

Lamnth

Lilit Hartunian, violin
Nicholas Tolle, cimbalom

Debut Concert

November 29, 2023 8pm
Sully Hall
Boston Conservatory at Berklee

threshold of our fragile body (2023)

Darcy Copeland (1996)

inflorescence (2023)

Marti Epstein (1959)

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.
- v.
- vi.
- vii.

echoes and empty shapes (2023)

Erin Graham (1995)

- i. *disconnect*
- ii. *disturb*
- iii. *disembody*
- iv. *disavow*
- v. *disarm*
- vi. *distance*
- vii. *disdain*
- viii. *disappear*
- ix. *dissociate*

—intermission—

sliver of sky in a crowded room (2023)

Maya Bennardo (1989)

lines and traces of desire (2022)

Mischa Salkind-Pearl (1984)

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.
- v. *Sonata in E Major: Adagio (Blasco de Nebra)*

Program Notes

To be at a threshold is to be at a place of both endings and beginnings, to be in a liminal space, to be in between. To be fragile is to be easily broken, vulnerable, delicate.

threshold of our fragile body is a piece about breaking—breaking down, breaking apart, breaking through. It is about the fragility of connection and the precarious contingencies of relationships and the ways we intertwine with those we commune with — the fragility of these threads as well as the fragility of our own identities. — **Darcy Copeland**

I was inspired to compose 'Inflorescence' for Lamnth after I heard Nick and Lilit perform Mischa Salkind Pearl's music at a concert at Boco 2 years ago. Not only was I captivated by the sonic possibilities of the two instruments, I was also inspired by the musical personalities of the performers themselves. Both Nick and Lilit have been valued and trusted performers of my music; that trust translates into inspiration, admiration, and respect. The title, 'Inflorescence' means 'a cluster or group of flowers arranged on a floral axis'. This image suggested a musical form to me- each movement of the piece is like a collection of progressively decaying flowers on a stem. Finally, at the end, there is almost nothing left. — **Marti Epstein**

Lately, I've been interested in how overwhelming, unhinged, and/or dramatic communication can still present itself through claustrophobically restricted means. My first point of inspiration for this was considering the sentient AI, HAL 9000, from Stanley Kubrick's film based on Arthur Clarke's novel 2001: A Space Odyssey. HAL, forced to exist and run with paradoxical instructions, is driven to digital incongruity, desperation, and murder, yet can only demonstrate paranoia, turmoil, and fear to his interlocutors through very limited dialogue which must be spoken in a calm and measured inflection. This led me to consider the way that self-censorship and filtering influence one's own comparatively mundane everyday communication, and what it looks like to draw a musical representation of a disconnect between external and internal dialogue. — **Erin Graham**

When working on *sliver of sky in a crowded room* I reflected upon the simple joy of being caught off guard by a warm ray of light entering my train car during an afternoon commute. In this piece I wanted to sit inside of that golden stream and expand the fleeting moment. — **Maya Bennardo**

Maya and Lamnth wish to thank the Föreningen svenska tonsättare for assistance with Maya's travel.

Lines and Traces of Desire is meant as a companion piece (or reaction to) György Kurtág's 8 Duos for Violin and Cimbalom, op.4. The material documents restlessness, resignation, and desire. — **Mischa Salkind-Pearl**

Performer Bios

Lamnth—a new violin and cimbalom duo founded by Lilit Hartunian and Nicholas Tolle—presents their first full season of concerts in 2023-2024, with newly commissioned works by Maya Bennardo, Darcy Copeland, Marti Epstein, Erin Graham, Sid Richardson, Golnaz Shariatzadeh, and Niloufar Shiri. Selected for a 2023 Avaloch Farm Music Institute residency, Hartunian and Tolle rehearsed and workshopped their first commissioned work, Mischa Salkind-Pearl's *Lines and Traces of Desire*, for a recording to be released in 2024. Hartunian and Tolle, long established members of the Boston new music community, are frequent performers with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, A Far Cry, Emmanuel Music, and Sound Icon, among other groups. They also frequently perform together with The Ludovico Ensemble, founded by Tolle, including a duo concert in March 2022 which led to the launch of this project.

