

THE MUSIC OF SHEILA SILVER: A CELEBRATION

Wednesday, February 7, 8:00 PM
Recital Hall | Staller Center for the Arts

To the Spirit Unconquered (1992)

- I. With great intensity—strained, sometimes violent
- II. As if in a dream
- III. Very fast, rhythmic and precise
- IV. Slow and stately

TRIO DE NOVO

Brian Bak, violin; Phuc Phan Do, cello; Hsin-Chiao Liao, piano

Life is Always Changing from *The Wooden Sword* (2010)

Libretto by Stephen Kitsakos

Thursday from *Beauty Intolerable*,

A Songbook based on the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay (2013)

RISA RENAE HARMAN, soprano

TIMOTHY LONG, piano

Sonnet: “What lips my lips have kissed” from

Beauty Intolerable, A Songbook based on the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay

Tarik, It’s Always You, aria from *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (work in progress)

Libretto by Stephen Kitsakos

LUCY FITZ GIBBON, soprano

BRIAN BAK, violin; RYAN McCULLOUGH, piano

On Loving

Three Songs for Diane Kalish in memoriam (2015)

- I. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! (Wm. Shakespeare)
- II. Sonnet: Mindful of you the sodden earth in spring (Edna St. Vincent Millay)
- III. Love is a Magic Ray (Khalil Gibran)

LUCY FITZ GIBBON, soprano

GILBERT KALISH, piano

Intermission

Subway Sunset (1999)

JOHN FELDMAN, video
GILI SHARRET, bassoon
ARIELLE LEVIOFF, piano

Twilight's Last Gleaming (2008)

- I. War Approaching
- II. Souls Ascending
- III. Peace Pretending

GILBERT KALISH, CHRISTINA DAHL, pianos
LUSHA ANTHONY, BRIAN SMITH, percussion

PROGRAM NOTES

I joined the Stony Brook Music Faculty in the Fall of 1979. I've loved being part of this vibrant musical community which has given me so much and which it has been my privilege to serve. All of the pieces on this program were written during my time there. Thank you Stony Brook Music Department for being a such a big part of my life and for this special concert. I'm sad to be stepping down from teaching and enter the Emerita status, but I'm also excited about the next chapter of my life filled with new musical projects and directions.

TO THE SPIRIT UNCONQUERED was commissioned by Chamber Music America for the Guild Trio who premiered it at the Port Jefferson High School in 1992. Over the next three years the Guild Trio toured internationally with the piece and recorded it. One of my most performed works, "*Spirit*" was inspired by the writings of Primo Levi on the Holocaust. It is about the ability of the human spirit to transcend the most difficult of circumstances, to survive and bear witness. The image of a silent scream haunts the opening. Levi talks about how, upon exiting the trains at Auschwitz, he knew he had to control his fear in order to survive. He also speaks about how the camp inmates, to maintain some kind of normalcy and humanity to their lives, would talk of food and family parties and sweet memories. The second movement, played *attaca*, comes from this idea of sweet rememberings and introduces an innocent almost child-like tune that will reappear in the *finale*. The third movement is a "*dance barbare*" – the camp guards, not the prisoners, are the barbarians. This is cast in a *scherzo* (but in 5 instead of 3) and then segues into the *finale*, which recalls music from the first and second movements. The booming chords from the opening return, but are eventually overcome, or at least, lessened. Ultimately, while Levy's writings serve as a source of inspiration, the music is abstract and could be applied to any human condition of suffering and transcendence.

