

The Portland String Quartet
54th Season Concert Series



2022–2023

Presented by the
Portland String Quartet Society



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A Season of Change

For 44 years, the Portland String Quartet performed with its founding members. It was a record-breaking tenure in classical music and an extraordinary feat of teamwork in any domain. Even Harvard Business School took note, publishing a case study analyzing the group's collaborative approach—and that was in the early 1980s when the founding four weren't even halfway done. Last spring, violinist Ronald Lantz retired after 53 years of performing with the Portland String Quartet—the last founding member to leave the group. He followed violist Julia Adams, who retired in June 2020.

In 2022, for the first time in its history, the PSQ begins a concert season without a single founding member. Led by first violinist Dean Stein, who joined in 2013, and violist Brianna Fischler, who became a permanent member of the quartet last year, this 54th season will be a critical one for the quartet. Each concert will feature two new guest artists joining the quartet. Some are longtime friends and collaborators; others are alluring strangers. Each will bring voices and perspectives that spur the ensemble in exciting new directions.

Each concert's programming will follow suit. Expect classics mixed with bold new entrants to the quartet repertoire. Audiences who experience Beethoven's mind-bending Op. 127 on October 16 will also hear the dreamy pizzicato interplay in Jessie Montgomery's 21st-century crowd favorite, *Strum*. Fans of Johannes Brahms's Viola Quintet who attend on April 16 will also hear work by a compelling predecessor of Brahms (Creole composer Joseph Bologne, born in 1745) and an unlikely intellectual progeny of the German master — Hans Gál, a leading Brahms scholar in the 20th century. Insightful selections like these will draw out the tension between tradition and innovation. The new players' fresh perspectives make them all the more exciting. Welcome to this Season of Change, the 54th season of the PSQ.

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VentiCordi Chamber Music	Kennebunkport	venticordi.com

A Message from our President



Winky Lewis

Greetings and welcome to the Portland String Quartet Society's 54th season. About 30 years ago this fall, if you can imagine it, my 4th-grade class filed into the gym for a unique musical assembly. At center court was the PSQ, already playing the theme from "Mission Impossible" (beyond cool to my 10-year-old ears). Afterward, our teacher handed us a sign-up sheet with pictures of a violin, viola, and cello: Would we like to play one of those? Obviously, I checked the box with the biggest of the three instruments—it was cello time.

Since its inception in 1969, the PSQ has made educating and inspiring young musicians one of its primary missions. It's rare in the world of chamber music—or anywhere else, for that matter—for a high-caliber group to make itself accessible to aspiring musicians of so many different ages and experience levels. Maine students have benefited from the group's warmth, intelligence, and genuine enthusiasm for chamber music for decades through public concerts, school presentations, coaching sessions, master classes, and summer workshops.

This season, you'll hear the fruits of that half-century of commitment. Star students of the Quartet—Callie Brennan and Patrick Doane—return to Maine as acclaimed professionals to perform with the PSQ on April 16th and May 14th, 2023. The PSQS board also boasts two more former students in addition to me: David Cosgrove and Sarah Hoag, who played together at summer workshops at St. Joseph's College of Maine together in the mid-aughts.

We're calling this the "Season of Change" for various reasons. Most noticeably, the 54th will be the first PSQ season where the quartet performs without a single founding member. First violinist Dean Stein and violist Brianna Fischler have taken on this challenge with verve and equanimity, inviting guests to join them throughout the year. It will be a season of electrifying collaborations and compelling performances. I'm honored to become the PSQ Society's newest president. I want to thank Shirley Helfrich, Carolyn Paulin, Sue Nutty, Tracey Richardson-Newton, David Myers-Wakeman, David Cosgrove, Liz Dodson, George Burns, and Jean Murachanian for their unflappable assistance as we build on the past and prepare PSQ for a bright future.

Finally, thank you—our audience. Enjoy this exciting first season of the new PSQ.

