



music dance theater

# Cal Performances

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



**Tessa Lark**



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Jeremy Geffen

Words cannot express my pleasure in welcoming you to today's recital with violinist Tessa Lark and pianist Amy Yang, Cal Performances' opening concert of the 2021–22 subscription season. Many of you will recall that Tessa also launched our digital streaming season last October, the first broadcast on our *Cal Performances at Home* series, a well-received venture that successfully delivered full-length, professionally produced, original programming to audiences in their own homes and during a time of social distancing. On that occasion, Tessa presented a brilliant recital that few present will soon forget. I have no doubt that she and her performance partner Amy Yang will do the same today, and I'm so happy you could join us for what promises to be a remarkable concert; it's

wonderful that we can gather together again, listening to great music under the same roof!

When the pandemic forced Cal Performances to close its doors in March 2020, no one could have imagined what lay ahead. Since then, we've witnessed a worldwide health crisis unlike any experienced during our lifetimes, an extended period of political turmoil, recurring incidents of civil unrest and racially motivated violence, and a consciousness-raising human rights movement that has forever—and significantly—changed how each of us views social justice in our time.

Of course, the pandemic remains with us to this date and future challenges—including many adjustments to “normal” procedures and policies—can certainly be expected. I encourage you to check Cal Performances' website regularly for the most current information regarding our COVID-19 response. First and foremost, I assure you that there is nothing more important to us than the health and safety of our audience, artists, and staff. (And I remind one and all that proof of vaccination is mandatory today, as is protective masking throughout the event.)

Our season continues next weekend with performances by jazz great **Bria Skonberg** (Oct 9) and Cal Performances favorites, the brilliant **Danish String Quartet** (Oct 10), and our full schedule offers more of the same, packed with the kind of adventurous and ambitious programming you've come to expect from Cal Performances. In particular, I want to direct your attention to this year's *Illuminations*: “Place and Displacement” programming, through which we'll explore both loss and renewal, disempowerment and hope, while seeking paths forward for reclaiming and celebrating vital cultural connections that can fall victim to political and social upheaval.

Please take the opportunity to explore our complete schedule through our website and season brochure and begin planning your performance calendar; now is the perfect time to guarantee that you have the best seats for all the events you plan to attend.

Throughout history, the performing arts have survived incredible challenges: periods of war, economic collapse, and, yes, terrible disease. And if it will take time for us—collectively and individually—to process the events of the past 18 months, I'm certain that the arts have the power to play a critical role as we come to terms with what we have experienced and move together toward recovery.

I know you join us in looking forward to what lies ahead, to coming together once again to encounter the life-changing experiences that only the live performing arts deliver. We can't wait to share it all with you during the coming year.

Cal Performances is back. Welcome home!

Jeremy Geffen

Executive and Artistic Director, Cal Performances



Sunday, October 3, 2021, 3pm  
Zellerbach Hall

**Tessa Lark, *violin***  
**Amy Yang, *piano***

**PROGRAM**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)          | Sonata for Violin and Piano in G major,<br>Op. 30, No. 3<br>Allegro assai<br>Tempo di minuetto, ma molto moderato<br>e grazioso<br>Allegro vivace |
| Tessa LARK (b. 1989)                      | <i>Jig and Pop</i> for Solo Violin<br>(California Premiere)   |
| Michael TORKE (b. 1961)                   | <i>Spoon Bread</i> for Violin and Piano<br>Cornmeal<br>Milk<br>Eggs   |
| John CORIGLIANO (b. 1938)                 | <i>STOMP</i> for Solo Violin  |
| John LEWIS (1920–2001)<br>arr. Sam Reider | <i>Django</i> for Violin and Piano (World Premiere)   |
| Maurice RAVEL (1875–1937)                 | Sonata for Violin and Piano in G major<br>Allegretto<br>Blues: Moderato<br>Perpetuum mobile: Allegro  |

*This performance is made possible, in part,  
by Patron Sponsors Deborah & Bob Van Nest and Diana Cohen & Bill Falik.*

**COVID-19 Information**

Proof of vaccination status is required for entrance and masking is mandatory throughout the event.  
COVID-19 information is updated as necessary; please see Cal Performances' website  
for the most up-to-date policies and information.