THE WOODEN SWORD is a one act opera that was composed as a result of my winning the 2007 Sackler Prize in Music Composition for Opera. With origins in both Afghan and Jewish cultures, this folk tale of how a simple cobbler's humility and cleverness provide insight for a mighty king is one of the world's great archetypal stories. This operatic telling focuses on the powerful but anxious King Zamani who seeks to discover the secret of happiness from Hazim, the poor cobbler. Zamani, disguised as a wanderer, visits Hazim and his family at night and witnesses their joyful singing. The King then makes a series of decrees designed to reduce Hazim to despair, not believing that the cobbler can stay true to his simple philosophy — to trust in joy and not in fear. Hazim, unaware that he is being personally challenged, outwits the king's obstacles at every turn. In this aria, however, Hazim is feeling defeated by the King's most recent decree. His wife, Benefsha, gently encourages him to trust that he will find a way out of his predicament. Risa Renae Harman sang the role of Benefsha when Stony Brook produced the opera under the baton of David Lawton in 2011.

THURSDAY is one of the first songs I composed in what eventually became **Beauty Intolerable**, *A Songbook based on the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay*. Tim Long and Risa Harman premiered it in the Spring of 2012 at a concert honoring mezzo-soprano Elaine Bonazzi, to whom it is dedicated. It is Edna at her most irreverent and saucy. The *Songbook* grew to 14 songs and was developed with the support of American Opera Projects.

WHAT LIPS MY LIPS HAVE KISSED is the last of the Edna songs I composed for **Beauty Intolerable**. One of Millay's most famous poems, an aging woman looks back on her life and loves on a lonely rainy night. The pitter-patter of the rain on the window forms the basis of the piano accompaniment.

A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS, is being developed with our production partners, American Opera Projects, with the support of many grants including a New York State Council of the Arts

Commissioning Grant for both me and my librettist, Stephen Kitsakos, two Opera America Toulmin Awards for Female Composers, and a National Endowment for the Arts development grant. Set in contemporary Afghanistan and based on the international best-selling novel by Khaled Hosseini, the opera tells the story of two women twenty years apart and from different walks of life who are each forced into marriage with the same troubled and abusive man. The depth of the mother-daughter bond that they form is revealed in their acts of sacrifice and heroism as they struggle to survive their difficult circumstances.

Lucy Fitz Gibbon has sung the role of Laila in all three of the workshops that have taken place over the last 3 years. "*Tarik, it's always you*" is Laila's first aria in the opera. While she will eventually become the second wife of the brutal Rasheed, here she is an innocent fourteen year-old. After arguing with her mother, she steps onto the balcony to reveal to the night her feelings for sixteen year old Tarik, her childhood companion, for whom she is beginning to have mature feelings of love and desire.

ON LOVING, *Three Songs for Diane Kalish, in memorium*, was written over two years. First came the Shakespeare, from *Romeo and Juliet*, "*O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright.*" It seemed a fitting tribute to the love that Gil and Diane Kalish shared. A while later came the Millay sonnet, "*Mindful of you the sodden earth in spring.*" It is about mourning but also about remembering and is the first Edna poem that I set. When Dawn Upshaw asked for a third song to complete the cycle, I chose *Love is a Magic Ray*, by Khalil Gibran. It celebrates love in all its parameters – physical, spiritual, and eternal.

SUBWAY SUNSET was made in collaboration with my husband, filmmaker John Feldman. When digital video cameras first became available, John was eager to experiment with them and this was one of his first efforts. We conceived the music and visuals together. The video was shot from the shores of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge where we

often walked, as well as in the New York Subway. It is a poetic meditation on the city that we both love. Shot in 2000 with a clear view of the Twin Towers, we later dedicated it to the memory of those who perished during 9/11.

TWILIGHTS LAST GLEAMING was composed for Gilbert Kalish, Christina Dahl and Eduardo Leandro. Composed between 2005 and 2007, it was a response to the Iraq war. The titles of the movements sum up my perspective: *War Approaching, Souls Ascending, Peace Pretending*.

