



**metropolis**

# **Infinite Staircase Han Chen**

**September 24 • 7:30pm • National Sawdust**

## **Infinite Staircase: Han Chen**

**Sunday, September 24 • 7:30pm  
National Sawdust • Brooklyn, NY**

“Infinite Staircase” is a commissioning project featuring the World Premiere of 18 new works for solo piano, co-commissioned by Metropolis Ensemble and pianist Han Chen, each paired with one of Hungarian-Austrian composer György Ligeti’s 18 canonic piano études.



# On the Program

## ***Pre-show – Phong Tran: Ambient Music\****

### **Set A**

- Vivian Fung: White on Black\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 15 “White on White”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 15 “White on White”
- Ligeti: Étude No. 8 “Fém”
- Molly Joyce: Push and Pull\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 8 “Fém”)
- Chiayu Hsu: Intricate rhythm on an Amis song\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 1 “Désordre”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 1 “Désordre”

## ***Pause — Phong Tran: Ambient Interlude 1\* (01:24)***

### **Set B**

- Tom Morrison: no way out but through\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 4 “Fanfares”)
- Shiuan Chang: Digital Chant\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 10 “Der Zauberlehrling”)
- Nick Bentz: Machine #1\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 16 “Pour Irina”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 4 “Fanfares”
- Ligeti: Étude No. 10 “Der Zauberlehrling”
- Ligeti: Étude No. 17 “À bout de souffle”

## ***Pause — Phong Tran: Ambient Interlude 2\* (03:12)***



## Set C

- Jihyun Kim: A leaf falls, the water ripples...\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 2 “Cordes à vide”)
- David Fulmer: New Work\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 12 “Entrelacs”)
- Meng Wang: Shadows, trailing...\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 17 “À bout de souffle”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 12 “Entrelacs”
- Ligeti: Étude No. 2 “Cordes à vide”
- Ligeti: Étude No. 16 “Pour Irina”

***Pause — Phong Tran: Ambient Interlude 3\* (00:57)***

## Set D

- Ligeti: Étude No. 5 “Arc-en-ciel”
- Gity Razaz: Fragmentation of Memory\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 5 “Arc-en-ciel”)
- Victoria Cheah: Étude: months\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 11 “En suspens”)
- Jessie Cox: Black Noise Canon\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 18 “Canon”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 11 “En suspens”
- Ligeti: Étude No. 18 “Canon”

***Pause — Phong Tran: Ambient Interlude 4\* (03:00)***



## Set E

- Fjóla Evans: Campanology\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 9 “Vertige”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 9 “Vertige”
- Jared Miller: Prelude\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 3 “Touches bloquées”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 3 “Touches bloquées”
- Nina Young: it is within you that the ghosts acquire voices\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 6 “Automne à Varsovie”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 6 “Automne à Varsovie”

### ***Pause — Phong Tran: Ambient Interlude 5\* (00:57)***

## Set F

- Sugar Vendil: pag-aaral: galing na ibon\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 7 “Galamb borong”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 7 “Galamb borong”
- Tengku Irfan: Columna finita\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 14 “Columna infinita”)
- Xinyang Wang: L’escalier du Parnasse\*\*  
(inspired by Étude No. 13 “L’escalier du diable”)
- Ligeti: Étude No. 13 “L’escalier du diable”
- Ligeti: Étude No. 14 “Columna infinita”

### ***Post-show — Phong Tran: Ambient Music\****

\* Metropolis Ensemble 2023 commission (World Premiere)

\*\* Han Chen / Metropolis Ensemble 2022-2023 co-commission (World Premiere)



## About the Project

National Sawdust presents the World Premiere of 18 new works for solo piano, co-commissioned by Metropolis Ensemble and pianist Han Chen, marking the centenary birthday of Hungarian-Austrian composer György Ligeti (1923-2006).

Each of the new works is paired with one of Ligeti's 18 renowned canonic piano études, in a solo recital performance by Han Chen. The pairing is meant for a specific inspiration for the composers to initiate their compositions. Composers can choose to study the étude, go against the étude, or just sit with the étude when they compose. They can also compose an étude, or even come up with something totally different. Nevertheless, the pairing is both conscious and subconscious, a basis for the composers to fly with their imagination.

A diverse, international cohort of contemporary composers were selected to collaborate with Han Chen and invited to study a specific Ligeti etude and create their unique response. Together, all thirty-six works will create a broad and exhilarating showcase of piano performance and composition.

"Infinite Staircase" is co-produced by National Sawdust, Han Chen, and Metropolis Ensemble (Andrew Cyr, artistic director). An immersive audiovisual experience features ambient music (Metropolis Ensemble commission, 2023) by Phong Tran inspired by Ligeti's *Etudes* and lighting design by Dominick Chang.

Learn more about [Infinite Staircase](#).

## Special Thanks



[Klavierhaus](#) and [Fazioli Pianoforti](#) are pleased to support Han Chen in his performance at National Sawdust. Klavierhaus is the authorized Fazioli concert service department in the tri-state area.

Additional thanks: Anonymous, Thomas Bown II, Paul and Libby De Rosa, Peter Solmssen, Jennifer West, June Wu, Vivian Wu, and Zander Zhou.



# Program Notes

## **Nicholas Bentz: Machine #1**

When going through Ligeti's music, and especially the etudes, I'm always captivated by his ability to construct sonic machines and moto perpetuos. I chose to respond to Pour Irina because of its machine-like nature as well as in homage to Irina Pevzner, a theory teacher of mine who was instrumental in making me the composer I am today. In Machine #1, I attempt to construct my own Ligeti-like machine, but through my own aesthetic lens.