UC Berkeley does not promise or guarantee that all patrons or employees on site are vaccinated.  
Unvaccinated individuals may be present as a result of exemptions, exceptions, fraudulent verification, or checker error.  
None of these precautions eliminate the risk of exposure to COVID-19.





**Sonata for Violin and Piano in G major,  
Op. 30, No. 3**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

In the summer of 1802, Beethoven's physician ordered him to leave Vienna and take rooms in Heiligenstadt, today a friendly suburb at the northern terminus of the city's subway system, but two centuries ago a quiet village with a view of the Danube across the river's rich flood plain. It was three years earlier, in 1799, that Beethoven first noticed a disturbing ringing and buzzing in his ears, and he sought medical attention for the problem soon thereafter. He tried numerous cures for his malady, as well as for his chronic colic, including oil of almonds, hot and cold baths, soaking in the Danube, pills, and herbs. For a short time he even considered the modish treatment of electric shock. On the advice of his latest doctor, Beethoven left the noisy city for the quiet countryside with the assurance that the lack of stimulation would be beneficial to his hearing and his general health.

On October 6, 1802, following several months of wrestling with his diminishing hearing (as well as a constant digestive distress and the wreck of a recent affair of the heart—the thought of Beethoven as a husband threatens the moorings of one's presence of mind!), Beethoven penned the most famous letter ever written by a musician—the “Heiligenstadt Testament.” Intended as a will written to his brothers (it was never sent, though he kept it in his papers to be found after his death), it is a cry of despair over his fate, perhaps a necessary and self-induced soul-cleansing in those pre-Freudian days. “O Providence—grant me at last but one day of pure joy—it is so long since real joy echoed in my heart,” he lamented. But—and this is the miracle—he not only poured his energy into self-pity, he also channeled it into music. The Symphonies Nos. 2–5, a dozen piano sonatas, the Fourth Piano Concerto and the Triple Concerto, *Fidelio*, three violin and piano sonatas (Op. 30), many songs, chamber works, and keyboard compositions were all composed between 1802 and 1806.

Beethoven completed the three Op. 30 Sonatas for Piano and Violin by the time he returned from Heiligenstadt to Vienna in the

middle of October 1802. The Sonata No. 3, in G major, is the most compact and cheerful such piece in Beethoven's creative output. The main theme of the opening sonata-form movement balances, in good Classical fashion, a frisky motive in rolling scale steps with a more lyrical idea. The second theme is full of incident, with mercurial shifts of harmony, a half-dozen thematic fragments, sudden changes of dynamics, and sharply accented notes. The trills and bustling rhythmic activity that close the exposition are carried into the development section, which provides only a brief formal deflection before a full recapitulation of the exposition's materials rounds out the movement. Though the second movement is marked to be played “in the tempo of a minuet,” this is music grown from song rather than dance, sweet and lyrical and gracious, that returns to its lovely opening strain throughout in the manner of a refrain. The closing movement is a genial rondo whose sunny vivacity and sparkling passage work recall Haydn's Gypsy rondos.

**Tessa Lark**

***Jig and Pop* for Solo Violin  
(California Premiere)**

*Jig and Pop* was inspired by a fiddle-sounding motif my fiancé bassist and composer Michael Thurber asked me to play and embellish for one of his pop songs. The bustling optimism immediately sparked more ideas for this piece, a virtuosic *moto perpetuo* inspired by the feel of an Irish fiddle master playing a simple tune over and over, ever new and entrancing.

