

**IMANI WINDS (USA)**  
*A Woman's Perspective*

Brandon Patrick George, flute  
Toyin Speellman-Diaz, oboe  
Jeff Scott, horn  
Mark Dover, clarinet  
Monica Ellis, bassoon

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2019 • 8PM  
GILDENHORN RECITAL HALL, THE CLARICE

**ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

Over the course of their 20+ year career, Grammy-nominated quintet **Imani Winds** has discovered what audiences value most from their concerts: a sense of connection - with the music, the performers, the composers, the artistry and beyond. Extolled by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as “what triumph sounds like”, Imani Winds has created a distinct presence in the classical music world through their dynamic playing, culturally relevant programming, virtuosic collaborations and inspirational outreach programs.

The concept of connectivity has led them to program not only music from the traditional chamber music canon, but also concerts that reach beyond the usual boundaries of the recital stage. *Passion for Bach and Coltrane*, a concert-length work composed by Imani Winds member Jeff Scott, is an exploration of the two genius' commonality featuring wind quintet, string quartet, jazz trio and orator. During their multifaceted, two-year residency at University of Chicago, Imani Winds created a concert to specifically highlight the rich history of the institution and the city, with a focus on today's social issues featuring a world premiere by Pulitzer Prize winner and Chicago-native Henry Threadgill.

Upcoming seasons include premieres of three new works: Jessie Montgomery's piece inspired by her great-grandfather's migration from the south to the north of the United States; music from Andy Akiho designed to be played not only on a concert stage but also outside of an immigrant detention center and Miguel del Aguila's piece about the brief Afro-Brazilian nation-state in 1600s Brazil.

The wide range of programs offered by Imani Winds demonstrates their mission to expand the wind quintet repertoire. From Mendelssohn, György Ligeti and Igor Stravinsky, to Astor Piazzolla, Elliott Carter and John Harbison, to 21st century greats like Frederic Rzewski, Jason Moran and Simon Shaheen, Imani Winds actively seeks to engage new voices into the modern classical idiom.

Imani Winds' touring schedule has taken them across the globe. At home, the group has performed in major concert venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, Disney Hall and Kimmel Center. They are frequently engaged by foremost chamber music series in Boston, Washington D.C., Houston, Philadelphia and New York, and have also played virtually every major university performing arts series

including those in Amherst, Stanford, Ann Arbor, Austin, Seattle, Urbana and countless others. Festivals include Chamber Music Northwest, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Banff Centre, Virginia Arts Festival, Angel Fire and Ravinia Festival. In recent seasons, the group has traveled extensively internationally, with tours in China, Singapore, Brazil, Australia, England, New Zealand and throughout Europe.

Imani Winds seamlessly navigates between classical, jazz and world music idioms. Through jazz legend Wayne Shorter's *Terra Incognita* – his first-ever composition for an ensemble outside of his own – Imani Winds went on to perform at length with Shorter at major European and North American festivals such as the North Sea and Montreal Jazz Festivals. On Shorter's acclaimed release on Blue Note, *Without a Net*, Imani Winds is prominently featured. The groups' Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center residency culminated in a recital in New York's Alice Tully Hall with renowned clarinetist/saxophonist/composer Paquito D'Rivera. The ensemble has also worked with luminaries such as bandoneonist Daniel Binelli, the Brubeck Brothers, the Fisk Jubilee Singers, clarinetist David Shifrin and pianists Gilbert Kalish, Stephen Hough, Anne-Marie McDermott and Shai Wosner. Their ambitious project, *Josephine Baker: A Life of Le Jazz Hot!* brought chanteuse René Marie with them to New York, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Los Angeles and St. Louis.

Imani Winds enjoy frequent national exposure in all forms of media, including features on NPR's All Things Considered, appearances on APM's Saint Paul Sunday and Performance Today, BBC/PRI's The World, as well as frequent coverage in major music magazines and newspapers including *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. The group maintains an ongoing relationship with Sirius-XM and has been featured multiple times on various channels.

Imani Winds first came to prominence at the 2001 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, where they were selected as the first-ever Educational Residency Ensemble, in recognition of not only their musical abilities but their connection with audiences of all ages. To this day, Imani Winds' commitment to education runs deep. The group participates in residencies throughout the U.S., giving master classes to thousands of students a year. In the summer of 2010 the ensemble launched its annual Imani Winds Chamber Music Festival (IWCMF). The Festival brings together young instrumentalists and composers from across North America and beyond for intense workshops in entrepreneurship as well as explorations and performance of traditional and new chamber music compositions. Festival participants have gone on to successes around the world, ranging from winning positions in orchestras, founding their own music educational programs, winning college professorships and forming their own chamber music ensembles.

Imani Winds have six releases on Koch International Classics and E1 Music, including their Grammy Award nominated recording, *The Classical Underground*. They have also recorded for Naxos and Blue Note and released *The Rite of Spring* on Warner Classics which was on iTunes Best of 2013 list. In 2018 they were featured on pianist, Edward Simon's latest recording project: *Sorrows and Triumphs*.

In 2016 Imani Winds received their greatest accolade to date: they are on permanent display in the classical music section of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture.