

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

2026-2027 SERIES • GUEST ARTIST RECITAL



PRESENTS

*World Premieres by
University of Missouri Composers*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8 • 7:30PM
SHERYL CROW HALL

A STRING QUARTET DEDICATED TO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC. THROUGH DIVERSE PROGRAMS AND CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH COMPOSERS, WE CREATE IMMERSIVE LISTENING EXPERIENCES THAT INVITE AUDIENCES TO ENGAGE DEEPLY WITH SOUND.

PROGRAM

Dave's Hocket Austin Wulliman

Bloom Henry Rusten

the same but differently Dean Wibe

Felis Catus, Josifko Aiden Spavale

- I. She's the Sweetest...
- II. She's the Silliest...
- III. The Prettiest...
- IV. Does She Know?

Contradanza J.T. Wolfe

Roundabout Vicente H. Atria

- I. About the Round
- II. At midnight the dance,
- III. Yet Again

JACK QUARTET BIOGRAPHY

Widely recognized as one of the leading ensembles in contemporary music, JACK Quartet has built an international reputation for its stylistic versatility, technical precision, and deep commitment to new music. Founded in 2005, the quartet—violinists **Christopher Otto** and **Austin Wulliman**, violist **John Pickford Richards**, and cellist **Jay Campbell**—focuses on the performance, commissioning, and advocacy of 20th- and 21st-century string quartet repertoire. Their work is grounded in close collaboration with composers, allowing them to engage directly with the technical, expressive, and conceptual demands of new works.

Over the course of its career, JACK Quartet has received numerous prestigious honors, including an Avery Fisher Career Grant, Musical America's "Ensemble of the Year" award, and Chamber Music America's Michael Jaffee Visionary Award. Their performances have been presented at major venues and festivals worldwide, such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Wigmore Hall, and the BBC Proms, establishing them as a central force in contemporary chamber music on both national and international stages.

A defining aspect of the ensemble's mission is its dedication to fostering new artistic voices. Through initiatives like JACK Studio, the quartet supports emerging composers with commissions, residencies, and workshops, creating an evolving global network of collaborators. Their extensive discography, which includes works by composers such as John Luther Adams, Helmut Lachenmann, and John Zorn, has earned critical acclaim and multiple GRAMMY® nominations.

Now in its third decade, JACK Quartet continues to expand the boundaries of the string quartet repertoire through innovative programming, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a sustained commitment to artistic experimentation and community-building.

Learn more at www.jackquartet.com.

PROGRAM NOTES

***Roundabout* (2024)**

Commissioned by the JACK Quartet as part of their Modern Medieval program, *Roundabout* is loosely inspired by *ars subtilior*, a late medieval tradition of rhythmic, notational complexity, and most importantly a deep sensibility and appreciation for play and humor.

Rounds are simple musical canons, whose more academic cousins (prolation canons) feature prominently in the piece. And of course, rounds are also a kind of dance (which inspires the urban version of a roundabout). If read all at once, the titles of the movements "About the round, at midnight the dance, yet again" are a kind of psychedelic self-referencing short verse about dance, rounds, and their repetitive nature. Besides prolation canons, the piece borrows several other *ars subtilior* techniques, such as hocketing and imitative counterpoint, alongside a variety of other influences, from bagpipes ornaments and Chilean organ-grinders to Thelonious Monk.

-Vicente Atria

***Bloom* (2026)**

Bloom is a string quartet with explorations of quartal harmony and melody, which means that a lot of the piece is based on the interval of a perfect fourth. These fourths are used in a variety of different ways and are combined with more standard tertiary harmony to create ebbs and flows throughout the duration of the piece.

-Henry Rusten

***Felis Catus, Josifko* (2026)**

This piece is dedicated to and inspired by one of our cats, Samantha. The title itself is a nod to her originally being owned by my grandfather, whose last name, in its original Croatian, was *Josifko*. We've had many cats in our family, but I chose Samantha, in particular, as I have a special place in my heart for her. She's getting old, around 11 or 12 as of writing. In all those years, I've been through a lot, mentally. And she's always been there, the sweetest and most wanna-be-vicious little thing. Her presence has helped me a lot through tough times and I want to pay homage to her. She herself has been through quite a bit, along with the rest of us, really.

