



Jo's  
Jamie,  
dle  
dio



...dle ensemble).  
...truments led  
...onal folk band in  
...te New York, but  
...I realized I didn't  
...making straight-up  
...she picked up an  
...rted writing lyrics  
...r the coffeehouse  
...ealed some, including  
...rth Carolina, where  
...njo pickers and  
...hen to Los Angeles,  
...n. When COVID hit,  
...me to Maine, where  
...tick around awhile,  
...various facets of her  
...ity.  
...bitch through and  
...always will be, but I  
...just be that," Stancioff  
...g my own stuff with  
...uitar, it feels like I'm  
...myself more fully and  
...vulnerable. It's about  
...the kind of darker, more  
...parts of life and love and  
...nd just being a little more  
...ll." — B.K.

**"WE  
STARTED  
THINKING ABOUT  
HOW WE COULD  
USE WHAT WE  
WERE CREATING  
TO TELL A  
STORY."**

Upcoming performances for Halcyon include scoring a live reading (with projected art) of Robert McCloskey's children's classic *Burt Dow: Deep-Water Man*.

## HALCYON STRING QUARTET

CHAMBER MUSIC WITH A MISSION.

If there's one principle most chamber ensembles prize above all others, it's cohesion. For a small group of musicians to play such technically demanding music requires them to be a tight-knit circle, attuned to one another to the point of near-telepathy. The midcoast's Halcyon String Quartet is nothing if not tight-knit: its violinists, Sophie and Josie Davis, are sisters; Josie's husband, Colin Wheatley, plays viola; a pair of longtime friends, Ju-Young Lee and Nora Willauer, take turns as cellists.

But what makes the group exceptional is its founding commitment to collaboration, to cracking open the circle and welcoming in all kinds of outsiders. "At its core, Halcyon is a quartet," Sophie says, "but so much of where our heart lies as an organization is in working with not just different musicians but also different artists and scientific organizations."

Fire up YouTube — the best way to hear Halcyon's music at home — and stream the group's crisp, expressive performance of Vivaldi's "Winter" concerto from last January, at Waldoboro's Waldo Theatre. Making them temporarily a quintet is violinist Luke Fatora, who filmed and edited the synched-up footage that plays in the background. As the ensemble navigates the first movement's shiver-like trills, a screen cycles through surreal aerials of a frozen Medomak River. During the third movement's blizzard-mimicking solo, time-lapse storm clouds cascade over a snow-capped mountain.

Other 2021 Halcyon performances

included supporting a vocalist singing "documentary songs" about resilience in the face of contemporary ills — from racial violence to wildfires — and live-scoring a presentation about the Schoodic Institute's conservation efforts. *Underway* is a team-up with Maine artist and glaciologist Jill Pelto, whom Halcyon commissioned to paint a watercolor depicting scenarios for Maine sea-level rise. The group will interpret the painting on stage this spring, in a program that includes Samuel Barber's mournful *Adagio for Strings*.

The ensemble formed in 2018, after Sophie returned from a stint as a Fulbright scholar in Samoa, studying how the arts can influence the climate movement. After years playing together casually, the 27-year-old Waldoboro native says, "we started thinking about how we could use what we were creating to tell a story, to convey information and communicate science." They founded Halcyon (named for a lobsterboat Sophie spotted while working on an oyster farm) hoping to urge environmental stewardship through music.

Halcyon casts as wide a net for its repertoire as for its collaborators: you'll hear the classical canon alongside Appalachian folk tunes and contemporary composers like Philip Glass and Monthathi Masebe. "It's easy for string quartets to get stuck in this mode of only playing musicians who were alive 400 years ago," Sophie says. In more ways than one, Halcyon's focus includes the years to come. — B.K.

