

OJAI AT BERKELEY

VIJAY IYER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

The four programs presented in Berkeley this month mark the seventh year of artistic partnership between the Ojai Music Festival and Cal Performances and represent the combined efforts of two great arts organizations committed to innovative and adventurous programming.



Vijay Iyer (*music director*), the Grammy-nominated composer-pianist, was described by *Pitchfork* as “one of the most interesting and vital young pianists in jazz today,” by the *LA Weekly* as “a boundless and deeply important young star,” and by Minnesota Public Radio as “an American treasure.” He has been voted *DownBeat* magazine’s Artist of the Year three times—in 2016, 2015, and 2012—and was named *DownBeat*’s Pianist of the Year in 2014, a MacArthur Fellow in 2013, and a Doris Duke Performing Artist in 2012. In 2014 he began a permanent appointment as the Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts in the Department of Music at Harvard University.

The New York Times observes, “There’s probably no frame wide enough to encompass the creative output of the pianist Vijay Iyer.” Iyer has released 20 albums covering remarkably diverse terrain, most recently for the ECM label. The latest include *A Cosmic Rhythm with Each Stroke* (2016), a collaboration with Iyer’s “hero, friend, and teacher,” Wadada Leo Smith; *Break Stuff* (2015), featuring the Vijay Iyer Trio; *Mutations* (2014), featuring Iyer’s music for piano, string quartet, and electronics; and *RADHE RADHE: Rites of Holi* (2014), the score to a film by Prashant Bhargava, performed with the renowned International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE).

The Vijay Iyer Trio (Iyer, Stephan Crump on bass, and Marcus Gilmore on drums) made its name with two acclaimed and influential albums. *Accelerando* (2012) was named Jazz Album of the Year in three separate critics polls, by the *Los Angeles Times*, Amazon.com, and NPR. Hailed by *PopMatters* as “the best band in jazz,” the trio was named 2015 Jazz Group of the Year in the *DownBeat* poll, with Iyer having earlier received an unprecedented “quintuple crown” in their 2012 poll (Jazz Artist of the Year, Pianist of the Year, Jazz Album of the Year, Jazz Group of the Year, and Rising Star Composer). *Historicity* was a 2010 Grammy nominee and was named the top jazz album of 2009 by the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and numerous other publications.

Iyer’s 2013 collaboration with poet Mike Ladd, *Holding It Down: The Veterans’ Dreams Project*, was hailed as the Jazz Album of the Year by the *Los Angeles Times*. Along with their previous projects—*In What Language?* (2004) and *Still Life with Commentator* (2007)—*Holding It*

Down rounded out a trilogy of politically searing albums about post-9/11 American life.

Iyer's compositions have been commissioned and premiered by Bang on a Can All-Stars, The Silk Road Ensemble, Ethel, Brentano Quartet, Brooklyn Rider, Imani Winds, American Composers Orchestra, ICE, Chamber Orchestra Leopoldinum, Matt Haimowitz, and Jennifer Koh. Iyer has performed, recorded, and collaborated with musical pioneers Steve Coleman, George Lewis, Butch Morris, Roscoe Mitchell, Henry Threadgill, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Dr. L. Subramaniam, Steve Lehman, Craig Taborn, Oliver Lake, Ambrose Akinmusire, Tyshawn Sorey, Matana Roberts, poets Amiri Baraka and Mike Ladd, novelist Teju Cole, and rapper Himanshu Suri.

Iyer is the director of The Banff Centre's International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music and the 2015–16 artist-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He holds a doctorate in music cognition from the University of California, Berkeley, and his writings have appeared in *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, *Wire*, *Music Perception*, *JazzTimes*, *Journal of the Society for American Music*, *Critical Studies in Improvisation*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies*.

Vijay Iyer is a Steinway artist.



Before his appointment as president of the Ojai Music Festival in 2015, **Jamie Bennett** was the chief operating officer of Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) in Los Angeles for six years. He has worked extensively in nonprofits and as an executive in media companies in Los Angeles and London. Bennett has also been a business advisor, investor, and director with the Pasadena Angels, which specializes in local emerging growth companies.

Bennett served as CEO of worldwide productions for London-based Pearson Television, as CEO of Los Angeles-based ACI television, and as a senior vice president at Disney's Buena Vista Television Productions in Burbank. Prior to working for the Disney Company, he worked for CBS, including five years as general manager of KCBS-TV in Los Angeles.

Bennett holds an MBA from Harvard University and a BA in political science from the University of California, Berkeley. He has served on the Public Television Advisory Board at the Annenberg School at USC and on the boards of the National Environmental Trust in Washington (DC), St. Nicholas Theatre in Chicago, and Marlborough School in Los Angeles, among others.



Thomas W. Morris was appointed artistic director of the Ojai Music Festival starting with the 2004 festival. Recognized as one of the most innovative leaders in the orchestra industry, he has served as the long-

time chief executive of both the Cleveland Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Morris is currently active nationally and internationally as a consultant, lecturer, teacher, and writer.

As artistic director of the Ojai Music Festival, Morris is responsible for artistic planning, and each year appoints a music director with whom he collaborates on shaping the Festival's programming. During his tenure, audiences have increased and the scope of the festival has expanded, including the addition of Ojai at Berkeley, a collaborative partnership with Cal Performances.

Morris was a founding director of Spring for Music, and served as the project's artistic director. He currently serves as a member of the board of directors of the Interlochen Center for the Arts. He is also an accomplished percussionist.

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL
MUSIC DIRECTORS

		1980	Lukas Foss
		1981	Daniel Lewis
		1982	Robert Craft
1947	Thor Johnson	1983	Daniel Lewis
1948	Thor Johnson	1984	Pierre Boulez
	Edward Rebner	1985	Kent Nagano
1949	Thor Johnson	1986	Kent Nagano
1950	Thor Johnson		Stephen Mosko
1951	William Steinberg	1987	Lukas Foss
1952	Thor Johnson	1988	Nicholas McGegan
1953	Thor Johnson		Sir Peter Maxwell Davies
1954	Robert Craft		Diane Wittry
1955	Robert Craft	1989	Pierre Boulez
	Igor Stravinsky	1990	Stephen Mosko
1956	Robert Craft	1991	John Harbison
	Igor Stravinsky		Sir Peter Maxwell Davies
1957	Aaron Copland	1992	Pierre Boulez
	Ingolf Dahl	1993	John Adams
1958	Aaron Copland	1994	Michael Tilson Thomas
1959	Robert Craft	1995	Kent Nagano
1960	Henri Temianka	1996	Pierre Boulez
1961	Lukas Foss	1997	Emanuel Ax
1962	Lukas Foss		Daniel Harding
1963	Lukas Foss	1998	Mitsuko Uchida
1964	Ingolf Dahl		David Zinman
1965	Ingolf Dahl	1999	Esa-Pekka Salonen
1966	Ingolf Dahl	2000	Sir Simon Rattle
1967	Pierre Boulez	2001	Esa-Pekka Salonen
1968	Robert LaMarchina	2002	Emerson String Quartet
	Lawrence Foster	2003	Pierre Boulez
	Michael Tilson Thomas	2004	Kent Nagano
1969	Michael Zearott	2005	Oliver Knussen
	Stefan Minde	2006	Robert Spano
	Michael Tilson Thomas	2007	Pierre-Laurent Aimard
1970	Pierre Boulez	2008	David Robertson
1971	Gerhard Samuel	2009	Eighth Blackbird
1972	Michael Zearott	2010	George Benjamin
1973	Michael Tilson Thomas	2011	Dawn Upshaw
1974	Michael Tilson Thomas	2012	Leif Ove Andsnes
1975	Michael Tilson Thomas	2013	Mark Morris
1976	Aaron Copland	2014	Jeremy Denk
1977	Michael Tilson Thomas	2015	Steven Schick
1978	Calvin Simmons	2016	Peter Sellars
1979	Lukas Foss	2017	Vijay Iyer

A MESSAGE FROM MUSIC DIRECTOR

Vijay Iyer



Thank you for joining us for these special selections from the Ojai Music Festival, which took place last weekend, a few hundred miles south of here. It's a special thrill for me to return to UC Berkeley, where I did my doctoral studies in the 1990s. Those years in the Bay Area made me the artist and person that I am today; what you'll hear over these four concerts (selected from more than a dozen that I curated for Ojai) marks the return of several trajectories that first intersected here in the Bay Area nearly a quarter century ago—creative collaborations across generations, traditions, and disciplines. I am honored to be a featured composer and pianist throughout this festival, but I'd like you to know that, despite appearances, this festival is really not all about *me*; rather, it's concerned with different notions of *us*."

Represented here are many ongoing relationships: my 12-year partnership with Wadada Leo Smith; my more-than-20-year collaboration with Rudresh Mahanthappa; performances with my longtime associates Tyshawn Sorey and Stephan Crump; our 17th performance with International Contemporary Ensemble of my score to the film *RADHE RADHE: Rites of Holi* by my dear friend, the late, great Prashant Bhargava. But also represented is a great deal of new energy: Rudresh's and my new project with two of our heroes, Ustad Zakir Hussain and Padma Shri Aruna Sairam; the second performance of my violin concerto, performed by the brilliant Jennifer Koh; and the Bay Area premiere of my friend and mentor George Lewis' opera on the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM).

By now you might have heard or read my suggestion that we should replace the word "genre" with "community"—a very different word, concerned not with styles, but with people. I realize that "community" has become a no-less-hackneyed term, too wishful, too forced, invoked far too often. My intent was only to underscore a simple truth about music: in listening to each other, we become connected. When done with patience and compassion, listening can elicit recognition of the other as a version of one's own self.

This kind of empathic listening shakes us out of our habitual role as musical "consumers," by reminding us that music is the sound of human action, and not a disembodied substance. It de-centers "the composer" as the primary actor in music, and reorients us instead towards the shared present: being together in time. Empathic listening begins to bring all of us in, music makers and observers alike, towards a shared purpose.

Here we find common cause with Judith Butler's *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, her recent far-reaching meditations on the politics inherent in the act of gathering. When we, as assembled bodies, are able to theorize a common purpose—to reflect upon ourselves, or to dream together, if you prefer—that is the moment that we become political; that is when we are first able to unite around something larger than the self. In this sense, I would add, the moment we commit to empathetic listening, to hearing one another as fellow human beings, we immediately have the potential for not just community, but equality and justice, through direct action and collective transformation. And I am certain that such moments, such purposeful shared presence—a *power stronger than itself*—will emerge, here, this weekend, with and among each other.