Burt Helm, President

Portland String Quartet Society

The Portland String Quartet's 54th Season Concert Schedule

PSQ Concert I – Sunday, October 16, 2022

2:00 p.m. at Portland Conservatory of Music

String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 20, No. 5 – *Joseph Haydn*

Strum for String Quartet – *Jessie Montgomery*

String Quartet in E-Flat major, Op. 127 – *Ludwig van Beethoven*

VentiCordi Chamber Music - Sunday, November 13, 2022

2:00 p.m. at Woodfords Church

Songs and Dances for Violin and Bassoon - *John Steinmetz*

Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano - *André Previn*

Trois Pièces for Oboe, Cello, and Piano - *Nadia Boulanger*

Duo for Violin and Cello - *Jessie Montgomery*

Synchrony for Oboe, Bassoon, Violin, Cello, Piano and pre-recorded audio - *Jonathan Bailey Holland*

PSQ Concert II – Sunday, December 4, 2022

2:00 p.m. at Portland Conservatory of Music

Danzas de Panama – *William Grant Still*

String Quartet No. 2 in D-minor – *Lucien Durosoir*

Clarinet Quintet in A major, K. 581 – *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*

Winter Solstice Concert – Wednesday, December 21, 2022

6:00 p.m. at Mechanics' Hall, Portland

The Art of the Fugue – *Johann Sebastian Bach*

Valentine's Day with Lantz & Kargul - Sunday, February 12, 2023

2:00 p.m. at Woodfords Church

Sonata No. 8 in G Major, Op. 30 No. 3 – *Ludwig van Beethoven*

"Mother and Child" from Suite for Violin and Piano – *William Grant Still*

"The Lark Ascending" (A Romance for Violin and Piano) – *Ralph Vaughan Williams*

Plus short works by Gluck, Mendelssohn and Piazzolla

Welcome to Chamber Music - Sunday, March 26, 2023

2:00 p.m. at Portland Conservatory of Music

The members of the PSQ present a program that combines performances and lecture to illuminate the inner workings of chamber music throughout history.

PSQ Concert III – Sunday, April 16, 2023

2:00 p.m. at Portland Conservatory of Music

String Quartet No. 5 in G Minor – *Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges*

Five Intermezzi for String Quartet, Op. 10 – *Hans Gál*

String Quartet 1931 – *Ruth Crawford Seeger*

Viola Quintet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 111 – *Johannes Brahms*

PSQ Concert IV – Sunday, May 14, 2023

2:00 p.m. at Portland Conservatory of Music

String Quartet No. 1 – *Walter Piston*

String Quartet No. 5, Sz. 102 – *Béla Bartók*

Piano Quintet in A Minor – *Florence Price*



**VentiCordi Chamber Music - Sunday, November 13, 2022
2:00 p.m. at Woodfords Church**

The Portland String Quartet Society is delighted that VentiCordi Chamber Music, winner of *Down East Magazine's* Readers' Choice award as Best Group in Maine 2016 and 2017, is making yet another appearance on the PSQ Society series on November 13th at Woodfords Church in Portland. Led by violinist Dean Stein and oboist Kathleen McNerney, Artistic Directors, VentiCordi has been praised for their "*.....beautifully articulated, shapely playing and rock solid ensemble*". VentiCordi combines McNerney's and Stein's love of chamber music with innovative programming that blends wind and string instruments. They invite musicians with the same spirit of chamber music to join them in collaboration. Both Ms. McNerney and Mr. Stein perform nationally and internationally as members of professional chamber ensembles. Their respective musical journeys from woodwind quintets and string quartets prepared them to explore creative frontiers beyond the usual constraints of these more traditional groups.

"One hopes that VentiCordi can continue to mine its musical treasure-trove for a long time to come."

