

Radica



WINDSYNC





Nadia Boulanger, 1925.
Courtesy of the Woodson Research Center,
Rice University

NADIA

Even for a music industry obsessed with anniversaries, 2026 will be a big one: 250 years since American independence from British rule. For the year-long occasion, American audiences can expect to hear plenty of George Gershwin and Aaron Copland, two composers who have become emblematic of American music. Gershwin is habitually trumpeted as the bridge between jazz and the concert stage, while Copland's interest in country western topics, Appalachia, Shaker themes and his titular "common man" put forward a dressed-down musical Americana. But even these quintessential American composers were not immune to foreign influences; both Gershwin and Copland, in fact, sought artistic guidance from French models. Copland was in Nadia Boulanger's first class of students at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France, while Gershwin apparently sought the tutelage of both Boulanger and Ravel; each refused, with Boulanger insisting she had nothing more to teach him, and Ravel, as the story goes, allegedly asking, "Why would you want to be a second-rate Ravel when you can be a first-rate Gershwin?" Although Ravel's exact words may be apocryphal, the tale remains popular. No wonder – it smacks of the "rugged

individualism" that continues to shape American thought, and props up an image of a self-made, locally sourced American musical identity.

As much as we may want to believe in a homegrown American sound, the country's sonic heritage is more complicated. Another reflex of the classical music industry is the urge to compartmentalize music based on national origin, perhaps a holdover from the nationalist attitudes of the 19th century, when a good deal of our common practice music was written – Germanic composers write muscular music of struggle and structure, whereas French music is softer, blurrier, like watercolor Impressionism. So what does American music sound like, anyway?

Rather than a singular sound that unites the country's composers, on this album WindSync suggests heterogeneity as a distinguishing feature of American music, recalling one of the country's founding slogans: *E pluribus unum* (Out of many, one). This legacy of stylistic diversity in American music can be convincingly traced back to a single source: not a founding father but a French *mademoiselle*, Nadia Boulanger. The composer, conductor, music theorist and legendary composition

pedagogue wielded immense influence over American music and musicians, many of whom passed through her rigorous curriculum in Fontainebleau; many more were exposed to her teaching through her extensive concert and lecture tours throughout the United States and, later, her teaching appointments in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Baltimore. But instead of imposing a unifying style on her studio, Boulanger found a way to nurture each composer's individual voice. In doing so, she sowed the seeds of the kaleidoscopic breadth of styles that emerged in American music in the 20th century as the young country quested for a musical identity of its own. Boulanger herself conjured the expansive landscape of American music and its constellation of influences when asked about the future of music at large: "I believe in the music born of jazz, in the music born of New York, in the music born also of the sun, the desert, the immense mountains."

A towering figure in 20th-century music, Nadia Boulanger was born in 1887 to a family of musicians and, at the remarkable age of nine, entered the Paris Conservatoire, where she and her sister Lili stood among Gabriel Fauré's

most promising students. Lili's premature death in 1918 at the age of 24 contributed to Nadia's decision to abandon composing in favor of nurturing her family's legacy and teaching composition to future generations of musicians. The career shift, while tragic in origin, ultimately earned Boulanger cult-like status; the American composer Ned Rorem described her as the "greatest teacher since Socrates."

Boulanger's mythological place in the history books tends to eclipse what windows remain into what it was to know her. But the testimonies left in the music and words of her students paint an adoring picture of a generous teacher, whose gift of coaxing the singular voice out of each student remains a model for all teachers of music. On *Nadia*, we hope to humanize Mademoiselle, as she was known by her pupils, by telling her story through a century's worth of music written by teacher and students, a legacy of dizzyingly varied American music that reverberates to this day.

Boulanger composed the **Prelude in F minor** in 1911 for an anthology of organ music to be published the following year. As if it were

a compositional *étude* – without a hint of pedantry – the Prelude follows only a single melody and its parallel accompaniment through striking turns of harmony and tone color, making a masterclass in miniature on weaving poignant, dramatic music out of limited materials.