As I worked on this piece, various images passed through my mind: tanks lumbering through villages and deserts spewing death and destruction; bells and chimes calling up the souls of fallen soldiers; insincere smiles of lying and corrupt statesmen. A "chant" or "chorale" tune emerges out of the opening music of the first movement and reappears in various contexts throughout the piece. Tonal and non-tonal elements exist side-by-side; triads are stripped of their "functional" meaning. The appearance of the Star Spangled Banner in the *finale* is a "wake-up call" for our country to embody the ideals for which it claims to be fighting. You will hear the tune where the words – "and our flag was still there" appear – but you will hear the music sputter and not complete the "still there." Will we survive and remake ourselves?

As in *To the Spirit Unconquered*, the source of inspiration of a piece of music is only the starting point. Hopefully, the music goes beyond.

TEXTS

Life is always changing

Aria from *The Wooden Sword*

Libretto by Stephen Kitsakos

Go sit down my husband. Rest and be still.
You will think of something. I know that you will.

Life is always changing. Nothing ever stays the same.

Life is always changing. Nothing ever stays the same.

Seedlings grow. Ice caps melt.

Snow turns into rain.

Trees are felled. Feathers plucked.

Wheat is plowed for grain.

But if our love is constant. If our love is true.

Even when life changes. Our love will see us through.

Hazim, your love is constant.

Hazim, your love is true.

Hazim, your heart is filled with courage.

Hazim, ... I love you.

Rest now and be still.

You always say the path will appear.

Hazim, I trust in you and I know that it will.

Thursday

From *"Beauty Intolerable"*

A Songbook based on the poetry of Edna St.

Vincent Millay

And if I loved you Wednesday,

Well, what is that to you?

I do not love you Thursday--

So much is true.

And why you come complaining

Is more than I can see.

I loved you Wednesday,--yes-- but what

Is that to me?

Sonnet: What lips my lips have kissed,

From *"Beauty Intolerable"*

A Songbook based on the poetry of Edna St.

Vincent Millay

What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why,
I have forgotten, and what arms have lain
Under my head till morning; but the rain
Is full of ghosts tonight, that tap and sigh
Upon the glass and listen for reply,
And in my heart there stirs a quiet pain
For unremembered lads that not again
Will turn to me at midnight with a cry.
Thus in the winter stands the lonely tree,
Nor knows what birds have vanished one by one,
Yet knows its boughs more silent than before:
I cannot say what loves have come and gone,
I only know that summer sang in me
A little while, that in me sings no more.

Tarik, It's Always You

Aria from *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

Based on the novel by Khaled Hosseini

Libretto by Stephen Kitsakos

Tarik. Tarik.

It's always you

dancing in my mind.

You make me laugh and cry

as I rock myself to sleep.

You take me from my waking thoughts

and bring me to my dreams.

Tarik, it's always you

dancing in my mind.

I want to feel your fuzzy lip tickling mine.

To feel you kiss my neck, my back, my breasts, my belly.

And then I'll know, it's not a dream, it's really you.

How can you be like a brother, when

I want you as another?

As my lover, Tarik. As my husband, Tarik. Forever.

Tarik, it's always you,

dancing in my mind

On Loving,

Three Songs for Diane Kalish, in memorium

I. From **Romeo and Juliet** by William Shakespeare

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

II. **Sonnet** by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Mindful of you the sodden earth in spring,
And all the flowers that in the springtime grow,
And dusty roads, and thistles, and the slow
Rising of the round moon, all throats that sing
The summer through, and each departing wing,
And all the nests that the bared branches show,
And all winds that in any weather blow,
And all the storms that the four seasons bring.
You go no more on your exultant feet,
Up paths that only mist and morning knew,
Or watch the wind, or listen to the beat
Of a bird's wings too high in air to view,--
But you were something more than young and
sweet and fair – and the long year remembers you.

III. **Love is a Magic Ray** by Kahlil Gibran

Love is a magic ray
emitted from the burning core
of the soul
and illuminating
the surrounding earth.
It enables us
to perceive life
as a beautiful dream
between one awakening
and another.