- Christopher Hyde, Portland Press Herald

Since its founding in the Kennebunks in the summer of 2009, VentiCordi has been enthusiastically received by audiences and critics. Audiences have fallen in love with their distinctive programming, sometimes including undiscovered gems, as the Classical Voice of New England noted, *“When music is played with enlightened soul, it speaks directly to the listener, as this did, whether or not it has been experienced previously.”* While the starting point will be oboe and violin, the other musical voices joining them have included piano, flute, clarinet, bassoon, horn, saxophone, soprano, viola, cello, bass, guitar, harpsichord, percussion, and harp. VentiCordi’s musical home is South Church in Kennebunkport, where they perform each summer. VentiCordi also performs regularly in South Portland, the Lincoln Theatre in Damariscotta, and the Unitarian Universalist Church in Brunswick.

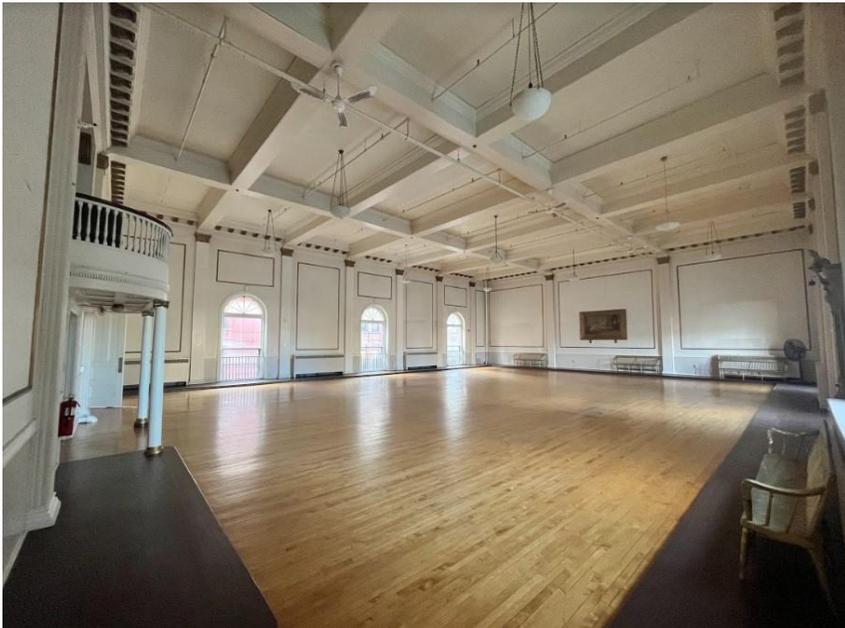
For more information about VentiCordi Chamber Music, visit their website at www.VentiCordi.com





**Winter Solstice Concert – Wednesday, December 21, 2022
6:00 p.m. at Mechanics' Hall, Portland**

The Portland String Quartet is excited to return to the recently renovated performing space at Mechanics' Hall to present the entirety of Johann Sebastian Bach's exquisite contrapuntal masterpiece, the *Art of the Fugue*. PSQS is happy to have Mechanics' Hall as our program partner for this FREE concert!



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Valentine's Day with Lantz & Kargul - Sunday, February 12, 2023
2:00 p.m. at Woodfords Church

Portland String Quartet violinist emeritus & founding member Ronald Lantz and University of Southern Maine pianist Laura Kargul once again join forces to present a program of passionate music and provocative commentary in their popular Valentine's Day concert at Woodfords Church in Portland, co-presented with the Dr. Alfred and D. Suzi Osher School of Music at the University of Southern Maine.

Lantz and Kargul first performed as a duo on the LARK series in 2010 and have been delighting audiences near and far ever since. Their performances of romantic music, combined with thoughtful and witty remarks from the stage, create a rare and memorable experience. Recent tours included concerts in Arizona, Florida and Jamaica, as well as appearances throughout Maine and northern New England.

