



Press Release

FOR RELEASE:

March 27, 2025

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Announces the

**2025–2026 SEASON OF
FORTAS CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERTS
AND CLASSICAL NEW MUSIC**

**CONCERTS HIGHLIGHTING NEW AMERICAN VOICES,
MENTORSHIP, AND INNOVATION IN CHAMBER MUSIC**

Featuring Five Mozart Viola Quintets
Jennifer Koh Performs *Bridge to Beethoven*

***SOUNDS OF US* RETURNS
FOR THE PROMISE OF US: OUR NATION AT 250**

Saturday, April 18, 2026

FORTAS FAVORITES

Dover Quartet | February 11, 2026

Takács Quartet | April 8, 2026

THREE CLASSICAL NEW MUSIC PERFORMANCES

yMusic | February 19, 2026

PubliQuartet | February 26, 2026

Quartet Integra | March 15, 2026

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announces the 2025–2026 Fortas Chamber Music Concert and classical new music season—**Artistic Director Jennifer Koh**'s second full season of programming. As America nears its 250th anniversary, this season celebrates the American experience with performances of new music by esteemed ensembles and burgeoning artists.

In addition to Terrace Theater performances, this season's Fortas series is supplemented by two Studio K concerts at The Reach, one *Green Shoots* concert highlighting a rising young ensemble in the Justice

Forum, and the second installment of *Sounds of US*—a one-day immersive music festival created and curated by Jennifer Koh.

“In recognition of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, I am thrilled to present a season that celebrates the profound role music has played in shaping our country’s history,” Artistic Director Jennifer Koh said. “It has been a pleasure to connect with our Fortas audiences during my first full year as Artistic Director of the Fortas Chamber Music Concerts Series. The community has reaffirmed my commitment to exploring music as a journey that engages a wide range of artistic voices, from iconic standards to the music of artists living today.”

Fortas Chamber Music Concerts

Throughout the season, celebrated quartets will perform a mix of standard and contemporary repertoire. Exploring the expressive potential of the human voice, Grammy Award®-winning vocal group **Roomful of Teeth** will perform on October 28, 2025. Joined by composer, flutist, and producer **Allison Loggins-Hull**, the group will present Loggins-Hull’s genre-defying new song cycle, *Friction*.

Three-time Grammy®-nominated tenor **Nicholas Phan** joins pianist and longtime collaborator **Myra Huang**—dubbed “...a colouristic tour de force” by *The New York Times*—on November 23, 2025. The duo will perform a program entitled *Fellow Citizens*, exploring stories of migration through classical and contemporary works.

On December 4, 2025, violinist and Fortas Artistic Director **Jennifer Koh** and pianist **Thomas Sauer** will deliver a powerful program exploring Beethoven’s impact on diverse composers, pairing his works with new commissions. This ***Bridge to Beethoven*** concert celebrates Beethoven’s revolutionary spirit, featuring a new work, *Bridgetower Fantasy* by composer Vijay Iyer, paired with Beethoven’s “Kreutzer” Sonata. Beethoven originally wrote the “Kreutzer” Sonata for his friend, violinist George Bridgetower, who premiered the work in 1803 with Beethoven on piano. Iyer’s *Bridgetower Fantasy* is a collection of imaginings about George Bridgetower, famed Afro-European violinist and Beethoven’s former acquaintance.

The **Brentano Quartet** ushers in the new year with a wealth of Mozart, performing three Mozart viola quintets on February 1, 2026. Leading violist **Hsin-Yun Huang** joins the ensemble for this program, which also includes George Benjamin’s intricate viola duet entitled *Viola, Viola*. “My desire at times was to conjure an almost orchestral depth and variety of sound,” writes Benjamin in his composer’s note. “The implied harmony is intended to be as sonorous as possible, the texture sometimes maintaining four or more parts for sustained periods.”

Fortas series favorite **Dover Quartet** returns on February 11, 2026, with a program featuring newly commissioned works by Jerod Impichchaachaaha’ Tate, a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation and a leading composer of American Indian classical music. Exploring the Native music of North America and its relationship to the concert stage, the quartet will also perform Dvořák’s “American” quartet, Tuscarora composer Pura Fé’s *Rattle Songs*, and Jessie Montgomery’s *Strum*.

The Fortas series welcomes **Quartet Integra**, recipients of the coveted Audience Award at the 2022 ARD International Music Competition, as this season's **Green Shoots** ensemble on March 15, 2026. Formed in 2015, the quartet is currently enrolled in the Chamber Ensemble-in-Residence program at the Colburn School. Their program features Tōru Takemitsu's *A Way a Lone*, honoring the 30th anniversary of the composer's death. Launched in the 2022–2023 season by former Fortas Artistic Director Joseph "Yossi" Kalichstein, the *Green Shoots* initiative annually features a burgeoning ensemble with the goal of fostering growth within the current generation of young musicians.

