



FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

IN COOPERATION WITH PACIFIC'S CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC PRESENT

Italian Saxophone Quartet

FEDERICO MONDELICI, soprano saxophone JULIAN BRODSKI, alto saxophone

SILVIO ROSSOMANDO, tenor saxophone MICHELE PAOLINO, baritone saxophone

2:30 pm, Sunday, April 13, 2025, Faye Spanos Concert Hall University of the Pacific

ENTRANCE OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA, *from Solomon* (1748)

GEORG FRIEDRICH HÄNDEL
(1685–1759)

ORCHESTRAL SUITE NO. 3, BWV 1068 (1730?)
Aria

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685–1750)

SONATA A QUATTRO IN C MAJOR, NO.3 (1804)
Allegro

GIOACHINO ROSSINI
(1792–1868)

SUITE ESPAÑOLA (1886)
Sevilla

ISAAC ALBÉNIZ
(1860–1909)

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (1997)
Theme

NICOLA PIOVANI
(b. 1946)

SUITE HELLÉNIQUE (2001)
Kalamatianos, Valse, Kritis

PEDRO ITURRALDE
(1929–2020)

PEQUEÑA CZARDAS (1998)

ITURRALDE

— *INTERMISSION* —

THE EASY WINNERS (1901)

SCOTT JOPLIN
(1868–1917)

MOVIE SUITE

Song for Elena, *from "Nuovo Cinema Paradiso"*

Sean Sean, *from "Duck, You Sucker!"*

Main Theme, *from "Once Upon a Time in the West"*

Main Theme, *from "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly"*

Goodbye Cheyenne, *from "Once Upon a Time in the West"*

Playing Love, *from "The Legend of 1900"*

Miserere, *from "The Mission"*

Gabriel's Oboe, *from "The Mission"*

Ecstasy of Gold, *from "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly"*

ENNIO MORRICONE
(1928–2020)

OBLIVION (1982)

ASTOR PIAZZOLA
(1921–1992)

LIBERTANGO (1974)

PIAZZOLA

Music from Fellini's "8½" (1963)

NINO ROTA
(1921–1992)

Italian Saxophone Quartet appears by arrangement with Lisa Sapinkopf Artists, chambermuse.com

Season Sponsor: C. A. Webster Foundation

Program Notes by Federico Mondelci

In 1842, when the saxophone created by Adolphe Sax was still in its infancy, Hector Berlioz wrote: "Its merit, in my opinion, lies in the flexible beauty of its accent, at times somber and calm, at times passionate, dreamy or melancholy, or as vague as the echo of an echo, like the indistinct cry of the breeze in the woods; or rather, like the mysterious vibration of a bell long after it has been rung. No other musical instrument in existence known to me possesses this particular sonority, on the borders of silence, ...the most beautiful low voice known to date in music."

Since then, the saxophone has come a long way, winning over composers of classical, jazz and popular music alike. Over time, a literature for the sax quartet has also developed, a modern, more easy-going and light-hearted equivalent of the aristocratic string quartet of the classical-romantic tradition, made up of original pieces and transcriptions.

Today's program is an example of this. Transcriptions of works conceived for other kinds of ensembles includes *The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba* by Händel, the famous *Air on the G String* by J.S. Bach, the third of Rossini's six *Sonatas for Four Instruments* (written when the composer was only 12 years old), and *Sevilla* (from *Suite Española*) by Isaac Albeniz. Film music will bring the audience into an imaginative world with soundtracks from famous movies by Ennio Morricone, Nicola Piovani and Nino Rota.

Pedro Iturralde's *Pequena Czarda* and *Suite Hellénique*, originally composed for saxophone quartet, are very enjoyable pieces in the popular Hungarian "Gypsy" and Greek styles. Ástor Piazzolla's famous compositions are perfectly suited to the expressive possibilities of the saxophone.

About the Quartet

The Italian Saxophone Quartet, with its 40 year history, is one of the longest-lived groups currently active on the world stage. Shortly after their founding, ISQ won a number of important chamber music competitions, including the unanimous First Prize at the prestigious Premio Ancona. Since then, they

have been giving exciting and eclectic performances to adoring crowds from New York to Moscow, Athens to Tokyo.

Over 40 compositions written by eminent contemporary composers have been dedicated to the ISQ. The ISQ has performed the world and/or European premieres of many eminent composers such as Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass, Luciano Berio, Salvatore Sciarrino, Franco Donatoni, Henri Pousseur, and the American composer Joe Harnell.

