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## Grammy-Winning Turtle Island Quartet Celebrate CD Release with Concert at Bucks County Playhouse

by [BWW News Desk](#) Jan. 31, 2018

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For more than thirty years, Turtle Island Quartet has reinvented the role of the modern string quartet through its Grammy-winning albums and arrangements. This spring, the Quartet honors the impact of legendary saxophonist [Charlie Parker](#) with a new album, *Bird's Eye View*, out February 9, 2018 from Azica. The Quartet will celebrate with a CD release concert at Buck's County Playhouse (70 S. Main Street, New Hope PA 18938) on February 10, 2018 at 8 pm. The genius of Parker's improvisations almost single-

handedly catapulted jazz from pop style into art music, indelibly altering the musical landscape of America. Tickets are \$35-\$45; purchase at [www.bcptheater.org](http://www.bcptheater.org) or call 215-862-2121.

Iconic [Charlie Parker](#) classics such as "KoKo," "A Night In Tunisia," and "Dewey Square" are juxtaposed with original responses by Quartet members and intertwined with other pieces from the bebop era and beyond such as [Sonny Rollins'](#) "Airegin," "Miles Ahead" by Gil Evans/[Miles Davis](#), and "Subconscious-Lee" by [Lee Konitz](#). Joining the Quartet in January 2016, violinist Alex Hargreaves and cellist Malcolm Parson fulfill their pedigrees as brilliant young emerging stars of cross-genre string playing, offering the listener a tantalizing glimpse into what lies around the bend for this seminal American chamber music ensemble.

Providing cross genre cantus firmus for *Bird's Eye View* is TIQ founder & violinist David Balakrishnan's four-movement work "Aeroelasticity: Harmonies of Impermanence," the result of a 2014 Chamber Music America commissioning grant. "Aeroelasticity" is dedicated to and inspired by Balakrishnan's father, Dr. A.V. Balakrishnan, professor of engineering at UCLA. "Aeroelasticity" was the subject matter and title of Dr. Balakrishnan's last book, and though his son did not inherit his love of numbers, the younger Balakrishnan still finds parallels below the surface between his work and his father's: "[My father's] book intends to make meaningful and useable sense out of the incredibly complex patterns that continually changing air currents create when they interact. I see that as mirroring my own lifelong pursuit of composing stylistically integrated music drawing from apparently disparate

musical genres and dialects, sifting for universal congruities buried beneath the cultural overlay." As in most of Balakrishnan's compositions, (such as his 2016 Grammy nominated composition "Confetti Man" from the previous TIQ recording of the same name), "Aeroelasticity" incorporates musical elements from all over the globe, from bluegrass to classical Indian music.

On Bird's Eye View, Turtle Island Quartet looks to draw analogy from the visionary brilliance of Parker, to the Quartet's own continuing aspirations to similarly redefine the parameters of the traditional string quartet form, in a sense coming from the other direction.

### **About Turtle Island Quartet**

Since its inception in 1985, the Turtle Island Quartet has been a singular force in the creation of bold, new trends in chamber music for strings. Winner of the 2006 and 2008 GRAMMY® Awards for Best Classical Crossover category, Turtle Island fuses the classical quartet esthetic with contemporary American musical styles, and by devising a performance practice that honors both, the state of the art has inevitably been redefined. Cellist nonpareil [Yo-Yo Ma](#) has proclaimed TIQ to be "a unified voice that truly breaks new ground - authentic and passionate - a reflection of some of the most creative music-making today."

The Quartet's birth was the result of violinist David Balakrishnan's brainstorming explorations and compositional vision while writing his master's thesis at Antioch University West. The journey has taken Turtle Island through forays into folk, bluegrass, swing, bebop, funk, R&B, new age, rock, hip-hop, as well as music of Latin America and India ...a repertoire consisting of hundreds of ingenious arrangements and originals. It has included over a dozen recordings on labels such as Windham Hill, Chandos, Koch and Telarc, soundtracks for major motion pictures, TV and radio credits such as the Today Show, All Things Considered, Prairie Home Companion, and Morning Edition, feature articles in People and Newsweek magazines, and collaborations with famed artists such as clarinetist Paquito D'Rivera, vibraphonist Stefon Harris, guitar legends Leo Kottke and the Assad brothers, The Manhattan Transfer, pianists [Billy Taylor](#), Kenny Barron, [Cyrus Chestnut](#) and Ramsey Lewis, singers [Tierney Sutton](#) and [Nellie McKay](#), the Ying Quartet and the Parsons and Luna Negra Dance Companies.

Another unique element of Turtle Island is their revival of venerable improvisational and compositional chamber traditions that have not been explored by string players for nearly 200 years. At the time of Haydn's apocryphal creation of the string quartet form, musicians were more akin to today's saxophonists and keyboard masters of the jazz and pop world, i.e., improvisers, composers, and arrangers. Each Turtle Island member is accomplished in these areas of expertise.

As Turtle Island members continue to refine their skills through the development of repertory by some of today's cutting-edge composers, through performances and recordings with major symphonic ensembles, and through a determined educational commitment, the Turtle Island Quartet stakes its claim as the quintessential 'New World' string quartet of the 21st century.

## **ABOUT Bucks County Playhouse**

Bucks County Playhouse, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, is the oldest and largest professional Equity performing arts center in Bucks County. Under the direction of Tony Award-winning producers Alexander Fraser and Robyn Goodman, the Playhouse provides first class professional theatrical entertainment as well as community events, partnerships and arts education programming for visitors and residents of New Hope, Doylestown, Lambertville and the Delaware Valley.

Located between Philadelphia and New York, Bucks County Playhouse opened in 1939 in a converted 1790 gristmill after a group of community activists, led by Broadway orchestrator Don Walker and playwright Moss Hart, rallied to save the building. The Playhouse quickly became one of the country's most famous regional theaters, featuring a roster of American theatrical royalty including Helen Hayes, Kitty Carlisle, George S. Kaufman, Grace Kelly, Robert Redford, Bert Lahr, Walter Matthau, Angela Lansbury, Bernadette Peters, Alan Alda, Tyne Daly, Liza Minnelli and Audra McDonald and remained in continuous operation until December 2010. In 2012, the Playhouse re-opened thanks to the efforts of the Bridge Street Foundation, the nonprofit family foundation of Kevin and Sherri Daugherty, and Broadway producer Jed Bernstein.

Since its renovation, significant productions include Terrence McNally's "Mothers and Sons" starring Tyne Daly, which moved to Broadway and was nominated for two Tony Awards, and "Misery" by William Goldman based on the Stephen King novel which also went on to a Broadway run in the 2015-16 season. Two of the Playhouse's recent productions -- "Company" starring Justin Guarini, and William Finn's "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" -- were named by Wall Street Journal to its "Best of Theatre" list for 2015. The Playhouse's productions of "Steel Magnolias" and "Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story" broke box office records in 2016. The record was broken again with its production of "Guys and Dolls" in Summer 2017. Thanks to the Bridge Street Foundation and its vision for the New Hope waterfront, the Playhouse is currently in construction as it adds a 4,000-square foot riverfront cafe and bar that will open in 2018.