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MUSIC

# AMERNET

STRING

QUARTET

WITH RACHEL CALLOWAY  
MEZZO SOPRANO

DECEMBER 10, 2025



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# FROM THE BOARD

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Welcome to this evening's concert! We are pleased to have so many people in attendance this evening to enjoy chamber music that we all treasure. Sharing music with friends like you is a treasured gift. Thanks for coming tonight.

Tonight we are delighted to present mezzo-soprano Rachel Calloway together with the Amernet String Quartet, extraordinary artists known for their expressive depth, adventurous programming, and dedication to both new and traditional chamber music. You'll find their full biographies later in this program; we encourage you to read more about their remarkable contributions to today's musical landscape.

As we enjoy this special performance, we also want to highlight an important moment for Arizona Friends of Chamber Music. We are in the midst of our 2024–2025 Annual Fund Campaign, and once again, our longtime supporter John Schaefer, together with the AFCM Board, has pledged up to \$50,000 in matching funds for all gifts received by December 31. Every dollar you give during this period will be matched, doubling the power of your support.

Ticket sales and grants cover less than half the cost of presenting concerts like this one. Your generosity fills that gap, bringing world-class artists to Tucson, supporting new commissions, and sustaining our education and outreach programs throughout the year.

If you're able, please consider making your Annual Fund gift tonight or before year's end. Your contribution, matched dollar for dollar, helps us continue presenting exceptional chamber music for our community.

Thank you for your support and for joining us this evening.

**ELAINE ROUSSEAU**  
*Vice-President*





# AMERNET STRING QUARTET

## DECEMBER 10, 2025 | 7:30 PM

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### **Amernet String Quartet**

Misha Vitenson, *violin*

Avi Nagin, *violin*

Michael Klotz, *viola*

Jason Calloway, *cello*

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### **AMERNET STRING QUARTET**

Praised for their "intelligence" and "immensely satisfying" playing by the New York Times, the Amernet String Quartet has garnered recognition as one of today's exceptional string quartets and are Ensemble-in-Residence at Florida International University in Miami. Their sound has been called "complex" but with an "old world flavor." *Strad* Magazine described the Amernet as "...a group of exceptional ability."

The Amernet's performance schedule has taken the quartet across the Americas and to Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. They have collaborated with many of today's most prominent artists and ensembles including the Tokyo and Ying quartets as well as Shmuel Ashkenasi, Roberto Diaz, Gary Hoffman, Ida Kavafian, Anthony McGill, Joseph Kalichstein, Sherrill Milnes, and Michael Tree. Internationally, the quartet has appeared at major festivals around the world, including Cervantino, San Miguel de Allende, Aviv (Israel), and Colima (Mexico), while in Germany a critic commented that their playing was "fascinating, with flawless intonation, extraordinary beauty of sound, virtuosic brilliance, and homogeneity of ensemble." (*Nürnberg Nachrichten*).

The Amernet's U.S. engagements have included the Kennedy Center, the Tilles Center, Caramoor, Ensemble Music Society, the Great Lakes Festival, Newport, Friends of Chamber Music in Arizona and Syracuse, LPR in New York City, Chamber Music Society of Louisville, Music on the Edge in Pittsburgh, the University of Maine - Collins Center, and Market Square Concerts. The Amernet has also appeared as quartet soloist with the Cincinnati Symphony under Alan Gilbert and at West Virginia University and Gettysburg College. Earlier in their career, the Amernet won the gold medal at the Tokyo International Music Competition before being named first prize winners of the prestigious Banff International String Quartet Competition.

Prior to their current position at Florida International University, the Amernet held posts as Corbett String Quartet-in-Residence at Northern Kentucky University and at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Additionally, the ensemble served as the Ernst Stiefel Quartet-in-Residence at the Caramoor Center for the Arts.

