



DAVID T. LITTLE'S *SIN-EATER* THE CROSSING & BERGAMOT QUARTET

THE CROSSING Dario Amador-Lage, Katy Avery, Kelly Ann Bixby, Karen Blanchard, Aryssa Burrs, Colin Dill, Micah Dinger, Joanna Gates, Sam Grosby, Steven Hyder, Lauren Kelly, Anika Kildegaard, Henry Koch, Jenna Hernandez McLean, Maren Montalbano, Rebecca Myers, Ben Perri, Jack Reeder, Daniel Schwartz, Thann Scoggin, Rebecca Siler, Tiana Sorenson, Daniel Spratlan, Daniel Taylor

BERGAMOT QUARTET

VIOLIN Ledah Finck

VIOLIN Sarah Thomas

VIOLA Amy Huimei Tan

CELLO Irène Han

KEYBOARDS Elizabeth Braden

CONDUCTOR AND DIRECTOR Donald Nally

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC ASSOCIATE Kevin Vondrak

REHEARSAL KEYBOARDIST Lee Hagon-Kerr

LIGHTING DESIGNER Eric Southern

SOUND DESIGNER Paul Vazquez

OPERATIONS MANAGER Shannon McMahon

GRANTS MANAGER Natalie Blumburg

BOOKKEEPER Elizabeth Dugan

Harold Prince Theatre

Saturday, October 14 @ 8 PM

Sunday, October 15 @ 3 PM

Sunday, October 15 @ 7 PM

There will be no intermission.

SIN-EATER was commissioned by The Crossing, Donald Nally, conductor, and Penn Live Arts with support from the Penn Live Arts Accelerator Program. It was composed, in part, during residencies at Yaddo and the Aaron Copland House.



Media support for this performance provided by WRTI.

PROGRAM

SIN-EATER (World Premiere)
a ritual grotesquerie
MUSIC David T. Little

PART I: Tell Me What You Eat.

- I. Tell me what you eat (1825)
text after Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin
- II. Canopy-covered, on an elevated platform (1660)
text after John S. Memes, Nathaniel Hazeltine Carter, and Étienne-Léon de Lamothe-Langon
- III. By a fortunate coincidence (1984)
text after Harold McGee
- IV. It is a melancholy object (1736)
text after Jonathan Swift

PART II: The Grotesque Body

- V. The Sin-Eater (1710)
text after E. Sidney Hartland
- VI. Because it is my heart (1895)
text after Stephen Crane
- VII. Dulce et decorum est (1918)
text after Wilfred Owen
- VIII. Body Horror / Final Girl (2017)
text after Anne Elizabeth Moore
- IX. Bakhtin, Barker, Bosch ("a body in the act of becoming") (1965)

PART III: Dirty Work

- X. Wet Work (2019)
- XI. Conscience Road (2023)
- XII. Lament for Used and Useless (all places, all times)
- XIII. Who, in deepest winter (for EF and KF) (2020)
- XIV. Everything in Moderation (2019)

PART IV: Eucharist

- XV. Introit (2023)
- XVI. Transubstantiation (2023)
- XVII. Offertorium (2023)
- XVIII. She feeds me bread of bitterness (1921)
text after Claude McKay
- XIX. You (We) Say That You (We) Are Holy (1895)
text after Stephen Crane

PROGRAM NOTE FROM THE COMPOSER

Who are our modern-day Sin-Eaters?

The bread is placed upon the body and it absorbs the sins of the deceased. The Sin-Eater approaches and consumes the bread – the sins – and absolves the dead. This is known as “sin-eating,” an unusual practice found in certain parts of Wales, Ireland, Bavaria and the United States until around the mid-1800s.

The Sin-Eater was an outcast: the lowest member of a community, for whom the act of sin-eating brought further ostracization. Though they were often paid for their service, it came with a greater cost: as they took on the sins of their village, they were rendered virtually untouchable. But sin-eating is neither the only instance of food and ritual being used to evince power or wealth, nor the only scenario in which an individual is made to suffer so that their neighbors don't have to. The confluence of these facts formed the basis of this composition. Ostensibly a work exploring the nature of power in western civilization through its connection to eating and food, *SIN-EATER* ultimately asks: who sins or suffers for us today? Whose jobs, or mere lives, expose them to dangerous or difficult conditions, requiring them to take on lasting trauma as they work to keep everyone else safe, healthy, fed, or blissfully unaware of the dark forces always around us?

