

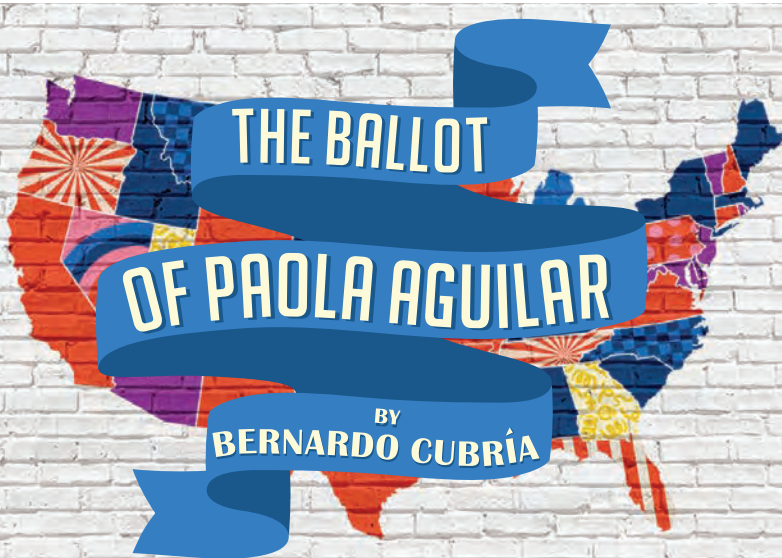
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SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2024



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Friends,

Welcome to the 2024-25 season of **CU Presents!**

On behalf of the University of Colorado Boulder **College of Music**, I'm thrilled to introduce the diverse and enriching experiences that await you.

With a lineup showcasing pinnacles of artistic expression, our current season promises to be extraordinary: The Artist Series—featuring performances from legendary soprano Renée Fleming to the ingenious Martha Graham Dance Company—complements captivating productions from the College of Music's Eklund Opera and musical theatre programs.

This season, we're especially excited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our resident **Takács Quartet** (page 24) whose mastery continues to inspire audiences worldwide. Additionally, the College of Music is proud to present more than 350 free events this academic year showcasing the talents of our students, faculty and guest artists.

This fall, I invite you to join me in extending warm congratulations to **Andrew Metzroth** (page 12)—our new executive director of CU Presents—whose leadership promises to bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas; as well as **Rudy Betancourt** (page 15) in his expanded role as director of Macky Auditorium and our long-running Artist Series, ensuring memorable experiences for you—our valued patrons.

We believe in the power of the arts to unite and transform. As we gather once again to celebrate creativity and community, let us remember the profound impact of what we do: Through the performing arts, we not only entertain but also enlighten, provoke thought and inspire change. Thank you for your continued support of the College of Music and CU Presents. We look forward to sharing this remarkable season with you.

Enjoy!

Dean, College of Music
University of Colorado Boulder

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CU ★ PRESENTS

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2024

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Eklund Opera: *Promotional art*, Hänsel und Gretel
Takács Quartet: *Photo by Amanda Tipton*

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SPOTLIGHT



***Hänsel und Gretel* Defies Fairy-Tale Expectations**

By Adam Goldstein

Engelbert Humperdinck's 19th-century opera *Hänsel und Gretel* is hardly the simple stuff of fairy tales.

That may seem like a contradiction for audience members taking in their first performance of the beloved opera based on the familiar folk tale. Like the well-known story, the opera follows the trials of two siblings who get lost in the woods and ultimately run afoul of a witch.

Humperdinck, the German composer of the opera (who just happens to share a name with the British pop singer who achieved fame in the 1970s) described it himself as a

"*Märchenoper*," quite literally a "fairy tale opera."

But those attending the Eklund Opera Program's performance of the opera may be surprised. According to Leigh Holman, stage director for the production and director of the Eklund Opera Program, the piece defies expectations.

"If someone has never seen it before, they might think it's a children's composition with sing-songy pieces," Holman says. "Humperdinck's musical idol was Richard Wagner, who's known for big, sweeping orchestral arrangements and themes that

recur. That's all to give the idea of the sumptuousness of the piece, the variety of the piece, the depth of it."

"It's a lot more glorious than we might think," Holman adds.

The opera's scope, scale and ambition are part of what's made it a perennial favorite among operagoers of all backgrounds for more than a century. With its demanding and evocative music shared by the lead mezzo soprano and high soprano (Hänsel and Gretel, respectively), and the witch's score sung by a mezzo soprano or a tenor, the opera offers a blend of voices that truly summons character and conflict.

The vocals find a complement in the lush orchestration of the piece, as well as the dynamic staging—from a ballet featuring 14 dancers representing angels to a final, dramatic conflict with the witch, *Hänsel und Gretel* offers plenty in the way of stagecraft.

All of this is to say that the opera has long encapsulated the most grandiose elements of opera—the larger-than-life music, costumes, sets and action.

This makes it ideal for audiences, and for relatively new performers taking their first steps in the world of opera.

"Our orchestra is made up of students. To be able to work on a piece like this that is so grand—it's difficult, but our students are up for it, for sure," Holman says, adding that the piece is a favorite of Music Director Nicholas Carthy. "The major roles are all done by grad students. It requires large voices and people who are adept at reading challenging music."