The Amernet has always been committed to the music of our time and has commissioned works from many of today's leading composers, working closely with artists including Anthony Brandt, Guillermo Carbo, John Corigliano, Orlando Garcia, Toshi Ichianagi, Pierre Jalbert, Fredrick Kaufman, Bernard Rands, Augusta Read Thomas, and Chinary Ung. Additionally, the group has made many recordings, among which are works of John Harbison with Charles Neidich; *The Butterflies Began to Sing* by Morton Subotnick; albums of quartets by the American composers Stephen Dankner, Steven Gerber, and Judith Lang Zaimont; the music of Dmitri Tymoczko; and the Chausson Concert with James Tocco and Yehonatan Berick. In addition, the Amernet is keen on exploring novel collaborative projects and has appeared with Cantor Netanel Hershtik, jazz pianist Steve Allee, José Garant Dance, and the Kruger Brothers.





## RACHEL CALLOWAY

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Rachel Calloway brings versatility and compelling insight to stages worldwide. Her work has been praised by the New York Times for “penetrating clarity” and “considerable depth of expression” and by Opera News for her “adept musicianship and dramatic flair.”

A dedicated interpreter of new music, Ms. Calloway has premiered hundreds of solo and chamber music works. Recent and upcoming premieres include music by Augusta Read Thomas, John Zorn, Robert Xavier Rodriguez, David Garner, Gabriela Lena Frank, Christopher Cerrone, and Annika Socolofsky. She collaborates with premiere ensembles including Third Coast Percussion, JACK Quartet, the Amernet Quartet, and Ensemble Signal. Ms. Calloway and her husband, violinist Ari Streisfeld, founded Duo Cortona, an ensemble dedicated to the creation and performance of new works for violin and voice.

She has appeared in concert with the Orlando Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Series, Charleston Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, Berkeley Symphony, Omaha Symphony, Ojai Festival, San Francisco Girls’ Chorus, BAM Next Wave Festival, Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, Cal Performances, and Lincoln Center Festival. Ms. Calloway made her European operatic debut as Mrs. Grose in *The Turn of the Screw* at Opéra de Reims, Athénée Théâtre Louis-Jovet (Paris), and Opéra de Lille.

She has performed with the late Lorin Maazel at the Castleton Festival in Virginia, and at Opera Philadelphia, Tulsa Opera, Central City Opera, Gotham Chamber Opera, The PROTOTYPE Festival, and the Glimmerglass Festival. She is also a founding member of Shir Ami, an ensemble dedicated to the performance, discovery and preservation of Jewish music.

Ms. Calloway serves on the faculty of the University of South Carolina as Assistant Professor of Voice and Director of Spark: Music Leadership at Carolina. She joined the faculty of the Cortona Sessions for New Music (Italy) in 2014 and Summer Performing Arts with Juilliard in 2016. Ms. Calloway holds degrees from The Juilliard School (BM) and Manhattan School of Music (MM) and can be heard on Albany Records, Tzadik Records, BCMF Records, and Toccata Classics.

# EVENING SERIES

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## PROGRAM

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### ERWIN SCHULHOFF (1894–1942)

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*Five Pieces for String Quartet*

Alla Valse Viennese

Alla Serenata

Alla Czeca

Alla Tango-Milonga

Alla Tarantella

### DANIEL ASIA (B. 1953)

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*Pines’ Last Poems*

(World Premiere, AFCM Commission)

### OTTORINO RESPIGHI (1879–1936)

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*Il tramonto*

for Mezzo-Soprano and String Quartet

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## INTERMISSION

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### ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

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*String Quartet in G Major, Op. 106*

Allegro moderato

Adagio ma non troppo

Molto vivace

Finale: Andante sostenuto – Allegro con fuoco

Dan Asia’s *Pines’ Last Poems* was co-commissioned thanks to the generous support Larry Herron and Harlow Sires, Milt Francis, Richard Hereld, Neil Kleinman, Garry Kippur, and James Wezelman.

# ON TONIGHT'S FEATURED COMMISSION

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*Pines' Last Poems* is a poignant song cycle for mezzo-soprano and string quartet, based on the final poems of Paul Pines, set to music by Daniel Asia. The work is commissioned by the Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, with the generous support of Larry Herron and Harlow Sires, Milt Francis, Richard Hereld, Neil Kleinman, Gary Kippur, and James Wezelman.