Boulanger’s **Three Pieces** were also composed for organ over a number of years, but are best known today in a version for cello and piano published in 1914. In all three, folklike melodies and old-style counterpoint – the bedrock of Boulanger’s curriculum – filter through modernist modes and harmonies associated with French “Impressionist” composers like Fauré and Debussy. Instead of bifurcating the musical texture into solo versus accompaniment, as in the version for cello and piano, Kara LaMoure’s arrangement echoes Boulanger’s original canvas of wind and reeds shared by the organ and the wind quintet alike.

A 24-year-old Marion Bauer met 19-year-old Nadia Boulanger in Paris in 1906 while living and training with the musical family of pianist Raoul Pugno. Pugno suggested that Boulanger give lessons in counterpoint and harmony to Bauer, reportedly in exchange for

English tutoring. Bauer was thus Boulanger’s first American student, and for decades after their introduction, the two musicians’ careers would continue in parallel: Both would go on to teach hundreds of students and indelibly impact classical music in the United States, their energetic advocacy for others eclipsing their own reputations as composers – to say nothing of the additional obstacle of their gender. Bauer worked as an instructor and lecturer at New York University, Juilliard and Columbia University, and she was a founder of the American Music Guild, the American Music Center and the American Composers Alliance. She also published scholarship reviving interest in women composers and edited the journal *Musical Leader*, writing music all the while.

The New Art Wind Quintet premiered Bauer’s **Woodwind Quintet** at the Circle in the Square Theater in New York City on February 23, 1953, and the piece was published in 1956, one year after the composer’s death. Despite a promising start as a concert work, the quintet went out of print and has not been heard at all in the 21st century. After years of undeserved silence, WindSync is proud to present the world-premiere recording of the work here.

A Beatnik darling of New York's anti-establishment "downtown" music scene, Philip Glass, in quintessential American fashion, is the child of many diverse influences. His family's record store influenced his early listening as much as conservatory-style training at Peabody, the University of Chicago and Juilliard did. It also foretold a lifelong eclecticism that resists categorization: The young Glass' boyish enthusiasm for Viennese atonality led him to overstock a new set of Schoenberg's string quartets in the record shop, to his father's chagrin (The four sets finally sold seven years later.). It wasn't until age 41 that Glass was earning enough to call himself a full-time composer; in the meantime, he worked as a steel works builder, a self-taught plumber and a taxi driver. When he had finally written enough music to win awards, he took a page out of Jack Kerouac's recently published book and spent the money on a motorbike, ultimately following the hippie road to the ashrams of Kathmandu and Northern India, where he studied with Ravi Shankar.

It is telling that, amid this colorful swirl of influences that shaped Glass' life and work

in the middle of a tumultuous century, his two years studying harmony and counterpoint with Nadia Boulanger from 1964–1966 resonate in his music to this day. "For years afterward, people would ask how she had influenced me," Glass wrote in his 2015 autobiography. "I had never studied composition with her, only basic musical technique, and that, endlessly. I have always replied to that question that since my studies with her, I have not written a note of music that wasn't influenced by her. I meant it then, and, even now, so many years later, it strikes me as true."

Etude No. 17, taken from Book 2 of Glass' Piano Etudes, was commissioned for the 25th anniversary of the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas in 2012. The composer's interest in composing *études* calls back to the intensive training he received from Boulanger in Paris, building musical skills from the ground up (prior conservatory degrees notwithstanding). And though he insisted that he never studied proper composition with her, it is difficult to ignore the Boulanger overtones in Glass' own characterization of his style. Often asked what his music sounds like, the ever-eclectic, all-American composer replies, simply, "It sounds like New York City."

Elliott Carter offers an interesting counterpoint to the pop-minimalism of Philip Glass as a superstar of New York's so-called "uptown" music scene. Aside from the fact that Carter lived in the same Greenwich Village apartment from 1945 until 2003, the label is slightly unfair, or at least reductive, on an aesthetic level. It refers to a thornier brand of musical modernism prized by avant-grade, often serialist composers including Pierre Boulez, Milton Babbitt and Stefan Wolpe, and authorized by academic institutions such as The Juilliard School – where Carter indeed taught, in addition to posts at Peabody, Columbia, Yale and Cornell.

