

## Isidore Quartet Biography

Adrian Steele   Phoenix Avalon   Devin Moore   Joshua McClendon  
Violin   Violin   Viola   Cellist

“A polished sonority and well-balanced, tightly synchronized ensemble with nearly faultless intonation...it is heartening to know that chamber music is in good hands with such gifted young ensembles as the Isidore Quartet” —Chicago Classical Review

Winners of a 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant, and the 14th Banff International String Quartet Competition in 2022, the New York City-based Isidore String Quartet was formed in 2019 with a vision to revisit, rediscover, and reinvigorate the repertoire. The quartet is heavily influenced by the Juilliard String Quartet and the idea of ‘approaching the established as if it were brand new, and the new as if it were firmly established.’

The quartet began as an ensemble at the Juilliard School, and has coached with Joel Krosnick, Joseph Lin, Astrid Schween, Laurie Smukler, Joseph Kalichstein, Roger Tapping, Misha Amory, and numerous others. They are currently completing their final year as Peak Fellowship Ensemble-in-Residence at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

In North America, the Isidore Quartet has appeared on major series in Boston, New York, Berkeley, Chicago, Ann Arbor, Pittsburgh, Seattle, Durham, Washington DC, Houston, Toronto, and Montreal, and has collaborated with several eminent performers including James Ehnes, Jeremy Denk, Shai Wosner, and Jon Nakamatsu. Their 24/25 season includes performances in Salt Lake City, Buffalo, Kansas City, Portland (OR), Louisville, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Memphis, Vancouver, San Francisco, and many other cities across the U.S. and Canada. In Europe they will appear at Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, and in Bonn (Beethoven Haus), Stuttgart, Cologne, and Dresden, among many others.

Over the past several years, the quartet has developed a strong connection to the works of composer and pianist Billy Childs. His String Quartet No. 2, “Awakenings” was among the repertoire that delivered the Isidore their Banff victory, and this season they will play Childs’ Quartet No. 3, “Unrequited.” In the 2025-26 season, they will premiere a new Childs quartet written expressly for them.

Both on stage and outside the concert hall, the Isidore Quartet is deeply invested in connecting with youth and elderly populations, and with marginalized communities who otherwise have limited access to high-quality live music performance. They approach music as a “playground” and attempt to break down barriers to encourage collaboration and creativity. The name Isidore recognizes the ensemble’s musical connection to the Juilliard Quartet: one of that group’s early members was legendary violinist Isidore Cohen. Additionally, it acknowledges a shared affection for a certain libation - legend has it a Greek monk named Isidore concocted the first genuine vodka recipe for the Grand Duchy of Moscow!  
May, 2024

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# Isidore Quartet

presented by  
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Tuesday, March 25, 2025  
7:30 pm Harris Concert Hall



# Isidore Quartet

Adrian Steele, *violin* Phoenix Avalon, *violin*  
Devin Moore, *viola* Joshua McClendon, *cello*

## Unrequited

String Quartet in B-flat Major “Sunrise”, Joseph Haydn  
Op 76 No 4 (1797) (1732-1809)

- I. Allegro con spirito
- II. Adagio
- III. Menuet. Allegro
- IV. Finale. Allegro ma non troppo

String Quartet No. 3, Unrequited, (2015) Billy Childs  
(b. 1957)

↻ *Intermission* ↻

String Quartet No. 12 in E-flat Major, Ludwig van Beethoven  
Op. 127 (1825) (1770-1827)

- I. Maestoso - Allegro
- II. Adagio, ma non troppo e molto cantabile
- III. Scherzando vivace - Presto
- IV. Finale

Please silence your mobile devices for tonight's performance.

Join Us in the lobby after the concert to meet the musicians.



We extend our sincere gratitude to Lane Music and Scott Lane for providing the piano for this evening's performance.



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A special thank you to Babcock Gifts and Brooks Terry for hosting our new “FaceTime” pre-concert evening talk with our musicians.

## Program Notes

Haydn, String Quartet in B-flat Major “Sunrise” 25’  
*Composed in 1796*

M 1: Sunrise and the world is waking up  
M 2: a sense of the sacred  
M.3: minuet, a peasant Hungarian dance  
M4: Recap of Sunrise theme then a madcap CODA

Simon Rattle describes Haydn as the most underrated of the great composers.

When asked who he would love having dinner with, he would prefer dining with Haydn and describes the evening as filled with interesting, witty conversation and many joyful moments. We know that Haydn has been described often as forward looking, intelligent, clever and very appealing to today’s audiences. He was also a teacher to Beethoven.

And in the news...

In 1796 when this was composed, significant world events included these:

1st US Presidential election with Adams defeating Jefferson.  
1st successful smallpox vaccine was discovered  
Tennessee was made a state.

Childs, String Quartet No. 3, Unrequited 22’  
*Composed in 2015*

From Billy Childs, 2015

“When the Lyris Quartet approached me in 2015 to compose a sort of commentary on the story of Intimate Letters: String Quartet No. 2 by Leoš Janáček, I thought it was a remarkable idea. The first thing—the only thing, really—that popped into my mind was the tragedy of unrequited love. Hence the name, Unrequited. I sought to compose Unrequited so that it moves like the five stages of grief through a variety of emotions associated with this one-way love.”

William Edward Childs (born March 8 1957) is an American composer, jazz pianist, arranger and conductor from Los Angeles, CA.

Here, then, are the stages of Unrequited love.

Romantic  
Pure love  
Paranoid  
Obsessive  
Neurotic possessiveness  
Arriving at despondent acceptance

Beethoven, String Quartet No. 12 in E-flat Major Op.127 41’  
*Composed in 1825*

The Italian words of tempo markings on a piece of music help the players know how to perform a piece or a section of a piece. But they can also help us listeners know what to expect as the piece unfolds.

Movement I:

Maestoso (majestic or dignified) and Allegro (fast and lively)  
These markings lead us to expect majestic passages alternating with faster, more cheerful sections

Movement II:

Adagio ma non troppo e molto cantabile (slowly but not too slowly and in a very songlike manner)  
So here we see Beethoven’s more lyrical side in a set of songlike variations

Movement III:

Scherzando vivace (jokingly and light-hearted)  
With sudden twists and turns, Beethoven shows his sense of humor and has fun with us

Movement IV:

Finale, Allegro con moto (fast and with a sense of motion)  
This fast movement, almost violent sounding in places, drives the quartet to an exciting close

Beethoven was totally deaf by the time he wrote this late quartet, and he had been deaf for more than half his life. Can you imagine for a moment that he heard this music only in his head?

The premier of this piece was a flop. So Beethoven retrieved all the copies of his music and rather demanded a new performance with his favorite quartet. He attended all the rehearsals and coached by watching the bowing and the body language of the musicians. This second performance was a profound success.

This quartet was composed two years before Beethoven’s death. Over 40 minutes in length, one can only imagine he had so much to say through his music and never did he want to say goodbye.

Notes by Julie and Keith Schap

The Isidore Quartet is represented by David Rowe Artists  
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