## **Shiuan Chang: Digital Chant**

How Ligeti masterfully structured a simple material into a virtuosic and flawless piece for a piano solo is impossible to rival. I decided to go in the opposite direction in form and structure while keeping the left-hand-right-hand arpeggio motive. One will still hear the G-A-G-A-A-G opening of the original etude no.10 from time to time, but the way materials are scattered and developed is in flashbacks or a sense of sonic cubism.

## **Victoria Cheah: Étude: months**

Étude: months for Han Chen takes its inspiration from Ligeti's étude En suspens. This étude practices waiting through repetition, with or without an apparent goal, other than the practice of waiting, with failures and patience.

## **Jessie Cox: Black Noise Canon**

This short piece was inspired by György Ligeti's piano étude no. 18 "Canon." I am not directly working on the musical practice of canon writing, where melodies appear in each voice. Rather, I was inspired by Ligeti's use of chords as canons and how different sounds would appear at each instant despite the same material being played, because of how the meetings of the different moments of the musical canon create a variety of sound colors. What is also for me part of the tradition of the canon on the piano in particular, is the movement of the fingers, how the hand is split into multiple voices. Working with these two aspects, I focused on how depressed keys color each other. Thus, melodic moments are imitated by different voices in my piece but often inaudibly—keys are depressed without sound. This means that each articulated key is colored by those keys depressed, which either decayed before or which were depressed in silence.



### **Fjóla Evans: Campanology**

Campanology is written in response to György Ligeti's *Étude No. 9: Vertige* (dizziness, published in 1990). Ligeti composed overlapping chromatic lines that evoke a spiral sense of disorientation — creating a powerful experience of circular movement. In Campanology I wanted to play with the idea of dizziness as a musical feature. I started wondering, what would it be like to be inside a huge bell while it is ringing? I imagined it would be quite bewildering and overwhelming, but in quite a different way than Ligeti's spiraling chromatic runs. The concept of this miniature is also indebted to the exhibition *Plexus* by artist Camille Norment, which got me thinking about the sonic qualities of the interior of a bell.

### **David Fulmer: the wind does...**

*the wind does...* (2023), written for Han Chen, unfurls as a vivid fantasy for solo piano. Articulated in a single sonic stroke, the work emerges with interlacing (*Entrelacs*) rhythms, woven into a delicate tapestry. Fragile strands meld into denser textures, culminating in a thunderous cascade of massive chords. Finally, like a fleeting breath, the texture collapses into a solitary descending line. The temporal freedom within the notation allows Han Chen the liberty to fluidly traverse tempi throughout the performance - an ode to his virtuosity. Beyond the notes and keys, this brief fantasy is a portrait of the performer, a reflection of their artistry and spirit. The title, drawn from Emily Dickinson's evocative poem, "The Wind", resonates as a timeless source of inspiration. This work joins a lineage of piano compositions, each bearing a title that pays homage to the sonorous imagery in Dickinson's work.

### **Vivian Fung: White on Black**

*White on Black* quotes from Ligeti's *White on White* and is structured as a conflict between the primarily white notes of the original Ligeti chorale and the primarily black notes that gradually take hold of the piece. Long-held notes of the chorale from *White on White* begin the short 3-minute piece, but are increasingly interrupted by black notes — starting off as birdcalls, gradually becoming a storm, and culminating in a conflict between black and white notes. The resolution of this conflict is for the listener to decide.

### **Chiayu Hsu: Intricate Rhythm on an Amis Song**

Commissioned by Han Chen, *Intricate Rhythm on an Amis Song* is inspired by the bimodality and rhythmic patterns in Ligeti's piano etude no.1, *Désordre*. *Intricate Rhythm* starts with an introduction using a short motive taken from a famous song of Amis tribe in Taiwan. Then the music develops employing this motive with different modes; sometimes the modes are interlocked and sometimes superimposed. The rhythmic structure has asymmetric rhythms and the rhythms of 3 against 4. The placements of different accents intend to create mix meters in both voices. The closing phrase starts with a short echo from the beginning section and the whole piece ends with a loud burst.



**Tengku Irfan: Columna finita**

“Columna finita” was written in response to Ligeti’s Columna Infinită. In some ways, the musical goals are opposite of what Ligeti creates in his etude. For example, instead of the register going upwards to the limits of the piano register, the music descends downwards throughout the course of the piece. The clear arrival of cadences makes the music “finite”, in contrast to the infinite and endless feeling in Ligeti’s etude.

**Molly Joyce: Push and Pull**

With responding to Étude No. 8, I incorporated the harmonic content while also providing a textural contrast to the light and quick nature of the original etude. Therefore with my piece, I emphasized weighted articulations that build off many gestures found in the original work.

**Jihyun Kim: A Leaf Falls, the Water Ripples**

Inspired by Ligeti’s Étude No.2 “Cordes à vide”, A Leaf Falls, the Water Ripples takes the interval of perfect fifth as a main premise. The sonority of perfect fifth in the second etude evokes an image of water that flows endlessly – and with my piece, I wanted to portray how the water changes its shape to fall in soft undulating folds when touched by a leaf or wind.