Drawing connections across time, the work includes texts by Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, Stephen Crane, Wilfred Owen, Harold McGee, Anne Elizabeth Moore, Jonathan Swift, Claude McKay and others, using juxtaposition to reveal deeper meaning. Framed as a “ritual grotesquerie,” (a reference to the early 20th century genre of horror literature epitomized by writers like Ambrose Bierce) *SIN-EATER* travels through many terrains: the absurd and the sincere, the beautiful and the horrific, the sacred and the profane. It is my hope that through these varied states, something like clarity will emerge. *SIN-EATER* winds a path through the dark terrains of our experience so that it might shine light on the power differentials we live with every day, power differentials so common we no longer see them. Thus illuminated, it seeks a path toward a better way of being.

But that of course will depend on us. After all, we are what we eat.

- David T. Little

I was in the darkness;
I could not see my words
Nor the wishes of my heart.
Then suddenly there was a great light--

“Let me into the darkness again.”

- Stephen Crane

The powerless must do their own dirty work.
The powerful have it done for them.

- James Baldwin

PROGRAM TEXTS

PART I: Tell Me What You Eat

I. Tell me what you eat

Tell me what you eat and
I'll tell you what you are
(and what I am too.)

II. Canopy-covered, on an elevated platform

Canopy-covered,
On an elevated platform,
At a horseshoe table,
blessed chairs and splendid garnish.

Magnificent splendor of illumination,
amidst the full blaze of chandeliers and lofty frescos,
the stupefied looks of the citizens of Paris,
being present at the dinner of the king.

The dinner of the king:

First Course
First Service

Les Hors d'œuvre

Royal oyster *ballotine*
Petit pâté en croûte chaud-froid
Fresh deep-sea pheasant *à la bourgeoise*
Mint aspic with grey-legged crayfish

Les Potages

Gold leaf *madrilène* with beef spangles
Pureed truffle soup "*sin culpa*" with chestnut from the Court
of Spain
Shellfish Vichyssoise, fresh from the royal gardens
Bisque of Dapperling from the Brittany coast with a
pumpkin rind infusion and escargot.

Second Course

Les Rôts

Oyster with eel liquor reduction (it rots)
Wild hare cromesquis with goose jelly (it rots)
Duck heart *à la Villeroy* (it rots)
Roast carrots and smoked salmon liver (it rots)
Wild scallops with beef au sel (it rots)

Third Course

Les Entremets

Nettle and fresh ham gold leaf salad
Riced eggs *à la royale*
Ice soufflé with durian smoke
Hard-boiled Morel cheese

Final Course

Final Service

Candied tripe inside an black edible candle,
Served with miniature, working guillotine

The dinner of the king.

III. By a fortunate coincidence

(after Harold McGee)

By a fortunate coincidence,
The methods of slaughter
That result in good-quality meat
Are also the most humane

Animal stunned.
Hung up by legs,
Major blood vessels cut,
Unconscious beast bleeds

Tenderize,
Marinate,
Brine, Shred, Grill, Broil
Spit-roast,
Barbecue,
Fry, Sear, Braise, Stew,
Sauté,
Simmer, Poach,
Smoke, Cure, Steam, Can,
Confit, Ferment,

un-conscious beast bleeds
a conscious beast bleeds
Ferment (Foment)
Ferment (Foment)

Meat benefits from a certain period of aging ...
During which it gets progressively more flavorful,
Essential for feeding the most discerning customer.

IV. It is a melancholy object

(after Jonathan Swift)

It is a melancholy object that
Helpless infants turn thieves:
A grievance to the nation.

A hundred and twenty thousand children
Born to poor parents each year;
To seventy thousand breeders.

Can't steal 'til six, nor
Apprentice 'til twelve.
Such wasted years,
With little prospect.

What is one to do?

Such wasted years,
Such wasted youth...

What is one to do?
I have been assured by a knowing American,
That a healthy young child of one, well—nursed, is a
Most delicious, wholesome, and nourishing food..
(breeders, breeders...tenderize, marinade, brine,
shred, grill, broil, bake, stew, roast, bake, boil)

What is one to do?

A proposal, that:
At one year old,
To contribute to the feeding of
The people of the nation,
The child be offered in sale (for food)
To persons of good quality and fortune throughout the
kingdom

A hundred thousand useless mouths and backs put to use,
And for their own good!

