

ISABELLA
STEWART GARDNER
MUSEUM

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Announcing the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's Fall 2026 Weekend Concert Series

Ten Performances at Calderwood Hall from September through November



Press photos available [here](#).

Information & Tickets: gardnermuseum.org/about/music
Tickets On Sale to the General Public on August 5, 2026

BOSTON, MA (July 29, 2026) – The **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum** announces its **Fall 2026 Weekend Concert Series**, a ten-concert autumn season curated by *Abrams Curator of Music* **George Steel** held on **select Sundays at 1:30pm** from **September 13 through November 22, 2026**. The season features world-class artists performing in the Museum's extraordinary Calderwood Hall—a 300-seat “sonic cube” with three levels of balconies designed so that 80% of seats are front row, creating a uniquely intense and intentional listening experience.

The Gardner Museum's Fall Weekend Concert Series includes: violinist **Rachel Barton Pine** performing a recital of Brahms sonatas (September 13); acclaimed period-instrumentalist, violinist

Rachell Ellen Wong, making her Calderwood Hall debut with collaborators from her **Twelfth Night Ensemble** (September 20; postponed from January due to the blizzard); a chamber music celebration honoring the late **Scott Nickrenz**, former *Abrams Curator of Music* at the Gardner, featuring **Geneva Lewis** and **YooJin Jan**, violins; **Emma Wernig**, viola; **Jay Campbell**, cello; and **Conrad Tao**, piano (September 27); the excellent **Ivalas Quartet** with music by Franz Schubert, George Walker, and Carlos Simon (October 4); ***Esther in the Age of Rembrandt*** performed by **ACRONYM**, in conjunction with the Gardner Museum's exhibition (October 18); ***Celebrating Chrysanthemums***, an exploration of the chrysanthemum as muse coinciding with the Museum's annual John Lowell Gardner Chrysanthemum Installation (October 25); Jamaican-British composer and pianist **Eleanor Alberga** with the **Green Room Ensemble** (November 1); the multiple prize-winning **Poiesis Quartet** (November 8); the **Lysander Piano Trio** in a wide ranging program spanning from Swedish violinist and composer Amanda Maier to South African composer Bongani Ndodana-Breen (November 15); and superstar harpsichordist **Jean Rondeau** in a survey of French Baroque music (November 22).

"We are delighted to announce our new season of concerts in Calderwood Hall," says George Steel. "Two violinists kick things off: Rachell Ellen Wong, playing Baroque violin, and Rachel Barton Pine, playing Brahms on an instrument he himself selected. I am thrilled that, thanks to the generosity of his many admirers, we are launching a new annual concert in honor of the late Scott Nickrenz. Fittingly, it will be a barnburner, featuring the astounding and seldom-tackled Piano Quintet of Leo Ornstein. For the first time, we are also presenting a concert celebrating one of the Museum's prized cultivars in conjunction with our John Lowell Gardner Chrysanthemum Installation. This concert will be a feast for the senses! I hope you will join us for this glorious music, throughout our Fall season."

George Steel's music programming for the Museum continues founder and legendary arts patron Isabella Stewart Gardner's vision of bringing together musicians and audiences for inspiring gatherings. Dating to 1927, the Gardner's Weekend Concert Series is the longest-running museum music program in the country. Much like Isabella Stewart Gardner did in her time, Steel champions unknown repertoire and embraces new works, creates connections and builds community among musicians, and supports them by presenting them in new endeavors and collaborations. His programming also frequently draws on the history of the Gardner Museum, featuring instruments from the Museum's collection and music by composers who were associated with its founder. In honoring Isabella Stewart Gardner's musical legacy, Music at the Gardner remains strongly committed to broadening the repertoire of music presented to include previously overlooked and marginalized composers as well as performers of all backgrounds.

Fall 2026 Weekend Concert Series Overview

Acclaimed violinist **Rachel Barton Pine**, praised by *The New York Times* for her "bravura technique and soulful musicianship," opens the Gardner Museum's 2026 Fall Weekend Concert Series on **Sunday, September 13**, returning to Calderwood Hall after her triumphant concert last season. Joined by pianist **Matthew Hagle**, she presents a recital of **Johannes Brahms's** violin sonatas — including Brahms's own violin version of a sonata better known on clarinet, which Pine has been championing. She performs on the astonishing Guarneri "del Gesù" violin that Brahms himself selected for his chamber music partner, Marie Soldat-Roeger.

