



**UGA**  
**presents.**

24|25 SEASON

Franklin College Chamber Music Series  
PAYNE MEMORIAL CONCERT

**CALIDORE STRING QUARTET**  
**GABRIELA MONTERO, piano**

SUN, OCT 13, 4:00 pm  
Hodgson Concert Hall

Supported by  
**DONALD SCHNEIDER**

Please silence all mobile phones and electronic devices. Photography, video and audio recording, and texting are prohibited during the performance.



## PROGRAM

### **GABRIELA MONTERO** (b. 1970)

*Canaima*: Quintet for Piano and Strings\* [19:15]

- I. Andante
- II. Scherzo. Prestissimo
- III. *Tepui*. Tranquillo, meditativo
- IV. *Fuerzas oscuras*. Allegro furioso e percussivo

### **LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN** (1770-1827)

String Quartet No. 5, Op. 18 No. 5 [29:00]

- I. Allegro
- II. Menuetto
- III. Andante cantabile
- IV. Allegro

## INTERMISSION

### **DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH** (1906-1975)

Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57 [38:00]

- I. Prelude
- II. Fugue
- III. Scherzo
- IV. Intermezzo
- V. Finale

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## CALIDORE STRING QUARTET

**Jeffrey Myers**, violin

**Ryan Meehan**, violin

**Jeremy Berry**, viola

**Estelle Choi**, cello

\*Co-commissioned for the Calidore String Quartet by The Gilmore in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Ottawa ChamberFest in Canada, Atlanta's Spivey Hall, University of Georgia Performing Arts Center, the Los Alamos Concert Association in New Mexico, and the Swedish Radio.

## PROGRAM NOTES

by Laurie Shulman ©2024

### ***Canaima*: Quintet for Piano and Strings**

**Gabriela Montero** (b. 1970)

This evening's performance opens with a 2023 piano quintet by Gabriela Montero, a virtuoso pianist who has also established a reputation as a significant voice in new music. She is a composer with a social conscience, whose works often address topics independent of music. Ms. Montero was recently awarded the Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent by The Human Rights Foundation (HRF) at the Oslo Freedom Forum.

Her composer's note for *Canaima* explains its unusual title as well as its connection to environmental issues—and their collision with politics.

In environmental news emanating from South America, the Brazilian rainforest tends to take the lion's share of headlines. Right-wing governments are perceived as the flouters of global ecology targets, while the left claims environmentalism as a core concern.

But Amazonia traverses Brazil's northern border into Venezuela, a country whose "leftist" dictatorship shows scant regard for the ecological concerns of progressive movements in the northern hemisphere. In short, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro has presided over the criminal destruction of large tranches of the Canaima National Forest—a World Heritage Site that includes the Angel Falls—and the catastrophic, chemical poisoning of its waterways. Many indigenous people, whom Chavismo swore to represent, have lost their lives and

livelihoods in the savage pursuit and trading of Canaima's vast mineral wealth.

The first movement of *Canaima* opens with a quotation from an indigenous Jivi song recorded by the Venezuelan explorer Charles Brewer-Carías in 1970. The song provides the leitmotif for an elegiac homage to the region and its indigenous people, as it winds its way, river-like, throughout the work.

A light but ambiguous second movement Scherzo suggests both innocence—a people as-yet undisturbed by the outside world, untouched by dark forces—and the ritual, repetitive processes of cooperative work necessary for group survival.

The contemplative third movement evokes the timelessness of the majestic Tepui—house of the Gods to the indigenous Pemón people—a table-top mountain formation that dominates the geological character of the Gran Sabana, and Canaima National Park in particular. We are reminded of the sacred dominion and permanence of nature in one of the world's most ancient landscapes.

Human encroachment dominates the chaotic and violent fourth movement ostinato, as order is disrupted and brutalized. It serves as a clarion call for both acknowledgment and action in one of the planet's most biodiverse regions, a remote region that has fallen victim to the politically expedient prioritization of other, competing ecological and political crises.