## Statement from Dan Asia

"My friend and long-time collaborator, Paul Pines, died in 2018, on my birthday, June 27, in Glens Falls, NY. Paul wrote about synchronicity in his poems. Like the physicist Erwin Schrödinger, who famously posited the cat both alive and dead, Paul believed that many things happen for a reason, and not just by happenstance. And so I like to believe that Paul's untimely death wasn't just by chance.

Might he have been signaling me?

These poems, which were left on his desk upon his passing, were sent to me by his wife. They remained on my desk for a long time before I could confront them, as the final documents my friend left for us. They confront dying, the ambiguity of spring and death, and some unfinished business of our history, Vietnam. They are dedicated to Paul's memory and his continued presence in my life."

This song cycle stands as both eulogy and celebration, honoring Pines' voice while extending the artistic dialogue these two friends shared throughout their careers. The commissioned version for mezzo-soprano and string quartet expands upon the original baritone and piano setting featured on Asia's album *A Mask That Changes*, revealing new dimensions of emotional depth within the chamber music idiom.

As Daniel Asia noted, Pines believed that "many things happen for a reason, and not just by happenstance." This belief infused his poetry with a unique depth, inviting readers to contemplate life's larger meanings. His final works, now brought to life in *Pines' Last Poems*, serve as a poignant continuation of his artistic legacy and a testament to the enduring bond he shared with Asia.

**Daniel Asia** (b. 1953) stands among the most versatile composers of his generation, having traversed orchestral, chamber, vocal, and operatic realms with equal mastery. A 2009 recipient of an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award and inducted into the American Academy of Sciences and Letters in 2024, Asia has been hailed as "a genuine creative spirit" and "a welcome addition to the roster of our strongest group of living composers."

His orchestral works have been commissioned and performed by major symphony orchestras including Cincinnati, Seattle, Milwaukee, Phoenix, and the American Composers Orchestra in New York City. Renowned conductors such as Jesús López-Cobos, Eiji Oue, and Zdenk Mácal have championed his music on stages across America and Europe.

Asia served as Professor of Music at the University of Arizona from 1988-2024 and currently serves as President of Polyhymnia (Center for American Culture and Ideas). His distinguished career includes a Guggenheim Fellowship, four NEA Composers Grants, a Fulbright Arts Award Fellowship, and numerous other honors recognizing his contribution to American music.



# PROGRAM NOTES

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## Schulhoff : *Five Pieces for String Quartet*

Czech composer Ervin Schulhoff wrote his only dance suite, the Five Pieces for String Quartet, in 1923, the year he returned to his native Prague from Berlin. During his influential years in Germany, Schulhoff had befriended the artistic avant-garde and performed recitals premiering their advanced music. At this time Schulhoff's greatest pleasures were jazz and dance, hints of which are heard throughout his entire body of work. He described his craving for dance in a letter to his friend Alban Berg: "I have a tremendous passion for the fashionable dances, and there are times when I go dancing night after night with the dance hostesses, purely out of rhythmic enthusiasm and subconscious sensuality. This gives my creative work a phenomenal impulse, because in my consciousness I am incredibly earthy, even bestial."

Schulhoff admired the free harmonies and whimsical theatricality of French composer Darius Milhaud, to whom he dedicated the suite. The dances also suggest the modernist influence of the "Second Viennese School" composers Berg and Schoenberg. The sardonic dissonances and spiky instrumental effects of Alla Valse and Alla Serenata create parodies of these traditionally elegant forms. Alla Czeca offers homage to his folk roots, and the suave Alla Tango develops from his love for popular modern dance. Alla Tarantella unfolds with the brilliant rhythmic vitality associated with this ferocious dance.

