

UNWRUNG: AESTHETICS, HISTORY, DECOUPLING

A CONCERT EVENT COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE JOHNS
HOPKINS UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ART
AND THE PEABODY INSTITUTE

- MUSIC OF DEBUSSY, HERSCH, LASSUS, MACHAUT, STROZZI & ZAND -

WITH PERFORMANCES BY

EMI FERGUSON
MIRANDA CUCKSON
AH YOUNG HONG

WITH
JOHN LENTI
KEVIN SMITH
JACOB SHACK
ARIANA NELSON

OCTOBER 8, 2025
8:00PM
EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH
811 CATHEDRAL STREET
BALTIMORE, MD 21201



P R O G R A M

In the Middle of the River - Rabe'eh Zand (arr. Ferguson)

Emi Ferguson, flute
John Lenti, theorbo

of sorrow born - seven elegies - nos. VI & IV - Michael Hersch

Miranda Cuckson, violin

Puis qu'en oubli - Guillaume de Machaut (arr. Hersch)

Miranda Cuckson, violin I / Kevin Smith, violin II / Jacob Shack, viola / Ariana Nelson, cello

Che si può fare - Barbara Strozzi

Ah Young Hong, soprano
John Lenti, theorbo

Puis qu'en oubli - Guillaume de Machaut (arr. Hersch)

Emi Ferguson, flute
Miranda Cuckson, violin I / Kevin Smith, violin II / Jacob Shack, viola / Ariana Nelson, cello

Syrinx - Claude Debussy

Emi Ferguson, flute

unwrung, apart, always - Michael Hersch

Emi Ferguson, flute

Susanne un jour - Orlande de Lassus (arr. Hersch)

Miranda Cuckson, violin I / Kevin Smith, violin II / Jacob Shack, viola / Ariana Nelson, cello

Lagrime mie - Barbara Strozzi

Ah Young Hong, soprano
John Lenti, theorbo

Susanne un jour - Orlande de Lassus (arr. Hersch)

Emi Ferguson, flute
Miranda Cuckson, violin I / Kevin Smith, violin II / Jacob Shack, viola / Ariana Nelson, cello

of sorrow born - seven elegies - no. II - Michael Hersch

Miranda Cuckson, violin

In the Middle of the River - Rabe'eh Zand (arr. Ferguson)

Emi Ferguson, flute
John Lenti, theorbo



UNWRUNG: AESTHETICS, HISTORY, DECOUPLING

A constellation of visual artworks thread through tonight's program, some evoked explicitly and others through a shared subject matter or sensibility with the music. *In the Middle of the River* engages the oldest musical context on the program. Excavations of a royal cemetery at Ur (modern Iraq) from about 2450 BCE, including of the tomb of a woman identified by her seal as Queen Puabi, unearthed not only elaborate jewelry and seals wrought from precious materials such as lapis lazuli, carnelian, and gold, but also ornate inlaid harps with bull's head protomes and delicate silver flutes. The bodies of women who played these instruments were also found entombed, sacrifices to accompany their queen. *In the Middle of the River* invites us to imagine the music these musicians might have played over four millennia ago. This evocation of the deep past frames tonight's program, while the Machaut and Lassus present early extant music.

Machaut's rondeau *Puis qu'en oubli* (mid-14th century) meditates on fidelity in loss. Lassus's *Susanne un jour* (1560) draws on a story from the Book of Daniel about a woman whom two old men accuse of adultery—a charge that sentenced her to death—in retribution for her rejection of their sexual proposition. Lassus recounts this story from Susanna's point of view: "You will force me to die in dishonor: but I would prefer to die in innocence than to offend God with sin." As early as the 3rd century CE, sculptors, painters, and weavers depicted Susanna's story, and between 1610-1652 Artemisia Gentileschi painted this subject repeatedly. Gentileschi's experiences and interests are echoed in the life of composer Barbara Strozzi. Both daughters of artists—a painter and a poet respectively—Gentileschi and Strozzi each grew up surrounded by writers, musicians, and visual artists as they trained for artistic careers that had historically been dominated by men. Like Susanna, both Strozzi and Gentileschi faced slander as their renown grew, yet each also persevered to support themselves through their art and to leave behind a robust corpus of work.

A "new Sappho," Strozzi crafts laments that explicitly invoke ancient Greek furies, the underworld, Elysian fields, and the pitiless stars and register as the the stoppered tears, "fire of pain," and gasping breath of lost love. Hersch's elegies *of sorrow born* also build from lament: *and before the sorrow/ that smashed me in the mouth.*¹ Elegy originally designated an ancient Greek mourning song accompanied by the flute. Artists often depicted women—tasked with public mourning—tearing their hair and ululating, picturing grief as sound and movement.

