Eastman Presents –
Eastman-Ranlet Series

Ying Quartet

Billy Childs and String Quartet Creativity

Sunday, November 8, 2026
Hatch Recital Hall
3:00 PM



Eastman School of Music

PROGRAM

String Quartet No. 19 in C Major, K. 465 ("Dissonance") — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Adagio – Allegro
Andante cantabile
Menuetto – Trio. Allegro
Allegro

Agitato — Billy Childs (b. 1957)

Oscuro

Variations on a Rondo

INTERMISSION

String Quartet No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 51, No. 1 — Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Allegro
Romanze. Poco adagio
Allegretto molto moderato e comodo – Un poco più animato
Allegro

Ying Quartet
Robin Scott, violin
Janet Ying, violin
Phillip Ying, viola
David Ying, cello



The Grammy Award-winning **Ying Quartet** occupies a position of unique prominence in the classical music world, combining brilliantly communicative performances with a fearlessly imaginative view of chamber music in today's world. The Quartet has established itself as an ensemble of the highest musical qualifications. Their performances regularly take place in many of the world's most important concert halls, from Carnegie Hall to the Sydney Opera House; at the same time, the Quartet's belief that concert music can also be a meaningful part of everyday life has also drawn the foursome to perform in settings as diverse as the workplace, schools, juvenile prisons, and the White House. In fact, the Ying Quartet's constant quest to explore the creative possibilities of the string quartet has led it to an unusually diverse array of musical projects and interests.

The Ying's LifeMusic commissioning project, created in response to their commitment to expanding the rich string quartet repertoire, has achieved an impressive history. Supported by the Institute for American Music, the Yings commission both established and emerging composers to create music that reflects contemporary American life. Their third recording of these commissions, titled *LifeMusic 3*, features works by Lowell Liebermann, Sebastian Currier, Paul Moravec and Pierre Jalbert. Other recent works include Billy Childs' *Awakening*, Kenji Bunch's *String Quartet No. 2*, "*Concussion Theory*," and Lera Auerbach's *Sylvia's Diary*.

In addition to appearing in conventional concert situations, the Ying Quartet is also known for its wide-ranging and unusual performance projects. For several years the Quartet presented a series called "No Boundaries" at Symphony Space in New York City that sought to re-imagine the concert experience. Collaborations with actors, dancers, electronics, a host of non-classical musicians, a magician and even a Chinese noodle chef gave new and thoughtful context to a wide variety of both traditional and contemporary string quartet music. They have also worked with composer Tod Machover and the MIT Media lab in the use of Hyperscore, an innovative musical composition software. Other musical partners have ranged from pianists Menahem Pressler and Leon Fleisher and cellist Paul Katz to the jazz pianist Billy Childs and his Sextet and the Turtle Island Quartet.

The Ying Quartet's recordings reflect many of the group's wide-ranging musical interests and have generated consistent, enthusiastic acclaim. Some of their noteworthy recordings include a Telarc release of the three Tchaikovsky Quartets and the Souvenir de Florence (with James Dunham

and Paul Katz), which was nominated for a Grammy Award in the Best Chamber Music Performance category. In addition, their much-heralded collaboration with the Turtle Island Quartet, *Four + 4*, explored the common ground between the classic string quartet tradition and jazz and other American vernacular styles, and won a Grammy Award. Other recordings include *American Anthem* (Sono Luminus)—music of Samuel Barber, Howard Hanson and Randall Thompson—and the complete string quartets of Robert Schumann (Sono Luminus). *Dim Sum* (Telarc), features music by Chinese-American composers that merges the Western string quartet with the aural world of traditional Chinese music. Released by Quartz, "*The Ying Quartet play LifeMusic*" was named Editor's Choice by *Gramophone Magazine*.

The Ying Quartet first came to professional prominence in the early 1990s during their years as resident quartet of Jesup, Iowa, a farm town of 2000 people. Playing before audiences of six to six hundred in homes, schools, churches, and banks, the Quartet had its first opportunities to enable music and creative endeavor to become an integral part of community life. The Quartet considers its time in Jesup the foundation of its present musical life and goals. The residency, supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, was widely chronicled in the national media. Toward the end of the residency, the Quartet and several of the townspeople were invited to Capitol Hill to testify before Congress on behalf of the NEA.

During the summers, the Ying Quartet's activity is primarily centered at music festivals. They are the ensemble-in-residence at the Bowdoin International Music Festival; other festival appearances have been at Tanglewood, Aspen, Ravinia, Caramoor, San Miguel de Allende, Kneisel Hall, Norfolk, Skaneateles, Amelia Island, and Interlochen.

As quartet-in-residence at the renowned Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, the Ying Quartet teaches in the string department and leads a rigorous, sequentially designed chamber music program. One cornerstone of chamber music activity at Eastman is the noted "Music for All" program, in which all students have the opportunity to perform in community settings beyond the concert hall. From 2001-2008, the members of the Ying Quartet were the Blodgett Artists-in-Residence at Harvard University.

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the "Great Hill People" and "Keepers of the Western Door" of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, NY.

UPCOMING EASTMAN SERIES CONCERTS

Tickets for all series concerts can be purchased at EastmanTheatre.org

Eastman Presents – Kodak Hall Series

Chris Thile and Aoife O'Donovan: Wassail

Friday, December 4, 2026 at 7:30 PM
Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre

Celebrate the holiday season in bluegrass style with GRAMMY Award–winning singer-songwriter **Aoife O'Donovan** (Crooked Still, I'm With Her, A Prairie Home Companion) and MacArthur Fellow and mandolinist **Chris Thile** (Punch Brothers, Nickel Creek, Live from Here) as they illuminate treasured holiday songs with spellbinding harmonies and joyful musicality. Featuring fresh arrangements of beloved classics, lively stories, and good cheer in abundance, *Wassail!* is a warm invitation to gather, sing, and revel in the glow of the holidays.

Eastman Presents – Fernando Laires Piano Series

Aristo Sham: A Star Ascendent

Tuesday December 8, 2026 at 7:30 PM
Kilbourn Hall

Extoled by *The New York Times* as a pianist "whose playing combines clarity, elegance, and abundant technique," **Aristo Sham** rocketed to prominence upon receipt of the gold medal and audience favorite award at the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. His first-ever Eastman outing will feature works by Bach, Chopin, and Brahms (whose Second Concerto he played in the final round of the Van Cliburn).

Eastman Presents – Kilbourn Concert Series

Timothy Long: The North American Indigenous Songbook

Sunday, January 31, 2027 at 3:00 PM
Kilbourn Hall

Following a much-lauded premiere at National Sawdust, Eastman Opera Artistic and Music Director **Timothy Long** brings his collection of music by Native American, First Nations, and Métis artists to Kilbourn Hall. Grounded "in traditional styles," with "forays into avant-garde music and groovier singer-songwriter veins" (*The New York Times*), this unprecedented anthology ranges from art song to funk and promises a profound, joyful, and entirely unique experience. Featuring creator Tim Long at the piano with Martha Redbone and her funk band, alongside classical musicians and special guests.



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