It is not news to anyone here that we are in a tumultuous moment, marked by oppression, danger, and rampant abuses of power. But there is a glimmer of something that music offers us. It was Wadada Leo Smith who said that the function of live music is "to transform that [observer's] life in just an instant, so that when they go back to the routine part of living, they carry with them a little bit of something else." This experiential residue, this embodied memory, this unnamed "something else" that you will carry back with you, represents our very future in a time of fierce urgency and precarity; it refers to how we all choose to bring our newly forged collective awareness forward into the world.

So I thank you, once again, for assembling, and for listening.



Up, Against Walls

"It takes a village to raise a child."

—Yoruba proverb

And it takes a village to create a song. Music grew out of shared activity and experience: to mark, to celebrate, to recall the rhythms of the seasons; the rituals of birth, life, and death; the representations of cultural identity.

But villages have changed. Families and clans once clustered by a stream or a crossroads. With time, roads became highways, rail lines, flight routes, and web links. Our villages today are global, our streams course along the internet. So what about our songs? Do we sing now into the ether? Are our clustered identities now defined by algorithms tracked and monetized by corporations? Ojai at Berkeley, a selection of four programs from the 2017 Ojai Music Festival, challenges this dystopian vision with a simple avowal: that even in a global culture, music, like politics, is still local and involves real-time interaction between minds and bodies (sometimes even machines!). Call it, if you will, a reaffirmation of the village.

Vijay Iyer prefers to speak of communities. He discovered his as a graduate student right here at UC Berkeley, playing in an Oakland club with older, more experienced players. And ever since, his own creative juices have been stimulated by similar encounters across boundaries of difference: across generations and divisions of gender, ethnicity, and background. Cultures have always been nourished by difference, and the dynamic flux of musical culture is animated

by the fluid substance of sound itself. The best of today's hybrid, genre-defying musical idioms arise not from slipping into assumed identities, but from communication and exchange across difference that reach toward the deep well-springs of our shared experience.

This, then, is a festival about communities, including communities of like-minded performers and ensembles like ICE—back for a third year as Ojai's house band—whose cross-disciplinary concerts will feature recent works by Vijay Iyer and George Lewis. Jennifer Koh will perform the Bay Area premiere of Iyer's new violin concerto, and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, heard in Cliff Colnot's new chamber arrangement for ICE, is refracted in Prashant Bhargava's beguiling film about the Hindu rites of Holi, *RADHE RADHE*, with a score by Iyer.

A central work this weekend is George Lewis' *Afterword, an opera*—a celebration of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), founded over 50 years ago by African-American artists on the South Side of Chicago. Lewis has described the AACM as a mutual aid society, "a community of people who are all engaged in personal transformation, a practice of the self that looks outward toward the community." The AACM has been a major force in Vijay Iyer's creative life and the opening-night Berkeley concert concludes with his improvisations with legendary trumpet player Wadada Leo Smith, one of the AACM's most prominent members, whose deep spirituality and long involvement with the civil rights struggle have guided his musical journey.

This year's festival composers are bound less by questions of style or musical pedigree than by attitude and philosophy. Vijay Iyer resists labels, insisting that genres simply designate a community of people who share a sensibility. At the core of his common ground with the AACM is a commitment to cooperative structures and collective experimentalism, for which improvisation is a key creative vehicle. Improvisation, Iyer has written, is bound up with the condition of our very being, the means with which we negotiate the course of our daily lives. It is a practice that is also central to the notion of social discourse, of making a space for others and finding our own. Improvisation takes center stage in Saturday afternoon's concert, featuring Iyer, along with his friends Zakir Hussain, Aruna Sairam, and Rudresh Mahanthappa.

For Vijay Iyer musical time is shared time in which both sound *and* listening are the currencies of exchange. He listens, not only to the

music, but to his audiences, to the space in which music is made: "to everything in the room—to every body." What he describes is listening at its most intense, a heightened sense of the moment that demands of both players and audience physical and emotional engagement, but fosters in turn deeper understanding and empathy. It is an aspirational, even utopian idea of musical community. And it is this kind of community that challenges enclaves of division and the walls that would enforce them with the premise that his village—our village—is humanity itself.

—Christopher Hailey

Christopher Hailey is the author of a biography of the composer Franz Schreker and an editor of the correspondence between Alban Berg and Arnold Schoenberg. He has taught at the Arnold Schoenberg Institute in Vienna and is the director of the Franz Schreker Foundation. Hailey was a co-editor of the Journal of Musicology from 2011–15.

With both friendship and admiration, Cal Performances dedicates these adventurous programs to Ken Fischer, president of the University Musical Society at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, on the occasion of his retirement and in celebration of his illustrious 30-year tenure.



Armen Elliott

International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) is an artist collective committed to transforming the way music is created and experienced. As performers, curators, and educators, the

artists of ICE explore how new music intersects with communities across the world. The ensemble's 35 members are featured as soloists, chamber musicians, commissioners,

and collaborators with the foremost musical artists of our time. Works by emerging composers have anchored ICE's programming since its founding in 2001, and the group's recordings and digital platforms highlight the many voices that weave music's present.

A recipient of the American Music Center's Trailblazer Award and the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, ICE was also named Musical America's 2014 Ensemble of the Year. The group currently serves as artists-in-residence at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart Festival, and previously held a five-year residency at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. ICE has been featured at the Ojai Music Festival since 2015, and has appeared at festivals abroad such as Acht Brücken Cologne and Musica nova Helsinki. Other recent performance venues include the Park Avenue Armory, The Stone, ice floes at Greenland's Diskotek Sessions, and boats on the Amazon River.

New initiatives include OpenICE, made possible with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which offers free concerts and related programming wherever ICE performs, and allows a working process with composers to unfold in public settings. DigitICE catalogues the ensemble's performances in a free online streaming video library. ICE's First Page program is a commissioning consortium that fosters close collaborations between performers, composers, and listeners as new music is developed. EntICE, a side-by-side youth program, places ICE musicians within youth orchestras as they premiere new commissioned works together. Inaugural EntICE partners include Youth Orchestra Los Angeles and The People's Music School in Chicago. Yamaha Artist Services New York is the exclusive piano provider for ICE.

International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)

Claire Chase, *flute*

Alice Teyssier, *flute*

Nick Masterson, *oboe*

Campbell MacDonald, *clarinet*

Joshua Rubin, *clarinet*

Rebekah Heller, *bassoon*

David Byrd-Marrow, *horn*

Gareth Flowers, *trumpet*

Michael Lormand, *trombone*

Luke Storm, *tuba*

Gabriela Díaz, *violin*

Erica Dicker, *violin*

Kyle Armbrust, *viola*

Wendy Richman, *viola*

Kivie Cahn-Lipman, *cello*

Katinka Kleijn, *cello*

Randy Zigler, *bass*

Cory Smythe, *piano*

Ross Karre, *percussion*

Levy Lorenzo, *percussion, live electronics*

Nicholas Houfek, *lights*

Staff

Claire Chase, *founder**

William McDaniel, *executive director*

Joshua Rubin, *co-artistic director**

Ross Karre, *co-artistic director**

Jacob Greenberg, *director of recordings and digital outreach**

Rebekah Heller, *director of individual giving**

Ryan Muncy, *director of institutional giving, and co-director, OpenICE**

Alice Teyssier, *artistic operations associate, and co-director, OpenICE**

Maciej Lewandowski, *director of production*

Meredith Morgan, *general manager*

Levy Lorenzo, *engineer and technical associate**

**denotes ICE musician*

ICE's appearance at Ojai at Berkeley is supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Howard Gilman Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, The A.N. and Pearl G. Barnett Family Foundation, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, The Paul M. Angell Family Foundation, The Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts, The Amphion Foundation, The Pacific Harmony Foundation, The Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, The Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University, The Casement Fund, and the BMI Foundation.

Thursday, June 15, 2017, 8pm
 Zellerbach Hall

Vijay Iyer: Recent Works

Vijay IYER (b. 1971) *Emergence* for trio and chamber orchestra (2016)
 (Bay Area Premiere)

Vijay Iyer, *piano*
 Stephan Crump, *bass*
 Tyshawyn Sorey, *drums*
 International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)
 Claire Chase, *flute*; Nick Masterson, *oboe*;
 Campbell MacDonald, *clarinet*; Rebekah Heller, *bassoon*;
 David Byrd-Marrows, *horn*; Gareth Flowers, *trumpet*;
 Mike Lormand, *trombone*; Luke Storm, *tuba*;
 Gabriela Diaz and Erica Dicker, *violins*;
 Kyle Armbrust and Wendy Richman, *violas*;
 Katinka Kleijn and Kivie Cahn-Lipman, *cellos*;
 Randy Zigler, *double bass*
 Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble
 Christa Cole, Tobias Elser, Adam Jeffreys, Dana Johnson,
 John Kirchenbauer, and Pok Yee (Pauline) Ng, *violins*;
 Jeremy Kreutz, *cello*; Benjamin Merte, *bass*;
 Corey Worley, *viola*
 Steven Schick, *conductor*

IYER *Trouble* for violin and chamber orchestra (2017)
 (Bay Area Premiere)

Prelude: Erasure
 Normale
 For Vincent Chin
 Cozening
 Interlude: Accretion
 Assembly

Jennifer Koh, *violin*
 International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)
 Alice Teyssier, *flute*; Nick Masterson, *oboe*;
 Campbell MacDonald, *clarinet*; Rebekah Heller, *bassoon*;
 David Byrd-Marrows, *horn*; Gareth Flowers, *trumpet*;
 Mike Lormand, *trombone*; Luke Storm, *tuba*;
 Ross Karre and Levy Lorenzo, *percussion*;
 Gabriela Diaz and Erica Dicker, *violins*;
 Kyle Armbrust and Wendy Richman, *violas*;
 Katinka Kleijn and Kivie Cahn-Lipman, *cellos*;
 Randy Zigler, *double bass*
 Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble
 Christa Cole, Tobias Elser, Adam Jeffreys, Dana Johnson,
 John Kirchenbauer, and Pok Yee (Pauline) Ng, *violins*;
 Jeremy Kreutz, *cello*; Benjamin Merte, *bass*;
 Corey Worley, *viola*; John Minor, *timpani*
 Steven Schick, *conductor*

*Commissioned by Cal Performances; Ojai Music Festival;
 and Boston Symphony Orchestra, Andris Nelsons, music director*

INTERMISSION

IYER *A Cosmic Rhythm with Each Stroke* (2015)
 and Wadada Leo SMITH (b. 1941)
 Vijay Iyer, *piano*, Fender Rhodes *piano*, *electronics*
 Wadada Leo Smith, *trumpet*



*Or to take up arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them?*

—*Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 1

*The only cats worth anything
are the cats that take chances.*

—Thelonious Monk

Not so long ago Vijay Iyer said that “to succeed in America is, somehow, to be complicit with the idea of America—which means that at some level you’ve made peace with its rather ugly past.” Iyer went on to urge his audience not to allow this ugly past to determine our future. “What I humbly ask of you, and of myself,” he concluded, “is that we constantly interrogate our own complicity with excess, that we always remain vigilant to notions of community that might—perhaps against our best intentions, sometimes—embrace a system of domination at the expense of others.” This concert explores three contexts for this kind of balanced creative interaction: between differently constituted ensembles; between a soloist and an orchestra; and between two artists across generations.

