



## Great Artists Series '22:

### Attacca Quartet

Amy Schroeder, violin  
Domenic Salerni, violin  
Nathan Schram, viola  
Andrew Yee, cello

*Sponsored by  
David and Melanie Alpers*

# Program

*Entr'acte* for String Quartet (2011)

Caroline Shaw  
(b. 1982)

String Quartet No. 3, "Mishima" (1985)

Philip Glass  
(b. 1937)

- I. 1957: *award montage*
- II. November 25: *Ichigaya*
- III. *Grandmother and Kimitake*
- IV. 1962: *body building*
- V. *Blood oath*
- VI. *Mishima: closing*

-Intermission-

*Summa* (1977)

Arvo Pärt  
(b. 1935)

String Quartet in F Major (1903)

Maurice Ravel  
(1875 - 1937)

- I. *Allegro moderato*
- II. *Assez vif, très rythmé*
- III. *Très lent*
- IV. *Vif et agité*

# Program Notes

## Introduction

Tonight's program offers the listener a panorama on the string quartet over the last century. Three of our four pieces are explicitly labeled string quartets; the other (*Summa*, Pärt) is a choral piece arranged for string quartet by the composer. We begin with the most recent (Shaw, 2011) and end with the earliest (Ravel, 1902-3). Beyond their relationship of performing forces and genre, these pieces intersect in various ways. Shaw and Ravel explicitly reach back to older forms to structure their pieces. Shaw, Glass, and Pärt represent twenty-first century composition that uses the styles of previous eras in innovative ways. Finally, Shaw, Glass, and Pärt all tie their pieces to other works of art—music, literature, film, and liturgy. This concert highlights the diversity contained within the string quartet genre.

## Shaw

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982) is an American violinist, singer, and composer who won the Pulitzer in 2013 for her choral composition *Partita for 8 Voices* (written for the vocal ensemble *Roomful of Teeth*). *Entr'acte* (2011) is one of Shaw's numerous string quartets, which she describes as one of her favorite genres. The title refers to two related theatrical conventions. An *entr'acte* could be a short musical entertainment performed between acts of a larger work, or may refer to the short overture-like piece played at the beginning of a second or third act of an opera or musical.

Shaw cites the Brentano Quartet's performance of Josef Haydn's String Quartet in F Major, Op. 77, No. 2 as the inspiration for *Entr'acte*. The second movement of Haydn's string quartet includes a surprising modulation to D-flat major that Shaw recalls as "spare and soulful." The composer modeled her piece on a conventional minuet and trio form. A slow, minor-key minuet precedes a faster, major-key trio, finishing with a return to the minuet. However, Shaw includes a novel section between the trio and the return of the minuet where fragments of previous motives return and are developed. Extended techniques such as unpitched bow sounds and pitch slides commingle with centuries-old techniques such as *bariolage* (a stringed-instrument technique in which the player alternates very quickly between notes on two adjacent strings). *Entr'acte* is shorter than the string quartets by Glass and Ravel, and—like the Pärt—unfolds over only one movement. Shaw compares *Entr'acte* to "Alice's looking glass" and "technicolor," describing the piece in terms of unexpected and delightful contrasts.

## Glass

Philip Glass's (b. 1937) String Quartet No. 3 is a concert piece constituted from music Glass wrote for Paul Schrader's 1985 film *Mishima*, about the life and death of prolific Japanese writer Mishima Yukio. Although Glass stated in a 1990 interview that he did not particularly enjoy composing for films, he has in fact written for more than 150. Glass's minimalist aesthetic unfolds through consonant, repetitive motives that layer together and slowly change, creating a reflective atmosphere in which small changes of harmony have striking effect. Because of these characteristics, his scores tend to be associated with intense, complex art films, notably *Koyaanisqatsi* (Godfrey Reggio, 1983) and *The Thin Red Line* (Terrence Malick, 1988), but his music also appears in such diverse films as *Hamburger Hill* (John Irvin, 1987), *Candyman* (Bernard Rose, 1992), and the television show *Tales from the Loop* (2020). *Mishima* fits the mold of high concept art house film, and when it premiered was controversial due to its subject matter.

