**What Is American?**

“What is American?” thoughtfully ponders this question through a musical kaleidoscope of composers and diverse genres that make up America’s rich musical history. Featuring our MIND | THE | GAP reimagination of Dvorak’s “American” Quartet, in which the composer’s original melodies meet PQ’s blues, jazz and rock-inflected improvisations, this program also includes works by Duke Ellington, Vijay Iyer, and Ornette Coleman, connecting the dots to illuminate the past, present, and future of American music.

Vijay Iyer (1971-)
*Dig The Say* (2012)
_duration: ~10’*

Fats Waller (1904-1943) / Curtis Stewart
*Pavement Pounding Rose* (1929 / 2019)
_duration: ~5’*

MIND | THE | GAP: *Free Radicals* (2021)
*Improvisations on “Law Years” and “Street Woman”* by Ornette Coleman
_duration: ~9’*

MIND | THE | GAP: *Wild Women Don’t Get the Blues* (2021)
*Improvisations on the music of Alice Coltrane, Ida Cox, Betty Davis, and Tina Turner*
_duration: ~10’*

Duke Ellington (1899-1974)
*Come Sunday* (1942)
_duration: ~5’*

*Improvisations on Antonin Dvorak’s “American” Quartet (Op. 96)*
_duration: ~25’*
**Freedom and Faith: American Woman**

Inspired by PUBLIQuartet’s GRAMMY-nominated album *Freedom and Faith*, this program celebrates American women composers past and present, exploring ideas of spirituality, resilience, and inspiration in works by Jessie Montgomery, Julia Perry, and Jessica Meyer, as well as three original MIND | THE | GAP projects: the first, honoring the life and legacy of Madam C.J. Walker, hair care pioneer and first African-American millionaire; the second, honoring the musical genius of Nina Simone; and the third, celebrating musical innovators Ida Cox, Alice Coltrane, Betty Davis, and Tina Turner.

Jessie Montgomery (1981-)
*Voodoo Dolls* (2008)
**duration: ~5’**

*Honoring the life and legacy of Madam C.J. Walker*
**duration: ~15’**

MIND | THE | GAP: *Nina!* (2018)
*Honoring the genius of Nina Simone*
**duration: ~10’**

Julia Perry (1924-1979), arr. Jannina Norpoth
*Prelude for Piano* (1946)
**duration: ~3’**

MIND | THE | GAP: *Wild Women Don’t Get the Blues* (2021)
*Improvisations on the music of Alice Coltrane, Ida Cox, Betty Davis, and Tina Turner*
**duration: ~10’**

Jessica Meyer
*Get Into the Now* (2017)
**duration: ~10’**
What Is American: Family Tree

Building upon our “What is American?” program, a concept originally premiered during PUBLIQuartet’s Met Museum Residency, this set continues to explore this timely question through the lens of music, history, and our own identities, this time with a focus on family connections, lineage, and tradition. The program includes George Walker’s String Quartet No. 1 (“Lyric”), which refers to both African-American and European classical traditions; John Corigliano’s “Snapshot 1909,” a meditation on a family photo and the story it tells; Vijay Iyer’s homage to the music of James Brown; as well as works by members of our own PQ family: founding violinist Jessie Montgomery, and violinist Elektra Kurtis, our current violinist Curtis Stewart’s mother.

Elektra Kurtis
Hasaposerviko (2015)
duration: 5’

George Walker (1922-2018)
String Quartet No. 1 “Lyric” (1946)
duration: 25’

Jessie Montgomery (1981-)
Break Away (2013)
duration: ~12’

John Corigliano (1938-)
duration: ~6’

Vijay Iyer (1971-)
Dig The Say (2012)
duration: ~10’
MIND | THE | GAP: Reflections on Beauty (multimedia program)

MIND | THE | GAP: Reflections on Beauty honors the life and legacy of Madam CJ Walker: hair care industry pioneer, philanthropist, arts patron, political activist, and first female African-American self-made millionaire. Created in collaboration with A'Lelia Bundles, Madam Walker’s great-great granddaughter, this 30-minute multimedia program weaves together narration, visual projections, improvisations, and original arrangements of blues, ragtime, and jazz, tracing Walker’s inspiring journey from the Mississippi Delta to the salons of the Harlem Renaissance.

Elvie Thomas (1891-1979)
Motherless Child Blues (1930)

Tom Turpin (1873-1922)
St. Louis Rag (1903)

W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)
Ave Verum Corpus (K. 618)

Nick Revel
Dream Sequence (2019)

Irving Jones (1874-1932)
Ragtime Millionaire (1900)

Scott Joplin (c. 1868-1917)
Wall Street Rag (1909)

Fats Waller (1904-1943) / Curtis Stewart
Pavement Pounding Rose (1929 / 2019)

Sister Rosetta Tharpe (1915-1973)
My Journey to the Sky (1948)

duration: ~30’ total; can be supplemented with other programming

Link to program trailer: https://youtu.be/2UENE3a_NBM
Link to full video of world premiere (Dec 2019): https://youtu.be/nqge1RUvsNM
Walk With Me (educational program)

Premiered at the 2019 PLAYUSA conference, this program explores the theme of belonging by pairing our personal stories with four short works commissioned by Carnegie Hall, each written by a different member of the quartet. These pieces all incorporate elements of improvisation, and may be distributed to and workshopped with music students and teachers of all ages.