The long-awaited Boston debut of **Twelfth Night Ensemble** follows on **Sunday, September 20**, in a program postponed from January due to the blizzard. Violinist Rachell Ellen Wong—the only Baroque violinist to be awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant—joins harpsichordist David Belkovski and cellist Coleman Itzkoff in Baroque works by **Nicola Matteis**, **Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber**, **John**

Eccles, Giuseppe Tartini, J.S. Bach, Jean-Marie Leclair, Francesco Maria Veracini, Joseph-Nicolas-Pancrace Royer, and Jacques Duphy, alongside contemporary composer **Wanessa Dourado's** *Conto Bachiano* from 2023. Inspired by Shakespeare's play of the same name, Twelfth Night strives to invoke a spirit of boundless revelry, celebration, and community in their programming.

A new annual tradition begins on **Sunday, September 27**, with the inaugural **Chamber Music Celebration**, endowed to honor the life and work of the late **Scott Nickrenz**, the Gardner's first *Abrams Curator of Music* and a superb violist and chamber music impresario and evangelist. Violinists **Geneva Lewis** and **YooJin Jang**, violist **Emma Wernig**, cellist **Jay Campbell**, and pianist **Conrad Tao** present a wide-ranging program featuring music by **Henry Purcell** and **Franz Joseph Haydn**, **Ruth Crawford Seeger's** Suite No. 2 for Four Strings and Piano, and crowned by the thrilling Piano Quintet of Ukrainian-American composer **Leo Ornstein**, whose life bridged three centuries.

Franz Schubert's monumental "Death and the Maiden" quartet anchors the **Ivalas Quartet's** program on **Sunday, October 4**, paired with two American works: an early piece in **George Walker's** "American" style (Walker died only a few years ago at age 96) and *An Elegy: A Cry from the Grave*, a moving miniature by **Carlos Simon**, whose *Requiem for the Enslaved* had its Boston premiere at the Gardner Museum in 2022. Hailed by *The Strad* for playing with "tremendous heart and beauty," the Ivalas Quartet has been changing the face of classical music since its inception in 2017 with a mission to enrich the classical music world by spotlighting past and present BIPOC composers alongside the standard repertory.

In conjunction with the Museum's exhibition, **ACRONYM** presents *Esther in the Age of Rembrandt* on **Sunday, October 18**, offering rare performances of three Esther cantatas written during Rembrandt's time. The program includes a work by the remarkable French composer **Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre**, alongside music by Flemish composer **Leonora Duarte**, Jewish Mantuan composer **Salamone Rossi**, **Giacomo Carissimi**, **Johann Heinrich Schmelzer**, and **Marc-Antoine Charpentier**. ACRONYM will perform with a roster of vocal soloists as special guests: **Amanda Forsythe** and **Teresa Wakim**, sopranos; **Kim Leeds**, alto; **Aaron Sheehan**, tenor; and **Jesse Blumberg**, baritone.

The Gardner Museum's annual John Lowell Gardner Chrysanthemum Installation inspires **Celebrating Chrysanthemums** on **Sunday, October 25**, an exploration of the flower as artistic muse hosted by the Gardner's *Stanley P. Kozak Director of Horticulture* **Erika Rumbley** and *Abrams Curator of Music* **George Steel**, who will also read related poems, letters, and horticultural texts. An all-star cast performs music by **Jules Massenet**, **Léo Delibes**, **Giacomo Puccini**, **Scott Joplin**, **Dora Pejačević**, **Nikolai Harito**, **William Penn**, **Zbigniew Maciejowski**, **Ernesto Lecuona**, **Tōru Takemitsu**, **Xiaogang Ye**, and **Juantio Becenti**.

Jamaican-British composer and pianist **Eleanor Alberga**, one of the most exciting composers writing in the U.K., takes the stage on **Sunday, November 1** with the **Green Room Ensemble** — violinists **Thomas Bowes** and **Nathan Meltzer**, violist **Jordan Bak**, and cellist **Sterling Elliott**, who are all stars in their own right. The concert is part of the world premiere tour of Alberga's Piano Quintet No. 2, "Stark" and will also include her String Quartets Nos. 1, 2, and 3. Alberga has been commissioned by the BBC Proms, The Royal Opera, and Covent Garden, among many others.