(Story continues on page 13)



Fall

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UPCOMING EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

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ARTIST SERIES



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Duck Pond
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Pablo Sáinz-Villegas

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Nov. 9, 2024



Boston Brass + Brass All-Stars Big Band

Christmas Bells
are Swingin'
Dec. 14, 2024



Renée Fleming

Voice of Nature
Jan. 31, 2025

COLLEGE OF MUSIC



Hänsel und Gretel

An opera by
Engelbert Humperdinck
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Kevin Murphy
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Peter Cooper, oboe | Aug. 27
The Oboe as Vocalist

Jennifer Hayghe, piano | Sept. 3
Circumnavigation

Ryan Gardner, trumpet | Sept. 10

Margaret McDonald, piano | Sept. 17
The student becomes the teacher

Nathan Mertens, saxophone | Sept. 24
A Celebration of Japanese Saxophone

Nicolo Spera, guitar | Oct. 1
With ITER Research Ensemble

Yoshi Ishikawa, bassoon | Oct. 8
With Pan Pacific Wind Quintet

Lillian Gordis, harpsichord | Oct. 15
Solo harpsichord works by J.S. Bach

Alejandro Cremaschi, piano | Oct. 22
Palimpsest: Folk Traditions Through New Music

**Abigail Nims, mezzo soprano
and Mutsumi Moteki, piano** | Oct. 29

Composition and Saxophone Faculty | Nov. 5
With the ~Nois Saxophone Quartet

Andrew Cooperstock, piano | Nov. 12

Meta Weiss | Dec. 3
With Daniel de Borah, piano

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SPOTLIGHT



College of Music welcomes new executive director of CU Presents

By Marc Shulgold and Sabine Kortals Stein

Andrew ("Metz") Metzroth can't contain his joy when he talks about his new job as executive director of CU Presents, effective since Aug. 5. "I've worked toward this for a decade—it's truly exciting," he enthuses. As part of the University of Colorado Boulder College of Music, CU Presents is the home of performing arts on campus annually presenting hundreds of events by CU Boulder students and faculty, as well as world-famous guest artists.

Overseeing CU Presents requires administrative skill, a steady hand and a cool head. Just consider the competition Metzroth had to contend with after longtime director Joan Braun retired at the end of last season. "I'm happy that the College of Music conducted a national search," says Metzroth. "I think there were about three dozen applicants." But one look at his résumé and it's not surprising that Metzroth landed the position.

For starters, his years of experience in nearly every aspect of the theater—backstage, onstage, above-stage, you name it—is mind-boggling. As his local credits will attest, he's been everywhere at CU Presents for decades. Plus, his enthusiasm is contagious.

"I've always had a love for the theater,"

he says. As for his relationship with CU Boulder, he became box office manager in 2007, handling ticketing for campus performing arts events for nine years. That's no small task, he emphasizes: "The ticketing software [Tessitura] goes incredibly deep, and takes a long time to learn and teach." Moving further up the ladder, he became director of operations at CU Presents in 2017.

Today, Metzroth's responsibilities entail close involvement in managing the Artist Series in Macky Auditorium and Takács Quartet concerts in Grusin Music Hall. But there are more shows to handle—a lot more. "There are some 450 on-campus events including about 350 College of Music events, 50 Theatre & Dance Department events and 50 Colorado Shakespeare Festival performances," he explains. "I'll be involved in strategy, ticketing, and marketing and communications for all our series, particularly College of Music events. You have to know what's important to all of them, to know their goals."

Not that he intends to remain invisible. "I never want this to be a desk job," stresses the four-time CU Boulder alumnus. "I see myself as a community ambassador—I want to bring audiences into performing arts experiences."

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(Hänsel und Gretel: *continued*
from page 6)

For its impressive scope, the piece also holds an allure to modern audiences of all backgrounds and ages. At a running time of a little more than two hours with intermission, it's an ideal length for children, teens and first-time operagoers. The libretto, penned by Humperdinck's sister, is entirely in German, but the production in Macky Auditorium will include supertitles in English for an accessible story.

That combination of accessibility and sheer scope is part of what has made *Hänsel und Gretel* a favorite for more than a century for both audiences and artists alike; it's also what's bound to defy the expectations of those who only know a simple, straightforward version of the old story.

