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HARLEM QUARTET

9.23.2021 @ 7:30 P.M.
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LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

EVENT PROGRAM

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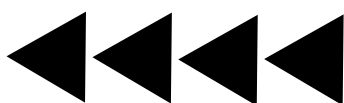
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PROGRAM

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART **STRING QUARTET IN F MAJOR, K. 590**

I. Allegro Moderato
II. Andante
III. Menuetto
IV. Allegro

JESSIE STRUM
MONTGOMERY

DIZZY GILLESPIE **A NIGHT IN TUNISIA**
arr. Dave Glenn and Harlem Quartet

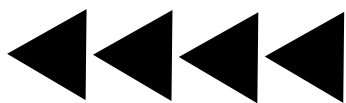
GEORGE WALKER **LYRIC FOR STRINGS**

ADONIS GONZALEZ-MATOS **FUGATO**

WILLIAM GRANT STILL **LYRIC QUARTET**
I. The Quiet One
II. The Sentimental One

WYNTON MARSALIS **AT THE OCTOROON BALLS**
I. Rampart Street Rowhouse Rag
II. Creole Contradanzas
III. Hellbound Highball

GUIDO LÓPEZ-GAVILÁN **CUARTETO EN GUAGUANCO**



ILMAR GAVILÁN, VIOLIN
MELISSA WHITE, VIOLIN
JAIME AMADOR, VIOLA
FELIX UMANSKY, CELLO

ENSEMBLE BIO

Harlem Quartet advances diversity in classical music while engaging new audiences with varied repertoire that includes works by minority composers. Their mission to share their passion with a wider audience has taken them around the world; from a 2009 performance at The White House for President Obama and First Lady, Michelle Obama, to a highly successful tour of South Africa in 2012, and numerous venues in between. The musically versatile ensemble has performed with such distinguished artists as Itzhak Perlman, Ida Kavafian, Carter Brey, Fred Sherry, Misha Dichter, Jeremy Denk, and Paquito D'Rivera. The quartet also collaborated with jazz masters Chick Corea and Gary Burton on the album *Hot House*, a 2013 multi-Grammy Award winning release.

ILMAR GAVILÁN, VIOLIN

Violinist Ilmar Gavilan, a native of Havana, Cuba, has had a remarkable performing career that has taken him all over the world. As a soloist, Mr. Gavilan has performed concertos and recitals around the world. An avid chamber musician, Mr. Gavilan has performed with Itzhak Perlman, Arnold Steinhardt, Ida Kavafian, Carter Brey, Paul Katz, Fred Sherry, Anthony McGill and Misha Dichter.

Jazz and Afro-Cuban music found a shining place in Mr. Gavilan's musical life. He performed with jazz legends Chick Corea and Gary Burton; the collaboration rendered him a Grammy for the recording of the "Hot House" album as member of the Harlem Quartet. Mr. Gavilan also performed and commercially released albums with Paquito D'Rivera, Eddie Palmieri, and Dafnis Prieto.

Mr. Gavilan began at the Manuel Saumell Conservatory in his native Havana. Winning all national competitions in which he participated, he was selected for advanced studies at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow at 14. Studies took him to the Reina Sofia School of Music in Spain where he studied with Zakhar Bron.

Later, Mr. Gavilan went to the Manhattan School of Music, studying with Glen Dicterow. As a founding member of the Harlem Quartet, Mr. Gavilan received a Graduate Diploma in Quartet Performance from the New England Conservatory. Mr. Gavilan achieved a Doctor in Musical Arts at Rutgers University under the mentorship of Arnold Steinhardt. Mr. Gavilan won first prize at the Sphinx competition, as well as top honors at the Lipinski-Wieniaswski and Henryk Szeryng International violin competitions. Mr. Gavilan is an experienced educator, teaching for several years at Juilliard School's Music Advancement Program.

Ilmar Gavilan was born to a prominent musical family. His father Guido is a widely recognized composer and conductor, his mother Teresita is a respected pianist and pedagogue. Ilmar Gavilan's unique, passionate, and brilliant performances reveal the fulfillment of his heritage and early promise. He has a beautiful family of his own and enjoys ocean related activities. Ilmar was also featured in the public television documentary LOS HERMANOS/THE BROTHER, patchworksfilms.net/the-brothers.

