



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 **Voces 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

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. Watch the trailer [here](#).

Sibelius' *Voces Intimae* was a discovery for the quartet and its audience: 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 numerous 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.

Scandinavia's rich folk music tradition is evident in the vast number of beautiful, often melancholic pieces passed down through oral traditions and collective memories. They tell stories of nature, the sea, islands, remote villages, budding love, and folk dances. The Ragazze perform a selection of arrangements from the Danish String Quartet's album "Last Leaf."

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.

Repertoire:

Sjölin - *Shore*, *Naja's Waltz*, Traditional - *Staedelil*, *AE Romeser*, Sorensen - *Shine You no More*, Kaija Saariaho – *Terra Memoria* voor Strijkkwartet (2007), Jean Sibelius – Strijkkwartet in D mineur, Op. 56, *Voces Intimae* (1908)

Performers: Ragazze Quartet

Availability: February - December 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 Aftab Darvishi. In September 2026, five works from the three cycles will be released on CD by Ragazze label Channel Classics.

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



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 Gevers (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.



Biography

Whether they are playing well-known classics, works by unjustly forgotten composers or new talent, the Ragazze Quartet is always fully committed to renewing and broadening string quartet repertoire and making string quartet culture more exciting.

In adventurous productions, they address socially relevant themes such as climate change, slavery history, mourn and feminism, collaborating with special partners such as Abel Selaocoe, Conny Jansen Danst, Jorinde Keesmaat, Lucia Lucas, Via Berlin, Thomas Beijer, Nynke Laverman and the Kronos Quartet. They also make exciting contributions to the renewal of the string quartet repertoire through commissions and arrangements. They commissioned new work from a.o. Aftab Darvishi, Caroline Shaw, Garth Knox, Calliope Tsoupaki, Annelies Van Parys and Seung-Won Oh.

The Ragazze Quartet has since long been inspired by the richness of sound from various cultures and will continue this line even more strongly in the coming period. This opens up the string quartet genre, rooted in Western tradition, to new sounds and approaches. Ragazze thus provides a stage for underexposed composers and contributes to opening new perspectives.

“Excellent performances from this challenging and always engaging ensemble” – BBC 3 on But Not My Soul

As great supporters of the contemporary music practice, the four women belong to the top Dutch string quartets. As Channel Classics artist, they released ten albums which invariably met with good reviews. On their latest CD *But Not My Soul*, the quartet presents its modest rediscovery of America, particularly from a more feminine perspective.

‘Nothing but good things about the Ragazze: a great ensemble we can really be proud of, technically and stylistically optimally equipped for even the most difficult pieces’ – *Opus Klassiek*

The Ragazze Quartet is a welcome guest at both large and smaller venues and festivals in the Netherlands and Belgium. Foreign tours have e.g. taken them to the UK, Ireland, Sweden, France, China, Japan, Indonesia and the US. They appear regularly on radio and TV in The Netherlands, but also on the BBC, Klara and France Musique.

Founded in 2001, the Ragazze Quartet consists of Rosa Arnold (violin), Jeanita Vriens (violin), Annemijn Bergkotte (viola) and Nathalie Flintrop (cello). They curate festival *September Me*, an annual festival with adventurous programming, featuring young Dutch and international musicians and makers.

The Ragazze Quartet receives multi-year funding from Performing Arts Fund NL and the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts. Jeanita's violin, Nathalie's cello and Annemijn's bow were made available by the Dutch Musical Instruments Foundation. Furthermore, the Ragazze own a quartet of classical bows made by Andreas Grütter, made possible by the Foundation. www.ragazzequartet.nl