In 1992 the ISQ organized the 10th World Saxophone Congress in Pesaro (Italy), the birthplace of Rossini, in the city's historic Rossini Theatre named for the great famous composer. This festival drew an unprecedented 550 soloists and groups from 22 countries around the world and was awarded the "Kaleidoscope Award" by the commission of the European Community.

Highlights of the ISQ's international touring include two concerts on the venerable Dumbarton Oaks series in Washington, DC and four on the Da Camera Society in Los Angeles; the Bermuda International Festival; the Alicante Festival (Spain), the Oleg Kagan Musikfest in Munich (Germany), and the Al Bustan Festival in Beirut.

In the last two years, the ISQ has given over 60 concerts in festivals such as Festival delle Nazioni, the Palaces of St. Petersburg Festival, the Palaces of Crimea International, and performances on concert series in the USA, China, Berlin, Vienna, Cairo, Yerevan (Armenia) and many Italian cities.

Händel: *Queen of Sheba*

Händel's oratorio *Solomon* was first presented at Covent Garden. Musically, the oratorio is a tour-de-force for chorus, soloists, and orchestra. Its libretto is a selective synopsis of the biblical accounts of Solomon woven into rhyming verse.

In Act III, the Queen of Sheba visits to verify claims of Solomon's great riches and judgment. The queen is wowed and in appreciation, she leaves him with gifts of gold, gems, and timber. Händel's unknown

librettist embroiders the biblical narrative, transforming Solomon's political marriage to Pharaoh's daughter into a celebration of marital piety.¹ The Entrance of the Queen is full of spectacle and portrays the lavish state visit of an exotic queen.²

Bach: *Orchestral Suite No. 3*

The models for the four orchestral suites by J.S. Bach go back to the court of Louis XIV and its brilliant composer, Jean-Baptiste Lully. The exact dates of composition for Bach's orchestral suites are open to question.

The Air is probably the most famous and most sublime movement among Bach's orchestral suites. The protracted line of the main theme spins out its cantilena against a walking bass line, while the inner voices provide support and occasional contrapuntal commentary.

Rossini: *Sonata a Quattro No. 3*

Rossini composed this cheerful sonata when he was not yet a teenager. In summer 1804, while on a holiday, Rossini produced his six "Sonate a quattro" for two violins, cello and double-bass, all composed and copied in three days.

The sonatas are beguiling works, reliably melodious, packed with good humor, and full of virtuosic spins for everyone: very Rossini and not what one would expect from a 12-year-old.

Albéniz: *Sevilla*

The threesome of Isaac Albéniz, Enrique Granados, and Manuel de Falla expressed and raised the idiom of Spanish music at the turn of the 20th century, uniting conventional and folkloric elements with classical schooling to create a national style.

Isaac Albéniz began composing his *Suite Española* in 1886. He intended it to be a collection of eight pieces; he finished only four. Twenty years later, a publisher completed the suite as we know it, using other pieces Albéniz had composed.

Delightfully distinctive, languorous and celebratory, the suite's movements each bear a clarifying subtitle. The selection we hear today, "Sevilla," is a Castilian dance with origins in the 15th century.

¹ Ignoring the biblical account of his 700 wives and 300 concubines

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AS-dCdYZbo>

Piovani: *Life Is Beautiful*

Nicola Piovani has written more than 130 film scores, has won some of the most prestigious awards for his compositions, and has been nominated for practically all the rest. So why have you never heard of this guy? Professionals who work solely in foreign industries tend to get short shrift from Hollywood,³ and Piovani has worked almost exclusively on Italian films.

Piovani's score for *Life Is Beautiful* (*La vita è bella*) is his most well-known score. It is a sublime example of classical scoring, perfectly matching the film's classic design and movie-making philosophy. The viewer vicariously feels the on screen characters' actions.

Iturralde: *Suite Hellénique & Pequeña Czardas*

Pedro Iturralde was a Spanish saxophonist who learned from his father, performed professionally by age eleven, and later led his own quartet that combined aspects of jazz and flamenco. The *Suite Hellénique* explores classical form through its natural language of jazz and flamenco music. Although jazz is his native musical language, Iturralde's textures and harmonies are relevant to the classical music of his day.

In his *Suite Hellénique*, he has fashioned a piquant, fresh and diminutive four-movement suite, showy in part but also with legato warmth. We hear movements 1, 3 and 4 today. The first movement is based on one of the best known popular, joyous and festive dances of Greece. The second movement is typical of a jazz combo with a soloist: think of it as a waltz with a bit of a jazzy Brubeck cocktail party tossed in. The fourth movement lends a lively finish to this charming work.