Violinist **Lilit Hartunian** (she/her) performs at the forefront of contemporary music innovation, both as soloist and highly in-demand collaborative artist. First prize winner in the 2021 Black House Collective New Music Soloist Competition, Ms. Hartunian's "Paganiniesque virtuosity" and "captivating and luxurious tone" (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*) are frequently on display at the major concert halls of Boston, including multiple solo performances at Jordan Hall and chamber music at Symphony Hall (Boston Symphony Orchestra Insights Series), as well as at leading academic institutions, where she often appears as both soloist and new music specialist. Highlights from the 2023 season include performances with A Far Cry at The Kennedy Center, Boston Modern Orchestra Project at Carnegie Hall, and [Switch~ Ensemble] at June in Buffalo, as well as the release of an album featuring A Far Cry, Roomful of Teeth, and pianist Awadagin Pratt. Described as "brilliantly rhapsodic" by the *Harvard Crimson*, Ms. Hartunian can be heard on New Focus Records, Innova Recording, SEAMUS records, New Amsterdam Records, and on self-released albums by Ludovico Ensemble and Kirsten Volness. As collaborative artist and ensemble musician, Ms. Hartunian regularly performs with Boston Modern Orchestra Project, A Far Cry, Sound Icon, Emmanuel Music, Callithumpian Consort, Guerilla Opera, and Ludovico Ensemble, and recently performed as guest artist with the Lydian Quartet, Arneis Quartet, and The Rhythm Method.

Nicholas Tolle (he/him) is one of America's premiere cimbalom artists. In 2019 he won 3rd prize in the Budapest Music Center International Cimbalom Competition. He has performed as soloist in Pierre Boulez' *Repons* with the composer conducting at the Lucerne Festival in 2009, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal with Péter Eötvös in 2012, and with Steven Schick at UC San Diego in 2017. He has performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, New York Philharmonic, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the International Contemporary Ensemble, Ensemble Recherche, Talea Ensemble, and Ensemble Signal. He is featured performing Boulez's *Repons* in the EuroArts documentary *Inheriting the Future of Music: Pierre Boulez and the Lucerne Festival Academy*, and in Kurtág's music for cimbalom and voice on soprano Susan Narucki's 2019 album *The Edge of Silence*, which was nominated for a 2020 Grammy award. His recording of Kurtág's *Seven Songs* from *The Edge of Silence* was named one of the best classical tracks of 2019 by *the New York Times*.

Composer Bios

Darcy Copeland (she/her) is an experimental composer based in Boston, MA. Working with acoustic instruments and electronics, she is motivated by primal curiosity of the physical world and what it means to be alive within it. Her work interrogates themes of vulnerability, materiality, and palpability to instigate new ways of being in the world through sound. In addition to composition, she is also a performer and scholar. Her current research within new materialism, sonic embodiment, and posthumanism has informed her recent works with a focus on ecological modalities, activism, and technology. In 2022, Darcy joined the PhD program in composition at Harvard University, studying with Chaya Czernowin and Hans Tutschku. She holds a master of music in composition from the University of Washington in Seattle, WA and a bachelor of music in composition from Columbia College Chicago.