Two ancient Greek myths involving flutes—of Syrinx and of Marsyas—wend through the solo-flute pieces at the center of tonight's program, Debussy's *Syrinx* and Hersch's *unwrung, apart, always*. To escape Pan's attempt to rape her, the nymph Syrinx asks her sisters to change her into a bed of reeds at the water's edge. Clutching at the reeds, Pan pants into them so that "his breath, coursing through the rushes, *sounded like a tender lamentation.*"² Breaking off and binding the reeds together with wax, he names this new flute after his victim—Syrinx. Where Debussy aestheticizes Pan's attempted rape of Syrinx, with *unwrung* Hersch takes us into the violence of Marsyas's myth. Having picked up a flute discarded by Athena, the satyr Marsyas challenged Apollo to a musical competition, he on the flute and the god on his lyre. After Marsyas's inevitable loss, Apollo flays him alive for his hubris. "Why do you strip me from myself?"³ laments Marsyas amidst the torture. Ancient artists often painted and sculpted images of musicians playing flutes as well as specific depictions of both myths, translating the sound worlds of such music into pigment and stone. Like tonight's music, this imagery ranges from frolic to carnage, the latter exemplified in the startling

sculpture carved in red stone of Marsyas stretched long, the flayed muscles of his torso at the surface, decoupled from his skin.

With *Marsyas encircled* Anja Utler takes up this flaying.⁴ While difficult not to quote Utler's mediation on pain, fragmentation of the body, and breath in full, one stanza exemplifies her approach:

cleanly: cut

him: to see him his: limbs glint they
glisten in sweat—cramped—in front of the trunk
salt will bloom in the: armpit, white,
will be stiff, crystalline, then, when his skin
has been shriveled to parchment by wind beside it
hangs—fibrous—the carved flesh

Hersch engages Marsyas through Utler's poetry taking the listener deep into the viscera. His work takes its name from the first movement of Utler's collection:

again, then again came un-
wrung, apart, always, bare
am murmer am: as if
wounded, raw
under cilia,
raw

Imagining her collection as an interweavement (*Verfelchtung*), tonight's program makes a similar statement, weaving breath, stone, and tears across time into a transhistorical lament.

— Jennifer Stager

¹ Thomas Bernhard, translated by James Reidel, "Why do I fear getting old" *Hora Mortis / Under the Iron of the Moon: Poems* (2006), 23.

² Ovid, translated by Yelena Baraz and Jhumpa Lahiri, *Metamorphoses*, 765-766, emphasis added.

³ Ovid, translated by Yelena Baraz and Jhumpa Lahiri, *Metamorphoses*, 408.

⁴ Utler, Anja, translated by Kurt Beal, *engulf—enkindle* (Providence: Burning Deck, 2004), 78.



FURTHER NOTES

of sorrow born (excerpts)
&
unwrung, apart, always

*I already fear the night
That is outside the villages
And behind the house
That moans in the cows
And dances with the stars ...
... and before the sorrow
That smashed me in the mouth.*

- Thomas Bernhard

Michael Hersch's music forms a unique world that is highly recognizable as his own and difficult to associate with stylistic movements. He uses spare materials to grippingly visceral effect. Using isolated clusters or chords, he often employs the power of a single attack, or of a crescendo on a single note, to express his aims. His markings outline both gentle motions and violent contrasts across a huge dynamic and pitch range. In solo pieces a single line can be devastating, with subtle changes in its timbre, or giving powerful impact with a sudden flourish. In all his works, there is the sense of space and of gesture as sculpted objects.

His music often deals with the most challenging aspects of human experience, invoking desolation, sorrow, illness, war, violence, isolation. The music also poses immense technical challenges. Loud and turbulent passages requiring great accuracy combined with wildly unleashed energy adjoin extensive sections or quiet moments of tremendous simplicity, in which shaping of every inflection becomes paramount. The music employs extremes of register, dynamics, and types of directional motion. There are violent gestures, wild chordal playing, slow pulses and cavernous gaps of silence. The sudden switches from furious virtuosity to very still, nuanced playing test the performer's skill and stamina. These issues are particular to Hersch's music and they serve its basic expressive paradox, for the listener is simultaneously impacted by its huge dimensions and powerful gestures, and drawn in by its acute focus on subtle detail and nuance.

Also a remarkable pianist, it is apparent that his music has been informed by his own sense as a performer of the importance of the player's intentions and imagination. It is true and important in all music that the inert symbols on the page must be infused with meaning, but Hersch's music relies crucially on the symbiosis of composer and performer in order for its emotional power and sonic possibilities to come forth. In every gesture, in all fluctuations of volume, articulation and color, the music needs to be executed with the same sense of purpose and conviction as it was written.

Many of his works are companioned with text. In these pieces he selects fragments of texts by a particular writer and employs them as a counterpart to his composition, placing the fragments in

conjunction with specific musical movements. The text can be read on the page but remains unsung and unspoken. His text-based works bear several layers of meaning, situated somewhere between the abstraction of pure music and the pictorial and poetic associations of programmatic composition.