Avoiding oppression of landlords, and
The sufferings of life!

...for their own good!

Advancing our trade while
Providing for infants.

...for their own good!

Relieving the poor,
Giving pleasure to the rich.

A hundred thousand useless mouths and backs put to use.
(Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you what you are.)

PART II: The Grotesque Body

V. The Sin-Eater

As reported:

In the County of Hereford,
1710 (?)
A funerary custom to
Absolve gentlemen of their sins.

Engaging a rascal
From the edge of town,
Lamentable and poor,
In a ramshackle cottage,
To eat, to drink, absorb, absolve.

The corpse is brought out of the house,
The bread and beer are laid upon it.
A prayer is said, and the bread and beer
Absorb the sin from the corpse's heart.

A prayer is said, and the bread and beer
Absorb the sin from the gentleman's heart.

Then both are delivered
Unto the rascal
Who takes of this bread and beer
Absorb the sin from the gentleman's heart.

Staining himself with the gentlemen's sin
An unholy communion for a measly sixpence.

As reported without judgment.
Both sides had their reasons.

[Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you what you are.]

VI. Because it is my heart

(after Stephen Crane)

In the desert
I saw a creature,
Naked, bestial,
Squatting upon the ground.

He held his heart in his hands,
He held his heart and he ate of it.

I said, "Is it good, friend?"
"It is bitter, bitter" he answered;
"—bitter"
"But I like it
Because it is bitter,
And because,
Because it is my heart."

VII. Dulce et Decorum est

(after Wilfred Owen)

Bent down, Knock-kneed,
Cough like hags,
Cursed through sludge. Till haunting flares
Turned our backs, We marched asleep.

No chance.

Had lost our boots, limped on, blood-shod,
All lame; all blind,
Limped on, blood-shod,
Blood-shod.

Drunk fatigue, and
Deaf to hoots, of Gas-shells dropped, an
Ecstasy of
fumbling,
clumsy Helmets
just in time, still
Yelling out and
stumbling Like a
man on fire.

In green seas I saw him drown.
In all my dreams he suffocates,
White-eyes writhe his face,
Froth-corrupted, cruel as cancer,
Innocent tongue, Incurable sores.

*Dulce et decorum est
Pro debitum mori.*

VIII. Body Horror / Final Girl

(after Anne Elizabeth Moore)

Body Horror,
The goriest sub-genre of horror film,
Presents a distinct visuality,
Where the known turns unknown,
The normal mutates, disfigured, and
The comforting erupts into the terrifying.

A real-life Final Girl,
Close observer, quasi-survivor,
Scuffed and seeping blood from the nose,
My interests lie in
The experience of body horror.
Of women.

Surviving physical and emotional trials
So acute they have changed us,
Women stand witness,
Too often muted,
As their own bodies bleed, mutate, or break down,
Under the simple effort it takes to get through another day.

Among the pillars of global capitalism,
Where the known turns unknown,
The normal mutates, disfigured, and
The comforting erupts into the terrifying,
We are Final Girls all.

IX. Bakhtin, Barker, Bosch ("a body in the act of becoming")

Tell you what you eat
Tell you what you are

Bread
Child
Beer
Heart

You are, you are, you are...

PART III: Dirty Work

X. Wet Work

On the killing floor
We watch it fall

On the killing floor
Upon our aprons

On the killing floor
We watch it fall

On the killing floor...

The blood streams down.

On the killing floor
We watch it fall

*Fortunately humane.
Just six injuries this month.*

*Watch more, do more,
Cut more, pith more*

*Bolted brain,
Suffocate, scream
Just a stupid pig.
Just a pig...*

*Get it done.
Stay on schedule.
Smash its head with a pipe if you have to.
Stay on schedule.
Plentiful food.*

On the killing floor
We watch it all

On the killing floor
Fall on our aprons.

On the killing floor...

The blood streams down.
And we know that they see us.
And we know that they know.
And at night we still hear them.
As we re-bandage our wounds.

The tears stream down.
The blood streams down.
And we know that they see us.
And we know that they know.
And at night we still hear them.
As we re-bandage our wounds.

And we
Can't sleep.
Can't feel.
Just hear them.

And we
Can't sleep.
Can't eat.
Become them.

XI. Conscience Round

Five guns. Four bullets. One blank.
Reasonable doubt on the firing squad.

*It wasn't my bullet.
I know that it wasn't*

A statistical hangman's hood.
Five guns. Four bullets. One blank.
Reasonable doubt...

