

Lamnth

Lilit Hartunian, violin
Nicholas Tolle, cimbalom
with Jeffrey Means, live electronics

October 15th, 2026 8pm
Somerville Music Spaces

The Shadowed Way Down From Every Three-Hundredth Dream (2026)
World Premiere

Toby Driver (1978)

Smoke Fingered Staircase
World Premiere

Charlie Looker (1980)

Indefinite Tetrad
World Premiere

Adam Kalmbach (1985)

The Shadowed Way Down From Every Three-Hundredth Dream

On a touristic road impeded by the blithe disregard of summer pedestrians, a four-story ashlar tower watches the ocean to the east. The road curves around it northward into the town's tchotchke district, and two men costumed as feudal men-at-arms pretend to guard the tower's door, a hefty wooden slab shut to keep out the sunlight and time. You've been meaning to see this attraction for some years, and today you finally have a free afternoon. You pass between the guards as the one to your right pulls open the obviously heavy door, welcoming you in.

The next thing you remember, you're in a low-ceilinged atrium with its walls, floor, and ceiling made of smooth concrete. Corridors stretch out in three directions, the two to your right extending about thirty feet toward what are apparently large, open warehouse rooms. One of the corridors slopes slightly upward. Even with their low ceilings, the corridors are the width of three forklifts, one passing by you swiftly, up the slope into the larger room from which emanates a din of productivity. The corridor to your left is equally wide and low-ceilinged, and slopes slightly downward as it stretches several meters and visibly angles to the right. Here for some tourism and exploration, you feel as though you've already wandered into an "authorized personnel only" area, and understand that's usually where the most exciting things are stashed. You head down the left-hand slope, plain, smooth, and grey as the others, and turn the corner to the right before any workers can spot you.

Strangely, no light fixtures of any kind are present, yet the passageway is evenly lit, the walls and the path ahead are visible, and you cast no shadow. The corridor now splits off into several more directions, all similar in appearance. The grinding of factory machinery and the clatter and scraping of wooden pallets are gradually receding towards silence. You don't remember which way you choose to walk, but soon you're at another intersection. Wide corridors stretch in what seems to be six directions, somehow not crowding each other. You notice a staircase heading down and turning to the left. The staircase, like all the other surfaces, is molded concrete, clean, free of dust, and apparently recently built. You find this to be the most attractive option, and so you walk down the stairs and turn to your left.

After less than a story, you come to a landing where two corridors are set into the wall directly before you. There are no paths to either side of you, and the stairs incline behind you. The corridor in front of you to your right slopes upward at about a 7% grade. You can see that after about thirty feet, it turns to the left. The corridor in front of you to your left slopes downward, also at about a 7% grade. About ten feet down the slope, the passageway dissolves into thick, complete blackness. The even dimensions of the corridor's surfaces—twelve feet wide, twelve feet tall—present before you an enormous black square with feathered edges. You now notice that all of the warehouse sounds above have been gone for some time, but you're not sure how long ago you last heard them. You're certain that the darkened, downward corridor stretches quite far. The sounds of your breathing and your body seem to travel without returning, reflecting off the smooth surfaces away from you and being swallowed up. A warm draft hovers, and a low drone emerges from somewhere far below. You want to go down there, but you feel unprepared. Your gut tells you that you need to return later with better clothing, or at least a flashlight. You're struck with a great fear and a feeling that you can't turn your back to the darkness.

You are in your bed, trying to hold the image like grasping black vapor. You've seen the corridor now in ten different buildings. — Toby Driver

Smoke Fingered Staircase

Most of my work has included the voice, and with it lyrics, subjectivity, and the whole world of the Inside. Writing purely instrumental music is a chance for me to deal with sound and time in a more purely objective way. This piece isn't "about" anything; I didn't title it until the last minute and I even considered leaving it untitled, though that felt like a bridge too far. The title describes the wispy, rising gestures and the overall "verticality" of the compositional approach, where much of the intrigue is in the movement through different register-specific harmonic zones. The influences I had in mind were Morton Feldman, Justin Broadrick and, most of all, Gerard Grisey and the spectralist school. – Charlie Looker

Indefinite Tetrad

Indefinite Tetrad was written by applying triangle waveforms of differing periodicities to various parameters: the area of the cimbalom's playable surface to strike, violin fretting and bowing positions, level of vibrato, the rate of striking/bowing, the amount each instrument's pitch is modified by electronic pitch-shifting, and the mix between the dry and pitch-shifted signals. The live instrumentation is accompanied by a reversed recording of a prior performance of the piece. – Adam Kalmbach

Toby Driver is a composer and multi-instrumentalist who navigates between genres. He is “a tirelessly inventive recording artist” (*PopMatters*) with a prolific career spanning over 25 years. His work—impressionistic, architectural, and emotionally vulnerable—has been described as “unlike any other” (*The Quietus*), displaying “a greater vision of how music can evoke feelings both grandiose and devastatingly intimate” (*Vice/Noisey*). His multifarious projects share a sensitive and detail-oriented approach to composition, ranging from the metaphysical to the avant-garde, and an insatiable search for the new: there's “absolutely nothing to compare it against” (*Echoes and Dust*).