SHEILA SILVER, COMPOSER

“Only a few composers in any generation enliven the art form with their musical language and herald new directions in music. Sheila Silver is such a visionary.” (Wetterauer Zeitung, Germany, 2004) Sheila Silver’s (b. 1946, Seattle) compositions have been commissioned and performed internationally. Recent honors for her current opera based on Khaled Hosseini’s international best-selling novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, include: a 2013 Guggenheim Fellowship; a 2016 Opera America Commissioning Award and a 2014 Opera America Discovery Grant for Female Composers, both funded by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation; selection in Opera America’s 2016 New Works Forum; a 2015 NEA Opera Development grant and a 2016 NYSCA Commission Award with her development partners, American Opera Projects. The work will be premiered by the Seattle Opera in 2020. Sheila recently returned from her third trip to India where she studies Hindustani music with Pandit Kedar Narayan Bodas. She is incorporating an authentic Hindustani color into her score for *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and using it in additional works as well.

Other honors include the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Prize in Opera; Bunting Institute Fellowship; Rome Prize; Prix de Paris, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Composer Award; twice winner of the ISCM National Composers Competition; and awards and commissions from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Camargo Foundation, the MacDowell Colony, New York State Council of the Arts, the Barlow Foundation, the Paul Fromm Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Cary Trust. Silver recently began a collection of piano pieces, based on a mixture of Hindustani ragas and Western traditional forms. *Nocturne, Inspired by Raga Jog*, was premiered by Gilbert Kalish at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in March 2015 and *Toccata, Inspired by Ragas Bhairav and Ahir Bhairav*, will be premiered by Christina Dahl next week in Greensboro, NC. Two more pieces, each composed for a different pianist, will complete

the set. Another upcoming project is a piece for French horn, string orchestra, and Tibetan singing bowls -- for Ann Ellsworth, horn, and the Philharmonia Northwest, Julia Tai, conductor.

Symbiotic Earth: How Lynn Margulis rocked the boat and started a scientific revolution, a documentary for which Sheila created the film score, will be released this Spring with premieres in Oxford, Barcelona, London, Berlin, and Berkeley.

Sheila lives in Spencertown, New York, with her husband, filmmaker John Feldman. They have a son, Victor, who is a sophomore in college. She has served as Professor of Music at the State University of New York, Stony Brook since the Fall of 1979.

Her music is published by Lauren Keiser Music, Studio 4 Productions, and Argenta Music and is recorded on various labels. She holds a BA from University of California, Berkeley, and a PhD from

Brandeis University. Her teachers include Gyorgy Ligeti, Arthur Berger, Harold Shapero, Erhard Karkosckha and Jacob Druckman. For more information go to: www.sheilasilver.com



PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

Lusha Anthony is a New York-based percussionist with a strong passion for contemporary music. Interested in collaborative works and electro-acoustic music, her goal as a performer is to share the beauty of sound with audiences inside and outside the contemporary music scene. Some of her performance highlights include several premiered works, including *Concertpop* by Andrea Mazzariello and *Busker Fantasy* by Peter Van Zandt Lane, in which she performed as a featured soloist. She has

also performed with New York Chamber Brass, Honolulu Symphony, and the Oahu Choral Society. Lusha received her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Conservatory of Music at Purchase College, SUNY and is currently working towards earning her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Stony Brook University.

Korean-American violinist **Brian Bak** enjoys a career as a sought after performer and pedagogue. Mr. Bak has been featured as a soloist with the Tampa Bay Symphony, the Central Florida Philharmonic, the Sewanee Festival Orchestra, and the Chicago Chamber Orchestra, among others. In 2016, he was the winner of the Stony Brook University Concerto Competition and performed the Elgar Violin Concerto with Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra. A versatile instrumentalist, Mr. Bak is also an accomplished cellist, and has performed with the Florida Young Artists Orchestra and the Chicago Chamber Orchestra as a soloist on cello.