**Tom Morrison: no way out but through**

“no way out but through” is a short piano piece written for and commissioned by Han Chen. It is a meditation—or, rather, a response—to Ligeti’s Étude for Piano No. 4, “Fanfares.” Ligeti employs a rapid, non-diatonic, 8-note ascending scale that repeats every bar until the etude’s coda. I wanted to work with a similar feature in my little piece, but instead of a rapid scale, I wrote a simple 9-note lydian melody that is woven and repeated through the entire piece. Both the scale and melody begin on C and have similar but differing pitch collections. As “no way out but through” unravels, the pitches surrounding the repeating melody attempt to get close to the original pitches in Ligeti’s collection but never quite get there. The brilliance in Ligeti’s Étude No. 4 is in his virtuosic use of the piano’s register. By putting the rapid scale in different octaves and framing music above and below, Ligeti’s scale takes on a life of its own—like a character that changes and morphs depending on the surrounding conflict and context. I tried to bring my approach to register in this piece, but in different, less direct ways than Ligeti’s.

**Gity Rezaz: Fragmentation of Memory**

When Han asked me to compose a solo piano work inspired by one of Ligeti’s Études, I gravitated almost immediately to “Arc-en-ciel” as my point of inspiration. I just loved the ethereal quality of this etude as well as its complex chains of harmonies. I also noticed that even hours after listening to the piece, I could still hear its mysterious and evocative lines undulating in my mind. My piece, “Fragmentation of Memory,” is therefore my homage to the power of Ligeti’s music, as it lingers in the imagination over time and becomes transfused with my own creative language.



**Sugar Vendil: galing na ibon**

My process for composing 'galing na ibon' employs choreographer Merce Cunningham's chance operation. I'm a huge Cunningham fan and I'd just taken one of dancer Patricia Lent's workshops the month before I started writing my piece. I designated each measure of Ligeti's seventh étude, 'Galamb Borong' as the gamut (1 per hexagram of the 64 total in the I-Ching), starting at 1 again after measure 64. Instead of rolling dice I tossed virtual coins (<https://www.eclecticenergies.com/iching/virtualcoins>) to determine the continuity (order). But the piece isn't just the étude re-organized: after the I-Ching revealed which bar of Ligeti was next, I reworked the notes of the measure to 1) sound more like me, 2) continue to form a phrase with what came before it, or 3) go in a new direction, before clicking "throw" again. It was like constructing an exquisite corpse with myself. Google translate translates "galing na ibon" into "great bird" but that's a little off. "Galing" is used to mean highly talented or skilled, e.g., "ang galing naman!" My Filipinx folks know what I mean!

**Meng Wang: Shadows, trailing..**

Shadows, trailing... is a piano solo composed in honor of György Ligeti's centenary in 2023. Commissioned by pianist Han Chen, the piece draws deep inspiration from Ligeti's Étude No. 17, "À bout de souffle." Taking a hint from Ligeti's approach, the composition employs a similar stretto technique but expands this concept by echoing the imitative voice within the piano itself. This intertwining of the piano's inner and outer worlds, a nod to the Eastern philosophy of Yin and Yang, helps to craft a soundscape that resonates with Eastern aesthetics. Shadows, trailing... will have its world premiere on September 24, 2023, at National Sawdust in New York.

**Xinyang Wang: L'escalier du Parnasse (The Steps to Parnassus)**

Music's rich tapestry is woven from dialogues between past and present masters. "L'escalier du Parnasse" illuminates this dialogue, capturing the bond between 20th-century maestro György Ligeti and pianist CHEN Han. While inspired by Ligeti's fervent 13th étude, "L'escalier du diable" (The Devil's Staircase), this piece veers into serene reflection rather than mirroring Ligeti's infernal intensity, celebrating both Ligeti's legacy and CHEN Han's artistry. Invoking Parnassus, a symbol of artistic zenith echoed in works by luminaries like Clementi and Debussy, this composition nods to past greats while charting a contemporary journey in music. Commissioned by Mr. Chen, the choice of "L'escalier du Parnasse" as its title seamlessly weaves this piece into a timeless narrative, underscoring the perpetual inspiration and evolution in the world of music.



# Artist Biographies

## Han Chen

[Han Chen](#) has emerged among the new generation of concert pianists as a uniquely fearless performer in a wide variety of musical settings. Gold Medalist at the 2013 China International Piano Competition and a prizewinner at the 2018 Honens International Piano Competition, he has been praised by Gramophone as “impressively commanding and authoritative” and further cited by The New York Times for his “graceful touch,” “rhythmic precision,” and “hypnotic charm,” Chen’s virtuosity is enriched by a probing commitment to new and lesser-known works, as well as the great cornerstones of the piano repertory. He made his Lincoln Center debut with Riverside Symphony at Alice Tully Hall in December 2022 performing Mozart’s early masterwork, the Piano Concerto No. 9 le Jeunehomme. In addition, he has performed as recitalist throughout Europe, North America, China, and Taiwan.

## Andrew Cyr

Grammy-nominated conductor and artistic director, [Andrew Cyr](#), founded Metropolis in 2006 to create new platforms for outstanding composers and performing artists. He has led premieres at Brooklyn Academy of Music, Celebrate Brooklyn!, Radio City Music Hall, Kimmel Center Verizon Hall, Sounds from a Safe Harbour (Cork, IE), Hamer Hall (Melbourne, AU), Cité de la Musique (Paris, FR), and The Tonight Show.