Iyer has written of *Emergence*:

Emergence is a composition for my group, the Vijay Iyer Trio, plus chamber orchestra. This piece situates our trio’s collaborative improvisational language in the context of a classical ensemble. In juxtaposing the respective powers of these very different ensembles, and featuring them separately and together, we explore how these two contrasting perspectives on music might coexist. The trio’s specialized skills of internal rhythmic synchronization and organic creative embellishment exist in relief against the orchestra’s interpretive powers, range of colors, and sheer physical spread of sound. In this piece, the trio should not be featured up front in a typical “concerto” formation, but rather in the rear of the orchestra, driving the energy from within the ensemble. At times this “rhythm section” function may challenge the role of the conductor, since the sense of pulse is often guided sonically by the trio. In addition, at certain moments, the orchestral players are asked to make choices in real time, sometimes by listening and responding to each other, which challenges the central-

ity of the score and the composer. These reconsiderations of authority and agency are key questions for me as a composer and improviser.

Here, as in all of Iyer’s writing, terms like “authority,” “agency,” “community,” and “collaboration” point to his understanding that music can serve as an analogue and laboratory for social formation and action. We see it in the abstract in *Emergence*; in *Trouble* it is explicit:

“Good trouble,” “necessary trouble”—these are favorite phrases of US Representative John Lewis, referring to the strategies and tactics of the Civil Rights Movement and the ongoing struggles for equality and justice in the last six decades.

When meeting with Jennifer Koh over the past year to discuss the details of this piece, I often found it difficult to focus; typically we found ourselves instead recoiling in horror at the events of any given day. This pattern has only intensified since January 20th, as we find our communities, our country, and our planet in greater peril with each passing hour. In creating the piece I found myself both channeling and pushing against the sensation of extreme precarity that pervades our moment.

Here, too, is a work that explores the relationship between musical forces, though Iyer sought to avoid the clichés of the virtuoso concerto:

I didn’t want to rehash the typical narrative positioning a heroic individual over or against a multitude. Ms. Koh told me that the soloist could instead be viewed as someone willing to be vulnerable, to publicly venture where most people won’t, to accept a role that no one else will accept, to bear the unbearable. In other words, the soloist can embody the relationship of an artist to her community: not so much a “leader” or “hero,” but something more like a shaman, a conduit for the forces in motion around us.

Although *Trouble* is not a programmatic work it is informed by the experience of its time. “The short second movement,” Iyer writes, “is dedicated to Vincent Chin, whose murder in the early 1980s signaled an ongoing pattern of violent hate crimes against people of color. His death became a watershed moment



for antiracist activism, which is as urgently needed today as it has ever been.”

• • •

“If you look at my collaborations,” Iyer has said, “it is very much in line with all these others in the sense that it is a building of community, particularly among artists of color. This is what I learned from the example of elder African-American artists, which is where it is all coming from; to refuse to be silenced.”

Wadada Leo Smith has not been silent. He came of age during the 1950s and was a witness of the great civil rights battles of the 1960s. His *Ten Freedom Summers* was a finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize in Music, described by the jury as “an expansive jazz work that memorialized 10 key moments in the history of civil rights in America, fusing composed and improvised passages into powerful, eloquent music.” The power and eloquence of Smith’s voice is felt across a range of activities, including composing, performing, improvising, teaching, and writing. For Vijay Iyer he is “a hero, friend, and teacher” of the past two decades, in particular through his own participation in Smith’s Golden Quartet:

The group’s broad palette included “pure” tones and distorted sound, motion and stillness, melody and noise. In quartet performances, Wadada and I often became a unit-within-the-unit, generating spontaneous duo episodes as

formal links. In the process, a space of possibility emerged that introduced me to other systems of music-making.

Their special chemistry bore fruit in a joint album, *A Cosmic Rhythm with Each Stroke* (2016), which has been lauded by critics for its “charismatic delicacy and subtle force” and an “awareness and acuity between the players that overlaps and breaks away on razor-thin margins.”

Like Iyer, Smith believes that music is a reflection of and means for engaging with social and political experience. Music, he has said, “allows the person a moment to reflect minus the distraction of living and being involved in living. And that reflection allows them that little moment with themselves so that they can figure out the best way to maneuver through this maze of a society.” People’s problems may still be there, he concedes, “but they have experienced a few moments of liberation to give them enough energy to carry on until the next challenge comes.”

“You run through your life,” he concludes, “and you hope that you can show something that enlightens somebody at some point in time. And if that happens, then that is really leading to a better humanity, a better society.”

Words and music for the sea of troubles ahead.

—Christopher Hailey

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Vijay Iyer (*piano*) is the music director of the 2017 Ojai Music Festival. For a full biography, please see p. 13.

For background on the **International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)**, please see p. 19.

The **Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble (CME)**, deemed “a hotbed of contemporary-classical players” and a “rural experimental haven” (*The New York Times*), cultivates innovation in its students. In its six annual full-concert cycles, the ensemble, directed by Timothy Weiss, performs music of all con-

temporary styles and genres: from minimalism to serialism, to electronic, cross genre, mixed media, and beyond.

CME has worked with many prominent composers, including George Crumb, Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Stephen Hartke, Helmut Lachenmann, David Lang, Joan Tower, and Frederic Rzewski, and has premiered many of their works. CME also regularly premieres works by Oberlin faculty, student, and alumni composers.

Each year, some of the most well-regarded contemporary music icons perform as soloists with CME, including Jennifer Koh

(Oberlin College 1997), Claire Chase (Oberlin Conservatory 2001), David Bowlin (Oberlin Conservatory 2000), Tony Arnold (Oberlin Conservatory 1990), Marilyn Nonken, Stephen Drury, Steven Schick, and Ursula Oppens. Distinguished students receive opportunities to perform as soloists with the ensemble as well.

CME presents an annual concert series at the Cleveland Museum of Art and regularly tours the United States. In recent years, the group has performed at the Winter Garden, Miller Theater, Merkin Concert Hall, DiMenna Center, Harvard University, Benaroya Hall, Palace of Fine Arts, and Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. CME has also been featured on a number of commercial recordings, including John Luther Adams' *In the White Silence* (New World Records), Lewis Nielson's *Écritures: St. Francis Preaches to the Birds* (Centaur Records), and in several releases on the Oberlin Music label.

Timothy Weiss has been music director of the Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble for more than two decades and has brought the group to a level of artistry and virtuosity in performance that rivals the finest new music groups. A committed educator, Weiss is professor of conducting and chair of the Division of Contemporary Music at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he helped create and mentor both Eighth Blackbird and the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). He has gained critical acclaim for his performances and programming throughout the United States and abroad.

Weiss' repertoire in contemporary music is vast and fearless, including masterworks, very recent compositions, and an impressive number of premieres and commissions. His work has been honored with an Adventurous Programming Award from the League of American Orchestras.



Stephan Crump (*bass*), from Memphis, is a rising star on the New York music scene. He has performed and recorded in the United States and across the globe with a diverse list of artists—from late blues legend

Johnny Clyde Copeland to Portishead's Dave McDonald, Patti Austin, The Violent Femmes' Gordon Gano, Big Ass Truck, Dave Liebman, Billy Hart, Sonny Fortune, Greg Osby, Kenny Werner, The Mahavishnu Project, and Bobby Previte, among others. As a longtime collaborator with adventurous jazz composers (since 1999 with Vijay Iyer) as well as guitar wizard Jim Campilongo and radiant singer-songwriter Jen Chapin, he has become known for the elegance and purposeful groove of his acoustic and electric bass playing. Crump's compositions can be heard in numerous films and on his six critically lauded albums, the latest of which, *Reclamation*, featuring his all-string Rosetta Trio, has been praised by *The New Yorker* for its "ingenious originals," named one of the year's best by NPR, and declared "a low-key marvel" by *JazzTimes*. Crump has also released duo recordings with alto saxophonist Steve Lehman and pianist James Carney, and two albums with Secret Keeper, his duo with visionary guitarist/composer Mary Halvorson.

Jennifer Koh (*violin*) is recognized for her intense, commanding performances, delivered with dazzling virtuosity and technical assurance. An adventurous musician, she collaborates with artists of multiple disciplines, curates projects that find connections within music of all eras from traditional to contemporary, and has premiered more than 60 works written especially for her.

Musical America's 2016 Instrumentalist of the Year, Koh has been heard with leading orchestras including the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics; the Cleveland, Marinsky, Minnesota, Philadelphia, and Philharmonia (London) orchestras; and the Atlanta, BBC, Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, National,

New World, NHK, RAI (Torino), and Singapore symphonies. This season, she played with the Baltimore, Cincinnati, New Jersey, and Saint Louis symphonies, among others; the New York String Orchestra at Carnegie Hall; premiered a new violin concerto by Christopher Rountree with *Wild Up*; and focused on the music of Kaija Saariaho in recital, chamber music, and concerto performances.

Koh has curated numerous projects including *Shared Madness*, comprising more than 30 short solo works that explore virtuosity for the violin in the 21st century; *Bridge to Beethoven*, a recital series that pairs Beethoven's sonatas for violin and piano with new works by composers Vijay Iyer, Andrew Norman, and Anthony Cheung; *Bach and Beyond*, which traces the history of the solo violin repertoire from Bach's six Sonatas and Partitas to contemporary composers; and *Two x Four*, exploring mentorship and collaboration between teacher and student, performed with her former teacher Jaime Laredo. Her latest project, *Mixtape*, asks composers to engage with American contemporary musical culture integral to their own lives and includes new violin concertos by Vijay Iyer (a work that received its world premiere last week at the Ojai Music Festival), Andrew Norman, and Chris Cerrone. Her recent album of Tchaikovsky's complete works for violin and orchestra, performed with the Odense Symphony Orchestra under Alexander Vedernikov, is her 11th recording for Chicago-based Cedille Records.