MELISSA WHITE, VIOLIN

American violinist Melissa White has enchanted audiences around the world as both a soloist and chamber musician. A First Prize winner of the Sphinx Competition, Ms. White has received critical acclaim for solo performances with some of America's leading orchestras, including those of Cleveland, Detroit, Baltimore, Atlanta, Pittsburgh and Colorado, as well as the Boston Pops. Ms. White, a founding member of the Harlem Quartet, has a passion for chamber music that has recently expanded to sharing the stage with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, most recently joining the world-renowned conductorless chamber orchestra for a tour of Japan.

Ms. White collaborated closely with several leading jazz musicians including Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke and Gary Burton. Following an extended international tour with Corea and Burton, her recording with Harlem Quartet and the jazz duo entitled "Mozart Goes Dancing" won three Grammy Awards, including one for Best Instrumental Composition, in February 2013.

Ms. White also serves as the ensemble's in-house grant writer, writing several successful grants, including James Madison University's Cultural Connections Artist-In-Residence Grant and a 2016 Chamber Music America Residency Grant which was designated the Guarneri String Quartet residency grant.

Ms. White holds performance degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music and the New England Conservatory of Music. She studied with Jaime Laredo, Ida Kavafian, Donald Weilerstein and Miriam Fried. Her current instrument, "Matilda," was commissioned as part of a Sphinx MPower Artist Grant in 2014 by the American violin maker Ryan Soltis.

When she doesn't have a violin in her hands, Ms. White is an advanced practitioner of Bikram Yoga and enjoys taking photos while exploring the many wonderful places around the world that her music has allowed her to visit.

JAIME AMADOR, VIOLA

Known for his unique and vibrant sound, violist Jaime Amador has distinguished himself among the latest generation of musicians to emerge from Puerto Rico. Before joining the Harlem Quartet in 2012, Mr. Amador has had a successful career as a member of the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra. In 2007, he won first prize at the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra Solo Competition for his interpretation of Béla Bartók's concerto for viola and orchestra. Born in San Juan, Jaime Amador began his career at the Children String Program of the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music. He continued his studies at the Juilliard School of Music, the Manhattan School of Music, and the New England Conservatory under the guidance of Toby Appel, Isaac Malkin, and Kim Kashkashian.

As a chamber musician, Mr. Amador has played in prestigious venues in the United States and Europe, such as Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher Hall in New York, Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, and the Kurhaus in Baden-Baden. Throughout his career, he has collaborated with Chick Corea, Ida Kavafian, Fred Sherry, Emanuel Borok, Mikhail Kopelman, David Geber, Michael Lewin, Misha Dichter, Emilio Colón, Vanessa Pérez, Mykola Suk, and Eric Himy, among others. Mr. Amador has participated in important international music festivals, most recently participating in the 30th anniversary celebration of the highly acclaimed chamber music festival, Music from Angel Fire, as a member of the Harlem Quartet.

Mr. Amador's interest in educating the new generation of musicians has led him to direct the String Department at the 2011 FOSJA Youth Festival in San Juan. Mr. Amador has made outreach programs a priority, bringing music to those with limited opportunities and to a society in need of healing through the arts. Jaime Amador plays a Ryan Soltis 2010 viola.

FELIX UMANSKY, CELLO

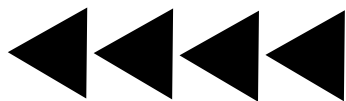
Praised for his "sublime" playing by Cleveland Classical, cellist Felix Umansky is a frequently sought-after recitalist, chamber musician, and pedagogue. His versatile career has taken him all over Europe and North America where he has performed in some of the most prestigious concert halls including Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Lincoln Center, the Krannert Center, and the Kennedy Center.