Montero's writing is richly descriptive, aptly reflecting the catalytic forces she describes in her note. The first movement is flowing and liquescent

with shifting textures in the piano. Understated and rarely rising to forte, it ends in a cloud of mystery. Her Scherzo is a clear ternary structure: pointillist and jazzy in its first section with frequent metric changes, followed by a cantabile middle section played legato. This movement requires razor-sharp precision from the ensemble.

Strings are muted for much of the *Tranquillo, meditativo* movement, which is a dialogue of phrases exchanged between piano and strings. The quartet plays largely in rhythmic unison, moving as a chorale. Montero's finale explodes with fury, recalling certain piano works of both Bartók and Ginastera. Here, the wild native dance is a cry of protest.

#### **Quartet in A major, Op. 18 No. 5 Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

Because Beethoven's late quartets are such transporting music, we sometimes overlook the impact of his early works in the genre. In their day, they too created quite a stir. Writing to her sisters on 10 December, 1800, Countess Josephine von Deym reported:

Yesterday we had music to honor the Duchess. I had to play and was, moreover, responsible for all the arrangements and supposed to see that everything went off well. We opened all the doors and everything was illuminated. I assure you, it was a splendid sight. Beethoven played the Sonata with Violoncello, I played the last of the three violin Sonatas [Op.12] accompanied by Schuppanzigh who, like all the others, played divinely. Then Beethoven, that real angel, let us hear his new Quartets, which have not been engraved yet, and are the greatest

of their kind. The famous Kraft played cello, Schuppanzigh first violin. You can imagine what a treat it was for us! The Duchess was enchanted and everything went famously.

Her description is most informative. We can picture the elegant circles in which Beethoven was moving, and the glitter of Viennese high society. We can also piece together the program, which must have been a full evening indeed, even if only two of the quartets were played (she does not specify how many). Such a gathering takes on added significance if we recall that it would have been one of the last such *soirées* that Beethoven could hear unimpaired. By mid-1801, he was confiding to his good friends that his hearing was deteriorating, and the famous Heiligenstadt Testament was written in 1802, detailing his misery at the prospect of total deafness.

Beethoven's first published quartets appeared as Opus 18 in 1801. As was the custom of the day, the Opus consisted of six works. It was the only time he issued that many pieces in a group as a single Opus. His decision to do so reflects a great respect for the 18th-century conventions brought to a summit in the works of Mozart and Haydn. As one would expect in such early works—Beethoven was not yet 30, and lived for nearly three more decades—he deferred to tradition. The A major Quartet, published as No. 5, is a well-mannered, elegant composition that is relatively free of the drama and passion we generally associate with Beethoven's compositions.

In fact, the A major quartet is clearly modeled on Mozart's quartet in the same key, K.464, which appeared in 1785 as part of the set of six quartets

that Mozart dedicated to Haydn. Beethoven's pupil Carl Czerny reported:

Once Beethoven came across the score of Mozart's six quartets in my house. He opened the fifth, in A, and said: "That's what I call a work! In it, Mozart was telling the world: 'Look what I could do if you were ready for it!'"

Among the obvious resemblances to the Mozart model are the placing of the Minuet second rather than third, and the casting of the slow movement as a set of variations in D major.

The variations movement is the most interesting of Beethoven's four. While this *Andante cantabile* compares unfavorably to the sophistication and depth of its Mozartean model, it has some moments that hint broadly at the genius Beethoven would more fully realize within a few years. He maintains the harmonic outline of his stepwise theme throughout. Variety results from textural changes and a nice balance between contrapuntal (imitative) and homophonic (melody supported by blocked harmonies) writing. The fifth variation has an extended coda that takes us by surprise with a brief, unexpected modulation to B-flat major. Beethoven soon returns to the home key of D. The coda ends *Poco adagio*, moderating the boisterous humor of the fifth variation and restoring the dignity and calm more generally associated with slow movements.

The quartet closes with a brisk *Allegro* in full sonata form, ending with a courtly bow rather than a bold flourish.

#### **Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57 Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)**

The Shostakovich Piano Quintet is a rare, thought-provoking work. Even

a first hearing leaves listeners with the uncanny sense that they already know this work well, and that they have heard something significant. At the same time one is struck with the Quintet's originality; nothing sounds hackneyed and Shostakovich's score comes across as fresh and immediate.