An avid chamber musician, Mr. Bak is a 2 time winner of the Ackerman Chamber Music Competition. As a member of Trio de Novo and the Emanio String Quartet, Mr. Bak has held chamber music residencies at the Banff Centre, the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, and the New Music for Strings Festival in Aarhus, Denmark. He is also a regular performer with the highly touted New York Classical Players.

A dedicated teacher, Mr. Bak is a faculty member at the New York Music School, and regularly gives masterclasses and lessons at festivals and schools across the USA. He was previously a Teaching Artist at Yale University, and a faculty member at MALI (Music & Art of Long Island), where he taught both violin and cello.

Christina Dahl, *piano*, has been on the piano faculty and served as Director of Chamber Music at SUNY-Stony Brook since 2000. Also at Stony Brook, she has premiered pieces written for her and Gilbert Kalish. She was both a faculty member and chair of the piano department at the Eastern Music Festival, and subsequently joined the faculty at the Icicle Creek Music Center. She also was on the piano

faculty at Lawrence University and a visiting faculty member at the Cleveland Institute, Peabody Institute, and Ithaca College. She has given masterclasses at New England Conservatory, Royal College of Music Stockholm, and on the Steinhardt series at NYU. She was a cultural ambassador for the U.S. State Department twice. She has played at the Gilmore International Piano Festival, Aspen, the Banff Centre, the Steans Institute at Ravinia, and twice was a fellow at Tanglewood. Christina has performed at Weill Hall, the National Gallery, and Merkin Hall. She has been featured several times on Performance Today, and also has appeared on KUSC in Los Angeles, Wisconsin Public Radio, WQXR, and WNYC. Christina has recorded with her husband Richard Stout, trombonist in the Cleveland Orchestra, and she can be heard in recordings on the Bridge, Albany, and Tzadik labels.

Lucy Fitz Gibbon is a dynamic musician whose repertoire spans the Renaissance to the present. The Berkshire Review for the Arts praised Lucy's "agile and beautifully focused soprano of exceedingly wide range, uniform timbre, and great flexibility... a remarkable performer who stood out among many other remarkable musicians."

A graduate of Yale University, Lucy is the recipient of numerous awards for her musical and academic achievements. A frequent participant in such festivals as Music at Marlboro and Tanglewood, Lucy has worked closely with numerous composers including John Harbison, Sheila Silver, Christopher Stark, David Hertzberg, Pauline Oliveros, and Anna Lindemann. Lucy also holds an artist diploma from The Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory and a master's degree from Bard College Conservatory's Vocal Arts Program. She currently holds the position of Visiting Lecturer at Cornell University. For more information, see www.lucyfitzgibbon.com.

American soprano **Risa Renae Harman** has been widely acclaimed for her technical virtuosity and communication skills as an artist. For her recital at Trinity Church, The New York Times noted, "But she is that rare creature among singers, a really

good recitalist...she seemed to have something to say in all five languages she was singing in."

From Richmond, Virginia, Miss Harman received her Doctor of Musical Arts and Masters of Music degrees from Stony Brook University, an Artist Diploma in Opera from the Hartt School of Music and a Diploma with Distinction from the Franz Schubert Institute in Austria. Miss Harman is the recipient of numerous awards and career grants, including the Lee Schaenen Foundation, the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, Sullivan Foundation, Shoshana Foundation, Palm Beach Opera, Lola Hayes Foundation, Liederkranz Foundation, YWCA Studio Club, Washington International, the D'Angelo Vocal Competition and a winner of the Dalton Baldwin Mélodie prize in the Lotte Lehmann Vocal Competition. As a winner of the American Jenny Lind Competition, she made a concert tour of Sweden and appeared with Elisabeth Söderström in a gala benefit concert honoring Jenny Lind's birthday.