—Tessa Lark

***Spoon Bread* for Violin and Piano**

**Michael Torke**

Michael Torke (TOR-kee) was born in Milwaukee on September 22, 1961. His parents enjoyed music, but they were not trained in the field, so they entrusted young Michael to a local piano teacher when he early showed musical talent. He soon started making up his own pieces, and by age nine, he was taking formal composition lessons. Torke's skills as a pianist and composer blossomed while he was in high school, and he chose to take his professional training at the

Eastman School in Rochester, where he studied with Joseph Schwantner and Christopher Rouse. Though he had surprisingly little familiarity with popular idioms before entering Eastman in 1980, Torke absorbed all manners of music from the students and faculty at the school, coming to realize that he could make pop, rock, and jazz coexist with the “classical” idioms in his music. After graduating from Eastman in 1984, he spent a year at the Yale School of Music as a student of Jacob Druckman before moving to New York City, where his practice of submitting scores to every available competition had already made his name known to a number of contemporary music buffs. (Torke won the American Prix de Rome and grants and prizes from the Koussevitzky Foundation, ASCAP, BMI, and the American Academy & Institute of Arts and Letters.) In 1985, his music was taken on by the prestigious publishing firm of Boosey & Hawkes. In 1990, he received a first-refusal contract for all of his compositions from Decca/London Records, the first such agreement that company had offered since its association with Benjamin Britten; in 2003, he launched his own label, Ecstatic Records. In 1997, Torke was appointed the first associate composer of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. He now has more requests for commissions than he can accept, and is one of only a handful of American composers supporting themselves entirely through the income from their compositions. Among Torke’s recent releases is the 2019 recording *Sky* of concertos for violinist Tessa Lark, bassoonist Peter Kolkay, oboist Ryan Roberts, and clarinetist Weixiong Wang with the Albany Symphony Orchestra, conducted by David Alan Miller.

Torke composed *Spoon Bread* in 2016 for Tessa Lark on a commission from Carnegie Hall for her performance at Weill Recital Hall on February 2, 2017. The collaboration was so successful that the following year Torke wrote for her the “bluegrass concerto” *Sky*, which was nominated for a Grammy for Best Classical Performance and was a finalist for the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in Music. Torke wrote, “Tessa’s background is from Kentucky, which brings a fresh approach to her classical playing. In addi-

tion to that inspiring starting point, I wanted to write music that would give a platform to her warmth, her bountifulness, and her bouquet of musicality. Starting with the characteristic sound of *détaché* bowing (each note gets its own bow stroke; i.e., the notes are not slurred—a primary feature of fiddle playing, also found in jazz violin performance, with an historical precedent in Baroque music), I joined that technique with a harmonic vocabulary which would be considered unmistakably American (with some French overtones... but then there is a direct relationship between harmonies Ravel used and certain strains of jazz). I thought the title would give a nod to something common and shared by Kentuckians. In fact, Tessa enthusiastically revealed to me when we first read through the piece that there is a Spoonbread Festival that takes place near her hometown [Richmond, Kentucky] which brings tens of thousands of people together every year. The movement titles (“Cornmeal,” “Milk,” and “Eggs”) for the fast–slow–fast structure of the piece, are the key ingredients found in every spoon bread recipe.”

### **John Corigliano** ***STOMP* for Solo Violin**

John Corigliano, one of today’s most prominent and frequently performed American composers, was born in New York City on February 16, 1938, and raised in a family rich in musical talent—his father, John, Sr., was for many years the concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic and his mother was an accomplished pianist and teacher. From 1955 to 1960, Corigliano studied at Columbia University with Otto Luening and at the Manhattan School of Music with Vittorio Giannini. He served as composer-in-residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1987 to 1990, and has taught at the Manhattan School of Music and at Lehman College of the City University of New York, which recently established a composition scholarship in his name; he has also been on the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music since 1991. Corigliano has been recognized with such distinguished honors as the Pulitzer Prize and Grawemeyer Award, five Grammy Awards, the Horblit Prize, and an Academy Award (for *The*





Composers Michael Torke (photo by Bryan Hainer) and John Corigliano (J. Henry Fair)

*Red Violin*). In 1992, *Musical America* named him as that publication's first "Composer of the Year." Corigliano's most recent composition, premiered by Santa Fe Opera in July 2021, is *The Lord of Cries*, with a libretto by composer and writer Mark Adamo, which explores the "intriguing intersections between two classics of Western literature—*The Bacchae* by Euripides and *Dracula* by Bram Stoker—to warn of the monster within us, not around us."

