



SAN FRANCISCO
PERFORMANCES

presents...

ATTACCA QUARTET

Amy Schroeder | Violin
Domenic Salerni | Violin

Nathan Schram | Viola
Andrew Yee | Cello

THEO BLECKMANN | Vocals

Friday, February 27, 2026 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

DAVID LANG

note to a friend
(West Coast Premiere)

Attacca Quartet is represented by MKI Artists
70 S Winooski Ave., #318, Burlington, VT 05401 mkiartists.com

Theo Bleckmann is represented by Unlimited Myles unlimitedmyles.com

ARTIST PROFILES

San Francisco Performances presents the Attacca Quartet for the third time. It first appeared here in January 2024.

San Francisco Performances presents Theo Bleckmann for the third time. He first appeared here in January 2020.



The Grammy® Award-winning **Attacca Quartet** is recognized as one of today's most versatile and forward-thinking ensembles. From classical masterworks to contemporary collaborations, they redefine what a string quartet can be. Winners of the 2020 and 2023 Grammy Awards for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance, their album *Orange and Evergreen* with Caroline Shaw earned widespread acclaim. In 2021, they released *Real Life*, a genre-defying project featuring TokiMONSTA and Daedalus, and *Of All Joys*, which explored music by Glass, Pärt, and Renaissance composers. Attacca has performed at major venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Wigmore Hall, and the Concertgebouw, and at leading festivals like Ojai, Big Ears, and Verbier. They've collaborated with orchestras around the world, including the Colombian National Orchestra, the National Orchestra of Catalunya, and the Nagoya Philharmonic. Beyond the concert hall, Attacca has collaborated with Billie Eilish and FINNEAS on their album and appeared with them on *Saturday Night Live*. They're featured on soundtracks for the Ken Burns documentary *Leonardo da Vinci* and the film *We Grown Now*. In 2025–26, the ensemble will perform at the Phillips Collection, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, among others. Founded at Juilliard, they made their Carnegie Hall debut in 2003 and have won top prizes at international competitions including Osaka, Coleman, and Melbourne. Dedicated educators, Attacca has worked with institutions like the Lincoln Center Institute, Juilliard, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and Bravo! Vail. Their programming blends tradition and innovation, engaging audiences across genres.



Theo Bleckmann is a jazz singer and new music composer of eclectic tastes and prodigious gifts. He makes music that is accessibly sophisticated, unsentimentally emotional, and seriously playful. His iconoclastic approach blurs boundaries, surprises expectations, and leaves listeners feeling like the world is a bit bigger, weirder, and more interesting than they thought.

Unconstrained by genre, Bleckmann brings his adventurous sensibility to re-imagining songs from the likes of Henry Purcell, Charles Ives, George Gershwin and Kurt Weill to Kate Bush, Massive Attack and the Bee Gees. He's discussed his joyful, experimental approach to genre and technique with Terry Gross on NPR's *Fresh Air*, has been nominated for Grammy Awards in jazz and classical categories, and is the recipient of the prestigious Jazz Echo award in his native Germany. He's recently toured in Europe performing with both the Oulu Symphony Orchestra and UMO Jazz Big Band, and will tour in Japan this summer with orchestra, performing music by Joe Hisaishi.

Bleckmann is equally recognized for his distinct and evocative original work across two decades' worth of influential albums—recent examples include the aching and luminous *Elegy*, on ECM, and the delightful, propulsive *12 Easy Songs*, commissioned by National Sawdust, based on found texts uncovered on walks around Bleckmann's longtime home of downtown New York City (album release forthcoming 2026.) His second solo release on ECM is due later this year. Bleckmann is a sought-after collaborator, working with a stellar and wildly diverse roster of talent that includes Ambrose Akinmusire, Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass, John Hollenbeck, Kneebody, Ulysses Owens, The Westerlies, John Zorn, and the Bang on a Can All-Stars. He maintains longstanding creative relationships with jazz luminary Sheila Jordan, guitar phenom Ben Monder, and avant-garde trailblazer Meredith Monk, recently performing in Monk's 2024 blockbust-

er at the Park Avenue Armory, Indra's Net.

His pure and daring voice has inspired compositions by, among others, Phil Kline, Ikue Mori, and Julia Wolfe. Pulitzer-Prize winner David Lang's chamber opera *note to a friend*, commissioned by the Japan Society and directed by the legendary Yoshi Oida, was composed explicitly for Bleckmann's unique sound and sensibility.

PROGRAM NOTES

note to a friend

DAVID LANG
(B. 1957)

"Mr. Lang captures the conflicted emotional currents of the story in his elusive, austere music."

—*The New York Times*

"With his winning of the Pulitzer Prize for the *little match girl passion* (one of the most original and moving scores of recent years), Lang, once a postminimalist enfant terrible, has solidified his standing as an American master."

—*The New Yorker*

"Lang's huntily beautiful musical language paired with Oida's evocative staging approaches a difficult subject with great empathy, opening up new kinds of experiences for audiences today."

—*The Theatre Times*

In this 60-minute chamber opera, commissioned by the Japan Society, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Lang combines and reimagines three texts by iconic Japanese novelist Ryūnosuke Akutagawa. The result is a stunning and haunting monodrama addressing our eternal human fascinations with death, love, family, and suicide.

Theater luminary Yoshi Oida, Paris-based opera director and longtime member of Peter Brook's international theater company, directed the world premiere that took place as part of the PROTOTYPE Festival 2023.

Content Warning: This production contains references to suicide and depression, which some audiences may find distressing. If you need suicide or mental health-related crisis support, or are worried about someone else, please call or text 988 or visit the 's chat to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

—Notes provided by the Attacca Quartet