In Schrader's film, Mishima and four members of his private army attempted to overthrow the government on November 25, 1970. When the coup failed, Mishima and his second-in-command died by *seppuku*. Each movement title refers to a particular segment in the film's narrative, which intertwines Mishima's last day alive with flashbacks of his life and surrealist dramatizations of three of his novels. The string quartet's form remixes the form of the film in favor of musical contrast. These pieces, recorded for the soundtrack by the Kronos Quartet, are all associated with black-and-white flashbacks to Mishima's past. The first movement's music is associated with shots of Mishima accepting awards for his literary accomplishments. The second movement's material occurs late in the film as Mishima and his followers approach the military buildings in Ichigaya, an area in Tokyo. *Grandmother and Kimitake* (Movement III) refers to Mishima's cloistered childhood with his ailing grandmother. Movement IV (1962: *bodybuilding*) underscores the camera's movement through a gym of shirtless, muscled men as Mishima turns to intense exercise and physical discipline. *Blood Oath* (Movement V) sounds as Mishima and his followers swear to try to restore an emperor to Japan, and the final movement accompanies the film's end credits. Although Mishima's family fervently denounced the idea that the author was queer, Schrader's film presents Mishima as queer and masochistic, and emphasizes queer themes and characters in the three novels explored the film. Glass' String Quartet No. 3 demonstrates a twentieth-century string quartet in which the genre springs from the makeup of the ensemble rather than the specifics of the musical form.

## Pärt

Arvo Pärt is an Estonian composer born in 1935 who developed the tintinnabuli compositional style, heard here in *Summa*. The word "tintinnabuli" refers to the sound of bells ringing, which Pärt evokes by constructing two voices: the M-voice (melodic voice) and the T-voice (tintinnabulation voice). The M-voice usually moves by step, while the T-voice restricts itself to the three pitches of the tonic (in this case, the notes E, G, and B). The voices tend to move slowly and fairly quietly, always together in short musical phrases. In *Summa*, the violin I and viola are the T-voices and the violin II and the cello are the M-voices. The instruments alternate between the full ensemble and duets between the upper voices and lower voices. For instance, the violins begin alone; the full ensemble joins together on the next phrase; and then the viola and cello take the third phrase.

Although we will not hear the text tonight, *Summa* is a musical setting of the *Nicene Creed*, one of the only Christian creeds accepted across Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant denominations. Pärt originally composed *Summa* in 1977 as a choral piece, five years after the composer joined the Eastern Orthodox Church. The entrances and exits of the different instruments are often, but not always neatly aligned with the text, sometimes changing from duet to full ensemble in the middle of a word. Pärt's religious affiliation has strongly influenced his output. In fact, the composer has orchestrated *Summa* for various types of ensembles, completing the string quartet version in 1991. Pärt often adapts his music for different ensembles, feeling that the identity of each piece rests in the notes, not in the particular sound created by a trumpet versus a voice versus a violin. *Summa* is the only sacred work on our program and the most different formally from a conventional string quartet.

## Ravel

French composer Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) is often associated with his exoticist works like *Boléro* and *Shéhérezade* or with his virtuosic orchestrations of other composers' works. However, as evidenced by later works like *Le tombeau de Couperin*—which the composer modeled on a Baroque dance suite—Ravel was deeply interested in exploring the musical genres and idioms of the past. The String Quartet in F Major (1902-03) exemplifies this interest, specifically Ravel's fascination with eighteenth-century "Classical" conventions. Composing string quartets with strict Classical-era forms had largely fallen out of fashion in France around the turn of the century. Perhaps this is why music lovers often speak of Ravel's only string quartet in the same breath with Claude Debussy's only string quartet, completed a decade earlier.

Both Ravel and Debussy adhered to the expected movement styles and forms of the Classical-era string quartet. The first movement is Ravel's adaptation of sonata form, followed by a quick, playful *Scherzo* in triple time. The *Scherzo* features a fast "A" section marked by rapid shifts between pizzicato (plucked) and arco (bowed) playing styles and a slower, more lyrical "B" section. Listen for the "A" material to return after the "B" section. The slow third movement gives way to a long, grand finale in rondo form. The finale organizes beats in groups of 5 (mainly 5/4 and 5/8), which listeners may notice as a slightly off-balance quality in comparison to the four- and three-beat groups throughout the rest of the piece. Ravel, like Debussy, also crafted links between movements: listen for the very first melody from the first movement to return in the third. Furthermore, the third movement begins with the same A minor chord with which the second ends, binding the two middle movements together tonally. Ravel's String Quartet in F Major blends neoclassicism and innovation, ending our program with the most traditional example of a string quartet you will hear tonight.

Lisa Pollock Mumme, Ph.D. student in Musicology, Washington University in St. Louis

This concert was made possible through the generosity of David and Melanie Alpers, with additional support provided by the Missouri Arts Council.



# About the Artists

Grammy award-winning Attacca Quartet, as described by *The Nation*, “lives in the present aesthetically, without rejecting the virtues of the musical past”, and it is this dexterity to glide between the music of the 18th through to 21st century living composer’s repertoire that has placed them as one of the most versatile and outstanding ensembles of the moment – a quartet for modern times.

Touring extensively in the United States, recent and upcoming highlights include Carnegie Hall Neighborhood Concerts, New York Philharmonic’s Nightcap series, Lincoln Center White Lights Festival and Miller Theatre, both with Caroline Shaw, Phillips Collection, Wolf Trap, Carolina Performing Arts, Chamber Music Detroit, Red Bank Chamber Music Society, Chamber Music Austin and a residency at the National Sawdust, Brooklyn. They recently performed at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, where they will return in 2020 and have performed a series of Beethoven String Quartet cycles both at the historic University at Buffalo’s Slee Beethoven Quartet Cycle series and at the New York and Trinity Lutheran Church, Manhattan, where they have a longstanding partnership. The upcoming season will see them debuting at the Trinity Church at Wall Street as part as their 12 Night Festival where they will perform the complete cycle of the Beethoven String Quartets. Attacca Quartet has also served as Juilliard’s Graduate Resident String Quartet, the Quartet in Residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Ensemble-in-Residence at the School of Music at Texas State University.

Outside of the U.S., recent performances include Gothenburg Konserthuset, Sociedad Filarmónica de Bilbao, MITO Festival in Milan and Turin, as well as tours to Central and South America, and Japan; they will return to the latter in spring of 2020 with concerts in Osaka, Yokohama, and Nagoya, performing John Adam’s *Absolute Jest* with Nagoya Philharmonic and conductor Edo de Waart. They have previously performed this piece under the baton of the composer with Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya and Orquesta Nacional de España, and with Marin Alsop at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. John Adams describes the quartet as “sharing his musical DNA”. The upcoming season will also see them debuting in London at Kings Place and Wigmore Hall, in Austria at Musik im Riesen Festival, and in Oslo at the Vertravo Haydn Festival.

Passionate advocates of contemporary repertoire, the quartet are dedicated to presenting and recording new works. Their latest recording

project, *Orange*, features string quartet works by Pulitzer-prize winning composer Caroline Shaw and has been greatly received and praised by the critics as “an outstanding performance” of a “staggering work that comes across as effortless” (*Noisey*). Previous recordings include three critically acclaimed albums with Azica Records, including a disc of Michael Ippolito’s string quartets, and the complete works for string quartet by John Adams. The latter was praised by Steve Smith of *The New York Times* as a “vivacious, compelling set” and described the Attacca Quartet’s playing as “exuberant, funky, and ... exactingly nuanced”. The album was the recipient of the 2013 National Federation of Music Clubs Centennial Chamber Music Award. Additional awards for their recordings include both the Arthur Foote Award from the Harvard Musical Association and Lotos Prize in the Arts from the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation.

Other accolades include First Prize at the 7th Osaka International Chamber Music Competition, the Top Prize and Listeners’ Choice award winners for the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition, and Grand Prize Winners of the 60th annual Coleman Chamber Ensemble Competition.

