

CCM

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES
PRESENTS

ROOTS

AYANE KOZASA, VIOLA

Salley Koo & Rachel Charbel, violin

Paul Wiancko, cello

Rachel Calin, bass

Sihan Zhang, piano

Tuesday, February 20, 2024
Robert J. Werner Recital Hall
7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

American Haiku (2015)

I. Far Away
II. In Transit
III. Home

Paul Wiancko, cello

Paul Wiancko

Walimai (2011)

Sihan Zhang, piano

Michael Djupstrom

Blue Bourrée (2014)

Michi Wiancko

Yann's Flight (2013)

Salley Koo & Rachel Charbel, violin
Paul Wiancko, cello
Rachel Calin, bass

Shawn Conley

K'Zohar Harakia (2020)

Paul Wiancko, cello

Judd Greenstein

PROGRAM NOTES

Ever since commissioning composer and cellist Paul Wiancko to write American Haiku back in 2015, where I come from and where I belong has always been a question at the forefront of my mind. The more creativity I explore through music-making, the more my curiosity bubbles to find the music that feels unequivocally like myself. Simultaneously, being able to experience another person's roots and culture through music is a precious privilege, and I believe it is the way towards a compassionate understanding of each other in a world that can feel so polarized. Though many of these works are not directly related to me, they encapsulate different parts of my identity and roots, and performing them makes me feel at home.

-- Ayane Kozasa

American Haiku (Notes by Paul Wiancko):

American Haiku is at once a reflection on the composer's Japanese American identity as well as an ode to the evocative concision of haiku. A celebration of detail and color, American Haiku is also a longer journey divided into three sections: Far Away, In Transit, and Home.

Walimai (Notes by Michael Djupstrom):

Much of Walimai inhabits the dark, mysterious world that lies concealed beneath the rainforest canopy. This vast, timeless landscape is also the setting for the powerful short story of the same name found in Isabel Allende's fascinating collection "Cuentos de Eva Luna." Reading Allende's work provided the initial inspiration to compose this piece, and to some extent, suggested its dramatic and emotional trajectory, which traces a path from clarity and freedom through a terrible loss toward an eventual release from suffering and return to peace.

Allende's Walimai is one of the Children of the Moon, a tribe of indigenous people who live deep in the forest, just beyond the reach of the outside world – a world with which contact is fleeting and often violent. In the course of the story, Walimai is responsible for the death of a woman, thus violating the first fundamental law of his people. As she dies, the woman's soul enters his body, forcing Walimai to carry with him the tremendous weight of her earthbound spirit and the knowledge of his actions.

For more than a month, the two are bound to one another, and with each day, the woman's spirit weighs more heavily upon Walimai. As they move deeper into the forest, talking, singing to each other, sharing their histories and legends, a powerful love develops between them, only increasing Walimai's suffering; he knows that very soon, he must help her to leave the earth. Finally, they arrive at the appropriate site, and in the dense, black stillness of the jungle, Walimai begins the ritual fast. As his strength slowly deteriorates, their spiritual connection weakens, and the woman's soul begins to break away from his embrace. Days later, she takes her first steps alone, returning quickly but venturing farther out with each successive attempt. On the twelfth day of the fast, when the pain of their separation has reached a terrible intensity, Walimai dreams she is flying high above the forest canopy, and he wakes, his body shaken and nearly weightless. She is gone. Around him, the eternal forest waits in silence. Walimai rises and walks for hours until he arrives at a small river. After snaring a fish, he goes to hunt, so as not to return to his village empty-handed.

PROGRAM NOTES

Blue Bourrée (Notes by Michi Wiancko):

Blue Bourrée is a tribute to Bach's first cello suite, in which I climb into the laced-up world of baroque dance music and attempt to unravel it a bit from the inside, while hopefully fortifying the listener's urge to dance.

Yann's Flight (Notes by Shawn Conley):

Yann's Flight is named for my friend Yann Romanson, whose two passions are videography and flight. His idea of a good time is jumping off a mountain with a paraglider strapped to his back

and a camera on his head. On a trip we took to Hawaii, he brought his paraglider with him. I would stumble out of bed around 11am and Yann would be sitting at the kitchen table, finishing up the edits on the video he had created from his morning flight. While I never got up the nerve to join him, the images he captured made me feel as if I was there, soaring over the mountains and ocean.