For starters, we've recently moved houses, and that has caused all our cats quite some stress. We even lost our previous dog because of it. Before we moved, there was a time when our basement flooded from a broken water heater. I'll never forget seeing her tiny, fearful eyes staring up at me as she stood trapped on a card table, surrounded by a foot and a half of water. When I picked her up, she scratched my chest as she leapt to the stairs for freedom. Because of events like these she's become extremely anxious, which is what the first movement is about. Despite all of that, she's still held to her "small and ferocious" nature. In the second movement, I appeal to this side of her, the more playful and cheery. The third movement is more of a reflection of my own anxieties for her. She's getting old and on top of that, seems anxious and stressed out. With all of my time away from the house and how far away I am, I worry about her and fear whether or not I will be there for her when her time comes. Thankfully, her being on the small end (runt of the litter and all), I imagine she's got plenty of years left. The final movement is a triumphant and joyous celebration of life, of the years she's lived and has yet to live, and the warmth she's brought to me and my family.

-Aiden Spavale

the same, but different (2026)

Is a set of two short pieces for JACK Quartet that explore unique playing techniques. My initial concept for the piece was inspired by a passage in Kaija Saariaho's *Sept Papillons*, in which the solo cello performs the same sounding pitch as harmonics on all 4 strings of the instrument. This quality of microtonal variation through playing the "same" pitch in different ways served as the basis for the second movement, in which the performers are asked to constantly alter left hand fingering throughout. The first movement explores similar sonic relationships between sounds, but with different bowing techniques.

-Dean Wibe

Contradanza (2026)

"Frau TroXea had started dancing on July 14th on the narrow cobbled street outside her half-timbered home. As far as we can tell she had no musical accompaniment but simply 'began to dance.' Ignoring her husband's pleas to cease, she continued for hours... But some of those who had witnessed her strange performance had begun to mimic her, and within days more than thirty choreomaniacs were in motion, some so monomaniacally that only death would have the power to intervene."

(Ned Pennant-Rea, "The Dancing Plague of 1518." *The Public Domain Review*.)

-J.T. Wolfe

***Dave's Hocket* (2024)**

In an old cathedral, each painstakingly crafted piece of colored artistic material that creates a stained glass window has transmuted the light of centuries of days. As it modulates the sun's energetic waves, allowing them to enter and pass through its viewer, these geometric shapes tell powerful tales that echo tropes passed down through generations.

Musically, the form and feeling of the *Hoquetus David* by Guillaume de Machaut is suggestive of some of these rich artistic methods. Each rhythmic cell tiles together to form a crystalline structure over a familiar melodic phrase. In *Dave's Hocket*, I use Machaut's own source material (the melisma on David from an "Alleluia"), number games, rhythmic motif, and harmonic language as a jumping off point. I also tie his world together with the sounds of my own time by mashing it up with *Fratres* by Arvo Pärt, a ubiquitous presence in my younger years.

The rich conflict of these two harmonic languages, combined with my own interests in continuously unfolding polyrhythmic formal construction and microtonal harmony led me to create this dance at the door to the cathedral. It is the morning and light passes through the stained glass onto my face as I look up at the great sculptures that stand sentry at its entrance. I imagine myself as the young monk Adso in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* observing the sculptural forms ecstatically twisting toward the one seated in judgment: "...as David must have danced before the Ark.."

-Austin Wulliman

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

Vicente H. Atria is a Chilean composer and drummer based in New York and Santiago. Described as "virtuosic", "revelatory" ([The New York Times](#)) and "ecstatic, (...) filled with a wild distorted energy" ([The Guardian](#)), his music riffs on a wide range of idioms, from renaissance dances to Korean sanjo, creating lucid, futuristic sonic worlds. He has written for groups such as the Sun Ra Arkestra, JACK Quartet, Wet Ink Ensemble, Yarn/Wire, TAK Ensemble, International Contemporary Ensemble, Bozzini Quartet, Science Ficta, and Daedalus Quartet.

As a drummer and composer, his music has been showcased at a wide variety of venues and festivals, including Moers Festival, The Shed, MATA Festival, Roulette Intermedium, Re:Sound Festival, Festival Mixtur, ATLÁNTICX Festival, The Stone, Dizzy's Club at JALC, Saint Vitus, Jazz Standard, and DiMenna Center for Classical Music. His music has been released on Carrier Records, Aguirre Records, and Endectomorph Music, and has been reviewed by publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Wire*, *Nettavisen*, *I Care If You Listen*, *Foxy Digitalis*, *Vinyl District*, and *Which Sinfonia*.

He is a recipient of a Deutscher Jazzpreis ("Best Debut Album International", 2023), an ASCAP Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Award (2022), an ACF Create award (2021), The Shed Open Call commission (2019), two Chilean Ministry of Culture Fondo de la Música funds (2022 & 2020), and was a finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award (2016).