*Just doing my job.
It wasn't my bullet.*

But when you know guns
Like we know guns.
You feel the difference
Between a bullet and a blank.

And when you know guns
Like we know guns.
You feel the difference
Between a bullet and a blank.

*So there was never any doubt:
I knew every time.*

Five guns. Four bullets. One blank.
Reasonable doubt on the firing squad.

*So they haunt me.
They still haunt me.*

XII. Lament for Used and Useless

(Instrumental)

XIII. Who, in deepest winter *(for E.F. and K.F.)*

Who,
in deepest winter
Left a warm home
For a refrigerated truck.

Who, was there to
Care for those
We could not see.

Who risked it all
For their dignity.

Who
Gave to each a welcome, and
Showed them love, and
Said their names, though
They could not hear him.

Who,
in deepest winter
Left a warm home
For a refrigerated truck.

Who, was there to
Care for those
We could not see.
Who risked it all,
Then cried himself to sleep.

*Kevin, Ruby, Joseph, Gwendolyn, Fatimah,
Jamie, Graham, Javier, Kevin, I'm sorry, Ruby, Joseph...*

The terror on the screen
Review it then remove it or allow.
Protect the client from the

But still, it sinks in.
<<<TORTURE>>>
But still, it sinks in.
<<<BEHEADINGS>>>
<<<CHILDREN>>>
But still, it sinks
OMG
BRB
NDA

Protect the client

LOL
BRB
NDA

Protect the client.
Take on trauma.

*A safe workplace environment.
Security on site, and guns allowed at your desk,
just in case.
Only seven incidents this month!
Help shape reality!*

Take on trauma.
But still it...

<<<<<<<TRAUMA GLITCH >>>>>>>

<<<Suicide>>>
<<<Misogyny>>>
<<<Murder>>>
OMG PTSD
GTFO WTF
Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q
GTFO WTF
PTSD WTF
The worst things that you'll ever see...
BRB NDA
<<<Beheadings >>>
<<<Torture>>>
<<<Brainwash>>>
Protect the clients.
Take it in and assess.
Take on trauma.
Shape reality.
Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q
Images on the screen.
<<<Animals>>>
<<<Children>>>
Shape reality.
<<<Racism>>>
<<<Hate Crimes>>>
<<<Trauma>>>

*(O sacred Head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed)*

Flag.
Take it in.
Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you what you are.
OMG PTSD, WTF, NDA, OMG PTSD, BRB, GTFO, DIE,
LOL, Q, Q, Q, Q...
Flag.
Take this...

XIV. Everything in Moderation

Flag.
Take it in.
Take it in and assess.
Review in its entirety,
Then remove or allow.

Flag.
Take it in.
Take it in and assess
The horror on the screen
Review it then remove it or allow.
Protect the client from the
Images on the screen.

OMG
BRB
NDA

Flag.
Review, take it in and assess.

LOL
BRB
NDA

Then remove or allow.

But still, it sinks in.
<<<CHILDREN>>>
But still, it sinks in.
<<<CHILDREN>>>
<<<ANIMALS>>>
But still, it sinks in.

*A safe workplace environment, with great co-workers.
Be part of the team helping keep the Internet safe for
your community;
for your family and ours.*

But still, it sinks in.

Flag.
Take it in.
Take it in and assess
The horror on the screen

PART IV: Eucharist

XV. Introit

Eat this bread and drink this wine.
(Take this...)
This is my body, my blood.
(All of you...)
Take this bread and drink this wine.
(Take me...)
This is my body, my blood.
(Taken me...)
(Forsaken me...)
Given up for you.

[Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you what you are.]

XVI. Transubstantiation

I will eat your bread, and
Drink your bowl of beer.

I will take your sins and
Make them mine.

I will go to foreign soil,
Coerced by economics.

I will stay at home and
Kill when I am ordered to.

Confront the hate you have for me
Because of how I look.

I will take your sins and
Make them mine.

Absorb the sin and
be transformed!

[Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you who you are.]

XVII. Offertorium

For you.
I sacrifice.
For you.
I am devoured.
For you.
Despised.
Nailed to the cross.
For you.
Used up.
For you.
Destroyed.
For you.

Given up for you.

XVIII. She feeds me bread of bitterness

(after Claude McKay)

She feeds me bread of bitterness,
Steals breath of life with tiger's teeth.

