The Westchester Chamber Music Society

Revised Program – December 7, 2025

IVALAS QUARTET

Reuben Kebede, *violin*
Tiani Butts, *violin*
Marcus Stevenson, *viola*
Pedro Sánchez, *cello*

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
  String Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 76, No. 4 ("Sunrise")
    Allegro con spirito
    Adagio
    Menuetto: Allegro
    Finale: Allegro, ma non troppo

Derrick Skye (1982-   )
***Deliverance* (2023)**

—*INTERMISSION*—

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
  String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10 (L. 91)
    Animé et très décidé
    Assez vif and bien rythmé
    Andantino, doucement espressif
    Très modéré

Jessie Montgomery (1981-   )
***Strum* (2012)**

Program changes appear in **bold.**

Derrick Skye (1982 -   )
Deliverance (2023)

Deliverance was commissioned by the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts for the Ivalas Quartet, which served as the Center's 2022-2023 Ernst Stiefel String Quartet-in-Residence. The work was premiered on June 29, 2023. The composer Derrick Skye writes:

> *Deliverance* is a transcultural classical string quartet that blends Persian classical melodic systems with rhythmic elements from West and North African music. The inspiration behind the title, *Deliverance*, originates from the deep sensation of freedom from fear and anxiety achieved by embracing vulnerability and imperfection. From Persian classical music, the piece uses two *korons*, which to the Western trained ear may sound like flat microtonal pitches. Sonically, this demonstrates how something initially perceived as an imperfection, over time and with a change in perspective, can be seen as an aspect of perfection.

> The piece begins with the use of the Persian classical *Gushé Shekaste*, which translates to "broken." This section embodies fragmentation and invites the listener to engage with the evolving dynamics between two tone collections of *Gushé Shekaste*, the main tetrachord and the auxiliary notes. As the tempo accelerates, grooves and repeated phrases emerge, symbolizing chants and mantras through the utilization of 3, 4, and 6 beat groupings and polyrhythms influenced by West African and North African rhythmic forms. As the piece slows, it transitions into *Dastgâh-e Navâ*, meaning "song." The counterpoint of this section is inspired by the choral works of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and the chorales of Johann Sebastian Bach.

> The journey of *Deliverance* continues as it explores the enigmatic realm of *Gushé Nahoft*, signifying "something hidden." Once we hear the recapitulation of the melody in *Gushé Shekaste*, the piece progressively builds in intensity, culminating in *Dastgâh-e Mâhur*, (*Mâhur* is a type of flower). In its final moments, the piece reaches its conclusion with a cadence using *Morakab-Navazi* to move between *Dastgâh-e Navâ* and *Gushé Goshâyesh*. The word *Goshâyesh* refers to something good opening up in one's life, such as prosperity or luck.

Jessie Montgomery (1981-   )
Strum (2012)

The composer Jesse Montgomery shares the following about *Strum:*

> *Strum* is the culminating result of several versions of a string quintet I wrote in 2006. It was originally written for the Providence String Quartet and guests of Community MusicWorks Players, then arranged for string quartet in 2008 with several small revisions. In 2012, the piece underwent its final revisions with a rewrite of both the introduction and the ending for the Catalyst Quartet in a performance celebrating the 15th annual Sphinx Competition.

Originally conceived for the formation of a cello quintet, the voicing is often spread wide over the ensemble, giving the music an expansive quality of sound. Within *Strum* I utilized texture motives, layers of rhythmic or harmonic ostinati that string together to form a bed of sound for melodies to weave in and out. The strumming pizzicato serves as a texture motive and the primary driving rhythmic underpinning of the piece. Drawing on American folk idioms and the spirit of dance and movement, the piece has a kind of narrative that begins with fleeting nostalgia and transforms into ecstatic celebration.