

Sunday, April 26, 2026

Butter Quartet

Music Among Friends

Anna Jane Lester & Chloe Prendergast, violins

Isabel Franenberg, viola

Evan Buttar, cello

String Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 6, No. 6 (1771)

Jan Křtitel Vaňhal (1685–1750)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Presto

String Quartet No. 15 in D minor, K. 421/417b (1783)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791)

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Andante
- III. Menuetto and Trio. Allegretto
- IV. Allegretto ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

String Quartet No. 5 in E-flat major, Kr. 195 (1788)

Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf
(1739–1799)

- I. Allegro
- II. Menuetto non troppo presto
- III. Finale. Allegro

String Quartet in D major, Op. 20, "Sun," No. 4 (1772)

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732–1809)

- I. Allegro di molto
- II. Un poco Adagio affettuoso
- III. Allegretto alla zingarese
- IV. Presto scherzando

ISABELLA
STEWART GARDNER
MUSEUM



NOTE FROM THE CURATOR

The period-instrument Butter Quartet presents a program exploring the origins of the Classical period string quartet. The four composers on this program—Haydn, Mozart, Vaňhal, and Dittersdorf—are reported to have performed together as a string quartet at private gatherings. At the core of this program is a musical tip-of-the-hat between two of them: Haydn’s Opus 20 “Sun” quartets number among his greatest works—witty, erudite, profound. Dazzled by Haydn’s fusion of counterpoint and gallant gesture, Mozart dedicated his most learned set of quartets to Haydn.

—George Steel, *Abrams Curator of Music*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Butter Quartet consists of four musicians brought together by their mutual love of vibrant, historically informed performance of string quartets. They first formed during their studies at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, but soon developed a passion and dynamic that extended beyond their conservatory years. They have been featured in festivals such as the String Quartet Biennale Amsterdam (2024), the York Early Music Festival (2023), the Utrecht Early Music Festival (2022), Mozartfest Würzburg (2021), and the Beethoven Academy at the National Forum of Music in Poland (2020). Their performances have also been broadcast on national classical radio in the Netherlands (NPO Klassiek), the UK (BBC Three), France (France Musique), and Slovenia (Radiotelevizija Slovenija). At the 2019 York Early Music International Young Artists Competition, they were awarded a place in the prestigious EEEMERGING+ professional development scheme for young European ensembles. Last season, the Butter Quartet was featured as the musical presentation of the Erasmus Prize 2024 and made their United States debut on their first North American tour in November 2024. They also released their debut album, *Scintilla*, in July 2024 with Brilliant Classics.

The Butter Quartet enjoys integrating their research on late 18th- and early 19th-century performance practice into powerful performances. They also bring the same spirit of discovery to newly composed

works for historically set up instruments. The Butters value a strong connection with their audiences, and have partnered with community organizations to create grassroots concert tours in diverse spaces, supported by grants from the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds and the Fonds Podiumkunsten.

Their expansive approach to historically informed and contemporary performance has been influenced by coaches and mentors, including renowned musicians and researchers such as Sigiswald Kuijken, Midori Seiler, Kati Debretzeni, Shunske Sato, Julia Wedman, Rachael Beesley, Clive Brown, and coaches at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. The Butter Quartet received grants from Early Music America and the Adriana Jacoba Fonds in their early years of study as an ensemble and are the recipient of the 2024 String Quartet Stipend from Het Kersjes Fonds.



UPCOMING PERFORMANCES:

ISATA KANNEH-MASON, PIANO

Sunday, May 10

RENAISSANCE STRING QUARTET

Sunday, May 17

THURSDAY NIGHT MUSIC:

NEW MASADA QUARTET

Thursday, May 28, at 7pm

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum resides on the homelands of the Massachusetts Tribe, who belong to this place and continue to regard these lands and waters as sacred.

Music at the Gardner is supported by Manitou Fund. The Museum thanks its generous concert donors: The Coogan Concert in memory of Peter Weston Coogan; Fitzpatrick Family Concert; James Lawrence Memorial Concert; Alford P. Rudnick Memorial Concert; David Scudder in memory of his wife, Marie Louise Scudder; Wendy Shattuck Young Artist Concert; and Willona Sinclair Memorial Concert. The piano is dedicated as the Alex d'Arbeloff Steinway. The harpsichord was generously donated by Dr. Robert Barstow in memory of Marion Huse, and its care is endowed in memory of Dr. Barstow by The Barstow Fund. Music at the Gardner is also supported in part by Barbara and Amos Hostetter, Joseph Mari, Sallie and Jim McGregor, Nicie and Jay Panetta, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which is supported by the state of Massachusetts and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Kindly turn off all electronic devices during the concert and refrain from any photography or filming in the hall. Also, please note the location of the emergency exit doors: across the hall from the doors through which you entered.