

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 8, 2020

**AWARD WINNING THALEA STRING QUARTET BRINGS THE CONCERT HALL TO ATLANTIC CANADIAN AUDIENCES**

HALIFAX, NS – Top prize winners at both the 2018 Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition and the Chamber Music Yellow Springs Competition, the Thalea String Quartet is dedicated to bringing timeless music to audiences from everywhere. Praised for their “vibrant performance” and “sincere expressivity” (SF Classical Voice), the quartet has performed recitals across Europe, China, and North America, and has appeared at the Kennedy Center, Massey Hall, and Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall. From living rooms to concert stages around the world, the Thalea String Quartet aims to connect with audiences on a musical, emotional, and personal level, from first-time listeners to string quartet aficionados.

The concert program highlights the quartet's interest in exploring diverse voices and influences in classical music, including African-American composer Florence Price's *Five Folksongs in Counterpoint*, and a work by Canadian Inuk composer Tanya Tagaq, and will be presented throughout Atlantic Canada. Join Thalea as the quartet members speak about their experiences during the pandemic, the seismic changes taking place in the music world, and how their roles as artists and musicians have changed over the past six months. All this, while re-igniting the joy and excitement of performing some of the greatest chamber music ever composed.

*The Thalea String Quartet will perform for the Antigonish Performing Arts Series at \_\_\_\_\_ pm on October 17, 2020. Additional information on how to watch this concert will be located on the Antigonish Performing Arts Series website.*

In addition to concert engagements, Thalea will be working with young students through the Debut Goes to School – 2020/21 Digital Program. This season, Debut Goes to School offers students throughout Atlantic Canada virtual access to outstanding classical and world musicians. Through this program, students are provided the opportunity to participate in live, interactive learning sessions and other events for various age groups and levels of ability.

Debut Atlantic wants to recognize the partners and sponsors that come together to bring these incredible artists to communities and venues of all sizes across our region. It would not be possible without the generous support of sustaining partners, including the Canada Council for the Arts, Arts Nova Scotia, and the Province of New Brunswick. Debut would also like to thank its educational partner, the Nova Scotia Department of Education; and its season partners, including the Halifax Regional Municipality, The Lloyd Carr-Harris Foundation, Support4Culture, the Craig Foundation, Pink Larkin, Halcraft Printers, Strategic Arts Management, and InnVest Hotels (Comfort Inn).

This performance will be featured by presenters across Atlantic Canada. Please see the enclosed artist biography, and come share in a unique performance, rich with passion and exploration.

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As one of Canada’s most prestigious classical music organizations, Debut Atlantic is committed to developing young artists and establishing new initiatives that enhance the cultural life of Atlantic Canada. Since 1979 it has treated Atlantic audiences to Canada’s most promising young musicians. Celebrating 41 years, Debut Atlantic has featured over 400 artists, gracing the stages of venues from Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia.

Full details on Debut Atlantic’s concert seasons and educational programs can be found at [www.debutatlantic.ca](http://www.debutatlantic.ca).

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**BIOGRAPHY—Thalea String Quartet**

“Thalea never failed to deliver a stirring performance” – Calgary Herald

The Thalea String Quartet is dedicated to bringing timeless music to audiences from everywhere. From living rooms to concert stages around the world, the Thalea String Quartet aims to connect with audiences on a musical, emotional, and personal level, from first-time listeners to string quartet aficionados. They are devoted to building a new and diverse audience for chamber music through innovative programming and community engagement.

Formed in 2014 at the Zephyr International Chamber Music Festival in Courmayeur, Italy, the Thalea String Quartet has been praised for their “vibrant performance” and “sincere expressivity” (SF Classical Voice). The quartet has performed recitals across Europe, China, the United States, and Canada, and has appeared at the Kennedy Center, Massey Hall, and Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall. They were recently named the Doctoral Fellowship String Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Maryland, and have held fellowship positions at the University of Texas at Austin under the Miró Quartet, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. They currently serve as Associated Artists at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel in Waterloo, Belgium.

The Thalea String Quartet were top prize winners at both the 2018 Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition and the 2018 Chamber Music Yellow Springs Competition, and were named the Ernst Stiefel Quartet-in-Residence at the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts for the 2019/20 season.

The Thalea String Quartet prides itself on the diversity of its collaborations. They have shared the stage with members of the St. Lawrence, Emerson, Alban Berg, and Borromeo quartets, and have performed alongside Lawrence Power, Gilbert Kalish, and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw. Committed to collaborating with artists of all backgrounds, Thalea has collaborated with the Joe Goode Performance Group, a San Francisco-based dance theatre company, and premiered a new work by Detroit-based spoken word artist Mohogany Jones. Additional collaborations include an appearance with acclaimed Canadian band BADBADNOTGOOD at the iconic Massey Hall.

The members of the Thalea String Quartet are dedicated educators and bring their commitment to teaching and community engagement to their frequent educational and community performances. They have performed educational concerts to students of all ages and regularly perform at care facilities and schools across the United States.

Christopher Whitley (violin) is originally from Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Kumiko Sakamoto (violin) is from Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada; Luis Bellorín (viola) is from Naperville, Illinois, and Titilayo Ayangade (cello) is from Cincinnati, Ohio. Christopher performs on the 1700 “Taft” Stradivari, generously on loan by the Canada Council for the Arts Musical Instrument Bank.

The Thalea String Quartet is a fiscally-sponsored affiliate of InterMusic SF, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to small-ensemble music in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Represented in North America by Lisa Sapinkopf Artists