

Sunday, February 24, 2013, 11am & 3pm  
Wheeler Auditorium

*First Stage for Families*

## Oakland Folkharmonic & Teslim



*with Special Guests*

Miles Jay, *bass*  
Tobias Roberson, *percussion*

### PROGRAM

*The program will be announced from the stage. There will be no intermission.*

*Cal Performances' 2012–2013 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

### OAKLAND FOLKHARMONIC

The **Oakland Folkharmonic** is Shira Kammen and Kaila Flexer's new string ensemble featuring the two of them plus Kyla Danysh and sisters Rachel and Danielle Taylor on a variety of stringed instruments, including violin, viola, velle, and tarhui. The repertoire of this ensemble ranges from traditional modal music of Greece, Turkey, and the Middle East to medieval music and original compositions by Ms. Flexer, Ms. Kammen, Ross Daly, and Kelly Thoma.

**Kaila Flexer** (*violin, tarhui*) is a violinist, composer, and music educator. In addition to performing and recording with Teslim, Ms. Flexer also performs with Shira Kammen and three other fiddlers in the Oakland Folkharmonic. Ms. Flexer founded and produced *Klezmer Mania!*, a much-loved annual Bay Area event for over ten years (1989–2002), and currently produces *Pomegranates & Figs: A Feast of Jewish Music*. She has been at the helm of such bands as Third Ear, Next Village, and Kaila Flexer's Fieldharmonik, ensembles that featured her original material. She has performed both nationally internationally with her own ensembles, as well as with the Hollis Taylor-Kaila Flexer Duo, Club Foot Orchestra, and Kitka Women's Vocal Ensemble. In addition, she has recorded two CDs of original music for Compass Records (Nashville). Ms. Flexer has a thriving studio of students of all ages. She encourages folk musicians to read music, classical musicians to improvise and to play by ear, and everyone to enjoy music and to find and appreciate their own voice.

Multi-instrumentalist **Shira Kammen** (*viola, viola, velle*) has spent well over half her life exploring the worlds of early and traditional music. A member for many years of the early music Ensembles Alcatraz and Project Ars Nova, and Medieval Strings, she has also worked with Sequentia, Hespèrion XX, the Boston Camerata, Kitka, the King's Noyse, the Newberry and Folger consorts, the Oregon, California, and San Francisco Shakespeare festivals, and is the

founder of Class V Music, an ensemble dedicated to providing music on river rafting trips. She has performed and taught in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Israel, Morocco, Latvia, Russia, and Japan, and on the Colorado, Rogue, Green, Grande Ronde, East Carson, and Klamath rivers.



Violinist **Kyla Danysh**, a Berkeley native, is a literacy teacher and musician who has been playing the violin since she was four. She studied classical and Klezmer music throughout her childhood and adolescence, and was a member of the University Opera and Orchestra at UC Santa Cruz. As an adult, Ms. Danysh has explored her passion for improvisation with the Son Jarocho and Son Huasteco traditions of Mexico, traveling to Veracruz on multiple occasions to record and perform. Most recently, Ms. Danysh is enjoying the humbling process of learning to play gypsy jazz in the tradition of Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli, a dream of hers since she was 16. In addition to playing the violin, Ms. Danysh loves hanging out in the Oakland redwoods, and working with teenagers.

Violinist and violist **Rachel Taylor**, an Oakland native, began studying violin at age nine at the Crowden School. In 2002, Ms. Taylor joined the Oakland Youth Orchestra, where she participated in tours to Australia, New Zealand, and Greece. In 2004, she attended the San Domenico School and Virtuoso Program. That year, Ms. Taylor was also the recipient of *From the Top's* Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award. She graduated from Northwestern University's School of Music, and throughout her musical career has enjoyed master classes with Bonnie Hampton, Yuri Bashmet, the Alexander String Quartet, the Jupiter Quartet, the Cavanni String Quartet, and many others. She is currently a preschool teacher in Seattle, Washington,

and continues her musical endeavors with the Oakland Folkharmonic.

Violinist and violist **Danielle Taylor**, a native of Oakland, started playing the violin in the fourth grade in the Oakland public schools. Since then, she has attended the Crowden School, graduated from the San Domenico School Virtuoso Program in San Anselmo, and played in both the Berkeley and Oakland youth orchestras. She recently graduated from Oberlin Conservatory and College with degrees in violin performance and African American studies. She enjoys playing listening to and learning different music, playing chamber and orchestral music, and teaching. She is the proud mother of a two-year-old daughter!

## TESLIM



**Teslim** (*tes-leem*) means both “commit” and “surrender” in Turkish and features two well-known Bay Area musicians: violinist Kaila Flexer and Gari Hegedus on *oud*, Turkish *saz*, Greek *lauoto*, and other (mostly plucked) stringed instruments. This potent duo performs Greek, Turkish and Sephardic music. In addition, both Ms. Flexer and Mr. Hegedus are composers whose original music is based on these fertile traditions.

**Kaila Flexer** (*violin, tarhui*) (see above).

In addition to playing in **Teslim**, **Gari Hegedus** (*oud, mandocello, divan saz, baglama*) is sought after for his very personal and heartfelt approach to music. He performs with the world music groups Janam, the Helladelics, Eliyahu and the Qadim Ensemble, Hamed Nikpay, and numerous other Bay Area Balkan ensembles. He is also a luthier and spends many hours making instruments—repairing old *sazes* and *ouds* he finds and coaxing out the true voice of these treasures. Mr. Hegedus has studied with *oud* master Naseer Shamma. He has toured with the Mevlevi Dervish (Sufi) Order of America and continues to participate in Turkish ceremonial and devotional gatherings around the country.

## SPECIAL GUESTS



**Miles Jay** (*bass*) is an internationally active contrabassist, multi-instrumentalist, and composer. From his roots in jazz and classical music, Mr. Jay has devoted himself to the music of the eastern Mediterranean, having based himself out of Cairo and Beirut the last six years to work as a musician and develop his sound. Inspired to expand the musical role of the bass in Near Eastern music, Mr. Jay has invented and hand-built his own unique instrument, the Contrabass Sintir, which combines attributes of several traditional Arabian/North African instruments, with the playing position of an upright bass. To his playing approach, Mr. Jay has adapted a whole range of melodic techniques from Arabic, Turkish, and Greek music. he has performed in over 20 countries, in such venues as Carnegie Hall, the Emirates Palace, and the United Nations, with such artists as Youssou N’Dour, Ziad Rahbani, Naseer Shamma, the Cairo Symphony Orchestra, Mashroa Layla, Omar Faruk Tekbilek, Ross Daly, Trygve Seim, Fathya Salama, Azam Ali and Niyaz, Zeid Hamdan, and Dr. Ali Jihad Racy. His 2012 solo recording, *The Troposphere*, has just been released.



Coming home from a five-year sabbatical in India, where he studied Carnatic violin and voice, **Tobias Roberson** (*percussion*) brings new depth and character to the shores of America through his reappearance on Middle Eastern and Balkan percussive instruments. Mr. Roberson is renowned for his innovative style and savvy improvisations on the *darbuka* and *cajón*. He regularly teaches international workshops on finger cymbals and Middle Eastern percussion. He has collaborated with many dance troupes, including Fat Chance Belly Dance and Rachel Brice & The Indigo. Mr. Roberson is currently a member of the world jazz quintet Elameno and has worked closely in the past with the Toids, Stellamara, Kitka, and the UC Santa Barbara Middle Eastern Ensemble.