Founded only in 2022, the **Poiesis Quartet** has already become a much-talked-about force in classical music. On **Sunday, November 8**, they tackle two landmarks of the repertoire—Ludwig van Beethoven's final string quartet (a work full of good humor despite having been written in trying

circumstances) and Sergei Prokofiev's String Quartet No. 1. They also bring two recent works: *Many Many Cadences*, a bright and brilliant work by **Sky Macklay**, and *Tapestry of the Beloved Beatified*, a new commission from **Jeff Scott**, founding horn player of Imani Winds. The Poiesis Quartet was named among the best classical performances of 2025 by *The New York Times*.

Formed while its members were students at Juilliard, the **Lysander Piano Trio** performs on **Sunday, November 15**, featuring music by the remarkable Swedish violinist-composer **Amanda Maier**, who knew and worked with Brahms and **Edvard Grieg**. The program also includes works by Grieg and **Antonín Dvořák**, and *Two Nguni Dances* by South African composer **Bongani Ndodana-Breen**, whom the Museum has commissioned in the past, and whose sophisticated style draws on sub-Saharan musical traditions, including those of the Xhosa clan, to which he belongs. The Lysander Piano Trio has been praised by *The Washington Post* for playing with, “an uncommon degree of heart-on-the-sleeve emotional frankness.”

The Gardner Museum's Fall 2026 Weekend Concert Series concludes on **Sunday, November 22** with superstar harpsichordist **Jean Rondeau**—perhaps the world's most celebrated performer on the instrument—returning to Calderwood Hall for a survey of French Baroque treasures by **Louis Couperin, Jean-Philippe Rameau, François Couperin, and Joseph-Nicolas-Pancrace Royer**. Rondeau is a global ambassador for the harpsichord, and is at the forefront of bringing the instrument into the 21st century. *The Washington Post* raves, “He internalizes the music he plays so completely that any interpretive ambivalence or miscalculation is unthinkable. The sincerity and modesty of his delivery are the keys to its power.”

Fall 2026 At-a-Glance Concert Schedule

September 13 Rachel Barton Pine, violin

September 20: Twelfth Night Ensemble

September 27: Chamber Music Celebration

This annual concert celebrates the life and legacy of Scott Nickrenz, first Abrams Curator of Music at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

October 4: Ivalas Quartet

October 18: ACRONYM: *Esther in the Age of Rembrandt*

October 25: Celebrating Chrysanthemums

This performance is made possible by the Anne Hawley Fund for Programs.

November 1: Eleanor Alberga with Green Room Ensemble

November 8: Poiesis Quartet

November 15: Lysander Piano Trio

November 22: Jean Rondeau, harpsichord

This concert is made possible by the generous support of David Scudder in memory of his wife, Marie Louise Scudder.

All concerts take place on Sundays at 1:30 pm in Calderwood Hall at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (25 Evans Way, Boston, MA).

Ticketing Information

Tickets (\$25-\$99) go on sale to the general public on **Wednesday, August 5, 2026 at 10:00 am** and are available at gardnermuseum.org/about/music or by calling the Box Office at 617 278 5156. All concert tickets include Museum admission.

About the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum invites you to escape the ordinary in a magical setting where art and community come together to inspire new ways of envisioning our world. Embodying the fearless legacy of its founder, the Museum offers a singular invitation to explore the past through a contemporary lens, creating meaningful encounters with art and joyful connections for all. Modeled after a Venetian palazzo, unforgettable galleries surround a luminous Courtyard and are home to masters such as Rembrandt, Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo, Whistler, and Sargent. The Renzo Piano Wing provides a platform for contemporary artists, musicians, and scholars and serves as an innovative venue where creativity is celebrated in all of its forms.

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum • 25 Evans Way, Boston, MA 02115 • Hours: Open Weekends from 10 am to 5 pm, Weekdays from 11am to 5 pm, and Thursdays until 9 pm. Closed Tuesdays. • Admission: Adults \$25; Seniors \$22; Students \$15; Free for members, children 17 and under, and all named "Isabella" • For information 617 566 1401 • Box Office 617 278 5156 • www.gardnermuseum.org

Music at the Gardner is supported by the Nora McNeely Hurley Foundation. The Museum thanks its generous concert donors: The Coogan Concert in memory of Peter Weston Coogan; Fitzpatrick Family Concert; James Lawrence Memorial Concert; Scott Nickrenz 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, and The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc.

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