Prior to joining the Harlem Quartet, Mr. Umansky spent six seasons as a founding member of the award-winning Linden String Quartet. Accolades with the Linden include first prizes in the 2009 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, 2009 Coleman Chamber Ensemble Competition, 2010 Hugo Kauder Competition, and 2010 Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh Competition, as well as the ProQuartet Prize at the 2011 Borciani International String Quartet Competition, and an honorable mention at the Banff International String Quartet Competition in 2013.

One of Mr. Umansky's missions as a performer is to bring a wide range of classical music to as many people as possible. In addition to performing in concert halls, he has been seen and heard playing everything from Bach to works written just yesterday in settings such as libraries, coffee shops, restaurants, bars, and even performances on the street. An avid supporter of contemporary music, Mr. Umansky has performed and premiered works by numerous living composers such as William Bolcom, John Corigliano, Kelly-Marie Murphy, Vivian Fung, John Harbison, Chen Yi, Aaron Jay Kernis, and Chick Corea. The newest member of the Harlem Quartet, Mr. Umansky is excited about future collaborations with many jazz and Latin-American composers.

Mr. Umansky has been an artist-in-residence at Yale University and the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts. He has also performed and given masterclasses at the University of Idaho, University of Iowa, University of Wyoming, and Utah State University. His festival appearances include Aspen, La Jolla, Music Mountain, Perlman Music Program, Music at Port Milford (Ontario), Highlands-Cashiers (NC), Madison (GA), and Amelia Island.

A native of Carmel, Indiana, Mr. Umansky holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and an Artist Diploma from Yale University. His teachers have included Richard Aaron, Desmond Hoebig, Clive Greensmith, Janos Starker, and Polina Umansky. In his free time, he enjoys exploring New York City as well as traveling with his wife, violinist Amy Schroeder.



THE COMPOSERS

MOZART | STRING QUARTET IN F MAJOR

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart suffered from depression he described as a "constant sadness." In 1787, this depression was exacerbated by his father's death. Furthermore, his concerts and commissions were fewer in the late 1780s because the Viennese economy had plunged into a recession, mostly due to a drawn-out war with Turkey. Thus, Mozart's productivity was waning and his finances were deteriorating.

In the spring of 1789, he travelled to Berlin, by way of Prague, Dresden, and Leipzig, in an attempt to turn things around. He met with royalty and patrons, and he gave concerts. He hoped to make a good impression on the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm II, who was an amateur cellist. It is not clear that Mozart ever got to meet the King. On his first attempt, he was sent instead to the director of chamber music, the cellist Jean Pierre Duport. Following his second attempt, he wrote to Constanze, his wife, that he received 100 friedrichs d'or and commissions for six string quartets and six clavier sonatas after performing for the Queen. But there is no entry in the court records that accounts for this second visit, and it is quite possible that Mozart borrowed the money from friends and made up the visit and the commissions to return to Vienna with something to show for his efforts.

Of the 12 allegedly commissioned pieces, only three were completed: the "Prussian" string quartets, K. 575, 589, and 590. The latter two of these, from 1790, were composed in an exceptionally fallow period for Mozart – he wrote only a few other pieces that year. Paradoxically, at times like these, when he really needed money, he seemed to shy away from compositions which would have been lucrative – compositions that would be easy to play and easy to understand, for the amusement of light-hearted amateurs. Instead, he wrote some of his most demanding chamber music, which, as it was appealing only to the Viennese musical elite, was not lucrative at all.

More than two centuries later, the "Prussian" string quartets are considered the culmination of Mozart's skill in the idiom. In giving the cello a larger role, Mozart was forced by symmetry to give every voice a share of the spotlight, and the resulting democratic interplay makes the quartets feel, more than ever, like opera. Symmetry is ubiquitous in Mozart's music, but it is always extraordinary.