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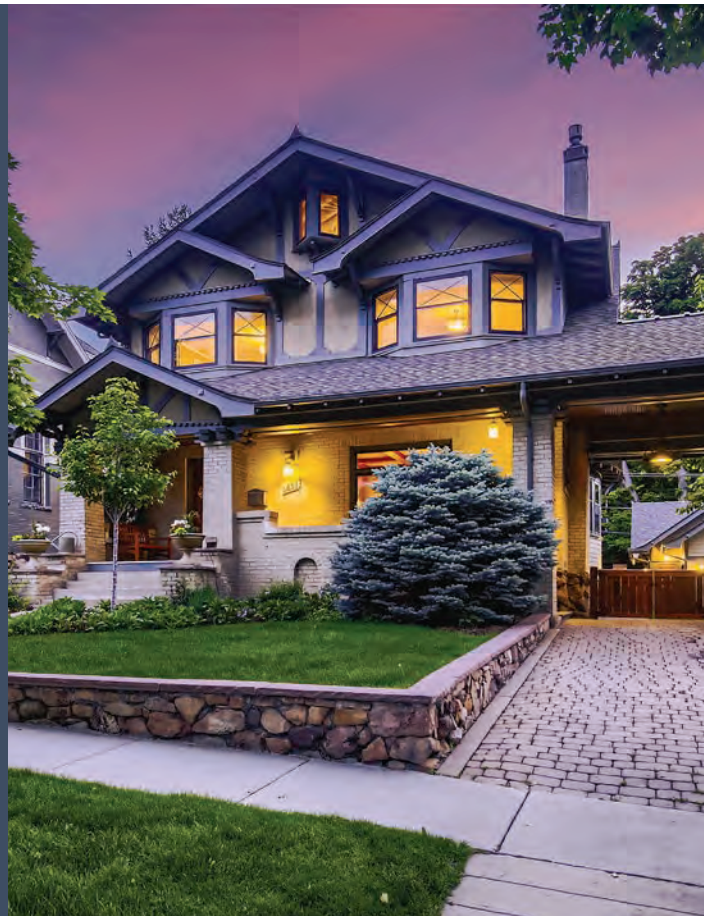


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SPOTLIGHT



Evolution of a Legacy

Macky Auditorium Director Rudy Betancourt takes over as director of CU Boulder's beloved Artist Series

By Clay Bonnyman Evans

After almost 15 years at the helm of Macky Auditorium at the University of Colorado Boulder, Rudy Betancourt has also been named the new director of the long-running Artist Series which has brought the finest jazz, classical, world music and dance performers to town for more than eight decades.

Betancourt—a native of Venezuela and an accomplished classical guitarist—will continue to serve as director at Macky which welcomes more than 100,000 people to over 100 events every season. He says adding the

beloved series to the venue's portfolio has the potential to turn over a new page for both.

"The Artist Series has been evolving for decades with an unparalleled cultural impact," he says. "Having the Artist Series within Macky's portfolio helps the venue to be a presenter as much as a facility for rent."

Betancourt says the Artist Series will continue to delight long-time patrons as it also seeks to expand and diversify its programming.

"The series will still include dance, classical music, jazz, performing arts from all over the world, as well as new genres. Keeping true to its well-established mission while feeling the cultural pulse in Boulder will help determine its evolution," he says. "There will be wonderful choices for our legacy and new audiences to enjoy."

When CU Presents Executive Director Joan Braun retired at the end of June after 30 years, it was determined that it made sense to separate the curation of the Artist Series from the operations of CU Presents. Braun and CU Boulder College of Music Dean John Davis recommended Betancourt to be the Artist Series director as the most natural choice.

"Rudy is an excellent, accomplished musician and he has impeccable taste and awareness of the music scene," Braun says. "As director of Macky, he also is very aware of audience tastes and preferences, and what they respond to. He can see some different pathways and possibilities and I'm excited to see what he does with it."

"Joan's legacy of innovation in the arts and securing the Artist Series' place in the hearts of its audiences is a tall order—one that I am honored to continue. I am excited to work with the College of Music's leadership and the Artist Series Advisory Board. It is a real privilege," Betancourt says.

Betancourt will continue to work closely with the staff at CU Presents. "The CU Presents team brings unparalleled knowledge of how to reach our audiences and cultivate our relationship with them," he says. "Continuing and deepening this collaboration will be paramount to the success of the series."

CU Presents will continue to work with other College of Music programs as well as with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and CU Theatre & Dance.

Tickets for the 2024-25 Artist Series are on sale now.



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SYNOPSIS

Prologue

Cupid appears in a flash

Act 1

The palace, a dream

It is the night before the Prince's birthday. Various friends, prospective partners and assorted revellers engage in acrobatically-infused merriments. A pillow mishap abruptly ends the party. In a brief encounter the Prince meets the Ugly Duckling and, with the help of Cupid, they fall in love. Romantic duets follow.

Reality soon intrudes. It could never be that a humble duck and a magnificent prince could be together. The Duck Army comes to console the Ugly Duckling. She leaves somewhat cheerier.

The Black Swan enters dazzlingly. Her magnetic, spiky presence captivates the Prince. The ball that follows celebrates the impending union of Black Swan and Prince. Yet, despite the merriments, something is amiss.

Act 2

The Lake

A lake with swans. We marvel above and below the water. In despair, the Ugly Duckling decides to throw herself into to swans. Unexpectedly she flies! She is, in fact, a swan.

The Black Swan appears. She and the White Swan fall eternally in love. Duets of love follow. The Prince, confused and devastated, implodes as the two enamoured swans head into the sunset.

Act 3

The Theatre

We catch a glimpse of what swans are like in nature. It's almost time to go home but as we pack up the theatre, true identities are revealed and real magic—the kind that does not depend on swans, tutus or spells—is rekindled.