The Attacca Quartet has engaged in extensive educational and community outreach projects, serving as guest artists and teaching fellows at the Lincoln Center Institute, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute and Bravo! Vail Valley among others.



New York based violinist and pedagogue **Amy Schroeder** is a founding member of the Grammy award-winning Attacca Quartet and has been hailed by the *Washington Post* as “an impressive artist whose playing combines imagination and virtuosity.” She has soloed with orchestras including the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Amherst Symphony, the Clarence Symphony, the Hilton Head Symphony, and the Greater Buffalo Youth Orchestra. As a founding member of the internationally acclaimed Attacca Quartet, Ms. Schroeder has soloed with the Spanish National Orchestra with composer John Adams conducting, and the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra with Marin Alsop conducting. Since its inception

the Attacca Quartet has won an array of awards including the grand prize in the Osaka International String Quartet Competition, the National Federation of Music Clubs Centennial Chamber Music Award, the Arthur Foote Award from the Harvard Musical Association, and the Lotos Prize in the Arts from the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation. The quartet has also held prestigious residencies including one at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and currently at Texas State University in San Marcos. With the Attacca Quartet Ms. Schroeder can be heard on several critically acclaimed recordings produced by Azica Records: *Fellow Traveler* the complete works of John Adams, Haydn: *Seven Last Words*, *Songlines*, works of Michael Ippolito, and most recently on Nonesuch/New Amsterdam Records the Grammy award-winning album, Shaw/Attacca Quartet *Orange*. In 2016 the Quartet completed a six year project in which they performed all 68 of Haydn’s String Quartets.

Ms. Schroeder is proud to serve as music faculty member at Vassar College. She also recently formed the Schroeder Umansky Duo with her husband Felix Umansky, internationally celebrated cellist and member of the Harlem Quartet. In 2002 she was the recipient of the Henrietta and Albert J. Ziegler Jr. Scholarship, which provided the tuition for her studies at Juilliard where she was a student of Sally Thomas and the Juilliard String Quartet. Growing up in Buffalo, NY Ms. Schroeder began her violin studies with Karen Campbell and Thomas Halpin. She currently plays on two different violins, a Fernando Gagliano made in 1771 on loan to her from the Five Partners Foundation, and a violin made by Nathan Slobodkin in 2012. In New York Ms. Schroeder teaches violin and piano to students of all ages, and in her spare time she enjoys composing, traveling with her husband, and scuba diving.



Violinist **Domenic Salerni** is active as a chamber musician, composer and arranger, and freelance musician. As the newest member of the Grammy award-winning Attacca Quartet, he looks forward to a full season of international concerts and tours ranging from Japan to Germany England to Brazil, including performances of the full cycle of Beethoven String Quartets at Trinity Church Wall Street in June. Domenic will be joining the Chiarina Chamber Players again this season for their Beethoven celebration, performing six of the major Piano Trios with pianist Efi Hackmey and cellist Carrie Bean Stute. Domenic is also pleased to join the PostClassical Ensemble for a number of concerts, as well as the Baltimore Symphony for their performance of Mahler's Third Symphony.

From 2016-2020 Domenic was the first violinist of the Dalí Quartet, Quartet-in-Residence at West Chester University and recipient of the Atlanta Symphony's Aspire Award. In 2016, as a member of Foundry, he was a laureate of the first inaugural M Prize at the University of Michigan. Prior to his tenure with Dalí, he was first violinist of the Vega Quartet, Quartet-in-Residence at Emory University, from 2010-2016, where he received ArtsATL's "30 Under 30" award. In 2010, Domenic composed the film score to Giuseppe de Liguorno's "Dante's Inferno" (1911). It was premiered at the Yale Dante Symposium that year with Samuel Carl Adams on bass, and was given its second performance at Emory University through a collaboration between the Department of Italian and French, the Center for Creative Studies, and the Department of Film, with Adam Bernstein on bass.