Notes by Nancy Monsman

## Asia: *Pines' Last Poems*

"My friend and long time collaborator, Paul Pines, died five years ago in 2018, on my birthday, June 27. Paul occasionally wrote about synchronicity in his poems. Like the physicist Erwin Schrodinger, who famously posited the cat both alive and dead, he believed that many things happen for a reason, and not just by happenstance. I like to believe that Paul's untimely death wasn't just by chance. Might he have been signaling something to me?

These poems, which were left on his desk upon his passing, were sent to me by his wife, Carol.

They remained on mine for a long time before I could confront them, as the final documents my friend left for us. They deal with the process of dying, the ambiguity of Spring and death, and then finally, some unfinished business of our history, Vietnam. They are dedicated to Paul's memory and his continued presence in my life.

## I. THE LAST ORACLE

Anything you say  
at this time will fall

on deaf ears  
so move inward

any ambition be  
thwarted

so cultivate humor  
and humility

on the other hand  
great power is

available to you  
but must be

handled carefully  
aware of the

vulnerability  
of those around you

don't do anything  
don't try to

do anything there  
is nothing to do

to make your self  
at home in this

condition requires  
resources well

beyond the givens  
of your abilities

and intentions  
your best recourse

---

bring it into focus  
as an act of love  
such as I send  
to you

## II. MOMENTS

I've become  
increasingly impatient  
with my dying

and not surprised  
if you are too

my death after all  
is of no greater moment  
than yours

but because mine  
at the moment  
is nested in  
my chest

and might  
at any moment  
eat me alive

friends whose deaths  
are more distant  
wish me courage  
tell me they are  
with me.

that they carry  
my dying life  
in their hearts

while a few  
allude to the cruelty  
in nature that exists  
beside its beauty

others stipulate  
all life is subject to repair

or an implicate order  
like Schrodinger's cat  
both alive and dead  
in a Superstate

or a moment  
like this one  
driving from Glens Falls  
into the city  
south of Kingston  
it occurs to me I may  
live to see another  
spring

while carrion  
circle over head  
ugly pencil necks  
in search of  
roadkill

so beautiful  
in flight

## III. RESPONSE TO THE MAJOR

*I came to this poem by  
Czeslaw Milosz. The two,  
your words and Milosz's,  
will always live in the same  
moment.*

—Major Ragin

Straightening suddenly  
from the garden  
to see the blue sea and sails  
with new eyes

thank you  
for folding me into  
this moment  
by Milosz

I can sleep in it  
and wake  
refreshed in the current  
moment  
of April snow.

fugitive robins  
and confused  
fruit trees.

I read in this  
out of sequence unfolding  
the way things

register.  
in the telos  
of dreams

the embrace of things  
as they are  
knowing  
and unknowing  
waking with  
new eyes

## IV. UNMASKED

a mask that changes  
without knowing what  
It knows so deeply  
it un.masks  
itself in change

myself  
the dancing child  
Jung called

Time playing  
a board game  
with itself

Telesphoros  
holding what  
has yet to unfold  
a star shining  
in the darkest  
region of the cosmos

Odysseus  
coming home after  
his voyage wounding  
and healing being  
wounded and  
healed

POW/MIA  
Left behind alive  
or as remains  
on a black and white flag  
the silhouette of a man in front  
of a guard tower strung  
with barbed wire  
words in white letters below

"You are not forgotten"

the haunt of Nam  
in this  
still visible  
on bumper stickers  
and at VFWs

a mask that changes  
without knowing what  
it knows so deeply  
it unmask  
itself in change

we have become  
a culture of prisoners and  
remains signaling  
what has been true  
all along

visible at last  
globally

POW/MIA  
as a species unmasked

*Tat vam asi*  
Thou art that!