Corigliano wrote of *STOMP*, composed in 2011 for the 14th International Tchaikovsky Competition in St. Petersburg, Russia, "What to include in a competition piece in 2011? One could write a virtuoso étude or a lyrical essay, but the judges will have dozens of pieces that demonstrate those virtues. I thought a more interesting piece would test a performer's imagination, intelligence, and musicality by offering some new problems to solve. Hence, this unaccompanied six-minute study I call *STOMP*."

"*STOMP* poses its player three problems: of ear, style, and coordination. First, the violin's outer two strings are tuned to non-standard pitches. This mis-tuning (*scordatura*) deepens the instrument's range, and replaces the usual perfect-fifth intervals between strings with grat-

ing dissonances high and low. Second, the piece is modeled not on classical precedents, but on American fiddle music—bluegrass and jazz. And third, as in fiddle playing, the violinist must periodically stomp his or her foot along with the music.

"So *STOMP* demands a theatrical mind, an unerring ear, and a delight in making music with the entire body. It is supposed to be fun for the audience, and a workout for the soloists. I can't wait to hear them play it."

### *Django*

**John Lewis (arr. Sam Reider)**  
(World Premiere)

Composer and pianist John Lewis was one of the most prolific and influential jazz artists of the 20th century. He studied piano and classical music from childhood in Albuquerque and was introduced to jazz by the dance-loving aunt with whom he lived after his mother, divorced from John's father, died when he was four. Lewis majored in music and formed a dance band at the University of New Mexico, and in 1942 he was drafted into the army, where he met Kenny Clarke, an established jazz drummer in New York. After the war, Clarke convinced Lewis to

join him in New York, where Lewis completed a master's degree at the Manhattan School of Music, joined Dizzy Gillespie's band, and began working as pianist, composer, and arranger with such jazz greats as Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Lester Young, and Ella Fitzgerald. By 1950, the musicians of Gillespie's rhythm section—Lewis, vibraphonist Milt Jackson, drummer Clarke, and bassist Ray Brown—were performing on their own, a group they formalized the following year as the Modern Jazz Quartet. The MJQ became known for its impeccable dress and stage demeanor as well as

at City College of New York and Harvard; toured internationally as a soloist and collaborator; played sporadically with the Modern Jazz Quartet after it was re-formed in 1981; co-founded the American Jazz Orchestra to perform arrangements from previous eras as well as new compositions; and received an honorary doctorate from Berklee College of Music in Boston in 1989. Lewis made more than one hundred recordings with the MJQ and other bands and artists as soloist, leader, and sideman, including Book I of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* in 1984. He made his last two record-



Django Reinhardt and John Lewis (c. 1945). Photos by William P. Gottlieb.

for the polished elegance of its music, much of it composed by Lewis using the techniques and discipline of classical composition he had learned during his conservatory training. He composed, performed, and recorded with the MJQ for the next two decades while also teaching at the Lenox School of Jazz in Massachusetts (1957–60), directing the Monterey Jazz Festival (1958–83), and becoming deeply involved with “Third Stream” music, which sought to combine classical and jazz traditions. After MJQ disbanded in 1974, Lewis taught privately and

ings, one solo, in 1999 and 2000, and performed for the final time at a lavish gala in January 2001 at Lincoln Center in New York celebrating his long career and the range of his genius in settings from solo piano to big band. John Lewis, died of prostate cancer at age 80 in New York City on March 29, 2001.