Koh made her debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at age 11 and went on to win the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, the Concert Artists Guild Competition, and an Avery Fisher Career Grant. She has a degree in English literature from Oberlin College and studied at the Curtis Institute, where she worked with Jaime Laredo and Felix Galimir.

Jennifer Koh is artistic director of *arco collaborative*, an artist-driven nonprofit that fosters a better understanding of our world through a musical dialogue inspired by ideas and the communities around us.



Steven Schick (*conductor*), a percussionist, conductor, and author, was born in Iowa and raised in a farming family. Hailed by Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* as, "one of our supreme living virtuosos, not just of

percussion but of any instrument," he has championed contemporary percussion music by commissioning or premiering more than 150 new works. The most important of these have become core repertoire for solo percussion. Schick was inducted into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame in 2014.

Schick is artistic director of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. As a conductor, he has appeared with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, Ensemble Modern, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and Amsterdam's Asko/Schönberg Ensemble.

Schick's publications include a book, *The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams*, and many articles. He has released numerous recordings, including the *Percussion Works of Iannis Xenakis* (2010) and its companion, *The Complete Early Percussion Works of Karlheinz Stockhausen* (2014), both on Mode Records. He received the Diapason d'Or as conductor (Xenakis Ensemble Music with ICE) and the Deutscheschallplattenkritikpreis, as percussionist (Stockhausen), each for the best new music release of 2015.

Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music and holds the Reed Family Presidential Chair at the University of California, San Diego. He was music director of the 2015 Ojai Music Festival and starting in 2017 will be co-artistic director, with Claire Chase, of the summer music program at the Banff Centre.

Wadada Leo Smith (*trumpet*), a trumpeter, multi-instrumentalist, composer, and improviser, is one of the most acclaimed creative artists

of his time, both for his music and his writings. For the last five decades, Smith has been a member of the legendary AACM collective. He distinctly defines his music as “Creative Music” and his diverse discography reveals a recorded history centered around important issues that have impacted his world.

Smith was a 2013 finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Music and is a recipient of the 2016 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award and the Hammer Museum’s 2016 Mohn Career Achievement Award. Other recent accolades include the Trumpeter of the Year (2016), Composer of the Year (2015), and Musician of the Year (2013) awards presented by the Jazz Journalists Association.

The prestigious *DownBeat* magazine selected Smith for its November 2016 cover story. Previously, he was named Composer of the Year in *DownBeat*’s 61st Critics Poll. *JazzTimes*’ 2016 critics’ poll named him the Artist of the Year and Composer of the Year, and Smith was runner-up for Trumpeter of the Year.

Tyshawn Sorey (*drums*) is a composer, performer, educator, and scholar who works across an extensive range of musical idioms. As a percussionist, trombonist, and pianist, Sorey has performed and/or recorded nationally and internationally with his own ensembles and with those led by Muhal Richard Abrams, Steve Coleman, “Butch” Morris, Peter Evans, Roscoe Mitchell, Misha Mengelberg, John Zorn, Vijay Iyer, Wadada Leo Smith, Dave Douglas, Anthony Braxton, Steve Lehman, and Tim Berne, among many others.



Sorey’s work has been favorably reviewed in *Traps*, *JazzTimes*, *The Village Voice*, *The Wire*, *The New York Times*, and *DownBeat* magazine, as well as on National Public Radio and WKCR-FM.

His forthcoming article in *Arcana 4* (John Zorn, ed.), entitled “Music and Meaning,” examines his approach to both composition and improvisation. Sorey received his bachelor’s degree (2004) in jazz studies and performance from William Paterson University. In 2009 he began his studies with composer-performer Anthony Braxton, Jay Hoggard, and Alvin Lucier, which culminated in earning his MA in composition from Wesleyan University. He recently received his Doctor of Musical Arts from Columbia University, with a concentration in composition, studying primarily under Fred Lerdahl and George Lewis, and he will join the faculty at Wesleyan University this fall. Sorey has also conducted and participated in various lectures and master classes on improvisation, contemporary drumming, ensemble playing, and critical theory.

As a composer, Tyshawn Sorey has received commissions from the Van Lier Fellowship, Roulette Intermedium, and, most recently, the International Contemporary Ensemble, whose large-scale work premiered in 2012. Sorey is a private instructor in composition and improvisation for The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, and the School of Improvisational Music.



Friday, June 16, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Playhouse

Afterword, an opera by George Lewis

Joelle Lamarre, *soprano*

Gwendolyn Brown, *contralto*

Julian Terrell Otis, *tenor*

International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)

Alice Teyssier, *flute*; Campbell MacDonald, *clarinet*; David Byrd-Marrow, *horn*; Erica Dicker, *violin*;
Katinka Kliejn, *cello*; Cory Smythe, *piano*; Ross Karre, *percussion*

Sean Griffin, *director*

Steven Schick, *conductor*

ACT I

Scene 1 *Down South*

Scene 2 *Up North*

Scene 3 *The Cemetery*

Scene 4 *First Meeting*

Scene 5 *Naming*

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Scene 1 *Ariae*

Scene 2 *The Split*

Scene 3 *Death*

Scene 4 *Paris*

Scene 5 *Afterword*

Narda E. Alcorn, *production stage manager*

Daniel Schlosberg, *répétiteur*

Sean Griffin and Catherine Sullivan, *costumes*

George Lewis (b. 1952)

Afterword, an opera (2015)

Founded on the South Side of Chicago in 1965, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians has long played an internationally recognized role in American experimental music. The AACM's unique combination of artistic communitarianism, personal and collective self-determination, and ardent experimentalism animates the *Afterword* project.

However, *Afterword* is not a history of the AACM, but a "Bildungsoper"—a coming-of-age opera of ideas, positionality, and testament. The challenge here was to create an opera around a collective that remains noted for its diversity of approaches to creative practice, while eschewing direct character representation of AACM artists. The opera eschews a conception in which fixed, authorial characters pose as what Michel Foucault calls "historical figure[s] at the crossroads of a certain number of events" in favor of having music, text, and movement deploy a tricksterish displacement of character onto metaphysical collectivities. Sung and spoken voices, instrumental music, and movement become heteroglossic avatars, in a process described by Toni Morrison and others as the expression of a community voice. In some scenes, that voice presents remembrances and testimony; in others, clashes between subject positions allow audiences to eavesdrop on history as it is being made in real, human time, bringing us face to face with contingency, empathy, and wonder. In a sense, the community voices adopted by the avatars could also constitute externalizations of the conflicts within a single complex human life. The opera takes its title from the concluding chapter of my history of the AACM, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (University of Chicago Press, 2008). The "Afterword" chapter selected quotes from nearly 100 interviews with AACM members to fashion an imagined intergenerational dialogue about overarching social, cultural, and aesthetic issues that the organization and its individual members faced over the decades.

Afterword's direction and movement take their form from the libretto, which is drawn

from the interviews I conducted for the book, as well as transcripts of audio recordings of formative AACM meetings made by Muhal Richard Abrams in 1965 and 1966. The opera includes remembrances from family histories and the Great Migration, daily observations jotted down in diaries, and descriptions of Paris in the wake of the tumultuous events of 1968. The lively dissonance of the orchestration functions as a musical commentary on these recounted historical and psychic moments, encouraging us to listen in on the fast-moving, creative sonic imagination animated inside the minds of the characters as they calculate their collective creative powers.

As the action unfolds, we witness young black experimentalists interrogating many issues: of power, authority, identity, representation, culture, economics, politics, and aesthetics; self-fashioning, self-determination, and self-governance; personal, professional, and collective aspiration; race, gender, and sexuality; and tradition, innovation, change, spiritual growth, death, and rebirth.

Building upon AACM ideas that are now part of the legacy of experimental practice constitutes a vital touchstone for operatic experience. The goal of *Afterword* is to combine aesthetic exploration with critical examination of the multiple, overlapping, and fundamentally human motivations that affect us all.

SYNOPSIS

Act I

Scene 1: Down South

Reminiscences of black life in the Southern United States, from antebellum days to the early Great Migration and the first stirrings of the Civil Rights Movement. We hear stories of loss and dispossession—but also of magic, mojo, mirthful tall tales, and self-determination.

Scene 2: Up North

The founding and original members of the AACM were all born between 1927 and 1932. These children of migrants from the South who

settled in Chicago found matters very different indeed from the glowing reports of life in the North they had received from their relatives and friends who were already there. Despite their struggles with housing, money, drugs, and much more, we hear strains of nostalgia for community, and the desire for a better life.

Scene 3: The Cemetery

A depiction of the hoodoo-tinged origin story of the AACM. Meeting in a local Chicago cemetery, two future AACM founders express sadness at the state of their community, and end with a call for action in which the interlocking powers of music and collective action would establish a better future for themselves and their community.

Scene 4: First Meeting

The sung texts are drawn largely from the audio recording of the founding AACM meeting in May 1965. As the musicians speak frankly among themselves, hopes, fears, aspirations, and a gradual self-realization dovetail with a general understanding, sung by the tenor, that music composed by the members themselves could play a major role in reconnecting them to their ancestors, as well as fostering social, political, and cultural change.

Scene 5: Naming

This naming meeting, drawn from an audio recording of another 1965 AACM meeting, highlights the role played by spiritual conceits such as numerology in establishing a baseline of understanding, as the participants declare themselves ready to move forward to advance each other as well as their music.

Act II

Scene 1: Ariae

The basis for this scene is an unpublished autoethnographic journal/narrative by pianist Claudine Myers, written in 1966 and set on a

Saturday afternoon at the Abraham Lincoln Center in Chicago, where the fledgling AACM held meetings, rehearsals, and concerts. “I was writing it as it was happening,” Myers recalled, and what we hear from the central figure, the soprano, is a kind of *agape*, as the AACM members go about their creative business in an optimistic and playful spirit, intertwined with explorations of the new individual and collective identities they were forging.

Scene 2: The Split

Drawn from an audio recording of another 1965 AACM meeting. We witness a breakdown of the sense of camaraderie shown in the earlier scene. In a heated debate over the age-old conflict between tradition and innovation, positions are staked out, and resolution is not forthcoming despite a too-hasty adjournment.

Scene 3: Death

The untimely passing of two AACM members in the prime of their youth is remembered and mourned. The feeling turns toward an understanding that life is fleeting, and that mobility is power.