Violinist **Ronald Lantz** has taught and concertized in over 30 countries as a member of the Portland String Quartet. He maintains a large teaching studio in Portland and many of his students have gone on to professional careers in music. Lantz is a graduate of the Indiana University School of Music. He interrupted his master's degree work at Juilliard to accept a position in the Music in Maine program, which led to his becoming a founding member of the Portland String Quartet. He holds an honorary doctorate from Colby College, and has served on the

music faculties of Bowdoin, Bates and Colby Colleges, the University of New Hampshire, the University of Southern Maine and the Portland Conservatory of Music.

Pianist **Laura Kargul** has performed as a soloist throughout much of the world. As a collaborative artist she has appeared with ensembles such as the Michigan Chamber Strings, and the Lark, DaPonte and Portland String Quartets, as well as in venues that include the Aspen Music Festival and the Chamber Music Festival of Lucca in Italy. She holds a doctorate from the University of Michigan, where she studied with Leon Fleisher and Theodore Lettvin and served as an assistant to conductor Gustav Meier. Her European debut in the Netherlands was hailed by the *Rotterdams Nieuwsblad* as “one of the most remarkable debut recitals recently given in our country” and just a year later she was praised as “a world class pianist: This is playing that belongs on our great concert stages...almost feverishly inspired, so controlled and so thrilling” by the *Haagsche Courant*, The Hague. With such high international acclaim, she is one of only a handful of pianists invited to perform a concert on Liszt’s own piano at the Liszt House in Weimar, Germany.



**Welcome to Chamber Music - Sunday, March 26, 2023
2:00 p.m. at the Portland Conservatory of Music**

Adapted from the Quartet's legendary survey course at Colby College, this program explores chamber music's form and history from the Baroque era to the present day. Portland String Quartet members perform influential chamber works and discuss their significance in a relaxed and informal setting that is sure to engage aficionados and neophytes alike!

This season, you will enjoy the Welcome to Chamber Music program in a relaxed and casual setting at the Portland Conservatory of Music's new location, 28 Neal Street in Portland. Given the welcoming nature of this event, it is a great way to get to know our Quartet members as they share their love for chamber music.



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Meet the PSQ



Violinist **DEAN STEIN** has performed throughout the world in recitals, with orchestras, chamber music ensembles, and as a soloist. His performances frequently garner critical acclaim, as in a recording of which *The Strad* magazine wrote, “Dean Arthur Stein excels in the first violin’s improvisatory cadenza, his fierce yet luxuriant tone setting the mood...”

A passionate performer and advocate for chamber music, Mr. Stein joined the Portland String Quartet as first violinist in 2013. In collaboration with oboist Kathleen McNerney, he founded VentiCordi Chamber Music, programming and performing creative, dynamic chamber music combining wind and string instruments. Since 2009 they have performed in Maine to great acclaim. *The Journal Tribune* wrote, “The programs I have witnessed by VentiCordi are of such caliber that one could easily imagine that it could be given to great acclaim in New York, London, Berlin or any other musically conscious community.” Upcoming plans include recording the music of Ned Rorem and Hans Gál with pianist Pamela Mia Paul.

Mr. Stein also enjoys a violin/piano partnership with his colleague at Bates College, pianist Chiharu Naruse. From 2003-08 Mr. Stein directed the Arcady Music Festival in Bar Harbor, Maine. At Arcady, he performed in chamber ensembles, brought internationally renowned artists to perform in Down East Maine, and gave high priority to educational programs, bringing musicians to perform directly for Maine schoolchildren. His passion for the solo violin music of Bach has resulted in many performances of Bach’s masterpieces, which one reviewer called “a superb and impressive performance of the unaccompanied

Chaconne from Bach's Partita No. 2." Chamber music audiences have heard Mr. Stein in performances throughout Maine and beyond; from Ogunquit to Orono, at Music Mountain, Eastern Music Festival, Harvard's Paine Hall, and many more venues.