O Sphinx of riddle eyes—
Might and granite wonders,
Cradle of Power! Arrogance and Shame!
—May you sink into the sand.

Darkness-swallowed,
Your time is done.

XIX. You (We) Say That You (We) Are Holy

(after Stephen Crane)

You say you are holy,
Because we have not seen you sin.

[Tell me what you eat and I'll...]

We say we are holy,
But there are those
Who see us sin,
There are those
Who see you sin.

[Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you...]

You say you are holy,
But there are those
Who see you sin.

[Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you what you are.]

There are those
Who see you sin.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Crossing

The Crossing is a Grammy® Award-winning professional chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally and dedicated to new music. It is committed to working with creative teams to make and record new, substantial works for choir that explore and expand ways of writing for choir, singing in choir and listening to music for choir. Many of its nearly 170 commissioned premieres address social, environmental and political issues. With a commitment to recording its commissions, The Crossing has issued 30 releases, receiving three Grammy® Awards for Best Choral Performance (2018, 2019, 2023) and eight Grammy® Award nominations.

The 2023-2024 season includes performances in Stockholm, Helsinki, Houston and Philadelphia with major new works from Tania León, David Lang, David T. Little, Ayanna Woods, Gavin Bryars and the Philadelphia premiere of Tyshawn Sorey's *Monochromatic Light (Afterlife)*. Recent projects included Michael Gordon's *Travel Guide to Nicaragua*, commissioned for The Crossing by Carnegie Hall and Penn Live Arts; John Luther Adam's *Vespers of the Blessed Earth* with the Philadelphia Orchestra, also at Carnegie Hall; Julia Wolfe's *unEarth* with the New York Philharmonic's in its inaugural season in the new Geffen Hall; Shara Nova's *Titration* at Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam; a tour featuring a world premiere of Jennifer Higdon and additional commissioned works of Caroline Shaw and Edie Hill; and Ted Hearne's *Farming*, premiering in a field at Kings Oaks Farm in Bucks County, PA, and touring to Haarlem, The Netherlands and Caramoor Center for Music and Arts.

The Crossing collaborates with some of the world's most accomplished ensembles and artists, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, American Composers Orchestra, Network for New Music, Lyric Fest, Allora & Calzadilla, Bang on a Can, Klockriketeatern and the International Contemporary Ensemble. Similarly, The Crossing often collaborates with some of world's most prestigious venues and presenters, such as the Park Avenue Armory, Penn Live Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center, Disney Hall in Los Angeles, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Menil Collection in Houston, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, The Big Sing (formerly Haarlem Choral Biennale in The Netherlands, The Finnish National Opera in Helsinki, The Kennedy Center in Washington, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Carnegie Hall, Winter Garden with WNYC, and Yale, Harvard, Duke, Northwestern, Colgate and Notre Dame Universities.

The Crossing, with Donald Nally, was the American Composers Forum's 2017 Champion of New Music. They are the recipients of the 2015 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, three ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming and the Dale Warland Singers Commission Award from Chorus America. The Crossing is represented by Alliance Artist Management.

Donald Nally (Conductor)

Nally collaborates with creative artists, leading orchestras and art museums to make new works for choir that address social and environmental issues. He has commissioned over 180 works and, with his ensemble, The Crossing, has produced thirty recordings, winning three Grammy® Awards for Best Choral Performance, while nominated eight times. He has held distinguished tenures as chorus master for Lyric Opera of Chicago, Welsh National Opera, Opera Philadelphia and for many seasons at Il festival dei due mondi in Spoleto, Italy. He has worked closely with the artists Allora & Calzadilla and composer David Lang on museum projects in London, Porto, Cordoba, Edmonton, Houston, Osaka and Philadelphia. He has been visiting resident artist at the Park Avenue Armory; music director of *The Mile Long Opera*, David Lang's 1000-voice work on The High Line in Manhattan; and chorus master for works of Lang, Julia Wolfe, John Luther Adams and Louis Andriessen for the LA Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. His sixty-chapter series *Rising w/ The Crossing*, a response to the 2020 pandemic, has been archived by The Library of Congress as a cultural artifact. Recent projects include the Swedish Radio Choir, Klockriketeatern at the Finnish National Opera, the Baltic Sea Festival, the Big Ears Festival, Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW, Carnegie Hall and the Haarlem KoorBiennale. Nally is a frequent guest artist/teacher at universities, including Yale, Harvard, the University of Chicago, Chicago, Indiana, Notre Dame and Boston Conservatory. He is the John W. Beattie Chair of Music Emeritus at Northwestern University.