Scene 4: Paris

The initial wonderment of living in France gradually becomes tempered by the realization that like the North, Paris was not necessarily a race-neutral haven for these young black experimentalists. As their pleas for expanded understanding sometimes go unheard, local difficulties in bridging cultural difference, combined with a lack of interest in assimilation, lead to their realization that the world is open for them to explore.

Scene 5: Afterword

The AACM members take stock—of their achievements, and of the problems remaining to be faced. Again, music, collectivity, ethical action, and self-realization become keys to the future.

—George Lewis



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

George E. Lewis (*composer*) is the Edwin H. Case Professor of American Music at Columbia University. A Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, Lewis' other honors include a MacArthur Fellowship (2002), a Guggenheim Fellowship (2015), a United States Artists Walker Fellowship (2011), an Alpert Award in the Arts (1999), and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Lewis studied composition with Muhil Richard Abrams at the AACM School of Music and trombone with Dean Hey. A member of the Association for the Advancement of Crea-

tive Musicians (AACM) since 1971, Lewis' work in electronic and computer music, computer-based multimedia installations, and notated and improvisative forms is documented on more than 150 recordings. His work has been presented by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonia Orchestra, Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart, Mivos Quartet, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, London Sinfonietta, Spektral Quartet, Talea Ensemble, Dinosaur Annex, Ensemble Pamplemousse, Wet Ink Ensemble, Ensemble Erik Satie, Eco Ensemble, and others. Lewis has received commissions from American Composers Orchestra, International Contemporary Ensemble

(ICE), Harvestworks, Ensemble Either/Or, Orkestra Futura, Turning Point Ensemble, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, IRCAM, and Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra, among others.

Lewis has served as Fromm Visiting Professor of Music, Harvard University; Ernest Bloch Visiting Professor of Music, University of California, Berkeley; Paul Fromm Composer in Residence, American Academy in Rome; Resident Scholar, Center for Disciplinary Innovation, University of Chicago; and CAC Fitt Artist in Residence, Brown University. He received the 2012 SEAMUS Award from the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States, and his book *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (University of Chicago Press, 2008) received the American Book Award and the American Musicological Society's Music in American Culture Award; Lewis was elected to honorary membership in the Society in 2016.

Lewis is the co-editor of the two-volume *Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies* (2016), and his opera *Afterword* (2015), commissioned by the Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry at the University of Chicago, has been performed in the United States, United Kingdom, and the Czech Republic. In 2015 Lewis received the degree of Doctor of Music (DMus, *honoris causa*) from the University of Edinburgh.

For background on the **International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)**, please see p. 19.



Earlier this year, with South Shore Opera Company of Chicago, **Joelle Lamarre** (*soprano*) presented a work of her own, *The Violet Hour*, which explores the career of internationally acclaimed soprano Leon-

tyne Price and how she rose to prominence during the 1950s and '60s, despite the segregation and discrimination prevalent in America. *The Violet Hour* traces Price's journey from the

beginning of her career up to her final performance of the opera *Aida* at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1985. Through the ingenious use of projections and voice, Lamarre portrays the life of a true iconic American.

Last fall, she played the role of Harriet in a new opera written by Nkeiru Okoye, *Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom*, with South Shore Opera Company of Chicago. It tells the story of Harriet Tubman, who, a century and a half ago, escaped from slavery and led others to freedom. Again, with South Shore Opera Company of Chicago, Lamarre performed the role of Celeste in William Grant-Still's *Troubled Island*.

Known for her powerful performances, Lamarre has appeared in such productions as *Dead Man Walking*, *Porgy and Bess*, and *Madama Butterfly* with the American Chamber Opera, in a unique take that set the production in Mombasa, Kenya. She is known for her extensive background in classical concert works and her talents in musical theater. Her awards include the BRAVO award from the Bel Canto Foundation, the AnneMarie Gerts Award from the Musicians Club of Women, and several vocal scholarships for VoicExperience.



Gwendolyn Brown's (*contralto*) operatic performances of traditional, 20th-century, American art song, Negro spiritual, and the avant-garde have earned her consistent critical acclaim. Her deep contralto "showed aston-

ishing range and timbre, a stern voice of certainty" (*Huddersfield Examiner*) and she has been hailed as "a transfixing force of nature" (Mark Swed, *Los Angeles Times*).

Brown's recent performances in George Lewis' *Afterword*, an opera were met with critical acclaim in the United States and abroad. Other critically acclaimed highlights of contemporary works include creating the lead role of Marie Laveau in Anne LeBaron's *Crescent City* for Los Angeles' The Industry. Brown has performed for many of the top opera compa-

nies and orchestras throughout the United States as well as in Australia, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium. She has received critical acclaim in character roles including the Principessa in *Suor Angelica* and Zita in *Gianni Schicchi*. She has performed her signature role of Maria in *Porgy and Bess* with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and Washington National Opera as well as in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Australia.

Originally from Memphis, Tennessee, Gwendolyn Brown studied music at Fisk University, the University of Memphis, and the American Conservatory of Music. She participated in the young artist programs of Des Moines Metro Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago Center for American Artists. Brown is an assistant professor of music at her *alma mater*, Fisk University.



Julian Terrell Otis (*tenor*) is proud to reunite with “this trio of impressive vocal soloists” (*The New York Times*) for the first West Coast performances of *Afterword, an opera*. His vocal improvisations have been called “instrumental” and highly sensitive to the ensemble’s texture. Otis has become an enthusiastic interpreter of contemporary music, most recently lending his ringing tenor sound to Anthony R. Green’s ...*I Shall Shake His Hand*... curated by Fulcrum Point New Music Project and Nkeiru Okoye’s *Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom* (South Shore Opera Company). As a student, he explored the choral works of Ted Hearne, James MacMillan, Sebastian Currier, and other contemporary composers under the baton of Donald Nally. Otis continues to explore the limitless possibilities of his instrument’s expressive capacity through a wide variety of song, improvisation, and theatrical works.



Intuitive and experimental music practices lie at the foundation of **Sean Griffin’s** (*director*) work, whether by inventing a Neanderthal language or composing hysteric choreographic and choral methodologies used in

films and installations, concert works, film scores, operas, music theater, or hundreds of numerically conceived collages and drawings. Griffin’s polyphonic strategies emerge from over 20 years of international productions in experimental theater, film, opera, installation, and performance art. With Opera Povera, the performance/design consortium he founded in Los Angeles in 2010, Griffin collaboratively combines ethnographic, archival, and historical research with critical artistic inquiry and improvisation. Mixing performance with sculptural sets, inspirational discards, assembled utilitarian objects, and interactive technology, he has been active throughout the United States, Mexico, Asia, and Europe directing opera, designing productions and installations, and arranging, recording, and conducting.

Griffin received an MFA from CalArts and a PhD from UCSD, and is currently an associate professor at the University of Guanajuato, Campus Irapuato-Salamanca, Mexico. With Opera Povera, Griffin has created new works with Charles Gaines, George Lewis, Anne LeBaron, and Pauline Oliveros, and is a longtime collaborator with Catherine Sullivan, Juliana Snapper, Aiyun Huang, Stacy Ellen Rich, and Carolyn Benjamin. Griffin’s work has been featured at MoMA, Brooklyn Museum, RedCat, LACMA, MAK Center at the Schindler House, Volksbühne, Secession Vienna, EMPAC, the 56th Venice Biennial, Chicago’s MCA and Trap Door Theatre, Ostrava Days, Tate Modern, Royal Academy of Arts, June in Buffalo, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Gwangju Biennial, Seoul’s Festival BO:M, and Taipei’s Forum Music. Griffin is a winner of the 2017 Fellows of Contemporary Art Award Fellowship.

For a biography of conductor **Stephen Schick**, please see p. 27.

George Lewis
Afterword, an opera

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Down South

Tenor (T):

My Great Great Grandparents Lee and Kitty
 Lived in Coontown
 Joined the Union Army

Contralto (C):

They killed my grand uncle Floyd
 Derry got all the property
 He said I got documents
 Ain't nobody gonna get our land
 Black folks did not issue ultimatums
 to white folks in Mississippi
 We had to get out
 We had to get out

Soprano (S):

My father had a college degree
 Wasn't worth ten cents for a black man
 in Mississippi
 He was a Pullman porter
 Everybody knew their place

T: My grandfather always grew his own food
 His deal was
 Never work for nobody
 We were philosophers
 That was our philosophy
 We made our own caskets
 Happy in our world
 The white fountain
 The black fountain
 We came together when fires broke out
 Everybody knew their place

S: Picked cotton till October
 Wild plums
 Green apples
 Tried to milk the cow
 I couldn't get the rhythm
 Chickens and pigs in the yard
 They knew their place

C: Biscuits with sorghum molasses and butter
 Sausages for everybody
 They gave us the hog bladder
 Blow it up like a balloon
 You never heard of that?

S: Had a well with a bucket
 Took a bath in a big old gray tub

T: Had a radio
 When Joe Louis was fighting
 People stood outside our window to listen

C: The church had Heaven and Hell parties
 Ice Cream was heaven
 Chili was hell
 Stories about Lazarus
 Baby and the
 Three Wise Men

S: At Easter I always had a big part
 I knew my place

T: Down South they're known for mojo
 If they don't like you
 They go to one of those doctors
 Fixing people, they call it
 I'll fix ya!
 I thought I was fixed
 The doctor gave me a little packet
 It got me unfixed
 I no longer knew my place

S: We walked into Woolworth's
 The TV man shouted
 Here they come!
 They have on dresses!
 They have on suits!