But Carter pursued more than one aesthetic during his famously prolific 75-year career, and his early music revels in humor, jazz influences and clever structures that play with the relationships between performers. Indeed, the present **Woodwind Quintet** was constructed in reaction to Carter's observation that "composers were in the habit of overlooking the fact that each of these instruments has a different sound." Carter, on the other hand, "was particularly struck by this, and so decided to write a work that would emphasize the individuality of each instrument and that made

a virtue of their inability to blend completely." The dedication of the ultra-virtuosic 1948 quintet, his first, reads "To Mademoiselle Nadia Boulanger."

Quincy Jones led a distinguished career as a performer, producer and bandleader, presiding over decades of American music in the fields of jazz, pop and film. Jones credited his study with Nadia Boulanger in the 1950s with illuminating for him the structure and science of music. But Boulanger's tutelage wasn't all "hard" musical science, if there is such a thing. "Quincy," she famously reminded him, "your music can never be more or less than you are as a human being." **The Midnight Sun Will Never Set**, one of his great classics, has been recorded by artists from Duke Ellington to Sarah Vaughan. We include it here in honor of the recently departed composer, with the firm belief that so, too, will the sun never set on his beloved teacher's legacy.

© Graeme Steele Johnson & Kara LaMoure, 2026

WINDSYNC



Over nearly two decades of performing throughout the United States and abroad, WindSync has proven itself “a major force in the American chamber music landscape” (*Arts and Culture Texas Magazine*), puncturing performing conventions and stretching the boundaries of what the wind quintet can be through fearless programming and a fresh stage presence. WindSync has appeared on some of the country’s most prestigious stages, including Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Library of Congress,

at Chamber Music Northwest and the Ravinia, Moab, Orcas Island and Phoenix Chamber Music Festivals, and internationally in China, Taiwan, Panama, Mexico and Canada.

In the spirit of the dressed-down, boyband accessibility that inspired the quintet’s cheeky name, WindSync’s unique concert experience features largely self-generated repertoire – commissioned by the group or arranged in-house – performed frequently from memory and presented always with a personal touch from the stage. Building a new repertoire

driven by purpose and growing from close collaboration, WindSync has commissioned a star-studded roster of leading and rising American composers; new works by Viet Cuong, Nathalie Joachim, Shawn Okpebholo, Marc Mellits, Miguel del Aguila, Nicky Sohn, Akshaya Avril Tucker and Mason Bynes have become emerging standards of the wind quintet literature.

WindSync presents a year-round concert series as well as the annual Onstage Offstage Chamber Music Festival in Houston, Texas. Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2026, the Festival integrates guest artists of national renown with WindSync members and local musicians from Houston's vibrant music scene for artistic cross-pollination.

Since the creation of a costumed and choreographed production of *Peter and the Wolf* that launched the ensemble's first performances, education has been central to WindSync's mission. WindSync has served on the faculty of Madeline Island Chamber Music and as a guest artist at universities, conservatories and music festivals around the country, including the New World Symphony, Eastman School of Music, Northwestern University, Kent Blossom Music Festival and

dozens of others. WindSync also maintains a year-round educational partnership with the Houston Youth Symphony and in 2022 was honored with the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Association's Ann Divine Educator Award.

Founded at Rice University in 2009, WindSync embarked on a robust touring career after winning the Concert Artists Guild's 2012 Victor Elmaleh Competition and the 2016 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, continuing as prize winners at the 2018 M-Prize Chamber Arts Competition. The quintet's 2024 album *WindSync Plays Miguel del Águila*, recorded at the legendary Abbey Road Studios in London, debuted at number one on the Billboard classical charts. WindSync's tri-coastal musicians – Garrett Hudson, Noah Kay, Graeme Steele Johnson, Anni Hochhalter and Kara LaMoure – make their homes in New York City, San Francisco and Houston. WindSync is represented by MKI Artists.

