

For Immediate Release: October 3, 2023

[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Images of the Takács Quartet and composer Nokuthula Ngwenyama are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#).
A video of the Takács Quartet performing the third movement of Haydn's String Quartet No. 1, Op. 77 can be found on [YouTube](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS THE
TAKÁCS QUARTET
IN TWO PERFORMANCES AT HERTZ HALL THIS SEASON:
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2023, AT 3PM
AND
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2024, AT 3 PM**

**November 12 concert features the world premiere of
Nokuthula Ngwenyama's *Flow*, a Cal Performances co-commission**

Berkeley, October 3, 2023—The world-renowned Takács Quartet returns to Cal Performances at UC Berkeley for two Sunday afternoon concerts in Hertz Hall this season on November 12, 2023, and February 25, 2024, both at 3pm. In its first concert, the Grammy and Gramophone Award-winning group will perform Haydn's late-period *Sunrise* quartet and Beethoven's middle-period Quartet No. 8 in E minor from the Op. 59 *Razumovsky* series. The centerpiece of the November concert is the world premiere of California composer **Nokuthula Ngwenyama's** Cal Performances co-commissioned work, *Flow*, written expressly for the Takács Quartet, which explores the pressing theme of climate change. For the ensemble's second concert in February, the artists will perform Hugo Wolf's *Italian Serenade* and Bartók's second quartet. Schubert's final string quartet rounds out the February concert.

Entering its forty-ninth season in 2023, the Takács Quartet is comprised of **Edward Dusinberre** and **Harumi Rhodes** (violins), **Richard O'Neill** (viola), and founding member **András Fejér** (cello). The group's most recent recording, released in July 2023, features music by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Dvořák; it will be followed later in the 2023–24 season by a recording of compositions by Schubert, including the composer's Quartet No. 15 in G major, D. 887.

Long fascinated by Nokuthula Ngwenyama's music, the ensemble asked her to compose a string quartet work that would focus on the natural world. To prepare for the creation of *Flow*, Ngwenyama researched a wide array of subjects for over a year including environmental protection, lemur songs and rhythms from Madagascar, seasonal starling murmurations, black hole collisions, protein music (converting protein sequences or genes to musical notes), SARS-CoV-2 Omicron and Kraken variants, and peat fields as nature's gift to carbon reclamation. She immersed herself in the catalog of Takács Quartet recordings, especially those of works by Brahms, Coleridge-Taylor, and Florence Price. Speaking of her research for the new piece, she shared, "Systems layered upon other systems revealed a common flow to existence tying us to the initial outburst of energy and matter at the birth of our universe. We, as biological creatures, flow through life. Conversely, the flow of existence is temporarily housed in all living creatures of each generation. Everything in nature flows and develops through time. Individual consciousness is a small part of all collectively lived experience."

Born in 1976 in Los Angeles to Zimbabwean and Japanese parents, Ngwenyama's works have been performed internationally. She is also an accomplished violist, performing as soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician. Ngwenyama first came to prominence by winning the Primrose International Viola Competition at age 16. The following year, she won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, which led to debuts at the Kennedy Center and the 92nd Street 'Y.' A recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, she has performed with orchestras and as a recitalist the world over, including at the White House.

#

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

Friday, November 12, 3pm

Hertz Hall

101 Cross-Sproul Path,
Accessible via pathway from Bancroft Way at College Ave
UC Berkeley campus

Chamber Music
Takács Quartet

Program:

Haydn/String Quartet No. 63 in B-flat major, Op. 76, No. 4, *Sunrise*

Nokuthula Ngwenyama/*Flow* (World Premiere, Cal Performances Co-commission)

Beethoven/String Quartet No. 8 in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2, *Razumovsky*

The Takács Quartet returns to Cal Performances to perform this concert program of new and canonic works centered around the world-premiere of *Flow* by California violist Nokuthula Ngwenyama, a Cal Performances co-commissioned work. To prepare for the creation of *Flow*, Ngwenyama researched a wide array of subjects for over a year including environmental protection, lemur songs and rhythms from Madagascar, seasonal starling murmurations, black hole collisions, protein music (converting protein sequences or genes to musical notes), SARS-CoV-2 Omicron and Kraken variants, and peat fields as nature's gift to carbon reclamation. She immersed herself in the catalog of Takács Quartet recordings, especially those of works by Brahms, Coleridge-Taylor, and Florence Price.

Tickets: \$98 (prices subject to change). Half-price for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available at calperformances.org, by phone at (510) 642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, Tuesday–Friday, 12–5:30pm and Saturday–Sunday, 1–5pm. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at calperformances.org/ucb-students. For information about other discounts, visit calperformances.org/discounts.

Sunday, February 25, 3pm

Hertz Hall
101 Cross-Sproul Path,
Accessible via pathway from Bancroft Way at College Ave
UC Berkeley campus

Chamber Music
Takács Quartet

Program:

Wolf/*Italian Serenade*

Bartók/Quartet No. 2 in A minor

Schubert/Quartet No. 15 in G major, D. 887

Tickets: \$98 (prices subject to change). Half-price for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available at calperformances.org, by phone at (510) 642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, Tuesday–Friday, 12–5:30pm and Saturday–Sunday, 1–5pm. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at calperformances.org/ucb-students. For information about other discounts, visit calperformances.org/discounts.

###

PRESS CONTACT:

Louisa Spier

Cal Performances

Media Relations Manager

(510) 643-6714

lspier@calperformances.org