C: We had heard they would be waiting
 for you

T: Spitting on you

S: Beating on you

ALL: We just sat there
 We knew our place

Scene 2: Up North

T: This was a different time
On a big holiday if you were all alone
Somebody would take you in
Give you a meal
Help you along your way

C: On the West side
Mother Father
Sister and Brother
Uncle and Grandmother and Grandfather

ALL: All in one little room

S: When people came South
They had rings on

C: They looked good

T: They said

ALL: It was paradise

S: Uncle Buck
Didn't have train fare
Hopped a freight
Got to Chicago

ALL: It was war

T: Cockroaches

C: Bedbugs

S: Mice

C: Eat right through the wall

S: You killed cockroaches

ALL: The normal way

C: Horses in the alley
Vegetable man

T: Ragman

S: Junk man

C: Fruit man

T: Ice man

S: Nice man

T: Coal man

C: Old man

T: Cats comin' through the alley

S: Lookin for mice

C: Insurance cat

S: Laundry cat

T: Numbers cat

C: Put a dollar on three six seven

S: Daddy played

T: Mama played

C: Auntie played
Uncle played

ALL: All the mice played

C: Potbellied stove

T: Wood and coal

S: Time for a bath

T: Get that pot

C: Heat that water

S: Pour it in the bathtub

ALL: Make yourself at home

S: Coal stove

ALL: Went out

- S: Icebox
- ALL: Disappeared
- S: Gas stove
- ALL: Came in
Apartment
No better
- T: We played on pots and buckets
- S: Singing
- C: Dancing
- T: Pass the hat
- ALL: The police came
- S: Got to thinkin
- ALL: What do I really want to do?
- S: Got to thinkin
- ALL: Got to thinkin
- T: People say at first
They didn't feel it
I did
Peewees
Bombers
Strange people
Blood running out of their arms
- S & C: A church boy's doing it
Plays the violin
- C: Get on the bus
Go to work
Every mornin
Picking pockets
Self-employment
- ALL: Talent counts
- T: Be glad you're black
Being black is hip
Otherwise
You'd be square
- S: Unless you went under that viaduct
The dividing line
Or go down town
Sit at that lunch counter
- ALL: Forever
- S: Lots of time to think
- T: Grandfather worked at the stockyards
Forty-three years found dead in the toilet
- C: Got to thinkin
- ALL: What do we really
- Scene 3: The Cemetery**
- S: If you're try'n to find
A certain Negro
- ALL: In Chicago
- C: Stand on the corner
Of 47th and South Park
- T: You're bound to see him
- ALL: Or go to Oakwood Cemetery
- T: The bus isn't coming
The bus isn't coming
It's a long way home
So cold
The cemetery gate is open!
Maybe I can cut through
Richard!
- C: Phil!
- T: What a nice place to meet!
- C: We haven't seen each other in a long time
I've been thinking

T: You're always thinking

C: Those old jam sessions
Twenty-four hours a day

T: Right by the El

C: Start out for work

T: Hear the cats playing

C & T: Don't go to
Work that day

T: The music was overwhelming

C: Like stepping into paradise

C & T: We looked up one day
All that was snatched away
We had been robbed
We were nothing
Nomads

C: Too much noise down there

T: Cleaned it up

C: Wiped it away

C & T: We're giving you Negroes more power

S: More power

C & T: More education

S: More education

C & T: Mo money

S: Mo money

C & T: Mo money
So let's take your culture

C: No place to play the music in our hearts

T: Our desires

C & T: We are under tight control
Like the great musicians of the past

C: You know some cats

T: You know some cats

C & T: Let's get together

Scene 4: First Meeting

C: Let the meeting begin
Robert's Rules of Order
Look at the post cards for our agenda
Number one is
Original music
Only
This will have to be voted on

S: We thought of all the things we are
What everybody would like to do
We spoke of furthering creative music
We've all been talking about it
So get to what you really feel
We're laying a foundation
For something that will be permanent

C: What point are we on now?
Original music?
We are creative musicians gathered here
to form an association
To realize our dreams
This is the highest purpose
We're all denied the privilege of
expressing what is in us

S: This involves a great deal of sacrifice
I don't want to sacrifice for any standard
music

T: But are the concerts only creative music?
She creates her own
He creates his own and everything
is creative?
I may not care to play my own music
A time will come when that originality
Must be sacrificed

- C: You don't have to compromise with anyone but yourself
- T: The Duke told us there are two types of music
Good and bad
Original music
That's not my mood
All the time
- S: The other music is already being presented
Record companies
Disk jockeys
Everyone is promoting it
- C: It's time for musicians to let go of the others and start finding themselves
Stretch out as far as we can
Most people here do want to play their own music
They don't get a chance
Someone else is in control
- T: All of us would gladly play original music But is that all we will allow?
That will not make us free
We will be slaves to original music
- C: This association cannot enslave us
But it can free us
To contribute something new
- T: Do people even know what original music is?
I don't
- C: Originality
Originate
Origin
Direct source
Original compositions
Originating from ourselves
- S: Now is the time
This is an awakening
- T: I think I see it now
The system we're locked up with now
in this society
It's what we learned
- As we learn more of other systems around the world
We found there is expression on a much higher level than we had been led to believe
Original means
Sound-conscious musicians
Getting closer to the music our ancestors played
Finding a complete new system that expresses us
We will be locked up in this system for the rest of our days
Unless we find ourselves as a people
- S: We're gonna take a vote right now
- C: All in favor of promoting ourselves
- S: Presenting our own music
- C: Signify by saying Aye
- ALL: Aye!
- Scene 5: Naming**
- T: We need a name
I have a name
Association of Dedicated Creative Artists
But I wonder
Could it be put in another way
- S: It said on the card "A meeting for the advancement of creative music."
That sounded good
Association for the Advancement of Creative Music
- T: What initials would that give?
- C: A is one
M is four C is three
M and C make seven.
Two A's are one a piece
That makes nine
- T: We will be the A. A. C. M.

LIBRETTO

C: A Number Nine Organization

S: That's as high as you can go
What are we calling it?
Creative Music?
Or Musicians?

C: We can all create music
Somebody else can take it and use it
We've been advancing creative music
No one has been advancing us

ALL: To advance Creative Musicians!

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Ariae

S: Hmmmm...
What do I call this?
A day... in my life No...
A day in THE life
By... Claudine...
No
What name should I use? Who am I?
Ariae
I'll be Ariae
Ajaramu and Ariae saw Mal and Lester
on their way downtown

C: Bring me a sandwich?

T: Goin' downtown to see a man ain't got
time to shake your hand

S: Walked in the auditorium
Stub playing piano
Leo cleaning the office
Anthony sweeping

C: Ariae proceeded to the desk of the Rock
She told him she was going to learn his
theories on notation

T: Get your own thing
You don't need someone else's
We're not dealing with style
We're dealing with music

C: You have your very own concert
Playing Now's The Time
They snatch you right off the stage
Where's your music?
Get yourself some music
This concert's over

S: Stub walks in
You people are really cleaning up!

ALL: We're creating individuals
Not an assembly line
We can take anything
Make anything out of it

S: Anthony came down with his contrabass
clarinet

T: Rock had his bass sax

C: Fonnies and Ariae sang and played piano

T: Man your hair is nappier than mine!
Where's that big horn you got?

C: Watch what you say
Claudine's copying everything

S: My name is Ariae

C: Better be cool
Gonna tell on yourself
You had a blonde wig

S: I don't anymore

T: We started the day facing the East
What's the faith here?
Is it Islamic?

C: That was for prayer purposes
The planet rotates to the East
When you face the East
You're standing proudly
Life feeds out of the East into the West
It returns to the East
It returns home
It shows us each day
What we are here to do

Among many other explanations
 There could be quite a few
 Africa is a mixture of a lot of things
 What's important is not a physical
 homecoming
 But a mental return

S: I've been happy all day
 Painting
 Writing, Composing, Playing, Poetry
 Totally involved in art
 Signed, Ariae

Scene 2: The Split

S: Let the meeting come to order

C: Our agenda is clear
 The new musicians have a need for
 mind expansion
 Fed up with the lies they've been told
 They want to break out
 Way beyond the intellect
 Your psyche is more vast than anything
 you see in this world

S: Original music restores us through
 adherence
 To natural laws and spiritual applications
 We hope to present this heirloom
 Left to us by the great black scientists
 Of our ancient heritage

T: My purpose
 Is to awaken my people to the music
 of our heritage
 Why can't I play the Harlem Blues?
 Can't I play
 What I feel?

C: There is no limitation
 Unless you feel that our purpose itself
 is limited
 The purpose of this Association is to
 play original music
 Those who cannot go along
 We're not asking you to stay

S: The people are not expecting to hear
 anything familiar
 We are trying to awaken the psyche
 Where does heritage come from?
 Their psyche was awakened to the
 vibrations in the air eternal
 Beyond intuition emotion and science

T: A good ballad puts everyone on familiar
 ground
 After that I might be ready for something
 foreign
 Everyone is not as hip as you are

C: I don't care how we play or what we play
 We are extracting thoughts that are
 already there
 Our purpose is to play original music
 If this will not stand
 I will have to step out

T: This music has been going on since the
 beginning
 It is almost impossible for a young jazz
 musician

S & C: We're not really jazz musicians

T: It is almost impossible for a young
 musician to play
 If you have no knowledge of your history
 A tree without roots has no foundation

C: We are in the midst of a revolution
 It's time for some new music
 I have no concern about how you are
 going to feel
 I'm concerned with how I feel

T: Why do you play in public?
 You could just play by yourself

S: We have an audience as big as the universe
 We play to draw people of like mind
 This music has a lot to do with
 disrupting any status quo or system

C: But our purpose is to awaken the psyche

S: There are people in the audience
that hear what you hear
They can't describe it
When you do it
They hear it

C: All the music of the past
Leads us to create new sounds

S: Our musical heritage
Is with us all the time
We don't have to worry

C: Mister Chairman
I make a motion to adjourn

Scene 3: Death

S: Warm
Handsome
Calm
Sweet as he could be
Charles did wonders with his music
He was having headaches

T: If you saw him
You saw me
Tagging along
Growing up

S: Charles was finally doing what he
wanted to do
They called me.
He had died.

ALL: We loved Charles
We loved his music
We loved his personality

T: Reminded me of Christopher

C: I met Christopher when he came out
of the Army
He wasn't no normal piano player

S: He was living in a basement

C: He got sick

T: I took him to the hospital
I asked
When did he want me to pick him up
He said
Don't worry about it
I don't think I'll be coming home

S: He was going to India

C: To study with his teacher

ALL: When we came into his room
His mother said Christopher
Was gone to India

C: I can accept death now
but these were my friends
my age
Both of them died in the same year
Something died in me
I didn't want to play anymore

T: After Charles and Christopher died
There was an exodus

ALL: We got to get out of here
We are dying
We got to get out
We got to get out
We got to get out

Scene 4: Paris

ALL: Ils sont noirs!
Ils sont noirs!
They are black! Ils sont noirs!
Ils ont débarqué
They have arrived!
They are black!
Ils sont noirs!

