

Meet the Omer Quartet.

2018-19 Ernst Stiefel String Quartet-in-Residence



Since 1999, one young string quartet is chosen each year as Caramoor's **Ernst Stiefel Quartet-in-Residence**. The Quartet-in-Residence performs three times at Caramoor during their year-long residency, and lends their time and talents to Caramoor's **Student Strings** program, a classroom-based series of concerts, conversations, and clinics.

Distinctive among today's young string quartets, the Omer Quartet captured First Prize in the 2017 Young Concert Artists International Auditions.

Following study at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Omer completed a graduate residency at the New England Conservatory and came into prominence in 2013 when it received the Grand Prize and Gold Medal at the Fischhoff National Competition.

Since then, they have received top prizes at several international competitions and now serve as the Doctoral Fellowship String Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Maryland.

"Being the 2018-19 Ernst Steifel String Quartet-in-Residence is such an honor," said Erica Tursi, violinist. "The eclectic range of genres and world-renowned artists that are brought to perform at Caramoor is so unique and inspiring and we are thrilled to be a part of it."

As the Quartet-in-Residence, the Omer will perform several concerts throughout the year. In their Caramoor debut in November, they will perform Beethoven's Grosse Fugue in B-flat Major, a piece they are particular excited to play. "The great fugue is something we all have been itching to perform. It conjures all aspects of human life including vulnerability, doubt, triumph, and spirituality. We identify very much with the idea of a quartet being four individual voices with our own distinct personalities, that when unified create something greater than the sum," said Tursi.

In May of 2019, the quartet will also be part of a lecture/concert with distinguished composer and music commentator Rob Kapilow that will delve into Mozart's "Dissonance" String Quartet, deconstructing and dissecting it, slowing it down, and reassembling it to discover why it has come to be considered one of the most famous of his 26 quartets.

An important component of the Caramoor residency is "Student Strings," a program where the Quartet-in-Residence visits local schools and works with students to build music literacy and confidence through in-class workshops and live performances.

The Omer Quartet has been committed to community engagement since the outset. "We've been highly fortunate to connect with audiences in various settings such as rehabilitation centers, shelters, and organizations who provide food services to those in need," said Tursi.

"Each time, we are introducing something new to the audience; whether it be the music we're playing, our instruments, or even just our own musical journey. On the flip side, we are learning so much about what it's like to share this music. Being in one of these settings takes away the concert format and leaves everything in a vulnerable space., the effect being is similar to turning up the dial on the reaction levels between the performer, the music and the listener. It's always really enjoyable and at its best, totally transforming."

In the summer of 2019, the Omer Quartet will premiere a piece commissioned by Caramoor. This will only be the second time they have had a work written specifically for them. "The opportunity to work with the composer throughout our learning process is a unique gift. "

*The Omer Quartet will perform in the Music Room on **Sunday, November 11** and with Rob Kapilow on **Sunday, May 5**; a Wednesday Morning Concert on **May 8**, and in the Venetian Theater during Caramoor's 2019 Summer Season.*