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DANISH STRING QUARTET AND DANISH NATIONAL GIRLS' CHOIR JOIN FORCES IN A BOLD CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S VOICES



Danish String Quartet & Danish National Girls' Choir (Photo: Caroline Bittencourt)

(IRVINE, CA, FEBRUARY 20, 2026)—The Philharmonic Society of Orange County presents the internationally acclaimed **Danish String Quartet** with the celebrated **Danish National Girls' Choir** under the direction of conductor **Charlotte Rowan** on Saturday, April 11, 2026, 8pm, at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall. A pre-concert lecture by Brian Lauritzen will take place at 7pm. This performance is part of the Eclectic Orange Series, sponsored by the Jelinek Family Trust, and is also part of the Philharmonic Society's

America@250 Celebration. This performance is dedicated to The Committees of the Philharmonic Society, the volunteer force who support and implement its youth music education programs.

The program, curated to showcase the full expressive power of both ensembles, pairs contemporary works with traditional masterworks, offering a profound musical journey through the voices, stories, and creative force of women across centuries. The evening opens with Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw's *Allemande*, presented in a special arrangement for girls' choir. Audiences will encounter historical and contemporary figures, from Queen Dagmar, the 12th-century Danish royal, to Marie Tang Kristensen, a Danish housewife whose folk songs were recorded in 1907, to contemporary composers including Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Lotta Wennäkoski, and rising Danish electronic artist Astrid Sonne. The second half of the program features the highly anticipated Orange County premiere of *in wildness*, a new work by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Lang, written specifically for girls' choir and string quartet. The piece was commissioned by Danish National Girls' Choir (DR Pigeekret), Arts & Lectures at University of California Santa Barbara, Carnegie Hall, La Jolla Music Society, the Philharmonic Society of Orange County, Stanford Live, and Washington Performing Arts Society.

More than a decade ago, the Danish String Quartet was first invited to collaborate with the Danish National Girls' Choir at its annual summer concert in Copenhagen. The quartet arrived expecting conventional, polished performances but left profoundly transformed. "These girls could certainly sing," the quartet reflects, "but they were also highly original—and they possessed a tangible power. They presented a different, ambitious and exciting concert and showed us—and the audience—what a girls' choir can be." This concert aims to recreate that same revelatory experience for Orange County audiences. As legendary Danish visual artist Ursula Reuther Christiansen once declared, "The next great moment in history will belong to the women."

Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2024, the Grammy-nominated **Danish String Quartet** is widely regarded as one of the world’s leading chamber ensembles. They have been the recipients of numerous awards and appointments, including *Musical America*’s 2020 Ensemble of the Year, the Borletti-Buitoni Trust, BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, and a coveted spot in the Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two). In 2011, the quartet received the Carl Nielsen Prize, Denmark’s highest cultural honor. Praised by *Gramophone* for its “intense blend” and “constant vitality and flow,” the quartet performs to sold-out halls worldwide and is known for imaginative programming that spans classical masterworks and Scandinavian folk traditions. Their acclaimed ECM recordings include the *PRISM* series—called “essential listening” by *The New York Times*—and three folk-inspired albums, most recently *Keel Road* (2024).

Founded in 1938 by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation, the **DR Pigekest (Danish National Girls’ Choir)** is one of Denmark’s most celebrated cultural institutions and widely regarded as one of the world’s premier girls’ choirs. Comprising 50 singers ranging from ages 16 to 22, the ensemble renews the Danish song tradition with authenticity, ambition, and striking artistic power, performing more than 50 concerts annually in Denmark and abroad. Based at the DR Koncerthuset and under the patronage of Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, the choir’s repertoire spans traditional Danish songs and hymns to contemporary classical commissions and modern works. Since 2023, the ensemble has been led by British conductor **Charlotte Rowan**, who brings an international perspective to the choir’s distinctive sound and vision.

Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall is located at 615 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626. Ticket prices start at \$26 and are available at the Philharmonic Society box office at (949) 553-2422, or online at www.philharmonicsociety.org, and at the Center’s box office at (714) 556-2787.

All artists, dates, venues, programs, and prices are subject to change.

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ABOUT THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY:

Founded in 1954 as Orange County’s first music organization, the Philharmonic Society of Orange County presents national and international performances of the highest quality and provides dynamic and innovative music education programs for individuals of all ages to enhance the lives of Orange County audiences through music.

Since its inception, the Philharmonic Society has evolved and grown with the county’s changing landscape, presenting artists and orchestras who set the standard for artistic achievement from Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Yo-Yo Ma, and Renée Fleming to the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and many others. In addition, the Philharmonic Society celebrates multi-disciplinary performances under its Eclectic Orange brand and embraces music from a wide range of countries with its World Music performances. Its celebrated concerts introduce children to classical music with creative and inspiring performances, instilling music appreciation for future generations.

The Philharmonic Society’s nationally recognized Youth Music Education Programs, offered free of charge, engage more than 80,000 students annually through curriculum-based music education programs that aim to inspire, expand imaginations, and encourage learning at all levels. These programs are made possible by the Committees of the Philharmonic Society comprised of nearly 450 volunteer members who provide more than 50,000 hours of in-kind service each year. As a key youth program, the exceptional Orange County Youth Symphony and String Ensemble provide top-tier training to the area’s most talented young musicians through multi-level ensemble instruction, leadership training, touring opportunities, challenging professional repertoire, and performances in world-class venues. The Philharmonic Society also promotes life-long learning, connecting with

colleges and universities to conduct masterclasses and workshops and providing pre-concert lectures to introduce audiences to program selections.

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WHAT: Danish String Quartet
Danish National Girls' Choir
Charlotte Rowan, conductor

WHEN: Saturday, April 11, 2026, 8pm

Pre-concert lecture at 7pm by Brian Lauritzen

PROGRAM: **SHAW:** *Allemande*
Lotta WENNÄKOSHKI: "Girl"
Franz SCHUBERT: Theme from *Death and the Maiden*
Anna THORVALDSDOTTIR: *Pann heilaga kross*
Trad: *Kisti du kom*
Trad: *A shoemaker I have been*
Trad: *Queen Dagmar*
Rune SØRENSEN: *Once a Shoemaker*
Astrid SONNE: *How far*
Caroline SHAW: *And so*
Trad: *Captain O'Kane*
Carl NIELSEN: *I am often happy and yet want to cry*
Trad: 2nd bridal piece
David LANG: *in wildness** (New Work for Quartet and Choir)

WHERE: Renée & Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall
Segerstrom Center for the Arts
615 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626

TICKETS: Ticket prices start at \$26.

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