K'Zohar Harakia (Notes by Judd Greenstein):

When Ayane & Paul commissioned me to write K'Zohar Harakia, my wife had just given birth to our second daughter, named Zohara. Given the timing, and the fact that Ayane and Paul are Zohara's aunt and uncle, the piece couldn't be about anything but the experience of having this beautiful new person in our life. Zohara's name means a kind of brightness, and is related to the title of one of the core works of Jewish mysticism, called the Zohar. My favorite source for the word, though, is in the Book of Daniel, from the following passage:

V'hamaskilim yazhiru k'zohar harakia

[And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament.]

That's the kind of brightness I hope Zohara's name bestows upon her, and upon us all: the brightness of true wisdom. This piece is a kind of grappling and seeking, for wisdom and for transcendence. Hearing Ayane & Paul play it, I feel we are all engaged in a journey together, to seek that end — one that can never be completely reached, but the seeking of which gives meaning to our lives. This is my musical expression of that idea, and I'm honored by having these two incredible musicians join me for the journey.

BIOGRAPHIES



Hailed for her “magnetic, wide-ranging tone” and her “rock solid technique” (Philadelphia Inquirer), violist **AYANE KOZASA** is a sought-after chamber musician, collaborator, and educator. As a founding member of the Aizuri Quartet for 11 years, she developed her skills of launching a brand new ensemble. The Aizuri Quartet’s debut album *Blueprinting* was nominated for a Grammy Award and named one of NPR’s top 10 classical albums of 2018.

Currently, Ayane is a member of the duo *Ayane & Paul* and *Owls*, a quartet collective with violinist Alexi Kenney and cellists Gabriel Cabezas and Paul Wiancko. *Owls* share an uncommonly fierce creative spirit, weaving together new compositions with original arrangements of music ranging from the 1600s to the present, and have played at series such as the Baryshnikov Arts Center in NYC and The Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. This season, Ayane is the guest violist of the Cavani String Quartet. The quartet boasts several original educational presentations with the string quartet as the catalyst, and they have presented their work at institutions such as the University of Michigan.

Much of Ayane’s current work involves mentoring aspiring young musicians through programs like the Meadowmount School of Music, Green Lake Chamber Music Camp, and Olympic Music Festival. She is currently on the viola faculty at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Raised in Bellingham, Washington, **RACHEL CHARBEL** began studying the violin at the age of seven. As a member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Rachel holds the Ida Ringling North chair. Past appointments include section positions in the Austin Symphony and Dayton Philharmonic, as well as Associate Concertmaster of the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra. In addition, Rachel has performed with the Detroit, Louisville, and Alabama symphony orchestras. Rachel received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Texas and a Master of Music degree from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Her principal teachers include Gabriel Pegis, Jorja Fleezanis, Walter Schwede, and Jane Perkins. After serving as Adjunct Professor of Violin at the Northern Kentucky University, Rachel now maintains a private studio of promising young violinists. (*cont.*)



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An avid chamber musician, Rachel has performed with several ensembles including the Winstead Chamber Series, Concert:Nova, Apollo Music Festival, Florestan Chamber Music, and the Austin Chamber Music Festival. During the summer, Rachel has performed with the Britt, Astoria, Festival dei Due Mondi (Italy), and Bellingham music festivals, and served as concertmaster of the Spoleto Festival (USA). In her spare time, Rachel enjoys gardening, hiking, board games, and exploring what greater Cincinnati has to offer with her husband and two daughters.



A violinist of great range and energy, **SALLEY KOO**'s recent calendar includes engagements as soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, orchestral guest, and faculty across the globe. She is regularly invited as a guest artist with groups such as the Minnesota, St. Luke's, Saint Paul Chamber, and East Coast Chamber Orchestras, International Contemporary Ensemble, and the Knights, and she is a familiar face at numerous festivals including Chamber Music Silicon Valley, Yellow Barn, Taos, Tanglewood, and Thy Chamber Festival.

Despite her busy performance itinerary, Dr. Koo has established a thriving teaching career and was thrilled to join the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign as assistant professor in 2022. Dr. Koo has also taught at Adelphi University, Montclair State University, University of Connecticut, Green Mountain and Green Lake Chamber Festivals, Apple Hill, Yellow Barn's Young Artist Program, and the Opus 118 program in East Harlem, New York.