Shostakovich composed it during summer 1940, shortly before the Nazi invasion forced the Soviet Union into the Second World War. The composer played the premiere in Moscow on 23 November, 1940 with members of the Beethoven Quartet. (Its members were lifelong friends; they also premiered 13 of Shostakovich's 15 string quartets.) Critical and popular reaction to the new piece was electric. The Quintet was immediately hailed as a masterpiece. It earned Shostakovich the Stalin Prize of 100,000 rubles; at the time this was the largest sum of money ever awarded for a piece of music.

The quintet has five movements, but it may also be perceived in three large sections, because the first two and last two movements are played without pause. These outer sections make a centerpiece of the middle scherzo, creating a sort of arch form of the complete work.

Within the five movements Shostakovich pays homage to many of his musical predecessors. The Prelude and Fugue that begin the work hark back to the Baroque era. Dance-like and fleet, the scherzo recalls the breathtaking and magical third movements of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. Shostakovich's Intermezzo, though in some ways the most individual of the five movements, manages to take a simultaneous bow to J.S. Bach and to Paul Hindemith. And the finale, with its delicate diatonic grace, is quite Mozartean.



Despite this apparent melting pot of musical styles, the Piano Quintet is well-unified and closely knit. One of the ways in which Shostakovich accomplishes this unity is texture. Only rarely does he employ the full sonority of the quintet. Because of that, when all five performers do participate, the composer achieves extra emphasis and emotional power. Many momentary duets and trios occur; it is as if he wished to give each player a special opportunity to listen to the others. This is music as much for the performers as it is for the listeners.

The piano is treated polyphonically for most of the quintet. In the Fugue, Shostakovich temporarily increases his voicing to six by using each of the pianist's hands for a separate fugue entrance. In all four movements, the pianist frequently plays unisons at a distance of one or two octaves, rather than chords, which might compromise the balance. By treating the piano in

this linear fashion—a technique characteristic of Shostakovich, especially in chamber music—he focuses attention on melody and the interplay of polyphonic lines. The piano becomes an extension of the string instruments.

A prevalence of slow tempi in the quintet throws a bright spotlight on the central scherzo. Curiously, though this movement is generally taken at breakneck speed, it is only marked *Allegretto*. Shostakovich apparently wished to maintain a sense of moderation and restraint throughout. His concluding movement fulfills this intent admirably. Its pastoral simplicity and direct terms show startling grace. There is humor as well. According to biographer Victor Seroff, one of the finale's themes is the traditional tune used by Russian circuses to herald the arrival of the clowns. Philosophical, witty and uplifting, the Finale is music for the soul.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### CALIDORE STRING QUARTET

The Calidore String Quartet is recognized as one of the world's foremost interpreters of a vast chamber music repertory, from the cycles of quartets by Beethoven and Mendelssohn to works of celebrated contemporary voices like György Kurtág, Jörg Widmann, and Caroline Shaw. For more than a decade, the Calidore has enjoyed performances and residencies in the world's major venues and festivals, released multiple critically acclaimed recordings, and won numerous awards. The *Los Angeles Times* described the musicians as “astonishing,” their playing “shockingly deep,” approaching “the kind of sublimity other quartets spend a lifetime searching.” The *New York Times* noted the Quartet's “deep reserves of virtuosity and irrepressible dramatic instinct,” and the *Washington Post* wrote that “four more individual musicians are unimaginable, yet these speak, breathe, think and feel as one.”

The New York City-based Calidore String Quartet has appeared in venues throughout North America, Europe, and Asia including Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, London's Wigmore Hall, Berlin's Konzerthaus, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and Brussels's BOZAR, and at major festivals such as the BBC Proms, Verbier, Ravinia, Music@Menlo, Rheingau, and Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Always seeking new commissioning opportunities, the quartet has given world premieres of works by Caroline Shaw, Anna Clyne, Huw Watkins, and Mark-Anthony Turnage, and collaborated with artists such as Anne-Sophie Mutter, Anthony McGill, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Marc-André Hamelin, Joshua Bell, the Emerson String Quartet, Lawrence Power, David Finckel, and Wu Han.