A highly sought-after teacher and clinician, Mr. Stein is on the faculty of Bowdoin and Bates Colleges, coaches chamber music workshops with the PSQ at Sebasco Harbor Resort, St. Joseph's College and Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village, and has taught at New England Conservatory's Preparatory Division, and University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He studied first with Margaret Berend at the Henry Street Settlement, then at The Juilliard School with Lewis Kaplan and Ivan Galamian, and at University of Maryland, College Park, with Gerald Fischbach and members of the Guarneri String Quartet.



Dean Stein (violin), Ron Lantz (violin), Paul Posnak (piano), Brianna Fischler (viola), and Andy Mark (cello) perform Ernest Bloch's Piano Quintet No. 1 on Nov. 14th, 2021



BRIANNA FISCHLER is a violist/violinist and teacher based in Portland, Maine. She holds a Bachelor of Music in violin performance from Boston University's College of Fine Arts, where she studied with Bayla Keyes. She also studied with Krzysztof Kuznik at Manhattan School of Music Pre-College.

Brianna, an alum of Kinhaven Music School, has attended the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, Aspen Music Festival, National Orchestral Institute, Garth Newel Music Center, and Three Bridges International Chamber Festival. She has performed in venues such as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, and Woolsey Hall. Brianna has performed in master classes for Ani Kavafian and Pinchas Zukerman, and placed first in the University of Connecticut Chamber Music Competition with the Anellie String Trio. She is a founding member, as well as the Education Coordinator, in Palaver Strings, a non-profit musician led chamber ensemble based in Boston, MA. Brianna is also certified in Early Childhood Music Learning Theory and the Suzuki Method.

“For as long as I can remember, music has been a central part of my life,” says Brianna. “As I came from a long line of musicians and artists, you could even say I had prenatal musical experiences. My grandmother, a violinist herself, first introduced my twin sister and me to the instrument. A few years later, my two younger twin brothers picked up the cello. If you were to walk into my house after school, in theory all four of us would have been practicing at once. Growing up with live-in “chamber music mates” was a luxury that positively enhanced my development as a human being. My sister, my best friend Jennie

Brent, and I began playing in a trio at the age of eight at Neighborhood Music School in New Haven, CT. We called ourselves The Annellies, and we were guided by the love and support of our coach, Jody Rowitsch. Though our rehearsals were most likely 80 percent laughter and 20 percent work, we learned about the strong bond that can be formed through music.”

In March of 2022, Brianna accepted the position as Violist with the Portland String Quartet. “I am honored and humbled to join the Portland String Quartet as their new violist”, she said. “The ensemble’s rich history in Maine is inspiring, and I am thrilled to help continue the legacy. I cannot wait to be a part of this new and exciting chapter.”





Dean, Ron, Brianna, and Andy take their bows after a stunning performance of J.S. Bach's "Art of the Fugue" at the Motherhouse Chapel, December 20th, 2021



Dean, Ron, Brianna, and Andy pose for a photo after their "Welcome to Chamber Music" performance on June 18th, 2022

Thank You and Best Wishes, Andrew Mark!



After five years as the PSQ's cellist — and an acclaimed career in chamber music spanning four decades — Andrew Mark made the difficult personal decision to step back from performing professionally. His departure is a loss for audiences in Maine, New England, and worldwide. He'll be especially missed by the Quartet, where his keen playing and musicality were surpassed only by his kindness as a collaborator and colleague. Luckily for his students, he will continue to teach privately and as a Professor of Cello at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

Andy sends along this note:

"It is with a heavy heart that I am announcing that for personal reasons, I will be stepping down as cellist of the PSQ this season. It was surely not an easy decision, and I will truly miss performing the amazing repertoire and rehearsing with such special musicians. To Julia, Ron, and Dean – thank you for welcoming me into the group with open arms in 2018. It has been a blessing to have them all in my life. My favorite memories include the two European PSQ concert cruises we took and the adult chamber music workshops at the resorts at Newagen and Sebasco Harbor along with the Portland concert series and performances in Philadelphia and Miami. To Brianna Fischler – I am so happy you joined the PSQ and you have brought so much to the Quartet beyond your beautiful playing. I would also like to thank the incredibly warm and devoted audience that supports the PSQ. COVID taught us how important it is to perform for a live audience. After a year of 'performing" online, we were hungry to perform and make personal connections with our listeners. Thank you all for the amazing memories and please continue to support this wonderful ensemble."