## Phong Tran

[Phong Tran](#) is a Brooklyn-based composer, electronicist, and visual artist. His works are heavily inspired by the sound of early synthesizers, late night wikipedia dives, simulation theory, RPGs, and vaporwave eccoams. Phong performs in MEDIAQUEER, a synthesizer and violin duo formed in 2018 with Darian Thomas. Phong’s solo work has been released through New Amsterdam Records, people | places | records and slashsound.

## Dominick Chang

[Dominick Chang](#) is a graduate of NYU’s undergraduate Music Technology program. Working with Max/Msp/Jitter, he is able to create generative and reactive visuals, allowing him to work with bands, film sets, and installations, creating custom light shows and visual projections. He is currently working as a freelance audiovisual engineer of mixing, live sound/lights, production and post-production sound for film and television.



## **György Ligeti**

[György Ligeti](#) (1923-2006) was a Hungarian-Austrian composer of contemporary classical music. He has been described as one of the most innovative and influential avant-garde composers of the twentieth century. He was also popularly known for his works featured in Stanley Kubrick films, including *The Shining*, *2001 A Space Odyssey*, and *Eyes Wide Shut*. Ligeti's cycle of 18 études for solo piano were composed from 1985–2001 and considered a major creative achievement following the work of Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, and Scriabin. He expanded the meaning of virtuosity, not only challenging the pianist's technique, but also lent the succeeding composers his imagination.

## **Metropolis Ensemble**

New York-based [Metropolis Ensemble](#) is a Grammy-nominated nonprofit organization dedicated to commissioning and producing ambitious projects in contemporary music, and expanding opportunities for emerging professional musical creators and performers to collaborate and inspire new audiences. Metropolis has commissioned hundreds of new works and site-specific projects, gathering independent expert musicians in premiere performances at renowned venues such as Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Hollywood Bowl, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Lincoln Center, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



# Composer Biographies

## Nick Bentz

Nick Bentz (b. 1994; Charleston, SC) is a composer and violinist whose art centers around the blurring, juxtaposition, and amalgamation of stylistic idioms into singular sonic statements. Finding inspiration in historical materials, Nick's work often explores the destructive relationship between sound artifacts and time. In his work he seeks to render intimately personal spaces imbued with an individual sense of storytelling and narrative. Nick is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Brown University, specializing in Music and Multimedia Composition, having earned prior degrees in composition and violin from the Peabody Institute and the University of Southern California.

## Jessie Cox

Described by VAN Magazine as "A multifaceted Black Swiss composer, performer, and scholar," Jessie Cox makes music about the universe—and our future in it. Through avant-garde classical, experimental jazz, and sound art, he has devised his own strand of musical science fiction, one that asks where we go next. He takes Afrofuturism as a core inspiration, asking questions about existence, and the ways we make spaces habitable. Known for its disquieting tone and unexpected structural changes, his music steps into the unknown, and has been referred to by the New Yorker as an example of "dynamic pointillism," a nebulous and ever-expanding sound world that includes "breathy instrumental noises, mournfully wailing glissandi, and climactic stampedes of frantic figuration." A dedicated collaborator, Cox has worked as a composer and drummer with ensembles and musicians such as the Sun Ra Arkestra, LA Phil, Ensemble Modern, and the JACK Quartet; at Festivals such as the Lucerne Festival, MaerzMusik, and Opera Omaha.

## Shiuan Chang

Described as "spiritual, light and comforting." by Classic Agenda (FR), Shiuan Chang is the winner of 2018 Chicago Civic Symphony Composer Prize, 2021 Asian Cultural Council award, and the 2021 Djerassi Artist Residency. His recent major productions include "Sounding Light (2020)" with the Cloudgate Contemporary Dance company; two with the Taiwan International Festival of Arts : "I-Village (2021)" with the Sheng-Xiang Rock Band and the National Symphony Orchestra, and "A thousand stages, Yet I have never quite lived (2021)" with the Beijing Opera artist Hei-Min Wei and National Symphony Orchestra, directed by Kengsen Ong. Mr. Chang's music has been performed nationally and internationally at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall (New York), Suntory Hall (Tokyo), Jordan Hall (Boston), Moscow Philharmonic Chamber Hall, Berlin Philharmonic Chamber Hall, Chicago Symphony Center, Taiwan National Concert Hall, Bartok Hall (Hungary), ODC Theater (San Francisco), Le Phenix Valenciennes (FR), Royaumont (Paris), Archipel Festival (Geneva), Tenso Music Days (Belgium), Boston Early Music Festival, Innovation Series Taipei, Grafenegg Festival, and the Bartok



Festival (Hungary). He has worked with the Cloudgate Contemporary Dance Company, Tonkünstler Orchestra, Taiwan Philharmonic, Taipei Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Civic Symphony Orchestra, Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble, Asasello Quartett, TANA Quartet, Mivos Quartet, Atlas Ensemble, Ensemble Multilaterale, Ensemble Musicatreize, Earplay Ensemble, signal ensemble, Antico Moderno, Neue Vocalisten Stuttgart, Ekmeles Ensemble, Les Metabole, Princeton Singers, and Orkest de Ereprijs. He studied with Malcolm Peyton at New England Conservatory as well as with Chaya Czernowin, Stefano Gervasoni, and Maestro Peter Eotvos.