In the first phrase of K. 590, we are struck, after two slow, soft notes, with a sudden loud note followed by a fast, jagged scale, with all four instruments playing the same pitches. In the second phrase, the shape is the same as

the first but the rough edges have been smoothed out, and harmony has been employed to create the perfect symmetrical answer. Similarly, the coda of the first movement holds up a transformative mirror to the development. The second movement is reminiscent of a siciliana, a dance form which is often pastoral and bittersweet. Mozart loved to use the siciliana in his operas. This movement begins gently and simply, in rhythmic unison. Gradually, embellishments and variations are added to the texture. In the minuet, an oscillating figure, passed from voice to voice, provides an unusual accompaniment, as do the outbursts in dotted rhythms, initially in the viola part. The movement ends with a Viennese lilt. The last movement is fun-loving and virtuosic, and strongly features the viola in conversation with the first violin. In the development section, each instrument gets a chance to burst out with a solo; here, Mozart confuses us by grouping three sixteenth notes within a duple meter. Perhaps Beethoven liked this section: it reminds us of the solos that are passed around in the last movement of his Op. 59, No. 3 quartet. It is unlikely that King Friedrich Wilhelm II ever saw K. 590. Mozart himself did not live long enough to see it published – he died the following year.

MONTGOMERY | STRUM

Jessie Montgomery is an acclaimed composer, violinist, and educator. She is the recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Award from the ASCAP Foundation. Her works are performed around the world by leading musicians and ensembles. Her music interweaves classical music with elements of vernacular music, improvisation, language, and social justice, placing her squarely as one of the most relevant interpreters of 21st-century American sound and experience.

Jessie was born and raised in Manhattan's Lower East Side in the 1980s, when the neighborhood was at a turning point in its history. Artists gravitated to the hotbed of artistic experimentation and community development. Her parents – her father a musician, her mother a theater artist and storyteller – were engaged in the activities of the neighborhood and regularly brought Jessie to rallies, performances, and parties where neighbors, activists, and artists gathered to celebrate and support the movements of the time. It is from this unique experience that Jessie has created a life that merges composing, performance, education, and advocacy.

Faulkner Chamber Music Festival Fund

Donations give students an opportunity to grow as musicians and individuals through the art and discipline of making chamber music. Proceeds also go to the Will & Jo Preece Scholarship Fund, named after the festival's founders, which provides needs-based scholarships that covers festival tuition.

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Her growing body of work includes solo, chamber, vocal, and orchestral works. Some recent highlights include *Five Slave Songs* (2018) commissioned for soprano Julia Bullock by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Records from a Vanishing City* (2016) for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, *Caught by the Wind* (2016) for the Albany Symphony and the American Music Festival, and *Banner* (2014). The New York Philharmonic selected Jessie as one of the featured composers for their Project 19, which marks the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Jessie began her violin studies, at the Third Street Music School Settlement, one of the oldest community organizations in the country. A founding member of PUBLIQuartet and a member of the Catalyst Quartet, she maintains an active performance career as a violinist.

"Music is my connection to the world. It guides me to understand my place in relation to others and challenges me to make clear the things I do not understand. I imagine that music is a meeting place at which all people can converse about their unique differences and common stories."

GILLESPIE | A NIGHT IN TUNISIA

"Night in Tunisia" (1942) by Dizzy Gillespie was first recorded in 1944 under the title "Interlude". It may have been written while Gillespie was playing with the Benny Carter Band; Gillespie said he composed it on the piano at Kelly's Stables, a jazz club on 52nd Street in Manhattan. Frank Paparelli had transcribed Gillespie's solos for publication; Gillespie added Paparelli's name to the published music.

It was written in D Minor, with a series of arpeggios and leaps. Gillespie said that while playing chord progressions on the piano a Latin/oriental melody with a syncopated bass line formed, leading to "Interlude" and forming a major step into Afro/Cuban bebop. Lyrics were first written by Raymond Leveen and used in the first recording in 1944 by Sarah Vaughan. Another set of lyrics written by Jon Hendricks was used by Ella Fitzgerald in 1961.

WALKER | LYRIC FOR STRINGS

A string of firsts dominated George Walker's long life and career. He was the first African American graduate of the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music with a dual diploma in both piano and composition. In 1945, he was the first African American to debut a solo recital at Manhattan's Town Hall and first to perform with the Philadelphia Orchestra as the soloist for Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3. In 1950, he became the first African American artist to sign with a major artist management company. He spent the next several years playing a string of high-profile concerts in nearly every European capital. In 1956, Walker became the first African American to graduate with a doctoral degree from the Eastman School of Music. In 1961, he was hired by Smith College where he became the first tenured African American faculty member in any department. And finally, in 1996, Walker was the first African American to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music in recognition of his composition *Lilacs* for voice and orchestra.