## Respighi: *Il tramonto*

Trained by the brilliant orchestrator Rimsky-Korsakov, Italian composer Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936) is best known for grand and lavish works such as “The Pines of Rome.” However, he could also be a subtle lyricist, and in 1917 he created a setting for “The Sunset,” a rarely anthologized 1816 poem by Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822). This somewhat gothic poem is generally understood to be an exploration of the Romantic’s connection between genius—here an intuitive knowledge of the spirit world—and death. The “youth,” a Shelley figure, falls in love with the Lady Isabel in a fantasy landscape. The youth has never seen the sunset and anticipates experiencing it with her, but he dies soon after their first encounter. She remains calm for the rest of her life, but “her eyelashes were worn away with tears,” and she is in effect a walking corpse. The elusive sunset, a symbol of beauty in death, will come only when she dies.

Sung in Italian to a translation by Rinaldo Ascoli, the work freely illustrates its haunting text through chromatically tinged harmonies and eloquent instrumental commentary. Respighi admired Debussy, and his impressionist influence can be heard throughout.

There late was One within whose subtle being  
As light and wind within some delicate cloud  
That fades amid the blue noon’s burning sky,  
Genius and Death contended. None may know  
The sweetness of the joy which made his breath  
Fail, like the trances of the summer air,  
When, with the Lady of his love, who then  
First knew the unreserve of mingled being,  
He walked along the pathway of a field  
Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o’er,  
But to the west was open to the sky.  
There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold  
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points  
Of the far level grass and nodding flowers  
And the old dandelion’s hoary beard,  
And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay  
On the brown mossy woods: and in the east  
The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose  
Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,  
While the faint stars were gathering overhead.



“Is it not strange, Isabel,” said the youth,  
“I never saw the sun? We will walk here  
Tomorrow; thou shalt look on it with me.”  
That night the youth and lady mingled lay  
In love and sleep—but when the morning came  
The lady found her lover dead and cold.  
Let none believe that God in mercy gave  
That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild,  
But year by year lived on—in truth I think  
Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles,  
And that she did not die, but live to tend  
Her aged father, were a kind of madness,  
If madness ‘tis to be unlike the world.  
For but to see her were to read the tale  
Woven by the subtlest bard, to make hard hearts  
Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief;—  
Her eyes were black and lusterless and wan;  
Her eyelashes were worn away with tears,  
Her lips and cheeks were like things dead—so  
pale;  
Her hands were thin, and through their  
wandering veins  
And weak articulations might be seen  
Day’s ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self  
Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day, is  
all, lost child, that now inhabits of thee!

“Inheritor of more than earth can give,  
Passionless calm and silence unproved,  
Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep! but rest,  
And are the uncomplaining things they seem,  
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love;  
Oh, that like thine, my epitaph were—Peace!”  
This was the only moan she ever made.

### Dvorák: *String Quartet in G Major, Op. 106*

Inspired by her desire to “create a national music spirit,” American philanthropist Jeanette Thurber founded the National Conservatory of Music in 1885 (but disbanded it during the Great Depression). Thurber offered generous scholarships, particularly to African Americans, and recruited stellar faculty such as Antonin Dvorák, who served as its director for three years. By 1895 Dvorák had completed the terms of his contract and was eager to return to Prague. Although he had composed prolifically during his American sojourn and had completed such works as the Symphony “From the New World” (a title suggested by Thurber), Dvorák never overcame intense homesickness for his native Bohemia. Once back in Prague, he wrote: “We are all inexpressibly happy to be home! Now I am very industrious. I work so easily I never could ask for anything better. I have just completed a new quartet in G major and have already begun another.” Dvorák wrote the Opus 106 quartet, the thirteenth of his fourteen string quartets, within a three week period. It was premiered in Prague the following year by the Bohemian Quartet.

Although Opus 106 occasionally suggests American influence in its inner movements, Slavic folk song and dance provide its primary materials. Modal shifts from major to minor occur throughout the work, imparting a haunting atmosphere of light and shade. The Allegro moderato richly develops two themes, one joyous and the second songful but more restrained. In the Adagio non troppo, essentially a set of free variations on a theme in E flat, Dvorák molds the major and minor aspects of the theme into a dynamic and deeply moving statement.