C: When we arrived
We wandered the streets
They found us a home at Maison Blanche
An insane asylum
Petit déjeuner ev'ryday
Patients wandering around
We were like patients too

- ALL: Ils sont noirs!
Ils ont débarqué! Création!
Révolution!
- T: Paris was twenty-four hours a day
Like the South Side of old
People from around the world
Even from Africa
- ALL: Ils sont noirs!
Des nouvelles têtes de la nouvelle
musique!
Rupture! Surprise! Austère! Violent!
Painted faces
Masks of terror
- S: For the very first time we could see
- ALL: What our music means to the world
- S: We did new music ev'ry time we played
- ALL: We were popular
- S: They asked us
"Does the A.A.C.M. have anything to do
with Black Power?"
- ALL: We told them:
- C: We are representing History
Ancient to the Future
A continuum with Africa
Our music is composed
- T: Improvised
- S: Free
- ALL: Difficult
Like your life
We told them
- S: We want you to invent a whole new way
of thinking
- T: Heroes gods and masters do not exist in
our sight
- S: At times they only saw our blackness
Human meanings often went unheard
Perhaps I could be successful as an
unusual exotic item
Like a Venus Hottentot
- ALL: They are black!
Révolution!
Terroristes subversifs!
- C: Different customs different food
I couldn't speak the language
It wears on you
But I was not convinced that it was time
to go
Then one day on the radio
They called us revolutionaries
The police came
- ALL: Got to thinkin'
What do we really want to do?
- T: We were young and open to explore
A whole lot more of the world to see
And we liked being American Negroes
What about New York?
- ALL: What about the world?

Scene 5: Afterword

- T: This brother told me
You musicians should use black names
A hundred years from now people will
think Duke Ellington was white
You need a name from Africa
I made up my name
Ajaramu
It means "A drummer"
- C: "A drummer"
- S: "A drummer"
- ALL: Their names had no love only power
We named ourselves to chart our future

S: This sister told me
 You're a singer
 You're Iqua
 A woman who sings
 Or one whose mother has sung for her
 Or prayed for her
 My European name always seem'd
 a little stern
 My brother started calling me Iqua
 My husband started calling me Iqua
 Everyone was calling me Iqua
 Except my mother

T: Somebody told me
 Ajaramu is a hard name to remember
 That don't make no dif'rence
 If they love you
 They'll remember it
 A thousand years from today
 No telling what kind of people will be here
 If there are people here at all
 They ain't gonna care
 Was he black or white

S: We've been together for half a century
 In Paris New York and the world
 Ev'ry thing was fast ev'ry thing was loud
 when we came along
 We would drop a silence bigger than
 a building
 What could they say? Gimme another
 drink? We were a glitch
 A mutation
 So much sacrifice
 So many things taken away from us
 We're still segregated here
 even as a global community is within
 our grasp
 Great Black Music brought us into
 existence
 To stand up for ourselves
 Our Great Blackness is our real power.

C: We are here as change
 Change is synonymous with any
 conception of deity
 I changed my name
 It means "Number One"
 Those who survived the cotton fields
 of death had no idea at first
 How long it takes to come into your own
 Survival by any means necessary
 The idea of an all-black organization
 has a great deal of vitality
 When you are struggling to create
 an identity
 You cast down your bucket where you are
 You build up your strength
 But the road that you take must not be a
 direct reaction to the brutality that
 has been placed upon you
 You're acting in defense against injustice
 If you become a perpetrator of injustice
 You join your enemy against yourself

ALL: We know now that we come from
 Somewhere greater than all of us
 We were never concerned with how
 it was going to happen
 Innovation cannot be stopped from
 getting to its rightful place
 Nothing can go wrong
 Because there's nothing to compare
 it with
 Faith and strength give us the power
 To easily slip into another world

ALL: Stop trying to be like others
 Follow the thought of who you are
 We're still a part of the power that's
 stronger than itself
 Forever

Afterword, an opera was developed in partnership with the Chicago Performance Lab through the Theatre and Performance Studies Program at the University of Chicago, and a Design Residency of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago's New Works Initiative, with support from the MCA Stage New Works Initiative with lead funding from Elizabeth A. Liebman; a Mellon Collaborative Fellowship for Arts Practice and Scholarship at the Richard and Mary L. Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry at the University of Chicago; the Multi-Arts Production (MAP) Fund, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the Edwin H. Case Chair in American Music, Columbia University; and a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in Music Composition.



Saturday, June 17, 2017, 2pm
Zellerbach Hall

Vijay Iyer and Friends: Confluence

Zakir Hussain, *tabla*
Vijay Iyer, *piano*
Rudresh Mahanthappa, *saxophone*
Aruna Sairam, *vocalist*

*This afternoon's program will be announced from the stage
and will include one intermission.*

*Use it if you can, but use it with respect,
with the reverence that it deserves.*

—Batá master Milton Corona
(to Zakir Hussain)

Vijay Iyer and Rudresh Mahanthappa met in 1995. “We both immediately knew,” Iyer recalled, “that this would be an important connection”:

We were two South Asian Americans of the same age [born in 1971], trying to gain a foothold in the world of creative improvised music, and trying to address issues of identity, community, and history through our work, while negotiating the pitfalls of pigeonholing and self-exoticization. Our many collaborations—as the duo Raw Materials, in the Manodharma Trio with South Indian percussionist Trichy Sankaran, in each other’s quartets, and in other ensemble formats—have provided a crucial space for our ongoing creative inquiry, as improvisors sitting at a particular intersection of composite realities.

Children of immigrants—members of any diasporic community—are constantly negotiating multiple identities, and nowhere is that negotiation more fluid than in music. But today virtually all creative musicians find themselves at this intersection of composite realities. In 1971, the year Vijay Iyer and Rudresh Mahanthappa were born, Zakir Hussain, son and student of the legendary *tabla* master Ustad Alla Rakha, had been in the United States two years. At 20, he had already embarked on an international career that included touring with Ravi Shankar, then riding the crest of Western interest in North Indian classical music with its centuries-old repertoire of metrical and melodic patterns (*talas* and *ragas*). In a recent discussion with Vijay Iyer, Hussain recalled his humbling encounter with other musical cultures:

I arrived thinking that “I am representing a 2,000-year-old history, a very refined tradition that I am bringing, and so we should be teaching people what to do.” I had no clue that there were other traditions in the world that were just as old if not older and just as re-

financed and deep and had so much to offer. I started to see so many things I needed to learn in order to make my playing better and expand my repertoire. [...]

What I saw among Afro-Cuban, Latin percussion instruments: The tonalities were being discovered, the singing was part of the musicality of the instrument, and you heard not only the rhythms being played, but melodies coming out of the instrument and each area of the instrument was being discovered, being found, being caressed to express itself. And suddenly it was like a revelation.

Such revelations have likewise shaped the music of Aruna Sairam. Like Zakir Hussain, she is a classically trained artist, although her roots are in South Indian Carnatic music which, though likewise built on *talas* and *ragas*, is primarily vocal with a rich vocabulary of embellishments. Sairam has also been drawn to explore what she calls the alchemy of cross-cultural exchange, including a dialogue with North Indian music, with its Persian and Islamic genealogies, as well as collaborations with artists across a range of styles and repertoires from Gregorian chant to Moroccan Sufi and Arab-Andalusian traditions.

Solid technical mastery rooted in years of study have enabled Sairam and Hussain to use their instrumental and vocal virtuosity to engage as well with contemporary musical practices, including the jazz-inflected improvisational styles of which Iyer and Mahanthappa are a part. Indeed, at Iyer’s invitation, both Hussain and Sairam have served as faculty members at the International Jazz Convention at the Banff Centre in Canada. The concerts here and in Ojai mark the group’s first appearances as a quartet.

Vijay Iyer uses music to create communities, especially communities forged out of difference. He and Mahanthappa have studied Indian music, whose elements are present in their own works, but the differences here are nonetheless stark. They are cultural and generational; a contrast of classical and contemporary; of ancient traditions of voice and percussion against two upstarts, piano and saxophone; of intricate

metrical and melodic vocabularies against styles infused by a Western harmonic language with very dissimilar rhythmic and tonal premises. Bridging these differences involves more than creative interaction; it is also a re-conception of time.

All music resonates with the cultural, social, religious, and philosophical practices that gave it birth. For conversant musicians and audiences such layers of meaning infuse each musical moment; for those outside the culture they are usually lost in translation. In this meeting

between revered traditions of Indian music and an improvisational language with roots in jazz, the European avant-garde, and American experimentalism, this kind of temporal experience is transformed. The moment, laden thick with history, is funneled into something slender and fragile, an ephemeral intersection of sounds, that may draw on but does not require cultural context for understanding. It is instead something new, a shared composite reality—and one that may, in time, give birth to histories of its own.

—Christopher Hailey

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Zakir Hussain, the preeminent classical *tabla* virtuoso of our time, is appreciated both in the field of percussion and in the music world at large as an international phenomenon. A national treasure in his native India, he is one of the world's most esteemed and influential musicians, renowned for his genre-defying collaborations.

Widely considered a chief architect of the contemporary world music movement, Hussain's contribution has been unique, with many historic and groundbreaking collaborations including Shakti, Remember Shakti, Masters of Percussion, the Diga Rhythm Band, Planet Drum, Tabla Beat Science, Sangam with Charles Lloyd and Eric Harland, in trio with Bela Fleck and Edgar Meyer, and most recently, with Herbie Hancock. The foremost disciple of his father, the legendary Ustad Allarakha, Hussain was a child prodigy who began his professional career at the age of 12 and was touring internationally with great success by the age of 18.

As a composer, Hussain has scored music for numerous feature films, major events, and productions. He has composed two concertos and his third, the first-ever concerto for *tabla* and orchestra, was premiered in India in September 2015, in Europe and the UK in 2016, and in the United States earlier this year. A Grammy winner, he is the recipient of countless other awards and honors, including the Padma Bhushan (the third highest civilian award in the

Republic of India) and the National Heritage Fellowship, and was named an Officer in France's Order of Arts and Letters. In 2015 Hussain was voted "Best Percussionist" by both the *DownBeat* critics' poll and *Modern Drummer's* readers' poll.

As an educator, Hussain conducts several workshops and lectures each year, has been in residence at Princeton University and Stanford University, and in 2015 was appointed Regents Lecturer at University of California, Berkeley. He is the founder and president of Moment Records, an independent record label presenting rare live concert recordings of Indian classical music and world music. Zakir Hussain was resident artistic director at SFJazz from 2013 until 2016.

Vijay Iyer (*piano*) is the music director of the 2017 Ojai Music Festival. For a full biography, please see p. 13.