At his death in August 2018, Walker was one of the most decorated and revered composers in American history.

Lyric for Strings was composed when Walker was only 24 years old, but it has remained one of his most enduring compositions. The sound, structure, and instrumentation of the piece are all clearly inspired by the famous Adagio for Strings composed by Walker's Curtis Institute classmate Samuel Barber in 1936. Walker first conceived the music that became Lyric as a middle movement for his first string quartet and originally titled it "Lament" in dedication to his grandmother who died the year prior. The piece fluidly and dramatically alternates between lush harmonies and stark solo passages which showcase the range of sounds possible in the string orchestra. In an interview not long before his death, Walker commented: "I never played a string instrument, but somehow strings have always fascinated me." In Lyric, we hear the beginning of this life-long fascination.

GONZALEZ-MATOS | FUGATO

Fugato is the last movement of Kalimbas, Chorale and Fugato, a work for string quartet written early this year (2021) and dedicated to the Harlem Quartet. This spirited and humorous movement is a show off piece for the ensemble in the style of a jazzy fugato. There is a program to this movement. Imagine you are listening to a classical piece on the radio, and suddenly in the middle of a catchy tune the radio signal becomes poor. The interference gradually distorts the music making it sound fragmented. In the middle of the distortion, the radio catches the strong signal of a Cuban music radio station and a brief episode of Cuban charanga style music is heard. The strong signal from the original classical radio station returns and the jazzy fugato resumes leading to a very flashy ending.

The artistry of this GRAMMY-nominated musician has been described as of inimitable elegance and highest virtuosity. Gonzalez has performed as a soloist with orchestras around the globe. An avid chamber musician, Gonzalez performed for Chamber Music Series of the New York Philharmonic, The Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York, The Concert Artist Guild of New York and The New Jersey Chamber Music Society. He collaborated with legendary artists such as mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves, violinist Arnold Steinhardt and also with clarinetists/saxophonist Paquito D'Rivera. The latter invited him to record as a guest artist for his CD Jazz-Clazz nominated for a GRAMMY for Best Classical Crossover Album.

He graduated with honors from the Superior Institute of Art of Havana, holds a Master of Music Degree from the University of Southern Mississippi, and a Doctoral Degree in Piano Performance from Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. He also took courses in Orchestral Conducting at The Juilliard School and is an accomplished composer who has collaborated for the Work and Process Series at the prestigious Guggenheim Museum in New York City. His Symphonic Poem for Piano and Orchestra 'Cimarrón' was premiered by the National Symphony of Costa Rica. He was a composer in residence of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, is

currently an Artist in Residence of the Cuban Artist Fund in New York and a Professor of Music at Alabama State University.

Gonzalez is featured in the Rey-Rodriguez-Productions film 'Adios a Cuba', which includes interviews and live performances by the artist. Gonzalez wrote the music for the art film 'Behind the Wall' premiered in New York and Boston.

STILL | LYRIC QUARTET

Known for being one of the forefront African-American composers of the 20th century, William Grant Still's legacy lives on today. Still was the first American composer to have an opera produced by the New York City Opera, the first African-American composer to conduct a major American orchestra, the first to have an opera performed on national television, plus many more accolades and ground-breaking events. Still left behind a wealth of music in his oeuvre, including five symphonies, nine operas, over thirty choral works, a number of chamber music works, art songs and four ballets.

Lyric Quartet was composed in 1960, and was dedicated to Still's friend, Joachim Chassman. Set into three movements subtitled "Musical Portraits of Three Friends", the quartet takes the listener on a personal journey.

Movement I – The Sentimental One. The opening unison fluctuations create warmth between the quartet's timbres. The style in which this movement is written showcases Still's more sensitive style of writing, which is highlighted through the textures and rhythms of the music. The definition of 'Sentimental' is "of or prompted by feelings of tenderness, sadness or nostalgia", and Still manages to get all of these things within the first movement. The lack of big dramatic changes and the familiarity and warmth of the style accentuates the nostalgia and tenderness of this sentimental friend and the effect they had on the composer. The music resolves on the final chord to, ending the movement quietly.