The Molto vivace (B minor) presents three recurrences of a vigorous scherzo section alternating with two trios—first, a lyrical duet between the first violin and viola, then a section that resembles folk song. The Finale is a rondo that develops a pair of themes in G major and G minor alternating with a contrasting subject in E flat major. At its center Dvorák reintroduces themes from the first movement and incorporates them into the work’s vigorous conclusion.

Notes by Nancy Monsman

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| EVENING SERIES  | TUCSON WINTER CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL  | COMMISSIONS  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Jerusalem Quartet</b><br>Wednesday, October 22, 2025<br>7:30 p.m.  | <b>Winter Festival 2026</b><br>March 8–15, 2026<br><br>Peter Rejto and Bernadette Harvey, <i>Artistic Co-Directors</i><br><br>Goldmund String Quartet<br>Florian Schötz, <i>violin</i><br>Pinchas Adt, <i>violin</i><br>Christoph Vandory, <i>viola</i><br>Raphael Paratore, <i>cello</i><br><br>Nick Canellakis, <i>cello</i><br>David Fung, <i>piano</i><br>Bernadette Harvey, <i>piano</i><br>Kristina Mascher-Turner, <i>french horn</i><br>Clara Neubauer, <i>violin/viola</i><br>Paul Neubauer, <i>viola</i><br>Axel Strauss, <i>violin</i> | <b>Dan Asia</b><br>Pines’ Last Poems for String Quartet and Voice<br>Amerinet String Quartet with Rachel Calloway, mezzo-soprano<br>Wednesday, December 10, 2025<br>World Premiere<br><br><b>Patrick Castillo</b><br>String Quartet No. 2, <i>Libera me</i><br>Work commemorating Jasper String Quartet’s 20th Anniversary<br>Jasper String Quartet<br>Wednesday, November 19, 2025<br>World Premiere<br><br><b>Tamar-kali</b><br>Pleasure Garden<br>Miró Quartet with Karen Slack, soprano<br>Wednesday, January 28, 2026<br>World Premiere<br><br><b>Michi Wiancko</b><br>Trio for Horn, Violin, and Piano<br>Tucson Winter Chamber Music Festival<br>Sunday, March 15, 2026<br>World Premiere |
| <b>Jasper String Quartet</b><br>Wednesday, November 19, 2025<br>7:30 p.m.                                       |   |  |
| <b>Amerinet String Quartet with Rachel Calloway, mezzo-soprano</b><br>Wednesday, December 10, 2025<br>7:30 p.m. |   |  |
| <b>Miró Quartet with Karen Slack, soprano</b><br>Wednesday, January 28, 2026<br>7:30 p.m.                       |   |  |
| <b>Juilliard String Quartet</b><br>Wednesday, February 18, 2026<br>7:30 p.m.                                    |   |  |
| <b>Brentano Quartet</b><br>Wednesday, March 25, 2026<br>7:30 p.m.   |   |  |
| <b>PIANO &amp; FRIENDS</b>  |   |  |
| <b>Benett Tsai, cello</b><br>Sunday, November 9, 2025<br>3:00 p.m.  |   | <i>Tickets online or at the box office.</i>  |
| <b>Michael Yeung, percussion</b><br>Sunday, January 18, 2026<br>3:00 p.m.                                       |   | <i>For program and artist information, please visit <a href="http://arizonachambermusic.org">arizonachambermusic.org</a>.</i>  |
| <b>Anran Qian, piano</b><br>Sunday, April 12, 2026<br>3:00 p.m.   | <i>If you are interested in sponsoring a concert or a musician, please contact Cathy Anderson in the box office or at <a href="http://arizonachambermusic.org">arizonachambermusic.org</a>.</i><br><br><i>If you are interested in sponsoring a commissioned work, please contact Cathy Anderson at <a href="mailto:office@arizonachambermusic.org">office@arizonachambermusic.org</a></i>  |  |

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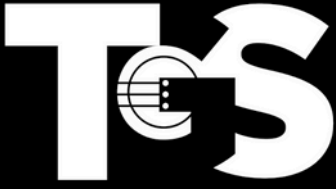
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