



Foto: Valentina Vos

Program Proposals 2026–2027

Dear programmer,

We are pleased to present our programs for the 2026–2027 season in this portfolio.

New Ragazze cellist Nathalie Flintrop brought her love of Scandinavian music to the quartet and put together the programme **Voices Intimae**, with music by Sibelius and Saariaho, among others.

A new chapter in our exciting series **They Have Waited Long Enough** premiered at festival Wonderfeel in the summer of 2025, in which we share the stage with soprano Katharine Dain and other special musicians. A tour of the halls will follow in the autumn of 2026.

In **Little Blue Something**, Ragazze joins forces with a local youth choir according to the venues, and renowned musicians Pascal Meyer (piano), Aart Strootman (electric guitar), Yung-Tuan Ku (percussion) and Joost Geevers (trombone). The focus in this programme is on the music of composer Bryce Dessner.

In the spring of 2027, there will be a reprise of the program **Lamento**, in which we will reflect on the different ways in which people commemorate their deceased with music, in different times.

We sincerely hope that you are interested! If you would like to invite Ragazze Quartet or if you have any questions, please **contact** Roland Spekle (roland@ragazzequartet.nl) or Annette de Bock (annette@ragazzequartet.nl).

Kind regards,

Ragazze Quartet

Voces Intimae



Foto: Valentina Vos

Our new Ragazze cellist Nathalie Flintrop brought her love of Scandinavian music to the quartet and put together this program. In *Voces Intimae*, Ragazze Quartet brings together three Scandinavian worlds: the timeless power of folk music, the ethereal sounds of composer Saariaho and the introspective depth of Sibelius. Time, or timelessness, and inner emotional life are a common thread throughout the program.

That Scandinavia has a rich folk music tradition is evident from the enormous amount of beautiful, often melancholic pieces that have been passed down through oral traditions and collective memories. They tell stories about nature, the sea, and human emotions. The Ragazze play a selection of arrangements from 'the Ireland of the North'.

Saariaho's *Terra Memoria* explores memory in an abstract, almost physical way. Saariaho describes how we continue to remember those who are no longer with us: their lives are complete, but our feelings about them continue to change. Some memories fade, others remain crystal clear and can haunt us even after years. This idea is reflected in the music: certain elements are constantly transforming, while others remain virtually unchanged and reappear recognizably.

Sibelius' *Voces Intimae* offers an intimate conclusion to the program. This string quartet is imbued with lyricism and personal expression. Written well after Sibelius shifted his focus from chamber music to symphonic compositions, this intimate string quartet is unique. The work contains many references to the folk music tradition, which subtly resonate

throughout the music. The subtitle, *Voces Intimae*, refers to both the recurring dialogue and the introspective nature of Sibelius' music. The work is a deeply human reflection on loss, longing and inner dialogue.

Repertoire:

Selection of Northern European Folk Melodies (16')

Kaija Saariaho – *Terra Memoria* for string quartet (20')

- intermission -

Jean Sibelius – String Quartet in d minor, Op. 56, *Voces Intimae* (30')

Performers: Ragazze Quartet

Availability: from January 2026

They Have Waited Long Enough

Together with festival Wonderfeel, we have been building the song cycle [They Have Waited Long Enough](#) since 2021. It is a retelling of historical or mythological events seen through the eyes of women. Three female composers are commissioned to create a work for soprano, string quartet and non-western instruments. They give a voice to three mythical or historical women who now - finally - get to tell their stories.

In 2025 we focus on the theme of [witches](#) and the piece is dedicated to three women who have been unjustly persecuted and murdered: Maria San Juan de Garonda, Hecate and Mother Shipton. Composers Saskia Venegas, Amarante Nat and duo Diamanda Dramm / Katharine Dain, add three new songs to the cycle. The lyrics will be written by British writer and 'stand-up-classicist' Natalie Haynes.