## **Victoria Cheah**

Victoria Cheah (b. 1988, New York, NY) is a multi-disciplinary composer whose work has been commissioned / presented by andPlay, Yarn / Wire, Wavefield Ensemble, MATA Festival, Guerilla Opera, Ensemble Dal Niente, Vertixe Sonora, Marilyn Nonken, Trio Okho, Transient Canvas, Trio de Kooning, PRISM Quartet, and performed by others. She has attended academies including Sommerakademie Schloss Solitude, Darmstadt, Fontainebleau, VIPA, SICPP, The Walden School, and others. Her teachers and mentors include David Rakowski, Eric Chasalow, Yu-Hui Chang, Steven Takasugi, Chaya Czernowin, Philippe Leroux, Shafer Mahoney, Shawn Crouch, as well as her students and colleagues. Cheah holds a B.A. in music from City University of New York Hunter College & Macaulay Honors College and a Ph.D. in music composition & theory at Brandeis University. She has taught music, research, and writing related courses as an instructor at Longy School of Music, Brandeis University, and as a teaching fellow at Harvard University. From 2011-2015, Cheah served as the founding executive director of Sound Icon and has worked with new music organizations Talea Ensemble, Manhattan Sinfonietta, Argento Chamber Ensemble, Composit, and others towards the realization of contemporary music events. She currently serves as Assistant Professor at Berklee College of Music, a co-director of Score Follower, and a bartender at Winnie's.

## **Fjóra Evans**

Fjóra Evans is a Canadian/Icelandic composer and cellist. Her work explores the visceral physicality of sound while drawing inspiration from patterns of natural phenomena. The Mississippi Public Radio program Auto Correct describes her work as a “texturing fog.” Commissions and performances have come from musicians such as Bang on a Can All-Stars pianist Vicky Chow, Grammy-winning ensemble eighth blackbird, and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. Her work has been featured on the MATA Festival, Bang on a Can Marathon, Gaudeamus Music Week, Cello Biennale Amsterdam 2020, Ung Nordisk Musik, and the American Composers Orchestra's SONiC Festival. As a performer, she has presented her own work at Cluster Festival of New Music, (le) poisson rouge, Mengi in Reykjavík, and at Toronto's Music Gallery. Fjóra has participated in residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts, and KulturKontakt Austria, among others. She has studied composition with Julia Wolfe, cello performance with Matt Haimovitz, and completed a master's degree in composition at the Yale School of Music in 2018. In September 2019 she began doctoral studies in



composition at Columbia University where her research is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Recent projects include a new song cycle for Dúplum duo based on a taxonomy of Icelandic plant life, the premiere of Self-Care by Fonema Consort, VC2 cello duo's rendition of Ridge & Furrow featured on the album Beethoven's Cellists, a performance of Lung as part of Gaudeamus Music Week 2021 by the Residentie Orkest, cellist Maya Fridman's performance of Reið-Hagall-Bjarkan out on TRPTK, and the release of Bearthoven's recording of Shoaling on Cantaloupe Music. Fjóra is the 2017 winner of the Robert Fleming Prize from the Canada Council for the Arts.

## **David Fulmer**

Winner of the 2019 Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, David Fulmer has garnered numerous international accolades for his bold compositional aesthetic combined with his thrilling performances. A Guggenheim Fellow, and a leader in his generation of composer-performers, the success of his Violin Concerto at Lincoln Center in 2010 earned him international attention and resulted in immediate engagements to perform the work with major orchestras and at festivals in the United Kingdom, Europe, North America, and Australia. Fulmer made his European debut performing and recording his concerto with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Matthias Pintscher in 2011. That same year, Fulmer made his debut at Tanglewood appearing with the work. A surge of recent and upcoming commissions includes new works for the New York Philharmonic, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Berlin Philharmonic, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, Alte Oper Frankfurt, BMI Foundation, Concert Artists Guild, Washington Performing Arts, Kennedy Center, Fromm Music Foundation, Koussevitzky Foundation, and Tanglewood. Mr. Fulmer was recently the recipient of both the Charles Ives Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Carlos Surinach Commissioning Award from BMI. He is the first American recipient of the Grand Prize of the International Edvard Grieg Competition for Composers. He has also received the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, the BMI Composer Award, the Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a special citation from the Minister of Education of Brazil, the Hannah Komanoff Scholarship in Composition from The Juilliard School, and the highly coveted George Whitefield Chadwick Gold Medal from the New England Conservatory. Fulmer appears regularly and records often with the premier new music ensembles in New York, including the International Contemporary Ensemble, Talea Ensemble, Argento New Music Project, Speculum Musicae, the Group for Contemporary Music, and the New York New Music Ensemble. His work has been recorded by the Ensemble Intercontemporain. He has appeared recently on the Great Performers Series at Lincoln Center, The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and Live from Lincoln Center broadcasts. He graduated from The Juilliard School.