He holds a DMA from Columbia University, where he has studied with Fred Lerdahl, Georg Haas, George Lewis, and Zosha Di Castri. Vicente is currently leading experimental chamber folk septet Orlando Furioso, as well as performing with collaborative trio Family Plan, improvising electronic music with Buen Clima as Tronador, and designing instruments with Mat Muntz for The Vex Collection, an alt-historical ensemble. Vicente is a 2022-2023 Artist-In-Residence for Wet Ink Ensemble.

Henry Rusten is an undergraduate composer and statistics double major at the University of Missouri. He began his musical studies at age five with piano and has since performed in a variety of ensembles, including choir, jazz band (as a pianist), and orchestra (as a violist) at both the high school and collegiate levels.

Rusten's music has been commissioned and performed by chamber ensembles affiliated with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and the Mizzou New Music Ensemble. His achievements include winning the Missouri Composers Project (High School Division), which included a performance by the Columbia Civic Orchestra, as well as first place in the University of Missouri COMP Contest (Jazz Category) and the Missouri Association for Jazz Education Jazz Band Composition Contest.

Rusten's compositional work explores complex musical ideas—such as intricate rhythms, rich textures, and advanced harmonic structures—while striving to communicate these elements in ways that resonate with a broad audience. He studies composition with University of Missouri faculty members Utku Asuroglu and Selim Göncü.

Aiden Spavale is a first-year student at the University of Missouri, pursuing a degree in Music Theory and Composition. Originally from St. Peters, Missouri, he was actively involved in music from a young age, performing as a violist in local orchestras, including Webster University's Young People's Symphony Orchestra, with which he performed at Carnegie Hall.

Aiden began composing in high school and has participated in programs such as Mizzou's Summer COMP and Webster University's Summer Composition Initiative, as well as their respective composition competitions. At the University of Missouri, Aiden continues to develop his musical voice as a member of the University Symphony Orchestra and as a composition student, refining his skills and expanding his artistic perspective.

Dean Wibe is a composer and cellist from Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He began his musical studies in public school and later studied cello privately with Dianne Platte and Hannah Holman. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance from the University of Iowa and completed a Master of Music in Cello Performance at the University of Missouri, where he studied with Eli Lara. Dean is currently pursuing a Master of Music in Composition at the University of Missouri, studying with Stefan Freund and Utku Asuroglu. As a member of the Mizzou New Music Ensemble, he has collaborated with composers including Marcos Balter, Viet Cuong, Mary Kouyoumdjian, Tania León, and George Lewis. Dean's compositions have been performed by ensembles such as the Saint Louis Symphony, HUB New Music, the Mizzou New Music Ensemble, the Mizzou Wind Ensemble, JACK Quartet, and the American Wild Ensemble.

J. T. Wolfe finds continual inspiration through his interactions with audiences, performers, and fellow composers. Constantly pushing beyond his comfort zone, his musical language continues to evolve while remaining grounded in lyricism, vivid harmonic color, and transformation. In 2021, Wolfe was awarded a Sinquefield Scholarship to pursue undergraduate studies in composition at the University of Missouri, where he studied with Stefan Freund, Utku Asuroglu, Yoshiaki Onishi, and Carolina Heredia. He has collaborated with ensembles including the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Khemia Ensemble, the American Wild Ensemble, the Mizzou New Music Ensemble, and JACK Quartet, as well as numerous soloists and student ensembles.

Violinist, composer and educator **Austin Wulliman** embodies the imagined and empathizes with the absurd through sounds both familiar and radical, telling stories with a limitless passion for tuning cries from every corner of the human capacity to hear. He is a member of JACK Quartet, called "the nation's most important quartet" by the New York Times and has been praised as a "gifted, adventuresome violinist" by the Chicago Tribune. Through in-depth collaboration with performers and composers working in a panoply of aesthetic realms, Austin searches daily for the violin's voice in today's musical world.

Austin's debut album as composer *The News From Utopia* was released in 2023, which Austin wrote, recorded, and mixed. His works have been performed in concert with pianist Conrad Tao at Miller Theater, by guitarist Alec Goldfarb at the Darmstadt Ferienkurse and Brooklyn's Roulette Intermedium, and frequently by JACK Quartet. With JACK, his works have been performed at such venues as the Melbourne Recital Centre, Carnegie Hall Summer Stage, Lincoln Center, and the Pierre Boulez Saal with upcoming performances at Wigmore Hall, the Pittsburgh Microtonal Music Festival, and Musikkollegium Winterthur, among others. His second album of original music *Escape Rites*, is set for release on May 23, 2025 on the Sono Luminus label, featuring JACK Quartet.