De Volkskrant wrote the following about the cycle in 2021: "Equally memorable is the Dutch premiere of They Have Waited Long Enough, three cantatas for voice and string quartet about women from ancient Greece. The title is a quote from English writer and comedian Natalie Haynes, who retells myths from the female point of view."

"There is no one men hate more
Than a woman who does not fear them."

Click [here](#) for a video of one of the pieces of the first rendition of They Have Waited Long Enough, by composer After Darvishi.

Repertoire: new works by Katharine Dain/Diamanda Dramm, Saskia Venegas and Amarante Nat

Performers: Katharine Dain (soprano), Ragazze Quartet, Raphaela Danksagmuller (duduk), Marianna Soroka en Maria Martpay (txalaparte)

Playing period: premiere July 2025 (Wonderfeel), playing period Autumn 2026



Foto Nichon Glerum, 2022

Little Blue Something

The program Little Blue Something focuses on the music of musician and composer Bryce Dessner. The Ragazze Quartet is convinced of Dessner's importance as one of the most interesting emerging composers of the moment. For this project, the quartet surrounds itself with a local youth choir (to be decided with the venue) and an ensemble of the most adventurous musicians in France.

Rooted in pop/rock music - Dessner is a guitarist in the world-famous band The National - he is quickly making a name for himself as a contemporary 'classical' composer. His music is characterised by tight rhythms, catchy melodies and a hint of minimal music. He composed for famous ensembles and orchestras such as Kronos Quartet, BBC Symphony Orchestra and Ensemble Intercontemporain. He has worked with composers such as Steve Reich, Philip Glass, David Lang and many others. In addition, Dessner is a sought-after film composer and has written soundtracks for films and series such as *The Revenant* and *The Two Popes*.

Aheym, or homeward, is inspired by Dessner's grandmother's stories about her journey to America. It refers to his roots as Jewish immigrants from Poland and Russia. Little Blue Something is based on Czech folk music, and Tenebre is about celebrating light. Dessner composed Tour Eiffel especially for the Brooklyn Youth Choir.

The program is supplemented with beautiful works for youth choir by composers Caroline Shaw and Richard Reep Parry, and a new commissioned work for string quartet and piano by the Greek/Dutch composer Calliope Tsoupaki. She draws inspiration for this quintet from an important element of her homeland: the sea.



Bryce Dessner and Calliope Tsoupaki

Repertoire:

Bryce Dessner: Aheym (string quartet)
 Bryce Dessner: Little Blue Something (string quartet)
 Calliope Tsoupaki: Meeting Point, Inner Life (piano solo)
 Bryce Dessner: Tenebre (string quartet)
 Bryce Dessner: Garcia Counterpoint (electric guitar)
 Calliope Tsoupaki: Poem for an empty world (piano quintet - commission)
 Caroline Shaw: Anni's Constant (youth choir, viola, percussion, piano, electric guitar, electric bass guitar)
 Bryce Dessner: Tour Eiffel (youth choir, string quartet, percussion, piano, electric guitar, trombone)

Performers:

Ragazze Quartet, Pascal Meyer (piano), Aart Strootman (electric guitar), Yung-Tuan Ku (percussion) and Joost Geevers (trombone) and a local youth choir according to the venues (for example Maîtrise de Radio France in Paris, Maîtrise de Bretagne in Saint-Brieuc)

Availability: September 2026 - January 2027

Lamento

The biggest disappointment of life is not death itself, it's what we let die inside of us. (Jeffrey Klein)

Every person comes into contact with death during their life. Mourning is a necessary process to adapt to life without the loved one who has passed away. Each of us grieves in his/her own way, but some emotions during this process we can share with others, even through the ages.