ARTIST SERIES

CIRCA

Duck Pond

Oct. 5 2024

Macky Auditorium

Created by Yaron Lifschitz and the Circa ensemble.

Director, Stage Design Yaron Lifschitz

Composer and Sound Designer Jethro Woodward

Costume Designer Libby McDonnell

Lighting Designer Alexander Berlage

Associate Director Marty Evans

Dramaturg/Associate Choreographer Rani Luther

Voice Over Artist Elise Greig

Footage of brutal swan fight used with the kind permission of Carl Bovis.

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ABOUT CIRCA

"The mighty Circa" (Lyn Gardner, The Guardian)

Circa Contemporary Circus is one of the world's leading performance companies. Since 2004, from its base in Brisbane, Australia, Circa has toured the world - performing in more than 45 countries to nearly 2 million people. Circa's works have been greeted with standing ovations, rave reviews and sold-out houses across six continents.

Circa is at the forefront of the new wave of contemporary Australian circus - pioneering how extreme physicality can create powerful and moving performances. It continues to push the boundaries of the art form, blurring the lines between movement, dance, theatre and circus. Compelled by the question 'what is possible in circus?' Circa is leading the way with a diverse range of thrilling creations that 'redraw the limits to which circus can aspire.' (The Age).

Under the direction of circus visionary Yaron Lifschitz, Circa features an ensemble of exceptional, multi-skilled circus artists who have been a regular fixture at leading festivals and venues in New York, London, Berlin and Montreal with seasons at Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Barbican Centre, Les Nuits de Fourvière, Chamäleon Theatre as well as major Australian Festivals.

Visit circa.org.au to find a Circa performance near you and discover why Circa has been hailed as nothing short of "... a revolution in the spectacle of circus." (Les Echos).

Circa is committed to fostering the next generation of circus artists and runs public circus classes from its studio in Brisbane. Circa also runs regular circus programs with communities throughout Queensland and around Australia.

As a champion of live performance, Circa was the Creative Lead for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games arts and cultural program.



Discover more about Circa by subscribing to enews at circa.org.au and following the company on:

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[instagram.com/circapresents](https://www.instagram.com/circapresents)
and via #circacircus

CIRCA ARTISTS

Growing up in Wollongong, **ASHA COLLESS** was introduced to circus at the age of six, taking classes at Circus Monoxide. Being in the air and flipping herself around quickly became her favorite thing to do, and this is where her love of performing came alive. At 19 she decided to take her training further and study at the National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA), specializing in hula hoops and silks. Colless also loves swimming at the beach, being in nature and a good book.

For as long as she can remember, **MAYA DAVIES** has always said, "when I grow up, I want to join the circus," and that's exactly what she did. She grew up between Australia and the United States, but Davies' circus training began at Cirkidz, in Adelaide at the age of seven. She has always excelled in both the arts and athletics and was thrilled when she discovered that circus could be the perfect hybrid of both. This eventually led her to the National Institute of Circus Arts where she specialized in Partner Acrobatics and Chinese Pole, graduating with a Bachelor of Circus Arts. She is devoted to continue using circus as an art discipline; to tell stories, create striking performances and explore physicality through an imaginative lens.

The combination between concentration and explosiveness of Partner Acrobatics has inspired **MALTE GERHARDT** since he started to train circus arts at the age of 9 in Southwest Germany. In the following years Gerhardt continued to develop his skills and started to teach various circus disciplines. At the age of 14 he successfully applied to the "Ballet-school and school of Acrobatics" Berlin and finished his vocational education 4 years later at CircArtiveSchool. With his friend and base Benedikt Löffler he finished his final year of Codarts specialising in a rarely seen combination of Partner Acrobatics and a one meter Globe.

JORDAN HART fell into circus at age 21 after seeing *A Simple Space* by Gravity & Other Myths at the 2014 Adelaide Fringe Festival. Coming from a sporty upbringing, the show left him feeling inspired and motivated to push himself and learn something new which led him the South Australian Circus Centre. He immersed himself in the world of acrobatics training with independent artists and members of the local performance troupe before leaving Adelaide to meet and train with other artists, both Australian and international. With a strong desire to play and explore, things eventually got out of control and he decided he wanted to make a career of it. Hart worked with Wildhouse Circus, Outside The Lines Circus, Casus and then Time In Space Circus before working with Gravity & Other Myths. In his spare time, he enjoys letting people jump on him and carrying heavy things for strangers.

From a very young age, **OSCAR MORRIS'** parents knew that sports weren't really for him, when they tried to enroll him in soccer but all he wanted to do was put on the uniform and sit on the sideline. Born and raised in Brisbane, Morris fell in love with circus at the age of eight when he was enrolled in youth circus classes at Flipside Circus. He trained primarily under Alex Weckes-Huck and Amy Stuart, specializing in various forms of ground acrobatics including hand to hand, banquine and group acrobatics, as well as juggling. Since graduating from Flipside's performance troupe in 2021, Morris has worked as an independent artist around Brisbane performing with companies such as Sparkle Society, Collective Circus, Counterpilot and Casus Creations. When not doing circus, Morris enjoys listening, playing and writing music—with him being able to play several instruments including piano, double bass, bass guitar, guitar, percussion and the smallest amount of trombone.