Winners of the 2019 Banff International String Quartet Competition, **Viano Quartet**, will perform Mozart's Clarinet Quintet alongside string quartets by Haydn and Shostakovich. The ensemble is joined by leading American soloist **Anthony McGill**, principal clarinetist of New York Philharmonic and winner of the Avery Fisher Prize, on March 24, 2026.

World-renowned Fortas favorite **Takács Quartet** returns to the Kennedy Center to close out the season on April 8, 2026. The Grammy Award®-winning ensemble, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary season, is joined by violist **Jordan Bak** for a concert featuring two Mozart Viola Quintets and Franz Schubert's *Quartettsatz*.

Recitals

Maria João Pires, a pianist "among the most elegant master-musicians of our time" (*Gramophone*), will perform a duo piano recital in the Concert Hall on May 3, 2026. Pires is joined by Marc-André Hamelin, "a performer of near-superhuman technical prowess" (*The New York Times*).

Classical New Music

Genre-leading chamber ensemble **yMusic** brings its innovative and collaborative spirit to the Club at Studio K on February 19, 2026. Founded in 2008, the ensemble has built upon its mission of presenting emotionally communicative music across both sides of the classical/popular music divide. With an orchestral sound and instantly recognizable style, the group has performed with an array of popular artists, from Anohni to John Legend, and its unique configuration has become a staple orchestration for composers.

Improvitational string ensemble **PUBLIQuartet** makes its Kennedy Center debut on February 26, 2026. The Grammy Award®-nominated quartet presents genre-bending programs ranging from new commissions to re-imaginings of classical works with open-form improvisations. *What Is American: Rhythm Nation* celebrates American rhythmic traditions in a program featuring new works by Jlin, Vijay Iyer, and Jeff Scott.

Sounds of US

Following a successful premiere in 2024, **Sounds of US** returns for its second installment as part of the Kennedy Center-wide celebration of **The Promise of US: Our Nation at 250**, marking the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. Created and curated by Jennifer Koh, **Sounds of US** will fill the REACH with nonstop music and world premiere commissions by artist-driven nonprofit **ARCO Collaborative** in a one-day immersive festival on April 18, 2026.

In this vibrant exploration of music, identity, and community, artists will be invited throughout 2026 to curate free events and activations in response to the question, “What does America sound like?” Programming will include interactive workshops, live performances, and more—all designed to celebrate cultural expression and foster community empowerment and joy. The programs will feature established composers and performers alongside the next generation of musical talent, highlighting the importance of mentorship, innovation, and the passing of traditions.

About Fortas Chamber Music Concerts

The 2025–2026 season will mark the 44th season of the Kennedy Center’s chamber music series, established in the 1981–1982 season by Marta Istomin, who, at the time, was the Kennedy Center’s Artistic Director. The Fortas Chamber Music Concerts, established as part of the Terrace Concerts during the 1983–1984 season, began a vibrant new life in the 1999–2000 season when—in addition to the generous contributions of loyal supporters of the Fortas Fund—income from a major gift to the Fortas Fund from the late Carolyn E. Agger, widow of Abe Fortas, became available to support the artistic programming. The Fortas Chamber Music Concert series is named for the former Supreme Court Justice, who was instrumental in the creation of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and later, the Terrace Theater. The Kennedy Center’s Board of Trustees established the Abe Fortas Memorial Fund in 1982 for the support of concerts in the Terrace Theater, and for the further development of the musical programs he envisioned. Major support for Fortas Chamber Music Concerts continues to be provided by this fund.

Fortas Chamber Music Concerts is under the artistic direction of violinist Jennifer Koh, who was appointed to the position in December 2022. Koh follows the late Joseph “Yossi” Kalichstein, who served as the Kennedy Center’s Artistic Advisor for Chamber Music and Artistic Director of the Fortas Chamber Music Concerts from 1997–2022.

Through its history the series has featured frequent appearances by artists such as the Guarneri, Emerson, Juilliard, Takács, Dover, and Alban Berg Quartets; early music ensembles Anonymous 4, Trio Medieval, and the Waverly Consort; performances by Eugene Istomin, Emanuel Ax, Edgar Meyer, Susan Graham, Isaac Stern, and Yo-Yo Ma; as well as many other distinguished artists and ensembles that actively perform and commission new works.

About Jennifer Koh

Grammy Award®-winning violinist Jennifer Koh is recognized for her intense, commanding performances, delivered with dazzling virtuosity and technical assurance. She is a forward-thinking artist dedicated to exploring a broad and eclectic repertoire. She has expanded the contemporary violin repertoire through a wide range of commissioning projects and has premiered more than 100 works written especially for her. Named *Musical America’s* 2016 Instrumentalist of the Year, Koh has won the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, Concert Artists Guild Competition, and an Avery Fisher Career Grant. She has a BA in English literature from Oberlin College and studied at the Curtis Institute, working with Jaime Laredo and Felix Galimir.