## Vivian Fung

Juno Award-winning Canadian composer Vivian Fung has a unique talent for combining idiosyncratic textures and styles into large-scale works, reflecting her multicultural background. Praised by the Philadelphia Inquirer for her “stunningly original compositional voice,” and by National Public Radio for being “one of today’s most eclectic composers,” Ms. Fung has numerous compositions to her credit, including Clarinet Quintet: Frenetic Memories, a reflection on her travels to visit minority groups in Yunnan, China; Earworms, commissioned by Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra, which musically depicts our diverted attention spans and multi-tasking lives; and The Ice Is Talking for solo percussion and electronics, commissioned by the Banff Centre, using three ice blocks to illustrate the beauty and fragility of our environment. Fung has a deep interest in exploring cultures through travel and research. With a grant from the Canada Council, she and Royce Vavrek will travel to Cambodia in 2023 to continue research for a new opera based on her family’s experience surviving the Cambodian genocide. Highlights of upcoming performances include the world premiere of Vivian Fung’s fifth String Quartet by Canada’s Lafayette String Quartet and a new piece for Houston’s ROCO; international performances of her critically-acclaimed elegy for the pandemic, Prayer, including concerts throughout U.S. and Canada and a version for viola and piano championed by the Carr-Petrova Duo in Israel and Bulgaria; and the European premieres of A Child’s Dream of Toys at Germany’s Theater Erfurt, Baroque Melting with Switzerland’s Berner Symphonieorchester led by Gemma New, and Prayer by the Argovia Philharmonic. Mary Elizabeth Bowden tours her Trumpet Concerto to Philharmonia Northwest, Waynesboro Symphony, San José Chamber Orchestra. Fung is the 2023 Composer-in-Residence at Alba Music Festival Composition Program in Italy. A portrait album featuring the Jasper Quartet in Vivian Fung’s first four string quartets will be released on Sono Luminus in 2023, and Elizabeth Bowden has recorded her Trumpet Concerto with the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras for future release on Cedille Records. Ms. Fung has received numerous awards and grants, including the 2015 Jan V. Matejcek New Classical Music Award for achievement in new music from the Society of Composers, Authors, and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), a Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, the New York Foundation for the Arts’ Gregory Millard Fellowship, and grants from ASCAP, BMI, American Music Center, MAP Fund, American Symphony Orchestra League, American Composers Forum, and the Canada Council for the Arts. She is an associate composer of the Canadian Music Centre and served on the board of the American Composers Forum. Many distinguished artists and ensembles around the world have embraced Fung’s music as part of their core repertoire, including the Chicago Sinfonietta, Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Montreal Symphony, National Arts Centre Orchestra (Canada), Detroit Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, San José Chamber Orchestra, American String Quartet, Staatskapelle Karlsruhe, Metropolis Ensemble, Civitas Ensemble, and Jasper Quartet. Ms. Fung’s Glimpses for prepared piano has been championed by a diverse group of pianists, including Conor Hanick, Jenny Lin, Sarah Cahill, Margaret Leng Tan, and Bryan Wagorn. Conductors with whom she has collaborated include Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Alexander Shelley, Miguel Harth-Bedoya,



Peter Oundjian, Cristian Macelaru, Mei-Ann Chen, James Gaffigan, Long Yu, Andrew Cyr, Rei Hotoda, Barbara Day Turner, Daniel Meyer, Edwin Outwater, Steven Schick, Gerard Schwarz, and Bramwell Tovey. Born in Edmonton, Canada, Ms. Fung began her composition studies with composer Violet Archer and received her doctorate from The Juilliard School in New York, where her mentors included David Diamond and Robert Beaser.

### **Chiayu Hsu**

Born in Banqiao, Taiwan, Chiayu Hsu is an associate professor of composition at UW-Eau Claire. She was the winner of Lakond prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, San Francisco Choral Society commission, Left Coast Chamber Ensemble composition contest, grand prize from Symphony Number One, Suzanne and Lee Ettelson Composer's Awards, IAWM Search for New Music, Copland House Award, Lynn University international call for scores, the 2010 Sorel Organization recording grant, music culture 2009 International Competition for Composers, the Sorel Organization's 2nd International Composition Competition, the 7th USA International Harp Composition Competition, ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer's Awards, the Maxfield Parrish Composition Contest, the Renée B. Fisher Foundation Composer Awards among others. Her work has been performed by the London Sinfonietta, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, the Nashville Symphony, the Toledo Symphony, the American Composers Orchestra, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra, the Lynn Philharmonia Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra in Taiwan, Aspen Music Festival Contemporary Ensemble, Eighth Blackbird, Ciompi Quartet, and Prism Quartet. She received her Ph.D. at Duke University, Master of Music at Yale University School of Music, and Bachelor of Music at the Curtis Institute of Music.

### **Tengku Irfan**

Malaysian-born Tengku Irfan has appeared around the world as a pianist, composer, and conductor, and has been praised by The New York Times as "eminently cultured" and possessing "sheer incisiveness and power". Irfan has performed with orchestras worldwide with conductors Claus Peter Flor, Neeme Järvi, Kristjan Järvi, David Robertson, Robert Spano, Osmo Vänskä, George Stelluto, Jeffrey Milarsky, among others. His compositions have been premiered by highly acclaimed ensembles, and have won international awards including three ASCAP Morton Gould Awards in 2012, 2014, and 2017. Mr. Irfan started his piano lessons at age 7 and developed an interest in composing shortly after. His major debut performance was at age 11, performing Beethoven's Piano Concerto in E flat (Wo04) with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Claus Peter Flor, where he improvised his own cadenzas for all three movements. Other performance highlights include the Juilliard Orchestra, AXIOM, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Sao Paulo State Youth Orchestra, Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Aspen Chamber Symphony, Peoria Symphony Orchestra, MDR Sinfonieorchester, Aspen Philharmonic Orchestra, Lexington Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, and a solo recital at the la



Virée classique Festival Montréal, on invitation from Kent Nagano. Irfan also won the Aspen Music Festival Prokofiev Piano Concerto No. 2 Competition in 2013 and was resident pianist for the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble for four years. His works have been premiered by the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Peoria Symphony Orchestra, and the MDR Simfonieorchester. His orchestral composition titled Keraian, was premiered by the New York Philharmonic, with Case Scaglione conducting. Mr. Irfan currently studies at the Juilliard School as a double major in piano & composition under Yoheved Kaplinsky and Robert Beaser respectively, and also studies conducting with Jeffrey Milarsky and George Stelluto. Irfan served as Teaching Artist Intern for the New York Philharmonic Composer's Bridge Program.