Hailing from Chicago, where she studied with Almita and Roland Vamos, Salley then earned degrees from Harvard University, Yale School of Music and Stony Brook University under the tutelage of Lynn Chang, Peter Oundjian, Pamela Frank, and Philip Setzer.

Salley currently performs on a violin made for her by Mario Miralles. When not playing the violin, she's likely to be found playing with her dogs or cooking and planning where and what to eat next.

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PAUL WIANCKO is an acclaimed composer, Director of Chamber Music at Spoleto Festival USA, and cellist of the Kronos Quartet, viola/cello duo Ayane & Paul, and quartet-collective “dream group” (NY Times) Owls. The Washington Post calls Wiancko “a restless and multifaceted talent who plays well with others,” a reference to his collaborations with artists ranging from Max Richter, Chick Corea, and Norah Jones—to members of the Guarneri and JACK quartets—to bands like Arcade Fire, Dirty Projectors, and Wye Oak. “Even with this chronically collaborative spirit,” the Post continues, “Wiancko maintains a singular voice as a composer.”



Paul Wiancko’s own music has been described as “delicate, harmonically rich,” “joyous, hard-driven” (NY Times), “dazzling, compelling” (Star Tribune), and “vital pieces that avoid the predictable” (Allan Kozinn). He has been composer-in-residence at Spoleto Festival USA, Caramoor, Music from Angel Fire, Portland Chamber Music Festival, and numerous others, and has recently been commissioned by Alisa Weilerstein, Alexi Kenney, Brooklyn Chamber Music Society, and the St. Lawrence, Kronos, Aizuri, Calder, and Attacca Quartets. NPR writes, “If Haydn were alive to write a string quartet today, it may sound something like Paul Wiancko’s LIFT”—a piece that “teems with understanding of and affection for the string-quartet tradition” (NY Times).



Celebrated for her proficiency as both a pedagogue and a performer, **RACHEL CALIN** has been called “a lyrical soloist in command of her instrument,” by the New York Times. In 1994 she won the Juilliard Concerto Competition, making her concerto debut at Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall with the Juilliard Orchestra.

As a chamber musician, Calin has appeared in concert throughout Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the United States. She can be heard on NPR’s Performance Today, both in live and recorded broadcasts, and has collaborated with Myung-Wha Chung, Lawrence Dutton, Leon Fleisher, among others.

She has performed frequently with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic, and has made appearances at the Aspen Music Festival, Live from Lincoln Center, Mostly Mozart, and Ravinia. She has given the world premieres of works by composers such as Lera Auerbach and D. Edward Davis, and has performed with many contemporary music ensembles including Sequitur, Composers Concordance, and Metropolis Ensemble. (*cont.*)

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Calin received a BM and MM from the Juilliard School, where she studied with both Homer Mensch and Eugene Levinson. In addition to Juilliard, she also trained with Jeff Bradetich, Paul Ellison and Denise Searfoss. She was the recipient of an instrument loan from the Karr Foundation, and currently performs on a double bass crafted by Carlo Giuseppe Testore in 1690.



Hailing from Shandong, China, Sihan's journey began at a young age, guided by a profound love for the piano and an unwavering commitment to her craft. Sihan's musical foundation was built under the guidance of respected mentors at the Central Conservatory of Music in China. From there, she continued her studies at the Academy of Music in Krakow, Poland, and later at the University of Music and Dance Cologne, Germany, and Manhattan School of Music in the US. Each step of her journey shaped her into the artist she is today, instilling in her a profound understanding of music's power to connect hearts and souls.

Sihan's performances have taken her across Europe, where she has shared her music with audiences in Holland, Germany, Italy, France, and Poland. Her dedication to sharing her artistry with diverse audiences has also led her to perform in prestigious festivals such as the Montepulciano Music Festival, the Acht Brücken New Music Festival, and the renowned Ruhr Music Festival in Germany.

Her collaborative spirit shines through in her work with fellow musicians and artists from various disciplines. She has collaborated with emerging composers, premiering their works at festivals and concerts, and has also had the privilege of working with the renowned Pina Bausch Dance Theater, providing the musical backdrop for their captivating choreography. These interdisciplinary projects have allowed Sihan to explore new artistic avenues and push the boundaries of traditional performance, creating memorable experiences for audiences worldwide.

Currently, she is pursuing her doctorate study in CCM under the guidance of Professor Sara Daneshpour.

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