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## Winter/Spring Season of Free Concerts Features Washington Premieres and Award-Winning Performers



Eighth Blackbird will perform at the Gallery on February 16 at 3:30 p.m. Photo by Saverio Truglia

Washington, DC—The 78th season of concerts at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, continues in 2020 with a wide-ranging schedule of performances featuring premieres, unusual collaborations, and music from around the world. Several concerts are Washington debuts of new pieces, including *(im)migration* by Jessie Montgomery performed by Imani Winds and Catalyst Quartet on January 12 and *Perpetulum*, Philip Glass's first-ever work for a percussion ensemble, performed by Third Coast Percussion on February 23. The season also brings award-winning musicians to the Gallery, including four-time Grammy-winning ensemble Eighth Blackbird on February 16, three-time Grammy winner Robert Mirabal on April 26, and Latin Grammy–nominated Brasil Guitar Duo on May 3.

The *Versatile Violin, Fantastic Fiddle: A Showcase of Women on Strings* series continues with performances by Eunice Kim, Diane Monroe, and Bomsori Kim. The lunchtime Sound Sketch series—which features concerts in different spaces around the Gallery on the fourth Friday of every month—includes the Suspicious Cheese Lords performing above the West Building's Rotunda. In addition to performances inspired by works in the permanent collection, multiple concerts are organized in conjunction with special exhibitions: on February 9, Nordic Voices presents a program of music from the time of Charles V and Alonso Berruguete; on March 15, Agora Dance and Sound Impact present a contemporary response to *Degas at the Opéra*; and on April 19 yMusic performs contemporary compositions inspired by nature to complement *True to Nature: Open-Air Painting in Europe, 1780–1870*.

Performances take place in various locations throughout the Gallery, including the West Building's lush West Garden Court and its grand central Rotunda. Concerts are open to the public free of charge. Admittance is on a first-come, first-seated basis 30 minutes before the performance.

The 2019/2020 season marks the 78th season of concerts. The Gallery has presented more than 3,000 free concerts since the music program began in 1942, when the Gallery's first director, David E. Finley, kept the museum open on Sunday nights to accommodate the armed forces personnel in Washington during World War II.

## **JANUARY**

*Versatile Violin, Fantastic Fiddle: A Showcase of Women on Strings*

[Eunice Kim, violin, and Xavier Foley, bass](#)

January 5, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Inventive and engaging, award-winning musicians Eunice Kim and Xavier Foley perform a sparkling mix of violin and bass solos and duos, exploring many facets of these two stringed instruments. The program includes baroque, Irish, Latin, and contemporary music with works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Turlough O'Carolan, Astor Piazzolla, and Foley himself.

*(im)migration*

[Imani Winds and the Catalyst Quartet](#)

January 12, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Imani Winds and Catalyst Quartet offer a unique program highlighting (im)migration experiences and featuring a new work by Jessie Montgomery, commissioned by Music Accord and the Sphinx Organization. Montgomery's piece was inspired by the Great Migration of African Americans, as captured through her great-grandfather's camera lens. The concert brings together spirituals and work songs that reflect his travels through Mississippi, the West, the North, and Georgia. The music

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tells his stories through the special timbral effects of winds and strings, continuing the storytelling tradition passed through Montgomery's mother—playwright, actor, and teacher Robbie McCauley.

*Venezia Roma Napoli*

[Concerto Italiano](#)

January 19, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Founded in 1984 by conductor Rinaldo Alessandrini, Concerto Italiano is internationally known for its historically informed recordings of early music. In this concert, the ensemble takes the audience on a grand tour of Italy, from Venice to Rome to Naples, with works by Arcangelo Corelli, Antonio Vivaldi, George Frideric Handel, Domenico Scarlatti, and others who were composing throughout baroque Italy.

Sound Sketch

*A Sense of Place: Art and Music Inspired by Landscape*

[Singers from Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program](#)

January 24, 12:10 p.m.

Location will be posted the day of the concert

Singers perform opera arias and songs inspired by landscapes beloved by composers. Robert Ainsley, program director, plays piano and discusses the many landscape paintings in the Gallery's collection.

*Bach, Beethoven, and Beyond*

[Minguet Quartett with Andreas Klein, pianist](#)

January 26, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

The award-winning Minguet Quartett and the highly sought-after pianist Andreas Klein perform works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, Sergei Prokofiev, and Israeli composer Avner Dorman.

## **FEBRUARY**

*Versatile Violin, Fantastic Fiddle: A Showcase of Women on Strings*

*Violin Woman, African Dreams*

[Diane Monroe, violin with PUBLIQuartet](#)

February 2, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Diane Monroe's *Violin Woman, African Dreams* is inspired by the environment and by objects in The Colored Girls Museum, a unique house museum in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. The work is a musical narrative reflecting on Monroe's journey as a professional violinist, a black

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woman, a classical-jazz-blues woman, and a Philadelphian. The performance features the New York-based PUBLIQuartet, Yacouba Sissoko on West African kora, and percussion.