Good luck, Andy! We are thankful for your commitment, talent, and wisdom, and we wish you all the best. Don't be a stranger here in Portland.

***Celebrating Ronald Lantz – and Enriching the Learning Fund
The PSQS Annual Spring Benefit Concert, “Music at the Mill”
June 5, 2022***

In the rough-hewn beauty of the Frontier cultural center in Brunswick, friends of the Portland String Quartet Society toasted the storied career of Ronald Lantz, the PSQ’s founding second violinist, and raised \$2,509 for the Learning Fund.

Thank you to the benefit’s organizers, David Cosgrove, Elizabeth Dodson, Shirley Helfrich, Liz Lantz, and Carolyn Paulin, and to our benefit host committee, whose support made the event possible:

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Shirley Helfrich

Peter and Kathleen Leslie

Sue and David Nutty

Caroline Loupe and Glenn Turner

Carolyn Paulin and Paul Vermel

If you missed this event, please join us in 2023! The homemade baked goods were virtuosic, the craft beer top-notch, the music boisterous, and the auction, silent. The entertainment was worth the price of admission alone: Guest musicians Laura Kargul and Callie Brennan treated the audience to exquisite surprise performances of a Kenji Bunch solo along with the barn-burning “Hot Canary”.



Ron Lantz performed Dvořák's *Terzetto* with the Quartet from second violinist's seat for one last time. Friends and students toasted Ron's retirement in person and virtually worldwide, from Paris to South America. Thankfully, Ronald Lantz fans will still be able to see him perform this February, in the fan favorite Lantz/Kargul Valentine's Day Concert on February 12, 2023.

Please consider donating to the PSQS Learning Fund throughout the year, which seeks to create educational opportunities and provide financial assistance for aspiring musicians of all ages, including:

- Student scholarships for future workshops
- Scholarships for student and amateur chamber ensembles to receive regular coaching or master classes by the PSQ
- Free tickets to PSQ series concerts
- Free tickets to attend "Welcome to Chamber Music" lecture demonstrations
- Educational outreach programs and residencies performed by the PSQ in Maine and New England



Many thanks to the following supporters who contributed to PSQ and PSQS between July 1st, 2021 and June 30th, 2022:

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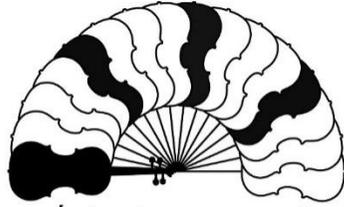
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Thanks again to our PSQ supporters who contributed in 2021 and 2022. Please contact us if we have omitted your name in error.

The Portland String Quartet Society *(Formerly the Lark Society for Chamber Music)*

The LARK Society for Chamber Music was formed in 1980 to promote chamber music and music education in the state of Maine through the performances and educational outreach activities of the Portland String Quartet. The Society took its name from a Quartet by Franz Joseph Haydn, *The Lark*, and from the surnames



Portland String Quartet Society

of the founding four musicians (Lantz, Adams, Ross, Kecskemethy). This non-profit organization, recently re-named the PSQ Society to better reflect its current incarnation, is the presenter of the Portland String Quartet's annual four concert series in Portland. Through grant writing and fundraising activities, the PSQ Society coordinates this Portland concert series and provides support for many other educational activities and workshops throughout Maine.

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Wishing the Portland String
Quartet a vibrant and joyful
2022-2023 season!



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