David T. Little (Composer)

A natural musical storyteller with “a knack for overturning musical conventions” (*The New York Times*), composer Little is known for stage, concert and screen works permeated with the power of the unexpected. Little probes the deep corners of human psychology, invoking political, historical, spiritual and social themes as pathways for exploring the human condition. His broad catalog speaks to the mix of light and dark that we experience in life, unafraid to invoke the mythical, bewitching, disturbing, surreal or comedic. He has drawn acclaim for operas including *Dog Days*, *JFK* and the comedy *Vinkensport, or The Finch Opera* (all with libretto by Royce Vavrek), as well as his opera, *Soldier Songs*. Little’s latest work is *Black Lodge*, a metal-infused opera with a libretto by poet Anne Waldman, premiered by Beth Morrison Projects at Opera Philadelphia, with a soundtrack released by Cantaloupe Music.

Upcoming projects include the world premiere of a theatrical choral work, *SIN-EATER*, based on the ancient practice of paying the poor to ritualistically “eat” the sins of the rich, co-commissioned by The Crossing and Penn Live Arts. In 2024, Little will unveil his monodrama *What Belongs to You*, developed for tenor Karim Sulayman and Alarm Will Sound. He is currently composing music for a new production of *Agamemnon* and developing several new operas with frequent collaborator Royce Vavrek including a project commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera/Lincoln Center Theater New Works Program.

Little has been commissioned by the world’s most prestigious institutions and performers, including recent projects for The Metropolitan Opera/Lincoln Center Theater new works program, the Kennedy Center, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, New World Symphony, London Sinfonietta, The Crossing, Kronos Quartet and Beth Morrison Projects. His music has been presented by Carnegie Hall, Holland Festival, LA Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Opéra de Montréal, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the LA Philharmonic. Little’s recorded catalog includes over 20 commercial releases, on such labels as New Amsterdam Records, Pentatone, Sono Luminus, Bright Shiny Things and Cantaloupe Music.

Little is the founding artistic director and former drummer for the amplified chamber ensemble, Newspeak, which explores the relationship of music and politics, while confronting head-on the boundaries between the classical and rock traditions. The group has released four commercial recordings, with a fifth on the way.

Little received a 2023 Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and is a recipient of the Copland House Residency Award. His music is published by Boosey & Hawkes. Learn more at davidtlittle.com.

Bergamot Quartet

Bergamot Quartet is fueled by a passion for exploring and advocating for the music of living composers, continually expanding the limits of the string quartet’s rich tradition in western classical music. With a priority given to music by women, the group aims to place this new, genre-bending music in meaningful dialogue with the histories that precede it through creative programming, community-oriented audience building and frequent commissioning.

Bergamot values partnership and collaboration as a vital element of its creative work. Included in the group’s 2023-24 season is the premiere of an evening-length work at Lincoln Center by percussionist Samuel Torres for Bergamot and Latin jazz sextet, collaborating with The Crossing for a premiere of David T. Little’s *SIN-EATER*, premiering a new work by Robert Honstein for BalletCollective, an evening exploring Hildegard von Bingen with the New York Choral Society and a collaboration with composer/percussionist Susie Ibarra and her Talking Gong trio. Highlights of its 2022-23 season included a partnership with NYU’s dance department, an appearance on the Ecstatic Music Series at Merkin Hall with Circuit des Yeux, a performance at Roulette with composer and Hardanger fiddler Dan Trueman for the SONiC Festival and being on faculty for the Creative Music Institute at Arts Letters and Numbers. Bergamot operates the concert series Bergamot Quartet Extended as a medium to showcase its many inspiring collaborators; this fall, Samuel Torres, Eli Greenhoe and Darian Donovan Thomas are featured.

In addition, Bergamot is particularly excited about helping young people discover their potential as music creators. Recent engagements include residencies at The Peabody Institute, Princeton University, Towson University, Peabody Institute’s Junior Bach program and MATA Jr.

Bergamot Quartet is Ledah Finck and Sarah Thomas, violins; Amy Tan, viola; and Irène Han, cello. Founded at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore in 2016, Bergamot Quartet is based in New York City and was the Graduate String Quartet in Residence at the Mannes School of Music for 2020-2022.