### **Molly Joyce**

Molly Joyce has been deemed one of the “most versatile, prolific and intriguing composers working under the vast new-music dome” by The Washington Post. Her work is concerned with disability as a creative source. Molly's creative projects have been presented and commissioned by Carnegie Hall, TEDxMidAtlantic, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Bang on a Can Marathon, Danspace Project, Americans for the Arts, National Sawdust, Gaudeamus Muziekweek, National Gallery of Art, Classical:NEXT, and in Pitchfork, Red Bull Radio, and WNYC's New Sounds. She is a graduate of Juilliard, Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Yale, and alumnus of the YoungArts Foundation. She holds an Advanced Certificate in Disability Studies from City University of New York and is a Dean's Doctoral Fellow at the University of Virginia in Composition and Computer Technologies. She has served on the composition faculties of New York University, Wagner College, and Berklee Online.

### **Jihyun Kim**

Jihyun Kim's music has been performed at numerous international venues, including Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Cloisters at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Sawdust, Bruno Walter Auditorium at Lincoln Center, Merkin Hall at Kaufman Music Center, Seiji Ozawa Hall, Harris Hall in Aspen, DiMenna Center, Palazzo Medici Riccardi in Florence Italy, and Seoul Arts Center in Korea. Eminent ensembles, such as the American Composers Orchestra, Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra, Cornell Symphony Orchestra, Cornell Festival Orchestra, Tanglewood New Fromm Players, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Da Capo Chamber Players, JACK Quartet, PUBLIQuartet, Society for New Music, Asciano Quartet, Switch Ensemble, Karien Ensemble, and Chanticleer LAB Choir, and were featured in the Underwood New Music Reading, Tanglewood Music Center, Aspen Music Festival, Mayfest, USF New Music Festival, Midwest Composers Symposium, and Korean Music Expo have presented Ms. Kim's compositions. Ms. Kim was the winner of the Consortium Commission from American Composers Orchestra/Alabama Symphony/American Youth Symphony, ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers Award, the League of Composers/ISCM Composers Competition, the American Prize in Orchestral music, the Libby Larsen Prize, PUBLIQ Access, Florence String Quartet Call for Scores, the 32nd Chang-ak



Composition Competition, the Otto R. Stahl Memorial Award/ Russell Distinguished Teaching Award from Cornell University, and received honorable mentions from Red Note New Music Composition Competition, TEMPO New Music Ensemble Call for Scores, among many others. Ms. Kim is currently a doctoral candidate in composition at Cornell University and holds a master's of music degree in composition from the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University and a bachelor's degree in composition from Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea. Jihyun recently joined the Oberlin Conservatory as Visiting Assistant Professor in Composition.

### **Jared Miller**

Described as a “rising star” by MusicWorks magazine, JUNO-Nominated composer Jared Miller has collaborated with the American Composers Orchestra, the Victoria and Nashville Symphonies, the symphony orchestras of Vancouver, Toronto, Detroit and Edmonton, The Attacca Quartet, Latitude 49, the New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute, the Emily Carr String Quartet and Standing Wave. His music has been featured and recognized in the New York Philharmonic's Biennial (2014), the ISCM World Music Days (2017 & 2019), Vancouver's Queer Arts Festival (2010, 2015 & 2019), and the Festival Internacional de Jóvenes Orquestas (2019.) Recent accolades include SOCAN's Jan V. Matejcek Award, young composer prizes from the SOCAN and ASCAP Foundations, and a nomination for the 2020 JUNO Award for Classical Composition of the Year. He has also held residencies at the Banff Centre, I-Park's International Artist-in-Residence Program, and with the Victoria Symphony from 2014-2017. An advocate for musical education and outreach, Miller has taught and performed at The Juilliard School's Music Advancement Program, the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Connects Program, BC's Health Arts Society, Vancouver's Opera in the Schools, and New York's Opportunity Music Project. Mr. Miller holds a doctoral and a master's degree from the Juilliard School where he studied with Samuel Adler and John Corigliano. He has also studied at the University of British Columbia with Stephen Chatman, Dorothy Chang, Sara Davis Buechner, and Corey Hamm. He is currently Assistant Professor of Music Composition at Dalhousie University.

### **Tom Morrison**

Tom Morrison (b. 1992) is a composer of acoustic and electroacoustic music. He has written for leading new music groups, including the Aizuri Quartet, Alarm Will Sound, Latitude49, Sö Percussion, Contemporaneous, Yarn/Wire, and Albany Symphony's new music chamber orchestra, Dogs of Desire, among others. His work has been released on Eric Huckin's album, Drifter, and Robert Fleitz's album, Leaving a Room. Recently, he contributed the title track to Red Dog Ensemble's debut album, Neon and Oak. He won the 2016 Thailand International Composition Festival Competition and first place in the 2021 Symphonia Caritas Competition for first-generation college students. Mr. Morrison is a graduate of the Juilliard School (MM) and the University of Montana (BM) in Missoula, where he cultivated his love for nature and the environment. He holds an MFA and Ph.D. from Princeton University, where he will be a Post Graduate Researcher in the fall 2023 semester.