An Artist-in-Residence and Head of the Voice Department at the Bay View Music Festival in Michigan for the past several seasons, her performances have included Broadway and Opera favorites, and recitals that boasted such diverse repertoire as Schubert's *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, Andre Previn's *Four Songs* for soprano, cello and piano, Chausson's *Chanson Perpetuelle*, Haydn's *Welsh Airs and Scottish Songs* and Mozart's *Exsultate, jubilate*. In appreciation of her artistry, the Karen Schuilling Endowed Chair was created. Miss Harman currently resides in New York.

The profound influence of pianist **Gilbert Kalish** as an educator and pianist in myriad performances and recordings has established him as a major figure in American music-making. This season he appears with the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic, performs at the Ojai Music Festival, and holds a residency at the San Francisco Conservatory. In 2006 he was awarded the Peabody Medal by the Peabody Conservatory for his outstanding contributions to music in America. He was the pianist of the Boston Symphony Chamber Players for 30 years, and was a founding

member of the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, a group that flourished during the 1960s and 70s in support of new music. He is particularly known for his partnership of many years with mezzo-soprano Jan DeGaetani, as well as for current collaborations with soprano Dawn Upshaw and cellists Timothy Eddy and Joel Krosnik. As an educator and performer he has appeared at the Banff Centre, the Steans Institute at Ravinia, the Marlboro Music Festival, and Music@Menlo; from 1985 to 1997 he served as chairman of the Tanglewood faculty. His discography of some 100 recordings embraces both the classical and contemporary repertoires; of special note are those made with Ms. DeGaetani and that of Ives' *Concord Sonata*. A distinguished professor at SUNY Stony Brook, Mr. Kalish has been an Artist of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center since 2006.

Described as "elegant" in the New York Times, pianist **Arielle Levioff** has appeared as a soloist at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium and Weill Hall, Merkin Hall, and Alice Tully Hall. As a collaborative artist she has performed throughout the United States, as well as in London, France, and Italy. Her concerto engagements include the Rapides Symphony (LA), the Lower Merion Symphony (PA), the Astoria Symphony, the Christ Church Festival Orchestra in Oyster Bay (NY), and the Seniors Orchestral Society of New York. At the 92nd Street Y in New York City, she has been on the faculty of the School of Music since 2005, and teaches piano and The Art of Listening to Music for the Himan Brown Senior Program. Ms. Levioff is also the music director of the Point Counterpoint Adult Chamber Music Workshop in Brandon, Vermont. From 2005 to 2009 she was the artistic director of Goliard Concerts, an organization based in Queens dedicated to community outreach and the commissioning of new chamber works by young composers. Ms. Levioff holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts at SUNY Stony Brook University, as a student of Gilbert Kalish. Find out more about her at www.ariellelevioff.com.

Raved for her stirring yet cordial touch, Taiwanese-born pianist **Hsin-Chiao Liao** has established a presence as one of today's foremost rising artists. In 2011, Hsin-Chiao moved to the United States and has since enjoyed a versatile career as a recitalist, chamber musician, and collaborative artist. As an avid chamber musician, Hsin-Chiao has collaborated with acclaimed artists including Colin Carr, Jennifer Frautschi, Cheng-Hou Lee, Philip Setzer, Arnaud Sussmann, and Carol Wincenc. Her festival appearances include Icicle Creek Chamber Festival, Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, Music@Menlo, and the Heifetz International Music Institute.

Hsin-Chiao is currently a doctoral candidate at Stony Brook University, New York, under the tutelage of Gilbert Kalish.

Timothy Long is a Native American musician of Muscogee Creek and Choctaw descent from the Thlopthlocco Tribal Town. He has been praised by critics for his "sharp conducting" (*Washington Post*), and his orchestras have triumphed with displays of "breadth, depth and color" (*Riverfront Times*) and "brilliant playing" (*Rocky Mountain News*).

Tim is currently an Associate Professor at SUNY-Stony Brook and Artistic Director of Voices of Hope. His former posts include Associate Conductor at the New York City Opera and Assistant Conductor of the Brooklyn Philharmonic. He is a graduate of Oklahoma City University and the Eastman School of Music.