Pequeña Czardas (little czárdá) is based on a style of Hungarian folk dance in binary form, traditionally used as a courting dance. This style typically involves a slow, melodic section followed by a lively, fast segment.

While there are constituents of the piece found in jazz tunes, the beauty of the alto saxophone on this Latin piece is very enticing. The passion arrives quickly as the listener is flung into the piece by a fast, technical passage, continuing to the finale.

Joplin: *The Easy Winners*

Scott Joplin was an African-American composer and pianist. He is also known as the "King of Ragtime" because of the fame achieved for his ragtime compositions, music that was born out of the African-American community. Joplin considered ragtime to be a form of classical music and largely disdained the practice of ragtime such as that in honkytonk. The title of the composition is a reference to athletes who are expected to win a sporting event without difficulty.

Morricone: *Movie Suite*

Ennio Morricone has been one of the most influential composers in the history of cinema. His death in Rome, caused by complications after a fall, has been an irreplaceable and unforgettable loss for the history of music, cinema and culture.

Ennio Morricone was one of the finest film composers of all time. His music captured the heart of a film without becoming overbearing, a perfect accompaniment to the visual medium. He was the sound of the spaghetti western for many, but he was a versatile composer who never stuck to one genre. Throughout a career that spans over 500 credits, he composed for giallo⁴ films, comedies, horror movies, dramas, television and radio. He worked with Italian greats such as Sergio Leone, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Giuseppe Tornatore and popular American directors including Brian De Palma and Quentin Tarantino. He embarked on extensive, worldwide tours over the years and performed live music well into his 80s. He was a true innovator who never forgot his roots, living a relatively simple life in Rome.

Piazzola: *Oblivion & Libertango*

Piazzola capitalized on the universal appeal of his native Argentina's celebrated tango; before his death, he was known as the "King of the Nuevo Tango" in his homeland. *Oblivion* was composed in 1982 and became popular in 1984 when used in Mario Bellocchio's film *Henry IV*, the *Mad King*. Piazzola's nostalgic tune unfolds in a slow milonga, a song genre of Uruguay and Argentina that was a forerunner of the

tango. It shows less influence from jazz or rock forms which was common in his work of that period and holds true to the original tango form. *Oblivion* is a beautiful, haunting piece that speaks of tragedy and love. It is one of his most famous Tango works and remains one of his best. *Oblivion* is a song that spins a sad account of ardor and anguish. It is a beautiful, unhappy song, but very sophisticated in form.

Pressured by his European agent to write shorter, more "airplay-friendly" pieces, Piazzola produced *Libertango* in 1974. A "sort of song to liberty," *Libertango* is one of his pure concert tangos: compact, dynamic, and unforgiving. *Libertango* is one of Piazzola's most popular compositions, recorded by artists in over five hundred releases. The title alludes to Piazzola's conscious artistic shift from traditional tango style to the new "Tango Nuevo." That will be easy to hear in this alluring composition, which, while obviously preserving so many of the beloved musical elements of traditional tango, nevertheless strikes out in new artistic directions. Traditional rhythms are often eschewed for new ones, but without losing the innate intensity of the genre. The incorporation of Piazzola's signature chromatic harmony here is innovative, forming the foundation for the soaring, romantic lines intrinsic to the tango. It is all a refreshing take on an old beloved style.

Rota: *Music from Fellini's 8½*

The complete original soundtrack to Federico Fellini's classic film *8½* consists of music composed by the great Nino Rota with references in the film to several classical themes including *The Barber of Seville*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Ride of the Valkyries*. The movie featured Marcello Mastroianni, Anouk Aimée, Rossella Falk, Sandra Milo, and Claudia Cardinale. It won two Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film and Best Costume Design (black-and-white), while being named the best foreign language film by the New York Film Critics Circle.

notes © Dr. Michael Spencer

³ In 2000, Piovani's work on *Life Is Beautiful* was nominated for a Grammy for Best Score but lost to Randy Newman's score for *A Bug's Life*! Offensive disregard!!