Movement II – The Quiet One. Throughout this movement, Still holds back in the way that the melody is presented. The sweetness of the upper strings sits neatly on top of the warm lower strings, creating perfect harmony between the ensemble. Still uses pizzicato sparingly in this movement to experiment with the timbre. However, the movement largely consists of unison arco playing. Deeply reflective and personal, The Quiet One shows Still's maturity as a composer.

Movement III – The Jovial One: The finale movement opens with a playful melody. The most energetic and driven of the three movements, the jovial character is established straight away. Exciting whirling from the upper strings in the central section builds tension as the driving force of the lower strings keeps the music moving along at quite a pace. The bouncy melody, led by the violin at the end, comes to its epic finale with all the parts coming together.

MARSALIS | AT THE OCTOROON BALLS

At the Octoroon Balls explores the American Creole contradictions and compromises – cultural, social, and political – exemplified by life in New Orleans. The piece's seven movements evoke people, places, and events in the Crescent City: "Come Long Fiddler," "Mating Calls and Delta Rhythms," "Creole Contradanzas," "Many Gone," "Hellbound Highball," "Blue Lights on the Bayou," and "Rampart St. Row House Rag."

Wynton Marsalis is an internationally acclaimed musician, composer and bandleader, an educator and a leading advocate of American culture. He has created and performed an expansive range of music from quartets to big bands, chamber music ensembles to symphony orchestras and tap dance to ballet, expanding the vocabulary for jazz and classical music with a vital body of work that places him among the world's finest musicians and composers. Always swinging, Marsalis blows his trumpet with a clear tone, a depth of emotion and a unique, virtuosic style derived from an encyclopedic range of trumpet techniques. When you hear Marsalis play, you're hearing life being played out through music.

Marsalis' core beliefs and foundation for living are based on the principals of jazz. He promotes individual creativity (improvisation), collective cooperation (swing), gratitude and good manners (sophistication), and faces adversity with persistent optimism (the blues). With his evolved humanity and through his selfless work, Marsalis has elevated the quality of human engagement for individuals, social networks and cultural institutions throughout the world.

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LÓPEZ-GAVILÁN | CUARTETO EN GUAGUANCO

"Cuarteto en Guaguanco" by Guido López Gavilán (the father of Harlem Quartet first violinist Ilmar Gavilán) focused its energy not on a melody but a rhythm. The straightforward five-note ostinato of salsa is displaced by a little syncopation that has every listener moving something — feet, fingers, head — in a pleasant game of find-the-downbeat in this new thing called guaguanco.

Mr. Lopez-Gavilán is a Cuban composer and conductor. He obtained degrees in choral conducting from the Conservatorio Amadeo Roldán (Havana) and orchestral conducting from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory (Moscow). His extensive compositional oeuvre encompasses a range of genres and has received much critical acclaim throughout the Americas and Europe. He was chosen to compose and premiere a piece for the inaugural concert of the VI World Music Symposium in Minneapolis in 2002. In 2010, the Symphonic Orchestra of Winterthur in Switzerland invited Gavilán to conduct a concert dedicated to his symphonic and choral works at the Musikkolegium.

He is the founder of the Instituto Superior del Arte (Havana) and head of the department of orchestral direction. He has directed the studies of several generations of Cuban conductors, many of whom are now leading the principal orchestras within Cuba and abroad.

He is president of the Festival of La Habana and is a founding member of the school of composers of Latino America of Music and Art, as well as president of the Association of Musicians and Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba. He was awarded the National Prize of Music in 2015, the highest distinction given by Cuba's Culture Ministry. He obtained the Gran Premio Cubadisco in 2016 with the CD/DVD Caribe Nostrum, which featured performances by Música Eterna and the Trio Concertante under his baton.



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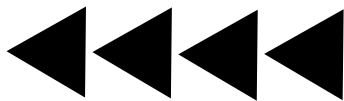
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