Pianist **Ryan MacEvoy McCullough** has developed a unique career as soloist and collaborator, at home with music ranging from the standard repertoire to electroacoustic improvisation. He has appeared as concerto soloist with numerous orchestras, including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic, and has performed alongside the Mark Morris Dance Group and contemporary ensemble eighth blackbird. He has performed at such festivals as the Tanglewood Music Center, Token Creek Chamber Music Festival, Sarasota Festival,

Methow Valley Chamber Music Festival, and Nohant International Chopin Festival, and in March of 2015 co-directed *Environs Messiaen*, a festival at Cornell University celebrating the naturalist aesthetic of French composer Oliver Messiaen.

Ryan holds his B.A. from Humboldt State University and M.Mus. from the University of Southern California, as well as Artist Diplomas from the Colburn Conservatory and The Glenn Gould School. He has studied primarily with Deborah Clasquin, David Louie and John Perry, in addition to influential work with Stephen Drury, Leon Fleisher, and Peter Serkin. Ryan is currently DMA candidate in Contemporary Performance Practice at Cornell University where he works with pianist Xak Bjerken and composer Kevin Ernste.

Vietnamese-born cellist **Phuc Phan** has appeared in different parts of the world as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral musician. He has been the principal cellist of the Pacific Music Festival orchestra under Valerie Gergiev, the New York Classical Players Orchestra, the Napa Valley Institute Orchestra, and the Asian Youth Orchestra. He has collaborated in concert with cellist Colin Carr, violinists Philip Setzer, Eugene Drucker, violist Larry Dutton and bassoonist Frank Morelli.

Phuc is currently pursuing his doctoral degree with Colin Carr at Stony Brook University. He is playing on a 1919 Zimmerman cello, generously loaned to him by the Carlsen Cello Foundation in Seattle, USA.

Bassoonist **Gili Sharett** performs with the New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theater, American Symphony, New York City Opera Orchestra and on Broadway. She played her Carnegie Hall solo recital debut in 2004. She also recently gave a recital at the International Double Reed Society in New York. Her numerous festival appearances include the Verbier Music Festival and the Bard Summer Music Festival. Ms. Sharett has recorded *Mozart's piano Concerti 22 & 24* with pianist David Greilsammer and Suedama

Ensemble for Naïve, *The Light in the Piazza* for Nonesuch (Grammy nomination), and *Water* with the Rafi Malkiel Ensemble for Tzadik. She appeared as a soloist on WQXR for the McGraw Hill Young Artists Showcase. As an active educator Gili has played for the New York Philharmonic Education series, Young Audiences of New York and Connecticut, Midori and Friends and the 92 Street Y.

She completed a BA at the Rubin Academy of Music in Tel Aviv. She completed a MM and a DMA at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Ms. Sharett has been currently on the faculty of Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College since 2010, The Bloomingdale School of Music and Point CounterPoint in Vermont. She is a recipient of the American-Israel Cultural Foundation scholarship. For her upcoming debut solo CD Gili has commissioned works by Sheila Silver, Peter Winkler and Noam Sivan.

She studied with Mordechai Rechtman, Kim Laskowski, Dennis Godburn and Arlen Fast.

Percussionist **Brian Smith** has a versatile performance career that bridges historical, contemporary, and experimental musical practices. He plays baroque timpani and percussion with the Staunton Music Festival. As a modern orchestral percussionist, Brian has performed with ensembles throughout the U.S. and Europe, appearing in world-class concert halls including the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and the Berlin Philharmonie. His

work as a contemporary percussionist incorporates many electro-acoustic and multimedia pieces, including experimental audio-visual works that utilize animated notational schemes. His ethnographic interests include West African drumming and dance from Ghana, Togo, and Benin. Brian received degrees from the Cincinnati College – Conservatory of Music and Rice University. He is completing a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree at Stony Brook University.



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