Few musicians share the ability of alto saxophonist/composer **Rudresh Mahanthappa** to embody the expansive possibilities of his music with his culture. What has materialized is a sound that hybridizes progressive jazz and South Indian classical music in a fluid and forward-looking form that reflects Mahanthappa's own experience growing up a second-generation Indian-American. The current manifestations of that trajectory include his latest project, *Bird Calls* (2015), which was named

the top album of the year by both *DownBeat* and NPR Music's jazz critics' poll.

Hailed by the *New York Times* as possessing "a roving intellect and a bladelikey articulation," Mahanthappa has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, and commissions from the Rockefeller Foundation MAP Fund, Chamber Music America, and the American Composers Forum. He was named alto saxophonist of the year for three years running in *DownBeat's* international critics' polls (2011–13) and again in 2015 and 2016, and for five years running by the Jazz Journalists' Association (2009–13) and again in 2016. He also was named alto saxophonist of the year in the 2016 *JazzTimes* magazine critics' poll. In April 2013 Mahanthappa received a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, one of the most prominent arts awards in the world. In 2015 he was named a United States Artists Fellow, and in 2016 he became the director of jazz and the associate director of the program in musical performance at Princeton University. Mahanthappa is a Yamaha artist and uses Vandoren reeds exclusively.

Padma Shri Aruna Sairam (*vocalist*), a renowned music ambassador from India, is one of her country's great classical music vocalists. Her style is rooted in tradition, yet continues to evolve. She belongs to the Veenai Dhanammal school of Carnatic music, known for its strict adherence to tradition and form. After her initial instruction from her mother, who was herself a classical singer, Sairam, at the age of 10, became a disciple of the legendary T. Brinda (who came from the family of T. Balasaraswathi and T. Viswanathan—pioneers who helped introduce South Indian classical music to audiences in the United States).

Sairam was the first to introduce the Abhang, a distinctive folk music form from Western India, into a traditional Southern Indian Carnatic concert. She has also collaborated with leading musicians across genres, including Dominique Vellard of France (classical liturgical, medieval, and Gregorian chants); Noureddine Tahiri of Morocco (Arabic-Andalusian music); Christian Bollmann of Germany (neo-classical music); Bollywood singer Shankar Mahadevan; mandolin virtuoso U. Srinivas; dancer Chandralakha; and multi-instrumentalist Ranjit Barot.

The BBC Proms invited Sairam to perform at the Royal Albert Hall in 2011 as the first South Indian classical musician in the Proms' 117-year history. Other venues where she has performed include Carnegie Hall (New York), Le Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Royce Hall (Los Angeles), the Festival of World Sacred Music (Morocco), and the Music Academy (Chennai).

Among the many recognitions bestowed upon her are the Padma Shri, the highest honor awarded by the Indian government to civilians of merit, and the US Congress Proclamation of Excellence. Her work has led her to undertake various worldwide mentoring programs, including the BBC World Routes Academy Project. The Aruna Sairam Foundation is dedicated to imparting knowledge of music to young and aspiring musicians, creating performance opportunities for budding artists, and rewarding senior music gurus in the community. Sairam is currently the vice chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the national Academy of India, which helps the Indian government formulate policies, implement programs, and foster cultural interchange between regions in India, and between India and the world.



Saturday, June 17, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Stravinsky & Iyer

Igor STRAVINSKY (1882–1971) *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913; 2016)
(arr. Cliff COLNOT)

Part I: Adoration of the Earth

Introduction
The Augurs of Spring
Ritual of Abduction
Spring Rounds
Games of the Two Rival Tribes
Procession of the Sage: The Sage
Dance of the Earth

Part II: The Sacrifice

Introduction
Mystic Circle of the Young Girls
Glorification of the Chosen One
Evocation of the Ancestors
Ritual Action of the Ancestors
Sacrificial Dance

International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)

Alice Teyssier, *flute*; Joshua Rubin, *clarinet*;
Rebekah Heller, *bassoon*; Gareth Flowers, *trumpet*;
Gabriela Diaz, *violin*; Kyle Armbrust, *viola*;
Kivie Cahn-Lipman, *cello*; Randy Zigler, *double bass*;
Cory Smythe, *piano*; Ross Karre and Levy Lorenzo, *percussion*;
John Minor, *timpani*

Steven Schick, *conductor*

INTERMISSION



Vijay IYER (b. 1971) *RADHE RADHE: Rites of Holi* (2014)

Film directed, edited, and designed
by Prashant Bhargava (1973–2015)

Part I: Adoration

Dawn
Promise
Summoning
Spring Fever
Procession
Colors

Part II: Transcendence

Thirst
Intoxication
Exaltation
Spirits
Rituals
Purging Rites

Vijay Iyer, *piano*

Tyshawn Sorey, *drums*

International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)

Alice Teyssier, *flute*; Joshua Rubin, *clarinet*;
Rebekah Heller, *bassoon*; Gareth Flowers, *trumpet*;
Gabriela Díaz, *violin*; Kyle Armbrust, *viola*;
Kivie Cahn-Lipman, *cello*; Randy Zigler, *double bass*;
Cory Smythe, *piano*; Ross Karre, *percussion*

Steven Schick, *conductor*

Sven Furberg, *projections*

Levy Lorenzo, *live sound*

The one true comment about a piece of music is another piece of music.

—Igor Stravinsky

Stravinsky got it right: Only music can comment on music, as these concerts from the Ojai Music Festival have demonstrated. But tonight's works are something different. If Varèse, Bach, and Mozart sent composers hurtling off in new directions (and one might say the same of improvisation, which is at every moment taking off from the moment before), the two halves of this concert are more akin to a lingering embrace. Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* has been prominent in recent Ojai festivals, appearing in 2005 and 2012 in versions for one and two pianos (Bugallo-Williams; Andsnes/Hamelin), and in 2013, the *Rite's* centennial year, in an arrangement for piano, bass, and drums (The Bad Plus), a gradual expansion of performing forces that indicates we may hear the composer's full orchestra original sometime late in the next century (!). These stripped-down versions captured the *Rite's* rhythms and harmonies with fierce energy and skeletal clarity, but this year, in an arrangement for an ensemble of 12 (suggesting a certain acceleration of our timetable) we'll get something more: color.

It is striking how memories of the *Rite* are linked to its colors—the pinched bassoon solo of the opening bars, undulating strings, pungent clarinets, snarling trumpets, shrieking flutes and piccolos, thumping bass and percussion—an orchestra of sharply etched primary colors, intense, explosive. This was how Stravinsky remembered the eruption of spring, announced by the cracking ice of the Neva River in St. Petersburg: bursts of color out of the monochrome of winter; a sudden, violent awakening at once exhilarating and menacing.

Stravinsky's ballet conjures this experience of spring through an ancient, primitive rite, strange and alien. But like any rite, it draws us into its sway, as if the very idea of annual recurrence overwhelms and submerges individual identity into shared, communal experience. We've transformed the horror of its culminating sacrifice into a cathartic abstraction, a symbol of frenzied abandon, a yielding that is coupled

with the very experience of this piece. Our love of *The Rite of Spring*, its grip upon our imagination more than a century after its premiere, has less to do with honoring a hypnotic icon that glares down from the darkened walls of music history than with surrendering to its immersive, enravishing power. Perhaps this explains why this one work has inspired so many versions and arrangements, from Walt Disney to The Bad Plus to Cliff Colnot. It is as if we can't get enough. Reliving the experience of this work from every possible angle—a recurring ritual of its own—is to recapture afresh that initial seduction. Memory and recall fuel the embers of desire.

• • •

When Prashant Bhargava first contemplated commemorating *The Rite of Spring* through a film about the Hindu rites of Holi, he was skeptical: "*The Rite of Spring* is a dark, dissonant work, and Holi is a joyous festival. Where could the two meet?" Holi, the heady spring festival that marks the carnal union of the goddess Radha with Lord Krishna, is a festival of color—clouds of color that fill the air and cover everything and everyone. Here, too, is spring as explosion, as passion unleashed by forces of nature that subsume individuals in communal celebration. But whereas Stravinsky's *Rite* traces an arc from violence to sacrifice, Bhargava's *RADHE RADHE* passes through chaos to transcendence.

For all its violence, *The Rite of Spring* was born in the quiet seclusion of Clarens, Switzerland, the alpine town where Stravinsky had rented a home and a studio to compose his ballet. Bhargava, on the other hand, took his cameras to the Braj region of Uttar Pradesh in northern India, the mythological home of Krishna and Radha. Here, he recalled, "they celebrated for eight days and it was primal and violent and sexual and celebration and they lost all their inhibition; it was a true kind of emerging of springtime in such a beautiful way." Rather than attempting a sober documentary narrative, Bhargava immersed himself in the frenetic, uninhibited crowds: "Shooting was chaotic and cathartic: Every evening for eight days, our crew returned drenched in color,

beaten and exhausted, only to be swept back up in more feverish celebrations the next morning.” He assembled his footage along the emotional arc of Stravinsky’s ballet—a structure of 12 episodes in two halves—shaping each section according to Stravinsky’s music, quite literally “sculpting the edit” around the episodes of the original scenario, such as the procession of the wise elders, the spring rounds, and the sacrificial dance. In the process, Bhargava’s use of montage mirrors the disjointed block-like structure of Stravinsky’s score.

In composing his own score, Vijay Iyer found it necessary to mute Bhargava’s Stravinskian “temp track” and let himself be “guided by the film’s inherent pulses—the rhythms of a people in transformation.” This included taking cues from the music and sounds recorded in the original footage: “There is music everywhere—different bands of roving troupes of drummers and singers worshiping and singing devotional songs.” The structural template, then, remained Stravinsky, but aside from a prominent bassoon solo there are no obvious allusions to Stravinsky’s music. Instead, Iyer’s goal was to take viewers through the “series of energies” captured in the film.

Our lingering embrace of a work like Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring*, whether through faithful arrangement, free adaptation, or creative variation, pays tribute to its power as a cultural artifact. It also says something about our capacity for transforming such objects of desire into vehicles of discovery. If Cliff Colnot has translated Stravinsky’s score into the textures of a contemporary ensemble, if Prashant Bhargava and Vijay Iyer have established a cross-cultural dialogue with the ballet’s scenario, these are means by which culture reflects upon itself, the “true comments,” the ones that matter.

—Christopher Hailey

Vijay Iyer (*piano*) is the music director of the 2017 Ojai Music Festival. For a full biography, please see p. 13.

For background on the **International Contemporary Ensemble** (ICE), please see p. 19.

For a biography of **Tyshawn Sorey** (*drums*), please see p. 28.

For a biography of conductor **Stephen Schick**, please see p. 27.