*Music from the Time of Charles V*

### [Nordic Voices](#)

February 9, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Undoubtedly the most powerful man in 16th-century Europe from his teens until his death in 1558, he ruled the Hapsburg Netherlands (1506–1556), the Spanish Empire (1516–1556), and the Holy Roman Empire (1519–1558). Nordic Voices has chosen music from Charles's era, with the exception of the first piece in each set, which is a Norwegian Gregorian chant from the *Olavsmusikken* (c. 1100).

Celebrating the exhibition *Alonso Berruguete: First Sculptor of Renaissance Spain*, on view through February 17, 2020.

*Ice 'n' SPICE*

### [Eighth Blackbird](#)

February 16, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Over the course of more than two decades, Eighth Blackbird has continued to push at the edges of what it means to be a contemporary chamber ensemble, presenting distinct programs in Chicago and throughout the world, reaching audiences in the tens of thousands. This program features works by Nina Shekhar, composer of *Ice 'n' SPICE*, as well as Fjólá Evans, Andy Akiho, Holly Harrison, Jessie Marino, Viet Cuong, Bailey Holland, and Julius Eastman.

### [Third Coast Percussion](#)

February 23, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Third Coast Percussion (TCP) brings an immersive concert experience of exciting new works for percussion to the Gallery. Although Devonté Hynes (a.k.a. Blood Orange) is best known as a performer and producer in the R&B and pop-music spheres, he also composed *Perfectly Voiceless* and two other classical and minimalist-inspired compositions for the ensemble, which are featured on TCP's latest album, *Fields*. Indie-pop star Ryan Lott (a.k.a. Son Lux) composed *Quarters* for TCP, calling on the performers to surround the audience and constantly stretch and bend the perception of time. Finally, the ensemble performs the Washington premiere of *Perpetulum*, a new work composed for them by legendary composer Philip Glass. *Perpetulum* is Glass's first-ever work for percussion ensemble.

Sound Sketch

*From the Heavens*

### [Suspicious Cheeselords](#)

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February 28, 12:10 p.m.

West Building Rotunda

Singing unseen from above the Gallery's central Rotunda, the Suspicious Cheese Lords perform music illuminating the Gallery's images of heavenly beings.

## MARCH

### [McGill-McHale Trio](#)

March 1, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

The McGill-McHale Trio includes leading classical musicians of our day, and the orchestration of clarinet, flute, and piano affords them the opportunity to play rarely heard music. Anthony McGill is the principal clarinetist of the New York Philharmonic, the first African American to hold that position. Anthony's brother Demarre McGill is the principal flutist of the Seattle Symphony, and Michael McHale, from Ireland, is one of Europe's finest pianists. The three musicians perform works by Camille Saint-Saëns and Sergei Rachmaninov as well as a new work by masterful composer Tyshawn Sorey.

### *A New Country*

#### [Jennifer Johnson Cano, mezzo-soprano](#)

March 8, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

A naturally gifted singer noted for her commanding stage presence and profound artistry, Jennifer Johnson Cano has garnered critical acclaim for her performances of both new and traditional repertoire. Together with a chamber ensemble consisting of piano, strings, and flute, she performs a program featuring American works, including Paul Moravec's new vocal chamber piece, *A New Country*, commissioned by the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival to celebrate its 35th anniversary theme, Destination America. This five-movement piece showcases texts by Emma Lazarus, Walt Whitman, and Anna Vacek.

### *Backstage at the Opera*

#### [Agora Dance with Sound Impact](#)

March 15, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Degas spent his life immersed in music, but always as an onlooker. His relationship to the opera, including the dancers, the orchestra, the patrons, and even the actual spaces—stage, backstage, orchestra pit, and boxes—greatly influenced his art. This production uses a contemporary approach to tell the story of those evenings when Degas attended the opera and how they impacted the artist and the Parisian community in the 1870s and 1880s. Celebrating *Degas at the Opéra*, on view March 1 through July 5, 2020.

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Curtis on Tour

[Vera Quartet with Meng-Chieh Li, piano](#)

March 22, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

The Curtis Institute of Music produces international competition prizewinners, soloists with major ensembles, and today's most promising artists. Hear the future stars of classical music in this inspiring and diverse program of chamber music, including Ludwig van Beethoven's Quartet no. 4 in C Minor, op. 18; César Franck's Quintet in F Minor; and a new string quartet by David Hertzberg. Curtis on Tour is the Nina von Maltzahn Global Touring Initiative of the Curtis Institute of Music.

Sound Sketch

*Travel Log: Visual and Aural Imaginings of Distant Places*

[Elliot Wu](#)

March 27, 12:10 p.m.

The location will be posted the day of the concert

Award-winning young pianist Elliot Wu performs a program of Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Franz Schubert. The selections reflect musings on life abroad and relate to travel works in the Gallery's collection.