In Lamento, Ragazze Quartet reflects on the different ways in which people commemorate their deceased with music, in different times. From Gesualdo (late Renaissance), via Purcell's famous Dido's Lament (Baroque) to the Romantic period with Mendelssohn's string quartet op. 80. He dedicated this work to his suddenly deceased sister Fanny, and he wrote it just two months before his own death. These works are combined with Elegy in me, a new string quartet that Seung-Won Oh composed on behalf of Ragazze Quartet (2023). Oh's affinity with traditional Korean music and customs resonates strongly in her contemporary musical idiom and performance practice. The genre of the string quartet, rooted in the Western tradition, is thus further opened up to new sounds and approaches. Click [here](#) for a video of Elegy in Me during the opening of the Buchmesse in Leipzig.

Lamento is, after a short tour in 2024, a revival that will be expanded with a context program about mourning in different cultures. In this context program we will collaborate with various social organizations where mourning plays an important role.

Repertoire: *Gesualdo* - Mercè! grido piangendo, *Purcell* - Dido's Lament, *Mendelssohn* - String Quartet no.6 in f minor Op.80, *Seung-Won Oh* - Elegy in Me

Performers: Ragazze Quartet

Availability: February - June 2027

Seung-Won Oh studied at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague with Louis Andriessen, she won the Toonzettersprijs in 2012 and has obtained an active presence in the Dutch musical scene by composing a large number of commissioned works for Dutch musical ensembles. Her 'Bosch Requiem' premiered in 2021, commissioned by November Music. This large scale oeuvre was inspired by the Korean catholic prayer for the dead. Her affinity to this theme and her original musical language in which cultures are linked are the reason that Ragazze asked her specifically to write a piece for them.



Biografie

The Ragazze Quartet plays classical and modern string quartets: passionately and at the highest level. With sensational programs, the quartet has developed into one of the freshest and most authoritative voices in classical music. In innovative programs, it collaborates with the most original voices in theater, dance and literature. With performances that appeal to all the senses, they succeed in winning an audience for the rich classical music tradition. In this way, they enthuse both the seasoned listener and the newcomer for the string quartet repertoire of the past and present.

Ragazze is a permanent artist with the Channel Classics label and has already released nine CDs there: Vivere, Česko, FourFourThree, Spiegel, Bartók Bound Vol. 1 and 2, Winterreise, Open Spaces and But Not My Soul. The CDs were received with praise by the (inter)national press. "Together they play chords, as if their hands and arms are controlled by one brain," wrote de Volkskrant about Česko. FourFourThree and Bartók Bound Vol. 2 received the 'Editor's Choice' Award in Gramophone. Česko, FourFourThree, Spiegel and Bartók Bound Vol. 2 all received a 10 in Luister.

Ragazze Quartet plays an average of 60 concerts a year in concert halls such as the Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, but can also be seen in concert series throughout the country and at festivals such as Oerol on Terschelling. They have also performed in the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, France, Sweden, China, Japan, Indonesia and the United States.

The quartet enjoys working with young musicians and theatre makers as well as with leading organisations such as NDT, the Kronos Quartet, Orkater and the Holland Festival. In addition, the quartet has been the artistic director of the September Me festival in Amersfoort since 2017. September Me transforms Amersfoort into the epicentre of tastemakers in classical music every year. Ragazze performs themselves and invites the latest generation of top artists who know no boundaries.

Ragazze Quartet followed the two-year full-time training at the Dutch String Quartet Academy and completed it in 2011. In 2013, they won the Kersjes Prize, an award that is awarded annually to an exceptional talent in Dutch chamber music. In 2017, the Ragazze Quartet won the Operadagen Rotterdam Award for "...their idiosyncratic music-theatrical approach, their social commitment and the ease with which they dare to think outside their traditional field", according to the jury.

The Ragazze Quartet is supported for several years by the Performing Arts Fund and the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts. Jeanita's violin and Annemijn's bow were made available by the National Musical Instruments Fund. Furthermore, the Ragazze own a quartet of classical bows made by Andreas Grütter, made possible by the Stichting Eigen Muziekinstrument.

www.ragazzequartet.nl