GARRETT HUDSON

FLUTE



Garrett Hudson is a founding member of WindSync. The Canadian flutist's roots lie in Winnipeg, Manitoba, where he made his solo debut with the Winnipeg Symphony at the age of 16. During his training, Hudson performed with the National Academy Orchestra of Canada and l'Orchestre de la Francophonie in Montreal, Quebec. He earned degrees from the University of British Columbia under Scottish flutist Lorna McGhee, and Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, where he studied with renowned flute pedagogue Leone Buyse. A sensitive communicator both onstage and off, Hudson has coached woodwind students at the Eastman School of Music, Northwestern University, University of Iowa, and University of Texas. He lives in Houston, Texas, where he maintains a teaching studio at the beginner through professional levels.

NOAH KAY

OBOE

Noted for his “expressive tone color and deft technique” (*EarRelevant*), oboist Noah Kay enjoys a varied career as an orchestral and chamber musician. Having previously served as principal oboe of the Colorado Springs Philharmonic and Symphony in C, Kay has performed, toured, and recorded in Japan, Europe and the United States with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. He has also performed with the International Contemporary Ensemble, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Rochester Philharmonic, Colorado Symphony and ProMusica Columbus, and appeared as guest principal with the Princeton Symphony, Winnipeg Symphony and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Festival appearances include Viva Bach Peterborough, the Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival, Moab Music Festival, Cape May Music Festival, National Repertory Orchestra and the Chautauqua Institution’s Symphony Orchestra, with whom he has served as second oboe since August 2023. Kay received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and his Master of Music degree from Yale, having studied with Richard Killmer and Stephen Taylor. He is currently a doctoral candidate at Stony Brook University, studying with James Austin Smith. A native of New Jersey, he now resides in Queens.



GRAEME STEELE JOHNSON

CLARINET



Praised as “technically and interpretively impeccable and passionately communicative” (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*), Graeme Steele Johnson is an artist of uncommon imagination and versatility. The clarinetist, curator and “musical detective” (*New York Classical Review*) recently garnered international attention for his rediscovery and reconstruction of a 125-year-old Octet by Charles Martin Loeffler, profiled in a full-page spread by *The Washington Post*. Released on his debut album *Forgotten Sounds*, Johnson’s world-premiere recording of the work was named one of *The New York Times*’ Best Classical Music Albums of 2024 and nominated for a Gramophone Classical Music Award. Johnson led the Octet’s first present-day performances at the Library of Congress, Morgan Library, Harvard Musical Association, Phoenix Chamber Music Festival, Emerald City Music and Chamber Music Northwest. Other recent appearances include the Ravinia, Bridgehampton, Moab, Rockport and Orcas Island Chamber Music Festivals. Driven by his interest in shedding fresh perspective on familiar music, Johnson has appeared as a TEDx speaker comparing Mozart and *Seinfeld*, and authored chamber arrangements heard around the world. He earned degrees from The University of Texas at Austin, Yale School of Music and a doctorate from the CUNY Graduate Center. His principal teachers include David Shifrin, Charles Neidich, Nathan Williams and Ricardo Morales.

ANNI HOCHHALTER

HORN

A maverick French horn player, Anni Hochhalter is a founding member and Executive Director of WindSync. As an award-winning chamber musician, Hochhalter has set a new standard of virtuosic wind performance practice and built a new repertoire for the wind quintet in addition to her experimental craft in non-traditional performance styles and mediums. Hochhalter was the only musician selected for Stanford University's Executive Program for Social Entrepreneurship in 2017 and has been a featured speaker at Chamber Music America's National Conference and the MENSA World Gathering to share bold approaches to community building through chamber music. Outside of WindSync, she performs on vocals, electronics and horn with the band Late Aster, praised by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as a "very cool collision of brass and electronics". Recent appearances with Late Aster include University of Wisconsin-Madison, Cal Academy's NightLife LIVE, KXSJ 102.5 FM radio, and the Owl Music Parlor in Brooklyn. Hochhalter studied horn at the University of Southern California with leading studio musicians Rick Todd, James Thatcher and Kristy Morrell, with additional summer training at Chautauqua Music Festival with Roger Kaza. Based in San Francisco, she enjoys ultra running and backpacking in her spare time.