[Miyabi Koto Shamisen Ensemble](#)

March 29, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Founded and headed by Masayo Ishigure, Miyabi Koto Shamisen Ensemble is a New York–based group of musicians from the Sawai Koto Academy, one of the most prominent schools for contemporary koto and shamisen music. The academy aims to incorporate many musical influences, from classical to jazz, to broaden the perception of the koto as an instrument with universal expressiveness. Since its founding in 1996, Miyabi's repertoire has ranged from classical to contemporary koto and shamisen music, and the ensemble especially dedicates itself to playing Tadao Sawai's compositions. Miyabi has performed in the New York metropolitan area, the Eastern United States, Hawaii, and South America. The group has also been sharing Japanese culture through workshops and school performances.

## **APRIL**

*Versatile Violin, Fantastic Fiddle: A Showcase of Women on Strings*

[Bomsori Kim, violin, and Amy Yang, piano](#)

April 5, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Bomsori Kim is regarded as one of today's most vibrant and exciting instrumentalists. Kim won the 62nd ARD International Music Competition, and many of the world's finest orchestras and conductors

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have recognized her exceptional talent and poised musicianship. A rising star on the international concert stage, Kim is committed to sharing passionate, personal, and refreshing performances of classical violin repertoire with a global audience.

### [Junction Trio](#)

April 12, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Three renowned visionary artists combine talents in this new and eclectic piano trio. Violinist Stefan Jackiw, recognized for combining poetry and purity with impeccable technique, performs with pianist Conrad Tao and cellist Jay Campbell.

*Liquid Music @NGA*

### [yMusic](#)

April 19, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Founded in New York City in 2008, yMusic presents excellent, emotionally communicative music, regardless of style or idiom. Founded and led by curator-producer Kate Nordstrum, *Liquid Music* develops innovative projects with iconoclastic artists in unique formats. The series focuses on collaborations and risk-taking. This concert features works by contemporary composers inspired by nature, and the music enhances the 19th-century plein air art works in *True to Nature: Open-Air Painting in Europe, 1770–1870*, on view February 2 through May 3, 2020.

Sound Sketch

*Remembered Voices: Recovering "Degenerate" Music*

### [Aspen String Trio](#)

April 24, 12:10 p.m.

The location will be posted the day of the concert

The recent gift to the Gallery of the Arnold and Joan Saltzman collection of German expressionist art inspires this program of composers whose music was suppressed by the Third Reich.

### [Robert Mirabal with ETHEL](#)

April 26, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

The Gallery celebrates the 50th anniversary of Earth Day with the latest from Robert Mirabal, a Taos Pueblo musician, instrument builder, and three-time Grammy winner, and ETHEL, one of America's most adventurous string quartets. Continuing a successful six-year collaboration inspired by ceremonies dedicated to the sun, Mirabal and ETHEL present the next evolution of their cross-cultural concert experience. The inspiration this time is water as the embodiment of spirit and water's essential role in life on Earth. The audience is immersed in a flow of music, narrative, and ritual that

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evokes timeless Native American traditions through contemporary musical artistry. As delivered by these master performers, the effect is breathtaking, even ecstatic.

## MAY

*Brazil to K-Pop*

[Brasil Guitar Duo with Jiji](#)

May 3, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

The Latin Grammy nominee Brasil Guitar Duo and breakout guitarist Jiji present a program featuring the music of the Americas matched with new arrangements of K-Pop and Korean folk songs. This curious pairing takes the listener on a musical journey in a show of solo, duo, and trio works by three of today's most dynamic guitarists.

[Inna Faliks, piano](#)

May 10, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Ukrainian-born American pianist Inna Faliks has established herself as one of the most exciting, committed, and poetic artists of her generation. Faliks has made a name for herself through her commanding performances of standard piano repertoire as well as genre-bending interdisciplinary projects and inquisitive work with contemporary composers. In this performance, Faliks plays Maurice Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* followed by contemporary response pieces by Paola Prestini, Timo Andres, and Billy Childs.

[Ariel Quartet with Alexander Fiterstein, clarinet](#)

May 17, 3:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

The Ariel Quartet and Alexander Fiterstein present Christopher Theofanidis's latest work for chamber ensemble, the Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet. Formed in Israel, the Ariel Quartet has been playing together for almost 20 years and serves as the faculty quartet-in-residence at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Considered one of the premier clarinetists performing today,

Alexander Fiterstein is chair of winds at the Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins University.

Christopher Theofanidis's works are in demand and have been performed by preeminent ensembles, opera companies, and major orchestras. He is a professor at Yale University and composer-in-residence and co-director of the composition program at the Aspen Music Festival.

*This concert is generously supported by The Gottesman Fund in memory of Milton M. Gottesman.*

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**Press Contact:**

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## General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the Gallery's Web site at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ngadc](http://www.twitter.com/ngadc), and Instagram at <http://instagram.com/ngadc>.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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