Highlights of the '23-'24 season included return appearances at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and People's Symphony in New York as well as concerts in Seattle, Palm Beach, Ottawa, Toronto, Kalamazoo and a European tour of the United Kingdom, Estonia, and Germany. In the '24-'25 season, the Calidore returns to the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the University of Delaware to perform the complete string quartets of Beethoven. The quartet will also return to their alma mater, the Colburn School in Los Angeles, where they will play the complete cycle of Korngold string quartets. Other highlights of the '24-'25 season include appearances with San Francisco Performances, the Celebrity Series of Boston, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the Warsaw Philharmonic, and BBC Radio at London's Wigmore Hall; and premieres and performances of works by Han Lash, Sebastian Currier, Xavier Foley, and Gabriela Montero.

In their most ambitious recording project to date, the Calidore is set to release the final two volumes of Beethoven's complete string quartets for Signum Records in the '24-'25 season. Volume I, containing the late quartets, was released in 2023 to great critical acclaim, earning the quartet *BBC Music Magazine's* Chamber Award in 2024. *The magazine's five-star review noted* that the Calidore's performances "penetrate right to the heart of the music" and "can stand comparison with the best." Their previous recordings on Signum include *Babel* with music by Schumann, Shaw, and Shostakovich, and *Resilience* with works by Prokofiev, Janáček, Golijov, and Mendelssohn.

The Calidore String Quartet was founded at the Colburn School in Los Angeles in 2010. Within two years, the quartet won grand prizes in virtually all the major U.S. chamber music competitions, including the Fischhoff, Coleman, Chesapeake, and Yellow Springs competitions, and it captured top prizes at the 2012 ARD International Music Competition in Munich and the International Chamber Music Competition Hamburg. The Quartet first made international headlines as the winner of the \$100,000 Grand Prize of the 2016 M-Prize International Chamber Music Competition and was the first and only North American ensemble to win the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship. The Calidore was also named a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist and in 2018, was awarded the Avery Fisher Career Grant, having won the Lincoln Center Emerging Artist Award a year prior. The Calidore is currently in residence with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York.

The Calidore String Quartet serves as the University of Delaware's Distinguished String Quartet in Residence. In this capacity they direct the UD School of Music's Graduate String Quartet Fellowship and serve as artistic directors of the University of Delaware Chamber Music Series. Prior to taking this position, they served as artists-in-residence at the University of Toronto, University of Michigan, and Stony Brook University. The Calidore is grateful to have been mentored by the Emerson Quartet, Quatuor Ébène, Andre Roy, Arnold Steinhardt, David Finckel, Günter Pichler, Guillaume Sutre, Paul Coletti, and Ronald Leonard.

#### **The Calidore String Quartet plays the following instruments:**

Jeffrey Myers plays on a violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini c.1775 "Eisenberg," owned by a private benefactor and bows by Dominique Peccatte and Francois Tourte. Ryan Meehan plays a violin by Vincenzo Panormo c.1775 and a bow by Joseph Henry. Jeremy Berry plays a viola by Umberto Muschietti c.1903 and a bow by Pierre Simon. Estelle Choi plays a cello by Charles Jacquot c.1830.

### **GABRIELA MONTERO**

Gabriela Montero's visionary interpretations and unique compositional gifts have garnered her critical acclaim and a devoted following on the world stage. Anthony Tommasini remarked in *The New York Times* that "Montero's playing had everything: crackling rhythmic brio, subtle shadings, steely power...soulful lyricism...unsentimental expressivity."

Montero's recent and forthcoming highlights feature performances of her own "Latin Concerto" with the San Francisco Symphony (Marin Alsop), New World Symphony (Stéphane Denève), Vienna and Polish National radio symphonies (Marin Alsop), BBC Scottish and Antwerp symphonies (Elim Chan), Swedish Radio Symphony (Marta Gardolińska), and National Arts Centre Orchestra (Alexander Shelley), the latter with which she concludes a four-year Creative Partnership at the end of 2025. In May 2024, Montero also made her long-awaited return to Los Angeles, where she worked with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and Jaime Martín, and also performed an adapted version of "Westward," a special program themed around immigration and Charlie Chaplin's *The Immigrant* at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Hollywood. She also gave the world premiere performance of her latest commissioned composition, a piano quintet entitled *Canaima*, with the Calidore String Quartet at the celebrated Gilmore Piano Festival.