KARA LAMOURE

BASSOON



Kara LaMoure approaches the bassoon as a dynamic performer, educator and creative. Her interest in the creation and curation of music has led to premieres of works for solo bassoon by Akshaya Avril Tucker and Adeliia Faizullina, and she is a prolific arranger of chamber music for winds. LaMoure has performed as a chamber musician at Ravinia, Strathmore, Carnegie Hall and the Grand Teton and Moab Music Festivals, as a soloist with ROCO, Caroga Arts Collective and the Eastman Wind Ensemble, and has coached youth orchestras in the United States, Switzerland, Honduras, Mexico and Brazil. She is also a founding member of the viral chamber-comedy group the Breaking Winds Bassoon Quartet, which has forged a special connection with thousands of young musicians and found broad appeal in venues from Beijing's Forbidden City Concert Hall to Seattle's Museum of Pop Culture and the Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest in Coney Island. LaMoure earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music and Northwestern University, where she studied with John Hunt and Christopher Millard, and she is an alumna of Eastman's cutting-edge Institute for Music Leadership. Between performances, she likes to explore her New York City neighborhood on foot and feed her interests in writing and visual art.

Recorded at Rieth Recital Hall, Goshen College,
Goshen, Indiana, United States,
on January 20-22, 2025.

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Alan Bise

Dolby Atmos Mastering
Nathaniel Reichman

Executive Producers
Anni Hochhalter, Garrett Hudson,
Graeme Steele Johnson, Noah Kay
and Kara LaMoure

Cover Image
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WindSync group photos: Philip Greenberg
Garrett Hudson: Aly Matei
Noah Kay: Hannah Criswell
Graeme Steele Johnson: Dylan Hancock
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Design
Pragma Création

WindSync gratefully acknowledges the support
of Paula Sanders, Beatrice and Gregory Graham,
Rainer Hochhalter and Ronald Pummer, Kerry and
Steve Incavo, Ann and Howard Hendrix, Terri and
Mark Messing, Leone Buyse and Michael Webster,
Miriam and Jack Meyers, and Jolene Meissert for
helping bring this project to life. We also thank our
management team at MKI Artists, our indefatigable
managing director Yvonne Chen, and our dedicated
board of directors: Kipp Johnson, Laura Reynolds,
Meghan Downs and Julian Hernandez.

Nadia Boulanger: Prelude in F minor
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Nadia Boulanger: Three Pieces
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Marion Bauer: Woodwind Quintet, Op. 24
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Quincy Jones: The Midnight Sun Will Never
Set © Copyright 2024 by Owen Broder Music





Radica

WINDSYNC

Garrett Hudson

flute

Noah Kay

oboe

Graeme Steele Johnson

clarinet

Anni Hochhalter

horn

Kara LaMoure

bassoon

NADIA BOULANGER (1887–1979)

1. Prelude in F minor *arr.* Kara LaMoure 5:13
2. Three Pieces *arr.* Kara LaMoure
3. Moderato 2:41
4. Sans vitesse et à l'aise 2:00
5. Vite et nerveusement rythmé 2:49

MARION BAUER (1882–1955)

Woodwind Quintet, Op. 48*

5. Allegro comodo 2:25
6. Allegro gioviale 3:48
7. Andante pastorale 3:55
8. Allegro giocoso 2:23

PHILIP GLASS (b. 1937)

9. Etude No. 17 *arr.* Kara LaMoure 8:00

ELLIOTT CARTER (1908–2012)

Woodwind Quintet

10. Allegretto 4:20
11. Allegro giocoso 4:10

QUINCY JONES (1933–2024)

12. The Midnight Sun Will Never Set 3:41
arr. Owen Broder

* *world-premiere recording*

Total Running Time

45:27