## **Gity Razaz**

Hailed by the New York Times as “ravishing and engulfing,” Gity Razaz’s music ranges from concert solo pieces to large symphonic works. With intense melodies and inventive harmonic languages, Gity’s compositions are often dramatically charged. As described by John Corigliano: “...her Middle Eastern roots have merged with her Western sensibilities to produce music that is both original and startling. She is on her way to becoming a major force in contemporary music.” Ms. Razaz is an active collaborator involved in projects across disciplines from opera and modern ballet to electro-acoustic sonic landscapes. She has been commissioned by the BBC Symphony Orchestra for the Last Night of the BBC Proms at London’s Royal Albert Hall and by the Houston Grand Opera. Ms. Razaz’s music has been commissioned and performed by Washington National Opera, Seattle Symphony, Brooklyn Youth Chorus, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, National Sawdust, National Ballet School of Canada, Ballet Moscow, Chicago Composers Orchestra, Chautauqua Opera Company, Amsterdam Cello Biennale, La Jolla Symphony and Chorus, American Composers Orchestra, former cellist of the Kronos Quartet Jeffrey Zeigler, violinist Jennifer Koh, cellist Inbal Segev, violinist Francesca dePasquale, Juilliard Symphony Orchestra, Norwegian string ensemble 1B1, Metropolis Ensemble, New York Choreographic Institute, American Festival for the Arts, and classical guitarists Duo Noire, among many others.

## **Sugar Vendil**

Sugar Vendil is a composer, pianist, and interdisciplinary artist based in Lenapehoking, known as Brooklyn, NY. A late bloomer, she began making her own work after over a decade of primarily performing as a pianist with her ensemble The Nouveau Classical Project (2008-2021) and started dancing in 2020. Her compositions span acoustic and electronic music, and her interdisciplinary practice integrates sound and movement which germinates from a kinesthetic and improvisatory approach. Ms. Vendil was awarded a 2022 NPN Creation Fund grant and a 2021 MAP Fund grant to support “Antonym:the opposite of nostalgia,” a memoir of a Filipinx American childhood. Her work “Simple Tasks 2” is included in Jennifer Koh’s Grammy-award winning album “Alone Together.” Ms. Vendil enjoys collaboration. In 2021, she scored Jih-E Peng’s short film “May We Know Our Own Strength” based on Amanda Phingbodhipakkiya’s installation of the same name. Vendil is part of choreographer Emily Johnson/Catalyst’s “Being Future Being.” Her album, “May We Know Our Own Strength” is available on Gold Bolus Recordings.

## **Meng Wang**

Meng Wang is a Chinese composer currently based in Cincinnati. Her music has been performed internationally by notable orchestras and ensembles, including the Brussels Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Columbus Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony, MSM Composer's Orchestra, China Youth Symphony; Aspen



Contemporary Ensemble, Thin Edge New Music Collective, Longleash Trio, F- Plus Ensemble, among others. Ms. Wang served as a composer fellow at Aspen Music Festival, Cabrillo Music Festival, and was selected to participate in 2019 [tactus] Young Composers Forum with Brussels Philharmonic and American Composers Orchestra EarShot readings in 2018. Recent commissions include a percussion ensemble piece for Shanghai Symphony in Chamber Concert series and a piano concerto for CCM Concert Orchestra. Ms. Wang is currently pursuing her DMA in composition at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of music under the guidance of Prof. Douglas Knehans. She earned her Master's degree at Manhattan School of Music. Her primary instructors include composers Wenchen Qin, Reiko Fütting, and Andreia Pinto Correia.

### **Xinyang Wang**

Xinyang Wang is a contemporary classical composer who has received numerous international accolades. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Composition and Theory from the Sichuan Conservatory, where Prof. CHANG Yingzhong mentored him. He further pursued his studies at the Manhattan School of Music, earning a Master's Degree, and recently completed his Ph.D. in Music Composition and Theory at the University of Pittsburgh in August 2022, under the guidance of Profs. Eric Moe, Mathew Rosenblum, and Amy Williams. Mr. Wang's compositions are characterized by an innovative blend of Eastern and Western traditions. His work has been recognized with the First Prize of the 2020 Toru Takemitsu Award, and he has collaborated with prestigious orchestras such as the Tokyo Philharmonic and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. With dedication and passion, Wang continuously pushes the boundaries of contemporary classical music.

### **Nina Young**

Composer and sonic artist Nina C. Young creates works ranging from acoustic concert pieces to interactive installations that explore aural architectures, resonance, timbre, and the ephemeral. Her music has garnered international acclaim through performances by the American Composers Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Phoenix Symphony, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, the Aizuri Quartet, Sixtrum, the JACK Quartet, and wild Up. Winner of the 2015-16 Rome Prize, Nina has received recognition from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the Civitella Ranieri, Fromm, the Montalvo Arts Center, and BMI. Recent commissions include Tread softly for the NYPhil's Project 19, a violin concerto for Jennifer Koh with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and a multimedia performative installation piece for the American Brass Quintet and EMPAC's EMPAC's High-Resolution Wave Field Synthesis Loudspeaker Array. Ms. Young holds degrees from MIT, McGill, and Columbia, and is an Assistant Professor of Composition at USC's Thornton School of Music. She serves as Co-Artistic Director of NY-based new music sinfonietta Ensemble Échappé. Her music is published by Peermusic Classical.