Other highlights include an extensive European tour with the City of Birmingham Symphony and Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, a UK tour with the Prague Symphony, and debut appearances with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, and the Minnesota Orchestra, where "Montero's gripping performance...made a case that she might become the classical scene's next great composer/pianist" (*Star Tribune*). Other highlights include artist residencies with the Sao Paulo Symphony, Prague Radio Symphony, Basel Symphony, and at the Rheingau Festival; debuts at Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall, New York's 92nd Street Y, Paris's Philharmonie and La Seine Musicale, and the London Piano Festival at King's Place; and the launch of "Gabriela Montero at Prager", an ongoing artist residency and international concert series established at the Prager Family Center for the Arts in the iconic coastal town of Easton, Maryland.

Celebrated for her exceptional musicality and ability to improvise, Montero has performed with many of the world's leading orchestras to date, including: the New York, Royal Liverpool, Rotterdam, Dresden, Oslo, Vienna Radio, Naples, and Netherlands Radio philharmonic orchestras; the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig,



NDR Sinfonieorchester Hamburg, NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover, Zürcher Kammerorchester, and Academy of St Martin in the Fields; and the Yomiuri Nippon, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Houston, Atlanta, Toronto, Baltimore, Oregon, Dallas, Vienna, Barcelona, Lucerne, and Sydney symphony orchestras; the Belgian National Orchestra, the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras, orchestra of the Komische Oper Berlin, and Residentie Orkest.

A graduate and Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music in London, Montero is also a frequent recitalist and chamber musician, having given concerts at such distinguished venues as the Wigmore Hall, Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Vienna Konzerthaus, Berlin Philharmonie, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Cologne Philharmonie, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Munich Herkulessaal, Sydney Opera House, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Luxembourg Philharmonie, Lisbon Gulbenkian Museum, Manchester Bridgewater Hall, Seoul's LG Arts Centre, Hong Kong City Hall, the National Concert Hall in Taipei, and at the Edinburgh, Salzburg, SettembreMusica in Milan and Turin, Enescu, Lucerne, Ravinia, Gstaad, Saint-Denis, Violon sur le Sable, Trondheim, Bergen, and Lugano festivals.

An award-winning and bestselling recording artist, her most recent album, released in autumn 2019 on the Orchid Classics label, features her own "Latin Concerto" and Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Major, recorded with the Orchestra of the Americas in Frutillar, Chile. Her previous recording on Orchid Classics features Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2 and her first orchestral composition, *Ex Patria*, which won Montero her first Latin Grammy for Best Classical Album. In 2008, she also received a Grammy nomination for her album *Baroque*, and in 2010 she released *Solatino*, a recording inspired by her Venezuelan homeland and devoted to works by Latin American composers.

Montero made her formal debut as a composer with *Ex Patria*, a tone poem designed to illustrate and protest Venezuela's descent into lawlessness, corruption, and violence. The piece was premiered in 2011 by the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. Montero's first full-length composition, Piano Concerto No. 1, the "Latin Concerto," was first performed in 2016 at the Leipzig Gewandhaus with the MDR Sinfonieorchester and Kristjan Järvi, and subsequently recorded and filmed with the Orchestra of the Americas and Carlos Miguel Prieto for the ARTE Konzert channel.

Winner of the 4th International Beethoven Award, Montero is a committed human rights advocate whose voice regularly reaches beyond the concert platform. In 2024, she was named a recipient of the Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent by the Oslo Freedom Forum. She was also awarded the 2012 Rockefeller Award for her contribution to the arts and was a featured performer at Barack Obama's 2008 Presidential Inauguration.

Born in Venezuela, Montero started her piano studies at age 4, making her concerto debut at age 8 in her hometown of Caracas. This led to a scholarship from the government to study privately in the USA and then at the Royal Academy of Music in London with Hamish Milne. Starting September 2024, Montero will be the Jonathan and Linn Epstein Artist in Residence, and piano faculty member, at the Cleveland Institute of Music.