In 2009, Domenic was a laureate of the Sion-Valais International Violin Competition, and in 2008, he joined violist Ayane Kozasa in Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante at the prize-winning concert for the Cleveland Institute Concerto Competition. Summer festival appearances include Highlands-Cashiers, Brevard Institute, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, and MIMIR. He holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he graduated with academic honors, and the Yale University School of Music, where he was the recipient of the Yale Chamber Music Society Award. Domenic started violin at the age of three in the Suzuki Method with Linda Fiore. Previous teachers include Linda Cerone, Naoko Tanaka, Diane Monroe, Lee Snyder, Geoffrey Michaels, and William Preucil. He can be found on the Delos, Naxos, Artek, Canary, Innova, and DoMilo labels.



Hailed by the *New York Times* as an “elegant soloist” with a sound “devotional with its liquid intensity,” Nathan is a composer, entrepreneur, and violist of the Attacca Quartet. Nathan has collaborated with many of the great artists of today including Björk, Itzhak Perlman, Sting, David Crosby, Becca Stevens, David Byrne, Trey Anastasio, Joshua Bell, Simon Rattle, and others. He has premiered music by Steve Reich, Nico Muhly, Timo Andres, Elliot Cole, and Gabriel Kahane. Nathan is also a violist in the Affiliate Ensemble of Carnegie Hall, Decoda, and an Honorary Ambassador to the city of Chuncheon, South Korea.

Apart from performing, Nathan is the Founder and Executive Director of Musicambia. Founded in 2013, Musicambia brings music learning and ensemble performance to prisons throughout the United States. Through working closely with incarcerated individuals on performance, music theory, ear training, and composition, Musicambia’s professional musicians build artistic communities that nurture the humanity of all involved. Musicambia currently runs a music conservatory in Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, New York with other programs in Indiana, and South Carolina. In addition to their work in the U.S., Musicambia has collaborated with projects in Venezuela and Scotland.

Schram is a prizewinner of the 2007 Primrose International Viola competition, the 2006 Corpus Christi Concerto Competition, and a First Prize winner of the 2008 ASTA National Solo Competition. He studied viola at Indiana University with Alan de Veritch, and at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía in Madrid, Spain with Diemut Poppen and Yuval Gotlibovich. Afterwards, as an Ensemble Connect Fellow, he was documented by radio journalist Jeff Lunden for a 2-year, four-part series for NPR’s *Weekend Edition*.



Cellist Andrew Yee has been praised by Michael Kennedy of the *London Telegraph* as “spellbindingly virtuosic”. Trained at the Juilliard School, they are a founding member of the internationally acclaimed Attacca Quartet who have released several albums to critical acclaim including Andrew’s arrangement of Haydn’s *Seven Last Words* which *Thewholenote.com* praised as “. . .easily the most satisfying string version of the work that I’ve heard.” They were the quartet-in-residence at the Met Museum in 2014, and have won the Osaka and Coleman international string quartet competitions. Their newest recording of the string quartets of Caroline Shaw won a Grammy for

best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble performance.

As a soloist last season Andrew performed John Taverner’s *The Protecting Veil* and Strauss’ *Don Quixote*. In 2019 they won the first prize at Oklahoma University’s National Arts Incubation Lab for their pitch of a wearable garment that translates sound into vibrations for the hard of hearing. They like making stop-motion videos of food, drawing apples, cooking like an Italian Grandma, and has developed coffee and cocktail programs for award-winning restaurants (Lilia, Risbobk, Atla) in New York City.

Their solo project “Halfie” draws on their experience as a bi-racial and non-binary person, having access to multiple communities at once, while not feeling at home in any of them. The works commissioned on the concerts will feature a wide range of composers all for solo cello.

They play on an 1884 Eugenio Degani cello on loan from the Five Partners Foundation.

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## Special Free Event: A Conversation with Angel Blue

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**Host:** Todd Decker

**Location:** Women's Building Formal Lounge

**Time:** 5:00 P.M.



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Saturday, April 9  
3:00 P.M.  
E. Desmond Lee  
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## The Music Makers: 75 Years of Composition and Performance, with a tribute to Robert Wykes



Robert Wykes

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Rhian Samuel, & Cole Reyes

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