotional heart of the work lies in the extraordinary finale. It begins not with brilliance but with an extended Adagio of profound sorrow, music that seems suspended between resignation and hope. Then, almost unexpectedly, Mozart pivots into a radiant Allegro in G major. Rather than erasing what came before, this transformation feels earned—as though light emerges only after fully acknowledging the darkness.

That journey resonates throughout tonight's program. Like Caroline Shaw's *Entr'acte*, Mozart's quintet delights in surprising turns of perspective, inviting listeners to hear familiar musical language through fresh ears. And, like Clarice Assad's *Canções da América*, it reminds us that music can carry memory, identity, and emotion across time. Though separated by centuries and shaped by different traditions, all three composers treat chamber music not as a fixed form, but as a living conversation—one that continually reimagines the past while speaking directly to the present.

Mozart's G minor Quintet remains one of the supreme achievements of chamber music not simply because of its craftsmanship, but because of its emotional honesty. Its remarkable range—from vulnerability and longing to resilience and joy—continues to feel as immediate today as it did more than two centuries ago.

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ARTARIA STRING QUARTET

Ray Shows, violin | Nancy Oliveros, violin | Annalee Wolf, viola | Rebecca Merblum, 'cello

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Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

Entr'acte (2011)

Caroline Shaw's *Entr'acte* invites listeners into a musical world where the familiar and the unexpected exist side by side. Inspired by the graceful elegance of an eighteenth-century string quartet, Shaw begins with sounds that feel warmly recognizable before gently bending them into something entirely her own. The result is music that is intimate, playful, and quietly surprising.

Drawing on elements of minimalism, Shaw uses repeating patterns, subtle rhythmic shifts, and slowly evolving harmonies to create a sense of suspended time. Rather than driving toward a dramatic destination, the music unfolds organically, allowing small changes in color, texture, and gesture to take on remarkable expressive power. Moments of silence are just as meaningful as the notes themselves, inviting listeners to lean in and experience the quartet's rich palette of sound.

The title, *Entr'acte*—French for “between the acts”—suggests a pause for reflection, a moment to step outside the expected narrative. Shaw transforms this in-between space into something deeply expressive, where echoes of the past mingle with a distinctly contemporary voice. Her music embraces curiosity, warmth, and wonder, reminding us that even the smallest musical gesture can open the door to an entirely new landscape.

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Music, Caroline Shaw has become one of today's most celebrated composers, admired for creating works that are both intellectually engaging and immediately inviting. *Entr'acte* exemplifies her unique ability to bridge tradition and innovation, offering audiences a fresh perspective on the timeless sound of the string quartet.

Clarice Assad (b. 1978)

Canções da America (2022)

Canções da America is a collection of song-like movements inspired by chants, dances, and rhythms associated with South American music. A melting pot of cultures consisting of Europeans, immigrants, natives, and people from Africa. This six-movement work embraces fragments of the Milonga dance, related to the tune of Uruguay, the choro from Brazil, the music of Paraguay, and a movement dedicated to the Argentinian Tango, born in its modern version in Buenos Aires in the early 19th century. Also in the suite is an homage to Andean music, chant-like melodies associated with the regions of Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, and other peoples who lived approximately in the area of the Inca Empire before the Europeans arrived.

For the first time as a composer, I explore the music of neighboring Brazilian countries – my original homeland – including Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Argentina. The latter was the homeland of composer Claudia Montero, whose passing in early 2021 inspired me to write this work. Montero was an accomplished musician who dedicated her life to creating beautiful pieces of music sparked by Latin American themes. She supported numerous projects to amplify women's voices in music, and her body of works reinforces the importance of female composers' voices in today's world. *Canções da America* is dedicated to her legacy and Fry Street Quartet. **U**

ABOUT ARTARIA A warm, rich sound is the hallmark of the Artaria String Quartet. Named after the Italian publishers of the first issues of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven quartets, Artaria's refined and thoughtful playing has brought them critical acclaim in Europe and throughout the United States. The Boston Globe describes Artaria as “exquisitely balanced and sonorous” and “their musical understanding...first-rate”. Mentored by members of the Budapest, La Salle, Kolisch, Juilliard, and Cleveland Quartets, the quartet has served as artists-in-residence at Boston University's Tanglewood Institute, performing at Festival de L'Epau in France, and in the final rounds of the 1992 Banff International String Quartet Competition.

Firmly rooted in the great traditions of chamber music masterpieces, the Artaria String Quartet is a staunch advocate of contemporary music, premiering a wide range of new works and commissions. Artaria is committed to supporting and celebrating students, audiences, and composers of diversity, and to contributing toward social justice...to confront one's role in perpetuating injustice, to facilitate the healing of past wounds, and to open opportunities for all to thrive today and always. **U**



AnnaleeWolf RayShows NancyOliveros RebeccaMerblum

ABOUT PAUL Acclaimed by The Strad for his “eloquent” and “vibrant” playing, violist Paul Laraia is an active soloist, chamber musician, and new music proponent. In competition, he was awarded First Prize in the 13th Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition, First Prize in the 14th National Sphinx Competition, and Gold Medal with High Distinction at the fifth Manhattan International Music Competition.

As an internationally acclaimed soloist, Laraia has performed concerti with major orchestras from Pittsburgh to Bogota and solo performances at Wigmore Hall, the Shalin Liu Performance Center, the 40th International Viola Congress, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Since 2013, Laraia has been a member of the Grammy Award-winning Catalyst Quartet, which has held residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, Chamber Music Northwest in Portland, and SF Performances in San Francisco.

Laraia has worked directly with many of the leading voices in composition such as Jessie Montgomery, David Ludwig Serkin, Gabriella Lena Frank, Richard Danielpour, Jimmy Lopez, and Todd Machover. He also maintains a close artistic partnership with Taiwanese composer Shiuan Chang, with whom he is crafting new work calling for peace in our troubled times. **U**



STRINGWOOD 2026 PERFORMANCES

August 11 - FestivalConcertOne

August 13 - FestivalConcertTwo

August 14 - First Friday Concert (7pm) Sons of Norway Hall

August 15/16 - Saturday Gallery & Sunday Church performances

August 15 - Spillville Tour Concert (3pm) St. Wenceslaus Church

August 18 - FestivalConcertThree

August 20 - FestivalConcertFour

August 21 - 2nd Friday Concert (7pm) Urness Recital Hall (St. Olaf), Northfield

August 22 - Young Artist Concert (7pm) Elstad Church, Lanesboro

August 23 - Young Artist Final Concert (1pm) 1st Congregational Church, Winona



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts & cultural heritage fund.