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[Press Room](#)



Images of Spektral Quartet are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
SPEKTRAL QUARTET
IN THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *CURRENT*,
A NEW WORK BY SAMUEL ADAMS
SUNDAY, APRIL 5

**Composer Samuel Adams and Cal Performances executive and artistic director
Jeremy Geffen will give a pre-performance talk free for all ticketholders**

Berkeley, March 2, 2020 — Cal Performances at UC Berkeley welcomes **Spektral Quartet**, the acclaimed American string ensemble, in a diverse concert that features the world premiere of a new composition by **Samuel Adams**, on Sunday, April 5 at 3pm in Hertz Hall. Adams' new work, titled *Current*, was co-commissioned by Cal Performances and is the fruit of a long artistic collaboration between the native Bay Area composer and the Chicago-based ensemble. The program also includes Schubert's *Rosamunde* Quartet and Philip Glass' *Company* Quartet.

According to Jeremy Geffen, executive and artistic director of Cal Performances, “Samuel Adams is a wonderfully inventive and distinguished composer who happens to be an important member of the Bay Area arts community. Cal Performances is proud to be a part of introducing this exciting new piece of chamber music to the repertoire.”

Adams’ *Current* is scored for string quartet and four resonating snare drums, which have been activated to vibrate through the attachment of electrical transducers. Adams has said that “the crux of the piece is the relationship between the minimal digital language of the resonating snare drums and the warm, acoustic complexity of the string quartet.” The work is 36 minutes in duration, in five movements. The title *Current* references both the electric currents that activate the snare drums and, in Adams’ words, “the intense, weather-blasted quality” of the composition’s sound world. “The sound changes slightly with each performance depending on how [the drums] are tuned, the humidity of the room, the tightness of the snares, etc. It’s quite organic. But more importantly, there is a deeper question being asked. I can’t say specifically what it is; that’s up to you. But I do think there exists an urgency found in witnessing four human beings playing in unison with a computer.” Adams has recently composed works for the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the San Francisco Symphony, and was named a Guggenheim Fellow in 2019.

The concert will also include a performance of Schubert’s emotive A minor quartet of 1824, nicknamed *Rosamunde* for the main theme in its second movement, which was borrowed from incidental music he had composed for a play titled *Rosamunde, Princess of Cyprus*. Philip Glass’ second quartet was arranged from a composition for string orchestra composed in 1983 for a theatrical production of Samuel Beckett’s 1979 novella *Company*, which later became a concert work.

Founded in 2010, Spektral Quartet has received three Grammy nominations and commissioned new work from more than 85 composers during its 10-year history. The quartet is made up of Clara Lyon and Maeve Feinberg, violin, Doyle Armbrust, viola, and Russell Rolen, cello. Of Spektral Adams says that “they can pretty much play anything—and with great persuasion. As a composer whose language is built on both older forms and contemporary techniques, working with them is a perfect fit. Not all the music I create is birthed out of friendship and camaraderie, but the members of Spektral, first and foremost, are my good friends. We trust each other, and therefore we can take

risks together.” Spektral Quartet is the ensemble-in-residence in the music department at the University of Chicago.

A pre-performance talk, free to concert ticketholders, is planned with Adams and Cal Performances executive and artistic director Jeremy Geffen at 2pm in Hertz Hall.

Ticket Information

Tickets for *Spektral Quartet* on Sunday, April 5 at 3pm in Hertz Hall are \$48 (prices subject to change). Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to calperformances.org/discounts.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, April 5, 3pm

Chamber Music
Spektral Quartet

Clara Lyon, *violin*
Maeve Feinberg, *violin*
Doyle Armbrust, *viola*
Russell Rolen, *cello*

Hertz Hall
Bancroft Way at College Avenue,
UC Berkeley campus

Program:

Philip Glass/String Quartet No. 2, *Company*
Schubert/String Quartet No. 13 in A minor, D. 804, *Rosamunde*
Samuel Adams/*Current* (World Premiere, Cal Performances Co-commission)

Tickets: \$48 (prices subject to change)

Pre-performance Talk

Hertz Hall

Sunday, April 5, 2pm

With composer Samuel Adams and Cal Performances executive and artistic director Jeremy Geffen. Free to all ticketholders.