

GLOBAL CHAMPION



Nicole Cherry, PhD

**Assistant Professor of Violin at UTSA Department of Music
and second violinist of the Marian Anderson String Quartet.**



Education is not only gleaning facts around us and learning what came before us but also gaining insight into what is within us. It is learning how we align with the **past and present** that allows us to be a part of **shaping the future.**

Nicole Cherry

FINDING IDENTITY IN CLASSICAL MUSIC

As a graduate student at Juilliard, seeing the Marian Anderson String Quartet - the first all African-American ensemble - perform their New York City debut was the first time that Cherry saw a true reflection of herself on stage.

Cherry, now a member of the Quartet, sought out more classical artists of color, including undertaking extensive research related to the 19th-century African-European violin virtuoso and composer, George Bridgetower.

"As a student passionate about Western Classical music, I had to find my identity within it on my own. It is essential that we allow students to graduate with what is supposed to be the canon by covering the vast knowledge and compositions of artists of color."

GEORGE BRIDGETOWER: A STORY LARGELY UNTOLD

History remembers London-based George Bridgetower as the original dedicatee of Ludwig van Beethoven's arguably most difficult violin sonata.

While black men struggled for universal freedom at this time throughout the world, this eighteenth-century black English musician forged his career and concertized throughout Europe representing a riveting period in music history. Bridgetower's virtuosity gained him the admiration of the era's most celebrated composers, patrons, and royalty. Placing Bridgetower's musical engagements and compositions in a socio-cultural and artistic context establishes his role in the evolution of classical music worldwide.

A GLOBAL PROJECT

Cherry's project **ForgewithGeorge** is a music performative platform that documents the contributions of Bridgetower and other historic musicians of color. New discoveries about the artists are a catalyst for commissions and curated programming. The compilation of performances restores the legacy of great artists that have been dismissed from our history books while bringing to the forefront questions of identity and equity, and how these issues intersect globally.

"Scholarship and investment in music publishing is a critical part of the process that gives access to the important contributions of unrecognized excellence in marginalized populations. Open dialogue around these issues is essential, and I am dedicated to establishing a global consortium that facilitates ongoing conversations about an inclusive musical canon."

FUN FACT ABOUT DR. NICOLE CHERRY



I am a devoted champion of new music and I often ask my composer friends to write pieces for me. One of my friends learned that I could beatbox (uh oh) and wrote me a piece of music for rapping, beatboxing, singing, speaking, solo violinist. Yes, at the same time! May you get what you wish for.