• • •

Django Reinhardt was the first European jazz star. The son of a traveling entertainer, he was born in 1910 at Liverchies, Belgium and raised in a Gypsy settlement outside Paris. He was

known for his expressive, sophisticated, and melodic playing as well as for his phenomenal technique, which was especially remarkable because he had lost the use of two fingers on his left hand in a childhood accident. Django, as he was universally known, founded the Quintette du Hot Club de France with violinist Stephane Grappelli in 1934 and it had become the most popular and influential European jazz ensemble by the time World War II broke out five years later. He was able to keep performing during the war, mostly in southern France and northern Africa, then reunited with Grappelli in 1946

*Django* as a memorial tribute; the Modern Jazz Quartet recorded it on December 23, 1954. *Django* became one of the ensemble's signature pieces, and they included it on three other studio albums. Percy Heath, a later bassist with the MJQ, said, "If we didn't play *Django* in a concert, we risked getting stoned. I mean in the thrown-at sense." Miles Davis called *Django* one of the best compositions ever, and NPR included it on its list of the "100 most important American musical works of the 20th century." In *Clawing at the Limits of Cool*, Salim Washington and Farah Griffin wrote that *Django* "is



Left to right: Hélène Jourdan-Morhange (1888–1961), Madeleine Grey (1896–1979), Germaine Malançon, unidentified, and Maurice Ravel in 1925

and a few months later came to America to tour with Duke Ellington. He met John Lewis when they were both in New York. "Really, music was it. That was him," Lewis recalled. "He and music were synonymous. That's what *Django* did."

Reinhardt died at Fontainebleau, south of Paris, on May 16, 1953; he was 43. "It broke my heart," Lewis said. "I'm not going to hear this anymore. Every time I had the opportunity to hear him play, I'd go, because I was going to hear something new." The following year Lewis wrote

almost like a poem in its economy and poignancy. With remarkable restraint and almost no concessions to the extroverted tendencies of jazz, the slow and dirge-like *Django* sustains an intensity and pathos made all the more beautiful through restraint."

This arrangement for violin, which receives its world premiere at today's concert, is by San Francisco pianist, accordionist, composer, and educator Sam Reider, who has often appeared in concert with Tessa Lark.



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## Maurice Ravel

### Sonata for Violin and Piano in G major

Hélène Jourdan-Morhange was one of France's most promising violinists in the years after the First World War. She was in her mid-twenties and recently widowed by the hostilities when Ravel first met her at a performance of his Piano Trio in which she participated during the war; they were close friends until the composer's death in 1937. Ravel consulted Hélène frequently on matters of string technique, and had her play many items from the standard violin repertory for his edification. In August 1923, he undertook a *Sonata for Hélène*, promising that "it won't be very difficult, and it won't sprain your wrist." (Violinists might well disagree!) His health and creativity had been damaged by the rigors of the war, however, and by the time he completed her sonata in the spring of 1927, rheumatism had forced an end to Mme. Jourdan-Morhange's performing career. The brilliant Romanian composer and violinist Georges Enescu, a friend of Ravel since their student days together at the Paris Conservatoire, gave the sonata's first performance with the composer at the Salle Érard in Paris on May 30, 1927.

Concerning the lengthy gestation of the Violin Sonata, his final chamber composition and one of his favorites among his own works,

Ravel once quipped that it took him four years to eliminate all the unnecessary notes. Though intended humorously, his comment touches on essential qualities of the work—its lean textures, acerbic harmonic language, and economy of means, characteristics that first appeared in Ravel's music with the remarkable *Chansons Madécasses*, completed in 1926. He said that in the *Chansons*, scored for soprano, flute, cello, and piano, "The independence of the part writing is pronounced.... I also asserted this independence in the Sonata for Violin and Piano, instruments that, in my opinion, are essentially incompatible. Far from balancing their contrasts, the sonata reveals their incompatibility." The opening movement, patterned on traditional sonata form, is the most convivial portion of the work regarding the sharing of musical materials between the participants, though even here each instrument displays a distinctive personality. The influence of that international musical mania of the 1920s—American jazz—was the inspiration for the second movement, titled "Blues." The sonata's flamboyant finale is designated *Perpetuum mobile*, though the "perpetual motion" is confined entirely to the violin part while the piano is allotted a considerably more sedate accompaniment into which are woven allusions to the opening movement.