⁴ A type of film from auteurs like Mario Bava, Dario Argento, and Lucio Fulci, that took crime and mystery stories and applied a new, stylish, and violent bent to them

69TH SEASON

2025-2026

*Presented in Cooperation with
University of the Pacific Conservatory of
Music, Peter Witte, Dean*

Telegraph Quartet

2:30 PM Sunday, September 14, 2025
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
Q & A FOLLOWS

Neave Trio

2:30 PM Sunday, October 5, 2025
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
Q & A FOLLOWS

Seraph Brass

2:30 PM Sunday, November 9, 2025
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
Q & A FOLLOWS

Trio 180

2:30 PM Sunday, February 15, 2026
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
Q & A FOLLOWS

Erinys Quartet

2:30 PM Sunday, April 19, 2026
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
Q & A FOLLOWS

TO OUR AUDIENCE

- The use of cameras and recording devices of any kind is not allowed.
- There is no smoking in the building.
- Please turn off cellular telephones and disengage audible signals on all digital devices during concert.
- Concert programs are subject to change without notice.
- Seating is unreserved.
- Contributions and memorials are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Tickets are available at the door or online at chambermusicfriends.org

Adult: Single \$30, Season \$115
UOP/Delta Faculty & OLLI (with ID):
\$20, Season \$80
Students with ID: Free
Children 12 and younger: Free

FOCM welcomes children to our concerts. An adult must accompany children ten years of age and younger (please, no babes in arms). At the request of artists, children should not sit in the first four rows.

Board of Directors

Officers

Dwane Milnes, President
Michael Spencer, Vice Pres.
Sara Milnes, Treasurer
Peter Meyer, Secretary

Members

Marilyn Draheim
Patricia Hammer
Jonathan R Latta
Ira Lehn
Glenn Pillsbury
Carl Serpa
Chris Steffanic
Patricia Shands

Artist Selection

Michael Spencer, Chairman
Ira Lehn
Glenn Pillsbury
Carl Serpa
Patricia Shands

Past Presidents

Carole Gilbertson
Michael Spencer
Janet Bonner
Kathe Underwood
Martha Tipton
Frank Dick
Mary Jensen
Mary Chamberlain
Helen Kessel McCrary
Virginia Short McLaughlin
Wilfred Mitchell, PhD
Tasha Stadtner
Marjorie Williams
Alfred Rageth
Robert Adams, MD

Founder

Walter H. Perl, 1956

Information/Donations

Friends of Chamber Music
PO Box 4874
Stockton, CA 95204-0874
209-981-9302

www.chambermusicfriends.org

2024/25 Donors*

Angel \$5000+

Sustainer \$3000-4999

C A Webster Foundation

Benefactor \$1000-2999

Robert Calcano
Marilyn Draheim
Alan Hitt
Dwane & Sara Milnes
Evelyn Perl
Michael & Helen Spencer
Torrey Stadner

Patron \$500-999

Tom & Kathlene Keeling
Glenn & Rhonelle Pillsbury
Paula Shell
Hilary Silver

Sponsor \$250-499

Christine Beckstrom
Richard & Ann Filson
Kathleen & Richard Goldman
Patricia Hammer
Peter Meyer & Cynthia Rence
Barbara Sarkany-Gore
Donna Yee & Calixtro Romias

Donor \$100-249

Cynthia Allison
Ed & Paula Almaas
Dick Archbold & Joyce Burriss
Janet Bonner
Marilyn Boulanger
Roy Childs
Jim & Judy Dyke
Tom & Nancy Harrington
Sue Kenmotsu
Jonathan & Melissa Latta
Keith Law
Ira Lehn
Gordon & Esther Schmierer
Cris Staffanic
Suzanne & Jerry Yucht

Supporter \$50-99

Connie Bock
Judith & Rex Buthe
Carol Carson
Ann M Chargin
Phillip Dunning
George Fairbrook
Peter & Jane Vial Jaffe
Marie Miellbrecht
Cindy Milford
Diane Morgali
Marvin & Bune Primack
Louise Saunders
Reuben & Nelda Smith
Frank & Lynelle Wiens

Friend \$1-49

Debra Hyman
Steve & Mary Ann Schermerhorn

In Kind

Sara & Dwane Milnes
Glenn Pillsbury
Michael Spencer
Marty Weiner Piano Service
Conservatory of Music,
University of the Pacific

Endowments

John & Gayle Perl
Estate of Kathe Underwood

Legacy Donors[§]

Carole & Phil Gilbertson
Dwane & Sara Milnes
Evelyn Perl

**Through 4/3/2025*

*§Legacy Donors have made
provision for bequests*

UNIVERSITY OF THE
PACIFIC

Conservatory of Music