Marti Epstein (she/her) is a Boston-based composer whose music has been performed by the San Francisco Symphony, The Radio Symphony Orchestra of Frankfurt, Ensemble Modern, Trinity Wall Street, and the Boston Symphony Chamber Players. She has completed commissions for the Fromm Foundation, The Munich Biennale, the Ludovico Ensemble, Guerilla Opera, the Radius Ensemble, Tanglewood Music Center, Winsor Music, Boston Opera Collaborative, Callithumpian Consort, Hinge, loadbang, and Collage New Music. Marti was a two-time fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center (1986 and 1988) and a three-time fellow at the MacDowell Colony (1998, 1999, 2022). In 2020, Marti was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to compose *Seven Sisters*, *Radiant Sisters* for the Hinge Ensemble, *Alpenglow* for loadbang, and *In Praise of Broken Clocks* for sound icon. *Nebraska Impromptu*, an album of Marti's chamber music for clarinet, was just released this past April on New Focus Recordings and features clarinetist Rane Moore and members of Winsor Music. Marti is Professor of Composition at Berklee College of Music/Boston Conservatory of Music.

Erin Graham (they/them) is a composer of contemporary classical music. A fifth-year PhD Candidate in Composition at UC San Diego, Erin has worked with highly-regarded artists such as King Britt, Stalina Villarreal, Lee Vinson, Amy Williams, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and the Houston Symphony. Erin's chamber work, *Manual*, was performed at the Tanglewood Institute's Seiji Ozawa hall by Elana Bell, Benjamin Fryxell, and Dominic Aragon in August 2022. Erin's recent projects include a collaboration with Lee Vinson as part of Intersection's LISTEN project as well as projects with percussionist Oliver Xu, and UC San Diego's Palimpsest Ensemble. In 2021, Erin was a composition fellow at the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's Edward T. Cone Composition Institute, where they worked with Steven Mackey and Ludovic Morlot. Erin received Rice University's Paul and Christiane Cooper Prize in Music Composition for their orchestra piece, *Increase* in 2019. In 2015, Erin won an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award for their chamber work, *Five Poems of Edward Lear*.

Maya Bennardo (she/her) is an active performer, improviser, and composer based in Stockholm, Sweden. Maya's music is characterized by slow, unfolding timbral movements--exploring the co-existence of pitch and noise. Her compositions have grown naturally out of her improvisational practice on the violin, and the two continue to inform each other. This season Maya is writing new works for NoExit + andPlay, Lamnth, and Alkemie + Amanda Gookin. As a performer, Maya is interested in opening the dialogue and blurring the boundaries between composers and performers and is devoted to performing music of the present. She is a founding member of the violin/viola duo andPlay, described by I Care If You Listen as "enthusiastic champions for new music and collaboration." She is a member of Mivos Quartet, "one of America's most daring and ferocious new-music ensembles" (The Chicago Reader) and also performs new and traditional repertoire for violin and piano with pianist Karl Larson in the Bennardo/Larson Duo.

Mischa Salkind-Pearl's (he/him) music has been performed by ensembles around the U.S., Japan, Germany, and Italy. Boston Classical Review named his opera, *Troubled Water*, (September 2015, Guerilla Opera) the Best Premiere of 2015. Current projects include a consortium commission for a string quartet that integrates traditional techniques of American weaving, a collaboration with fiction writer Franny Zhang, and a commission for a concert-length work for Knoxville-based duo Two Way Street. Ensembles and soloists he has composed for include ensemble *mise-en*, Philipp Stäudlin, Tony Arnold, Lilit Hartunian, Transient Canvas, Diagenesis Duo, and Callithumpian Consort. His work, *A Poppy of Erasure*, was included in the exhibition "Intersections: Masters of Line and Space" at the Akron Art Museum. Mischa was founder and board member of Boston's Equilibrium (2011-2020), an ensemble that presented concerts highlighting the music of Boston's diverse contemporary music community. He is Assistant Professor of Composition and Core Studies at Boston Conservatory at Berklee. His music can be heard on Ludovico Ensemble's portrait CD of his work, *I Might Be Wrong*, on Transient Canvas's *Wired*, on Diagenesis Duo's *Hands and Lips of Wind*, and on Chen Li Music's 2017 CD, *Pluralities*. He is composer-in-residence for the Ludovico Ensemble.

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