—© 2021 Dr. Richard E. Rodda





**Tessa Lark, violin**

Violinist Tessa Lark has been consistently praised for her astounding range of sounds, technical agility, and musical elegance. A 2020 Grammy nominee in the Best Classical Instrumental Solo category, Silver Medalist in the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, recipient of a 2018 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship and a 2016 Avery Fisher Career Grant, and winner of the 2012 Naumburg International Violin Competition, she is also an acclaimed fiddler in the tradition of her native Kentucky. Since her concerto debut with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra at age 16, Lark has performed with numerous prominent orchestras, recital venues, and festivals including Carnegie Hall, Marlboro Music, and Lincoln Center. Three recordings featuring Lark were released in 2019: her solo debut album *Fantasy*, comprising her own *Appalachian Fantasy* and a variety of classic works in fantasia form; the Grammy-nominated *SKY*, whose title selection is a bluegrass-inspired violin concerto written for her by Michael Torke; and *Invention*, the debut album of her violin-bass duo Tessa Lark & Michael Thurber. Planned for release this season is *The Stradgrass Sessions*, an album featuring Lark in solo works by Corigliano and Ysaÿe and in duo collaborations with bassist Edgar Meyer, pianist Jon Batiste, fiddler Michael Cleveland, and mandolinist Sierra Hull.

Lark is a graduate of New England Conservatory and holds an artist diploma from the Juilliard School. She plays a ca. 1600 G. P. Maggini violin on loan from an anonymous donor through the Stradivari Society of Chicago. For more information, visit [www.tessalark.com](http://www.tessalark.com).

**Amy Yang, piano**

A “jaw-dropping pianist who steals the show...with effortless finesse” (*Washington Post*), Amy Yang shared the stage with Anne-Marie McDermott, Yefim Bronfman, Paul Neubauer, and the Dover Quartet in a myriad of performances at Bravo! Vail 2020. She gave her solo debut and joined forces with the Jasper String Quartet in music by Tania León and Joan Tower for the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society’s 35th season. She was also featured in the PBS television program *Articulate* in June 2021.

Yang toured with Patricia Kopatchinskaya, Tito Muñoz, and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, and premiered music by Michael Hersch at Cal Performances and the Ojai and Aldeburgh festivals. Additional collaborations include performances with Richard Goode, Ani and Ida Kavafian, Tessa Lark, Tara Helen O'Connor, the Guarneri and Aizuri string quartets, A Far Cry, and the Houston Symphony.

She has premiered music by Caroline Shaw, Avner Dorman, Ezra Laderman, Paul Wiancko, and Hua Yang. Yang has performed at the Marlboro and Ravinia festivals, Verbier Academy, Chamber Music Northwest, Caramoor, and Music from Angel Fire. Her discography includes a solo album, *Resonance*; a world-premiere album of Michael Hersch’s music recorded live at the Aldeburgh Festival; a world-premiere recording of piano music by Ezra Laderman; and albums with Itamar Zorman, Tessa Lark, and José Franch-Ballester. Yang is on the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music, and was program director and a faculty member of Curtis Summerfest’s Young Artist Summer Program. If it weren’t for music, she’d love to be a painter. For more information, visit [www.amyyang.com](http://www.amyyang.com).



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\* Gift was entirely or partially in support of Cal Performances' Educational and Community Programs