KIMBERLEY ROSSI grew up in Queensland, and as a Brisbane local it didn't take long before she stumbled upon Circa. Beginning her circus training at age 13, in just three

short years she was given the opportunity to be the first member of Fast Track, a program designed for young and aspiring performers within Circa. With the support of her family, Rossi decided to leave school and pursue a career in the circus industry. Shortly after she found herself on a plane flying out to perform her first show, *Nocturne* in Seoul, South Korea. Over the years Rossi has been a part of more than 30 productions, visited some of the world's most beautiful locations and logged more than 4000 hours in her favorite video game.

SOPHIE SECCOMBE has loved free movement since she was born. Her slightly impetuous nature led her parents to enroll her in ballet lessons when she was two and competitive gymnastics a few years after that. While formal training gave her a foundation, she preferred handstands in trees and acrobatics on the roof. Seccombe discovered circus at the West End markets in 2021. Immediately enthralled, circus exposed her to a world where gymnastics could be meshed with artistic expression without constraints. After a year of coaching by members of Gravity & Other Myths, she began touring nationally and internationally in Rouge. Outside of acrobatics Seccombe may be found listening to Mazzy Star and swimming in any body of water she can find.

ZACHERY STEPHENS began his circus career following in the footsteps of his siblings and aspires to one day perform alongside them. With a background in competitive gymnastics and Olympic weightlifting, Stephens is no stranger to lifting weight above himself and has a terrible habit of asking anyone regardless of size to stand on him. Undertaking his circus studies at the National Institute of Circus Arts, he has trained for four years as a hand—balancer and hand to hand base. However, his true love and the place where Stephens thrives most is in an ensemble, where he can explore group acrobatics in collaboration with creative movement. Stephens' ambition as an artist is to become as versatile as possible, to never become comfortable and most importantly, to show the world why circus is the most powerful and beautiful expression of what it means to be human.

TRISTAN ST JOHN laughs a lot, produces music and people say he doesn't have an off switch. Since the backyard trampoline, St John has always wanted to fly! Teeterboard and trampolining were a part of his upbringing since the age of 10; not a spare second was spent off it! During the last 11 years, he has have competed at national trampoline competitions, performed Teeterboard, Acrobatics and Chinese Pole to multiple audiences and has completed a Bachelor in Circus Arts.

ADAM STROM started circus classes at the age of six, in the hopes of becoming a superhero. He trained in acrobatics, aerials and juggling for 11 years with Flipside Circus, while also developing his skills in dance, music and theatre. In 2014, Strom was accepted into the Québec Circus School in Canada, where he began an intense and intimate relationship with his German wheel. Since his three years of circus school, he has created and performed in myriad productions around the world, including *Midnight Circus*, *Crépuscule* by Flip Fabrique, and *La Galerie* by Machine de Cirque. He likes performing so much that his superhero career is going to have to wait.

CREATIVE TEAM

YARON LIFSCHITZ (Director) is a graduate of the University of New South Wales, University of Queensland and National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA), where he was the youngest director ever accepted into its prestigious graduate director's course. Since graduating, Lifschitz has directed over 60 productions including large-scale events, opera, theatre, physical theatre, and circus.

His work has been seen in over forty-five countries and across six continents by nearly two million people and has won numerous awards including six Helpmann awards and the Australia Council Theatre Award. His productions have been presented at major festivals and venues around the world including Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Barbican, Les Nuits de Fourvière, Chamaleon and all the major Australian festivals. His film work was selected for the Berlin and Melbourne Film Festivals. He was founding artistic director of the Australian Museum's Theatre Unit, head tutor in Directing at Australian Theatre for Young People and has been a regular guest tutor in directing at NIDA.

He is currently artistic director and CEO of Circa, and was creative director of Festival 2018: the arts and cultural program of the 21st Commonwealth Games.

JETHRO WOODWARD (Composer & Sound Designer) is a Melbourne-based composer, musical director, arranger, musician and sound designer recognised for his expansive and highly layered film, theatre and dance scores. A multi Green Room Award winner and Helpmann nominee, he has worked with some of Australia's leading major and independent companies including; Malthouse Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Opera Victoria, Chamber Made Opera, Back to Back, Chunky Move, Lucy Guerin, Australian Dance Theatre, Aphids, Stuck Pigs Squealing, Rawcus, Kage and more.

A composition graduate from the Victorian College of the Arts, Woodward draws upon his detailed understanding of contemporary music and its uses in live performance, including innovative uses of technology, combining live instrumentation with prerecorded, electronic, musical and sound elements into a seamless flexible and responsive score.

Woodward regularly tours his work internationally and has won Green Room Awards for his work on; *The Bloody Chamber* (Malthouse Theatre), *Moth* (Malthouse Theatre/Arena Theatre), *Goodbye Vaudeville Charlie Mudd* (Malthouse Theatre/Arena Theatre) and *Irony Is Not Enough* (Fragment 31). As a guitarist and singer, he regularly performs with Meow Meow and Paul Capsis, and has been a member of the band Cordazine over the past 15 years. He most recently was the composer of *Rapture* at Sydney Festival 2021, directed by Michael Kantor and starring Paul Capsis and iOTA.