Driver's extensive body of work encompasses experimental rock, metal, contemporary classical music, new age, and intimate songcraft, often dissolving the boundaries between these traditions. Recent releases include *Every Rock, Every Half-Truth Under Reason* (2025), the eleventh studio album by his long-running ensemble Kayo Dot; his solo album *Raven, I Know That You Can Give Me Anything* (2024); and *Live at Roadburn* (2025). Following nearly a year of international touring in 2025 and 2026, Driver is currently engaged in an ambitious reunion of his early ensemble maudlin of the Well, encompassing new recordings and performances. He also leads the trio Alora Crucible, whose music explores the transcendent and meditative, and plays bass in Charlie Looker's long-running group Extra Life, with whom he continues to record and tour.

In the contemporary classical world, Driver has composed chamber works for Ludovico Ensemble, Newspeak Ensemble, and Spółdzielnia Muzyczna Contemporary Ensemble. Across these diverse activities, Driver has earned a reputation as “one of the most endlessly creative and thrilling band leaders” (*Treblezine*), pursuing a singular compositional language that continues to evolve beyond the conventions of genre and instrumentation.

tobydriver.com

Charlie Looker has been active in underground and experimental music circles for the past two decades as a composer, guitarist, and vocalist. His music brings together contemporary concert music, post-punk, improvisation, pop, early music, and sound design. His many projects include the bands Extra Life, Psalm Zero, and Seaven Teares, and his orchestral record, *Simple Answers*. Looker's credits as a collaborator, sideman, and/or producer include Xiu Xiu, John Zorn, Lingua Ignota, Mivos Quartet, Darius Jones, Dirty Projectors, the Wet Ink Ensemble, and William Parker. He also hosts the Last Things podcast and YouTube channel, a platform for artist interviews, music education, and cultural criticism.

Adam Kalmbach releases black metal and electronic music under the name Jute Gyte.

www.jutegyte.bandcamp.com

Lamnth is a violin and cimbalom duo founded in 2023 by Lilit Hartunian and Nicholas Tolle dedicated to building a new repertoire for their unique pairing. Their thoughtful and hands-on approach to collaborating has yielded new works by composers including Maya Bennardo, Judith Berkson, Marguerite Brown, Darcy Copeland, Marti Epstein, Ash Graham, Anthony R. Green, John McDonald, Sid Richardson, Bahar Royaei, Juri Seo, 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 an album released by New Focus Recordings in September 2025. In 2024 they returned to Avaloch to create a new piece with Bahar Royaei. For their third season in 2025-2026 they were in residency with the Boston Conservatory at Berklee Composition and Contemporary Music departments. In 2025 they served as the John and Arlene Heiss Ensemble in Residence at the New England Conservatory and were previously in residency with New Music Brandeis.

In 2024 they launched two annual initiatives: LamnthLab, an open call for composers that results in two commissions, and the Jack-o-Lamnthern Spooktacular, a Halloween concert that invites composers to "dress up" as other composers by arranging existing music for violin and cimbalom.

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, her "Paganiniesque virtuosity" and "captivating and luxurious tone" (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*) are frequently on display at major concert halls and leading academic institutions, including Symphony Hall, The Kennedy Center, Dumbarton Oaks, The Tanglewood Learning Institute, and Jordan Hall. Ms. Hartunian appears regularly with A Far Cry, Emmanuel Music, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and Castle of Our Skins. She is a member of New-York-based Switch Ensemble, Boston-based Dinosaur Annex, Sound Icon, and Guerilla Opera, as well as an Assistant Professor at Boston Conservatory. Recent highlights include co-founding violin and cimbalom duo Lamnth, performing at the Boston Symphony Orchestra's "Ligeti 100" chamber music concerts in Symphony Hall, and appearing on the 2023 Grammy winning album for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. Described as "brilliantly rhapsodic" by the *Harvard Crimson*, Ms. Hartunian can be heard on New Focus Records, Innova Recording, Albany Records, and New Amsterdam Records. For recordings, photos, and news, visit www.lilithartunian.com. Ms. Hartunian performs on a Pietro Cateni violin made in Livorno, Italy in 1795.

Nicholas Tolle (he/him) is one of America's premiere cimbalom artists. 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, with Steven Schick at UC San Diego in 2017, and again at the Lucerne Festival with Jonathan Nott in 2025. 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*. In 2019 he won 3rd prize in the Budapest Music Center International Cimbalom Competition.

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