

Oberlin News Center

Calder Quartet Named Oberlin's Quartet in Residence

by
Conservatory Communications Staff
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The Oberlin Conservatory of Music is pleased to announce that the Calder Quartet (<http://calderquartet.com/>) has been named quartet in residence for the 2014-2016 academic years.

Called "superb" by the *New York Times* and "one of America's great string quartets" by the *Los Angeles Times*, the quartet has also just been awarded the 2014 Avery Fisher Career Grant (<http://www.aboutlincolncenter.org/programs/program-avery-fisher-artist-program/the-avery-fisher-career-grants>).

During its two-year appointment at Oberlin, the Calder Quartet will make three visits to campus each academic year. The scope of the appointment supports chamber music studies, which encompasses individual ensemble coaching, master classes, and public performances, including an appearance

on Oberlin's venerable Artist Recital Series (<http://www.oberlin.edu/artsguide/artist-recital-series/>). The quartet's first two stays in Oberlin will take place in September and November 2014.

"We are thrilled to begin a relationship with Oberlin," says violinist Andrew Bulbrook of the Calder Quartet. "Many of our family members are alumni, and we have always been attracted to the dual strength of a school with the oldest conservatory in the United States embedded in one of the finest liberal arts colleges in the United States. We had the opportunity to work with the thoughtful, curious, and gifted students at Oberlin last May and are thrilled to delve into this work more closely in support of the Oberlin faculty."

"The Calder Quartet are musicians of great skill and versatility, but they are also great advocates for the work of emerging composers and other artists," says Andrea Kalyn, dean of the Oberlin Conservatory. "Their passion for creative collaboration makes them an ideal match for Oberlin, and we're very honored to have them with us over the next two years."

Associate Professor of Viola and Chamber Music Michael I. Strauss (<https://new.oberlin.edu/conservatory/faculty/faculty-detail.dot?id=4321674>) adds: "The Calder Quartet has accomplished musical goals that match our vision of a well-rounded musical experience with regard to our chamber music program. I have no doubt that our student body will find the Calder Quartet an inspiring ensemble, and I feel they have the capability to lift the hearts of the entire population at Oberlin College and Conservatory through their unique artistic presence."

In addition to its appointment at Oberlin, the Calder Quartet will expand its creative relationship with the Cleveland Museum of Art (<http://www.clevelandart.org/>) with a residency on the CMA concert series at the Transformer Station (<http://www.transformerstation.org/>), the contemporary art gallery in the Ohio City neighborhood of Cleveland.

Thomas M. Welsh, the Cleveland Museum of Art's director of city stages, notes: "Our new concert series in the Transformer Station is devoted to adventurous music, in the same spirit that the exhibitions are devoted to contemporary art. I'm thrilled that the Calder Quartet is investing its time and energy in Oberlin and in the Greater Cleveland community, and I can think of no finer ensemble to have in residence."

The Calder Quartet collaborates with artists across musical genres spanning the classical and contemporary music world, as well as rock, dance, and visual arts, and in venues ranging from art galleries and rock clubs to Carnegie Hall and Walt Disney Concert Hall. The quartet has commissioned more than 25 works to date by some of today's leading and emerging composers.

Individually impressive, the members of the ensemble are violinists Benjamin Jacobson and Andrew Bulbrook, violist Jonathan Moerschel, and cellist Eric Byers. The Calder Quartet formed in 1998 at the University of Southern California. After completing their undergraduate studies, they attended the Colburn School in Los Angeles to study with distinguished American cellist Ron Leonard. From there, they went east to Juilliard, where they were the graduate resident string quartet and earned artist diplomas, followed by studies at the Hochschule für Musik "Hanns Eisler" Berlin with Eberhard Feltz.

Noting just one degree of musical separation from Oberlin, the Calder Quartet has long-standing relationships with three composers: Terry Riley, Thomas Adès, and Christopher Rouse (Oberlin Conservatory, class of 1971). The Calder is the first quartet in two decades to have a work written for it by Rouse. The quartet's album of works by Rouse, called *Transfiguration*, was released in 2010.

This spring, the Calder Quartet is making an all-Adès recording featuring the world-premiere recording of *The Four Quarters*, a revisitation of the Calder's debut recording of his landmark work *Arcadiana*, as well as his piano quintet with the composer at the piano.

Upcoming commissions include a work by Peter Eotvos for quartet and singer Barbara Hannigan, a piece for chorus

and string quartet by David Lang, and a quartet by Pulitzer Prize-nominee Andrew Norman.

Recent industry recognition of the Calder Quartet's work includes a Grammy nomination for its Harmonia Mundi release of works by Messiaen and Saariaho with pianist Gloria Cheng, and a 2013 Emmy Award for its performance of the Main Title Theme for the Starz TV show *Da Vinci's Demons*.

The Calder Quartet enjoys great populist appeal and has toured across North America with So Percussion and with rockers the National, Airborne Toxic Event, and Vampire Weekend. The quartet has been featured on KCRW's *Morning Becomes Eclectic*, the *Late Show with David Letterman*, the *Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, the *Tonight Show with Conan O'Brien*, *Late Night with Jimmy Kimmel*, and the *Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson*.

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