In December 2023, Koh was appointed Artistic Director for the Kennedy Center’s Fortas Chamber Music Series where this season she performs Bach’s complete Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin and curates *Sounds of US*, an immersive new music festival featuring world premieres of chamber works with an

emphasis on highlighting previously unheard artists in classical music. Additionally, Koh will perform other works from her critically acclaimed commissioning projects including *Alone Together*, *Bach and Beyond*, *Bridge to Beethoven*, *Limitless*, and *Shared Madness*.

Ticket Information

Tickets are available at the Kennedy Center Box Office, online at [kennedy-center.org](https://www.kennedy-center.org), and via phone through Instant Charge, (202) 467-4700; toll-free at (800) 444-1324. For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

Funding Credits

The Fortas Chamber Music Concerts are supported by generous contributors to the Abe Fortas Memorial Fund, and by a major gift to the fund from the late Carolyn E. Agger, widow of Abe Fortas. The *Green Shoots* Concert is generously endowed by John Kunkel and Anna Swenson.

For more information, please visit the [Kennedy Center website](https://www.kennedy-center.org).



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Fortas Chamber Music Concerts 2025–2026 Season Schedule

ROOMFUL OF TEETH WITH ALLISON LOGGINS-HULL

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Roomful of Teeth
Allison Loggins-Hull

Allison LOGGINS-HULL

De-Compartmentalize (Music Accord Commission)

NICHOLAS PHAN WITH MYRA HUANG

Sunday, November 23, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Nicholas Phan, tenor
Myra Huang, piano

Various Artists

Fellow Citizens

BRIDGE TO BEETHOVEN

Thursday, December 4, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Jennifer Koh, violin
Thomas Sauer, piano

Ludwig Van BEETHOVEN
Vijay IYER
Ludwig van BEETHOVEN

Sonata No. 1 in D major, Op. 12, No. 1
Bridgetower Fantasy
Sonata No. 9 in A major, Op. 47 (“Kreutzer”)

BRENTANO QUARTET WITH HSIN-YUN HUANG

Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Mark Steinberg, violin
Serena Canin, violin
Misha Amory, viola
Nina Lee, cello
with Hsin-Yun Huang, viola

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART

String Quintet No. 2 in C minor, K. 406/516b
String Quintet No. 5 in D major, K. 593
String Quintet No. 6 in E-flat major, K. 614
Viola, Viola

George BENJAMIN

DOVER QUARTET

Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Joel Link, violin
Bryan Lee, violin
Julianne Lee, viola
Camden Shaw, cello

Jessie MONTGOMERY
Pura FÉ (arr. Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate)
Jerod Impichchaachaaha' TATE
Antonín DVOŘÁK

Strum
Rattle Songs (new commission)
Abokoli' Taloowa' (Woodland Songs)
String Quartet No. 12 in F major, Op. 96
("American")

YMUSIC

Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

The Club at Studio K

Alex Sopp, flute
Mark Dover, clarinet
CJ Camerieri, trumpet
Rob Moose, violin
Nadia Sirota, viola
Gabriel Cabezas, cello

Program to be announced at a later date

PUBLIQUARTET

Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

The Club at Studio K

Curtis Stewart, violin
Jannina Norpoth, violin
Nick Revel, viola
Hamilton Berry, cello

Jeff SCOTT
Andy AKIHO

Mazz SWIFT
JLIN
Henry THREADGILL
Vijay IYER

Blues for Buddy
String Quartet No. 1, "Mobile on a Stream into the Sound"
Digging Gold; Deeper Blue
Baobab
Sixfivetwo
Dig the Say for string quartet

VIANO QUARTET WITH ANTHONY MCGILL

Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Hao Zhou, violin
Lucy Wang, violin
Aiden Kane, viola
Tate Zawadiuk, cello
with Anthony McGill, clarinet

Joseph HAYDN
Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH
Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART

String Quartet in D major, Op. 76, No. 5 "Largo"
String Quartet No. 9 in E-flat major, Op. 117
Clarinet Quintet in A major, K. 581

TAKÁCS QUARTET WITH JORDAN BAK

Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Edward Dusinberre, violin
Harumi Rhodes, violin
Richard O'Neill, viola
András Fejér, cello
with Jordan Bak, viola

Franz SCHUBERT
Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART

Quartettsatz in C minor, D. 703
String Quintet No. 3 in C major, K. 515
String Quintet No. 4 in G minor, K. 516

QUARTET INTEGRA

Sunday, March 15, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Justice Forum

Kyoka Misawa, violin
Rintaro Kikuno, violin
Itsuki Yamamoto, viola
Ye Un Park, cello

Leoš JANÁČEK
Tōru TAKEMITSU
Ludwig van BEETHOVEN

String Quartet No. 1, "Kreutzer Sonata"
A Way a Lone
String Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132

MARIA JOÃO PIRES WITH MARC-ANDRÉ HAMELIN

Sunday, May 3, 2026 at 8:00 p.m.

Kennedy Center Concert Hall

Maria João Pires, piano
Marc-André Hamelin, piano

Program to be announced at a later date