LIBBY MCDONNELL (Costume Designer) is a designer and choreographer and she is currently head of design at Circa. McDonnell works in diverse genres and forms. At the heart of her work is people and movement.

McDonnell has a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) in visual art from Queensland College of Art-Griffith University and an Associate Degree in dance from Queensland University of Technology. Her professional career has included performing and making independent dance work, as an artistic director of Ballet Theatre of Queensland and choreographer for Blue Roo Theatre Company. For 11 years McDonnell has worked with the team at Circa to imagine, develop and deliver their productions locally, nationally and internationally. During her time at Circa she has designed costumes for more than 30 productions, co-directed three main stage productions and led many of the company's engagement projects including the pilot of the Circability program. McDonnell is based in Brisbane with her family.

ALEXANDER BERLAGE (Lighting Designer) is an award-winning director and lighting designer. He is co-artistic director of the Old Fitz Theatre. Berlage has won the Sydney Theatre Award Best Direction of a Musical for the past two years in a row – for *American Psycho* and *Cry-Baby* at Hayes Theatre Co.

As a lighting designer, Berlage has worked for Sydney Theatre Company, Opera Queensland, Circa, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Sydney Chamber Opera, Sydney Dance Company, Griffin Theatre, Ensemble Theatre, Hayes Theatre Co., Australian Theatre for Young People and Redline Productions.

His smash-hit, sold-out production of *American Psycho* won 9 Sydney Theatre Awards including Best Direction of a Musical, Best Production of a Musical and Best Lighting Design of an Independent Production and more. Berlage's production of *Gloria* was nominated for 2 Sydney Theatre Awards. Berlage's production of *Cry-Baby* received rave reviews, sold out and won four Sydney Theatre Awards including Best Direction of a Musical and Best Production of a Musical. The same year, his productions of *There Will Be a Climax*, *Home Invasion* and *Cry-Baby* received a combined total of 12 Sydney Theatre Award nominations. For *There Will Be A Climax*, Berlage was nominated for Best Direction of an Independent Production and Best Independent Production.

Berlage's directing work includes: *Diary of One Who Disappeared*, *Future Remains* (with Sydney Festival), *Resonant Bodies* (Sydney Chamber Opera); *Young Frankenstein*, *American Psycho*, *Cry-Baby* (Hayes Theatre Co.); *Gloria* (Outhouse Theatre Co); *There Will Be A Climax* (Redline Productions/NIDA); *Home Invasion* (An Assorted Few/Old 505) and *The Van De Maar Papers* (An Assorted Few/PACT).

Berlage holds a Bachelor of Dramatic Art (production) and a Master of Fine Art (directing) from the National Institute for Dramatic Art, Sydney. In 2019, Berlage was awarded a Mike Walsh Fellowship.

MARTY EVANS (Associate Director) came to circus by a more roundabout route than most. After watching nothing but circus videos during his lunchbreaks at Australia's only nuclear reactor, Evans left behind his published scientific career, embracing his physical sports background to pursue a career in circus. His first taste of circus came at the University

of Sydney in 2010 as he tried to entertain himself during free periods by learning to throw people into the air and trying to catch them again. Evans trained at the National Institute of Circus Arts in Melbourne. He is a fiercely determined and hardworking hand-to-hand base that enjoys exploring new challenges and techniques. Evans joined the Circa Ensemble full time in 2015, and has been involved in the creation of numerous Circa productions including *When One Door Closes* and *Humans*.

RANI LUTHER (Dramaturg/Associate Choreographer) was born in Melbourne and attended the National Theatre Ballet School before completing her year 7-12 education at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School.

Luther's professional dance career began with the Kiel Ballet Company Germany in 1995 before moving to The Netherlands where she danced with world-renowned Netherlands Dance Theatre 2 and Netherlands Dance Theatre 1.

In 2003 Rani returned home to dance with The Australian Ballet Company for four years, joined Sydney Dance Company in 2007 and retired from stage as a principal dancer with Melbourne Ballet Company in 2011.

Luther has had the great pleasure of working with and performing works by choreographers such as Jiri Kylián, Hans Van Manen, Paul Lightfoot, Mats Ek, Ohad Naharin, William Forsythe, Johan Inger, Jacopo Gardani, Edward Liang, Graeme Murphy, Stephan Page, Stephen Baynes, Adrian Burnett and Rafael Bonachela.

Luther won the gold medal at the Sanlam International Ballet Competition, South Africa 1993, was winner of the outstanding performance award in the City of Sydney Ballet Scholarship 1994 and received a nomination for best female dancer in the Green Room Award 2006 for her roles in *Relic* and *Jiri* with The Australian Ballet Company. Luther was an adjudicator for the Sydney Eisteddfod Ballet Scholarship 2012, 2014 and 2016.

Rani's choreographic creations include two works for NDT Workshop performances 2001/2002, *Face the Music* for Carriageworks Theatre Sydney 2012, *Illuminate* for MBC Empyrean season 2016 and *Outside In* for The Sydney Dance Company Pre-Professional season 2017. In 2018 Luther choreographed *Lunar* for Queensland Ballet's inaugural season of *Synergy* and in 2019 *Heartstrings* for the Australian Ballet Company's Bodytorque season. In 2020 Luther choreographed *From. To. Here* for Queensland Ballet's Bespoke season and in 2022 choreographed *Butterfly Effect* for the inaugural season of TDC presents Encore season.

In 2019 Luther was appointed Ballet Mistress and creative associate for Queensland Ballet, and in 2022-2023 creative associate for Queensland Ballet and Thomas Dixon Centre in which Luther curated the Secret Lives of Costumes exhibition in collaboration with Griffith University QAC, produced, curated and choreographed four Global Fusion series performances in collaboration with Brisbane Multicultural Arts Centre and curated, produced and choreographed the Encore season in November 2022. Luther founded *Flourish by Rani Luther* in 2023.



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SPOTLIGHT



Guitar Without Borders

By Henry Michaels

Once or twice in a generation, a musician emerges of such prodigious and rare talent that their very name comes to be a byword for their instrument. Pablo Sáinz-Villegas—a Spaniard whom Billboard Magazine called the “global ambassador of Spanish guitar”—is one such generational talent.

Born in Logroño, the capital of the La Rioja province of Spain, Sáinz-Villegas has built an international career of such sterling repute that he’s been described as the successor to the great Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia. Sáinz-Villegas has performed in more than 40 countries including as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Orchestra of Spain and the Berlin Philharmonic (their first solo guitarist in 38 years!). He’s also an activist, having founded “The legacy of music without borders” in 2006 as a way of promoting cross-cultural understanding through music.

The program he will perform at Macky Auditorium on Saturday, Nov. 9, certainly showcases these ideals featuring a wide-ranging musical program that encompasses works from a variety of backgrounds and inspirations.

Heitor Villa-Lobos’s Five Preludes, which open the program, are evocative of Brazilian musical culture. They are followed by the *Chaconne* from J.S. Bach’s Partita No. 2 in D minor, unquestionably one of the greatest works ever composed for solo instrument (for violin, originally). This pairing is fitting. For one, the third of the Brazilian Villa-Lobos’s preludes is subtitled “*Homenagem a Bach,*” or “Homage to Bach.” But at the same time, Bach’s chaconne owes a debt of gratitude to the New World; the chaconne in its original form was a Spanish dance said to have been inspired by indigenous South American music.

Like the Bach Chaconne, Spanish composer Isaac Albéniz’s *Asturias* was originally conceived for a different instrument, in this case piano. But the work—featuring flamenco flair—was meant to *mimic* the guitar and thus works all too well on the instrument that inspired it. The program continues with another homage: Joaquín Rodrigo’s *Invocación y danza* written in honor of composer Manuel de Falla.

Paraguayan guitarist and composer Agustín Barrios-Mangoré’s *Un sueño en la Floresta* is a virtuosic showstopper, while Italian guitarist and composer Carlo Domeniconi’s *Koyunbaba* is a Turkish-inspired work whose distinctive sound comes from its use of *scordatura* (a non-typical tuning of the guitar’s strings). Sáinz-Villegas is a proponent of new music, as well, so it’s no surprise that the program features a work he commissioned from the Spanish composer Francisco Coll.

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CU Boulder's
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celebrates 50 years

By Marc Shulgold and Sabine Kortals Stein

HARUMI RHODES has mixed feelings about observing The Milestone. As second violinist of the world-renowned, Grammy Award-winning Takács Quartet, she understands the significance of the group's founding a half-century ago.

"It's a monumental moment and we're approaching it with a sense of awe," she admits. "I feel humbled. Yet, in another sense, for us it's business as usual." Much of that business takes place right here in Boulder.

Joining Rhodes in conversation is first violinist Ed Dusinberre, who's also her husband. The English-born musician reflects on the group's remarkable musical journey filled with loss, personnel changes and—most of all—brilliant music making.

"I find myself thinking about all our former quartet members—we wouldn't be celebrating this milestone today except for them," says Dusinberre, recalling that the original quartet was formed by students at the Music Academy in Budapest, Hungary, in 1975.

"They were so young, living behind the Iron Curtain, wondering how they could fulfill their musical aspirations worldwide," he adds.

HARD WORK AND WINNING PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS in several European competitions led to an American tour in 1982 and—following several U.S.-based short-term residencies—the decision to permanently relocate their families to the United States in 1985-86. Soon after, the players accepted an invitation to become the resident quartet at the University of Colorado Boulder—and they've resided here ever since, though not without challenges. Gábor Takács-Nagy stepped down in 1993 and now enjoys a successful career as a conductor and teacher worldwide. The following year, violist Gábor Ormai was diagnosed with cancer and retired, passing away in 1995. The late Roger Tapping succeeded him, leaving to spend time with his family in 2005; in turn, he was succeeded by Geraldine Walther.

As the first new member in 1993, Dusinberre recalls the challenge of being a non-Hungarian. "It was a big adjustment for me, but I appreciated the welcoming, adventurous spirit of the players and the warmth of their collective sound," he says. "The process was similar when Harumi and then Richard joined"—referring to current violist Richard O'Neill who succeeded Walther in 2020. Grammy-Award winner for Best Classical Instrumental Solo Performance in 2021, O'Neill is only the second person to receive an award for a viola performance in the history of this category.

Today, cellist András Fejér remains the sole original member of the Takács Quartet.

For Rhodes, becoming a member of the Takács was thrilling. "The College of Music is a musical home for us. We feel grateful to be embedded in this university and the community."

ALTHOUGH THE TAKÁCS maintain an international touring schedule that takes up about half of their time, the foursome prioritizes time with their students, working in partnership with Meta Weiss, the College of Music's chamber music coordinator.

It may surprise some audience members who've been regulars at sold-out Takács Quartet concerts to learn that the group's campus connection extends beyond Grusin Music Hall. As Dusinberre notes, their decades-long residency is centered around daily hands-on work with College of Music students.

"Our relationship with the college is the glue that keeps us together," he stresses. "Our graduate string quartet program inspires us to think about future generations." This two-year program consists of intense work with a promising ensemble, preparing and guiding the young artists into the demanding world of quartet playing.

"The newest quartet we're working with is the Michigan-based Koa Quartet," adds Rhodes. "We'll listen to their interests and help them to develop a unique musical voice."

THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC's chamber music program has a long track record of success. The Brisbane, Australia-based Orava Quartet is a good example: Via email, first violinist Daniel Kowalik shared that his group met the Takács at a music festival in Sydney in 2011—at that time, the Orava had been together for five years. They soon came to CU Boulder to study with the Takács.

"We always worked with one member at a time," wrote Kowalik. "They rotated, so we had time with each member. I asked lots of questions, from general well-being to dealing with the pressures of performing."

Today, the Orava Quartet enjoys an active schedule and has been signed by Deutsche Grammophon. Their Boulder experience "really helped launch us into having a career," Kowalik noted. "Our coachings were invaluable and absolutely essential to learning the craft. Being mentored by the Takács forever changed how I think about and approach music making."

FOR MANY STUDENTS at the College of Music, a career as a performer isn't their only goal—and the Takács Quartet is sensitive to that, too. "It's only partly about making music," Rhodes emphasizes. "Much of what we focus on when we're talking with students has to do with how to make a life in music."

Dusinberre treasures those conversations. "I ask students to identify individual favorite moments in a piece and we explore different ways to heighten those moments. Hopefully they learn about each others' musical tastes and how to use their individual ideas to shape a unified interpretation."

When touring and recording sessions wind down, these beloved artists find a special joy in coming home to Boulder, visiting with faculty colleagues, and sharing their knowledge and experience with students. As Rhodes says, "The gritty and beautiful work of a string quartet happens offstage in the rehearsal room. We feel so grateful that—after many decades—this process continues in our home at CU Boulder."

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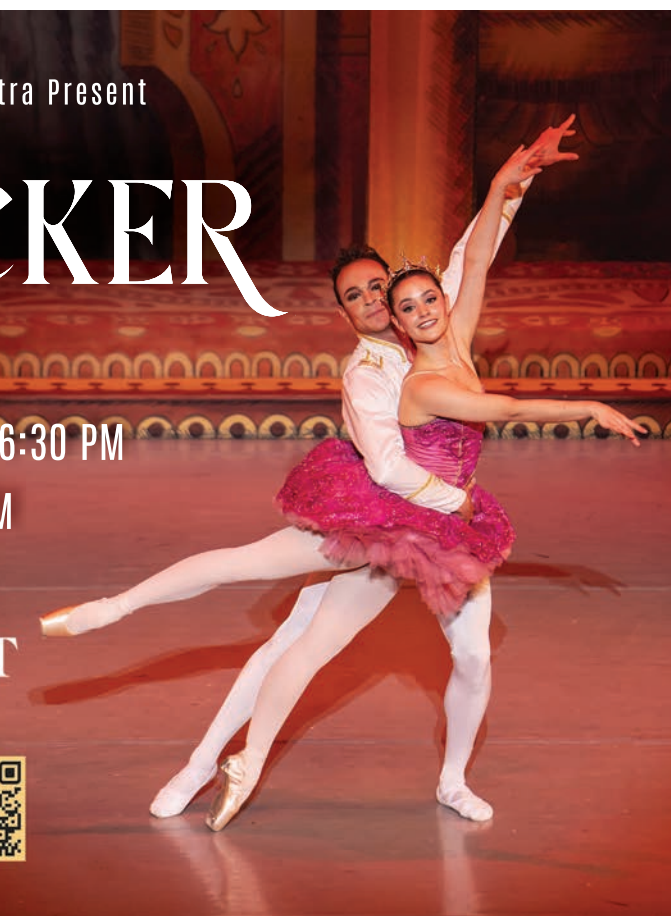
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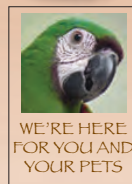


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