His work often conjures images from nature: birds in motion, water, lightning, snow, fiery skies. The persistent recurrence of material and passages of stillness counteract the volatile aspects of the music, often invoking a suffocating sense of despair and stasis. Taken together, the poetry and music evoke a range of darkly tinged emotional states, from desolation and frustration, to horror, to a kind of fearful wonder.

— Miranda Cuckson



Puis qu'en oubli
&
Susanne un Jour

From early on in my composing, I have had a love of certain musics from the 14th-17th centuries, with a particular affinity for the music of, among others, Guillaume de Machaut and Orlande de Lassus. I found a certain haven in this early music which often exhibited qualities shared with art of any period which I admired, qualities of concision, clear-sightedness, directed power and, generally speaking, an aversion to sentimentality.

Over the years, in-between composing my own works, often as a way of taking a kind of refuge from myself, I have made varying arrangements and transcriptions of some of these composers of the increasingly distant past. At times, I remain faithful to the original, at others, I take liberties, often extending the works durationally and structurally far beyond the original. In some cases I intensify or recede particular harmonies, employ a precise or modified use of ornament, apply reconfigurations of voicing, an expansion of coloration and gesture; above all, I embark on a reshaping of the dramatic arc, though always attempting to remain, with caveats, more or less within what I perceive to be the language of the period.

For those arrangements that feel as if they have stretched into something altogether different from the original, I often characterize the work as a Fantasia “on” the work in question. But again, there are those instances when I engage the originals in a more faithful manner, more or less adapting the work from one instrumental or vocal frame to another instrumentation. These arrangements of Guillaume Machaut’s *Puis qu'en oubli* and Orlande de Lassus’ *Susanne un jour* are works of this latter sort.

More than anything, I find these expressions from the past both haunting and beautiful, and in the occasional works I endeavor to write which engage with these musics, I find these particular dialogues, these momentary “conversations,” of which tonight’s program is a meaningful example in a larger dimension, deeply fulfilling.

— Michael Hersch



Che si può fare

Che si può fare?
Le stelle
Rubelle
Non hanno pietà.
Che s'el cielo non dà
Un influxo di pace al mio penare,
Che si può fare?

Che si può dire?
Da gl'astri
Disastri
Mi piovano ogn'hor;
Che le perfido amor
Un respiro diniega al mio martire,
Che si può dire?

Lagtime mie

Lagtime mie, à che vi trattenete?
Perché non isfogate il fier dolore
Che mi toglie'l respiro e opprime il core?
Lidia, che tant'adoro,
Perch'un guardo pietoso, ahi, mi donò,
Il paterno rigor l'imprigionò.
Tra due mura rinchiusa
Sta la bella innocente,
Dove giunger non può raggio di sole;
E quel che più mi duole
Ed' accresc'al mio mal tormenti e pene,
È che per mia cagione
Provi male il mio bene.
E voi, lumi dolenti, non piangete?
Lagtime mie, à che vi trattenete?
Lidia, ahimè, veggio mancarmi
L'idol mio che tanto adoro;
Sta colei tra duri marmi,
Per cui spiro e pur non moro.
Se la morte m'è gradita,
Hor che son privo di spene,
Dhe [deh], toglietemi la vita,
Ve ne prego, aspre mie pene.
Ma ben m'accorgo che per tormentarmi
Maggiormente la sorte
Mi neiga anco la morte.
Se dunque è vero, o Dio,
Che sol del pianto mio
Il rio destino ha sete,
Lagtime mie, à che vi trattenete?

What can you do?
The stars,
contrary/intractable,
have no pity.
Since the gods don't give
a measure of peace in my suffering,
What can I do?

What can you say?
From the heavens
disasters
keep raining down on me;
Since that treacherous Cupid
denies respite to my torture,
What can I say?

My tears, why do you hold back?
Why do you not let burst forth the fierce pain
that takes my breath and oppresses my heart?
Because she looked on me with a favorable glance,
Lidia, whom I so much adore,
is imprisoned by her stern father.
Between two walls
the beautiful innocent one is enclosed,
where the sun's rays can't reach her;
and what grieves me most
and adds torment and pain to my suffering,
is that my love
suffers on my account.
And you, grieving eyes, you don't weep?
My tears, why do you hold back?
Alas, I miss Lidia,
the idol that I so much adore;
she's enclosed in hard marble,
the one for whom I sigh and yet do not die.
Because I welcome death,
now that I'm deprived of hope,
Ah, take away my life,
I implore you, my harsh pain.
But I well realize that to torment me
all the more
fate denies me even death.
Thus since it's true, oh God,
that wicked destiny
thirsts only for my weeping,
tears, why do you hold back?

MUSICIAN BIOGRAPHIES

EMI FERGUSON

A 2023 recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, Emi Ferguson thrives as both a soloist and a collaborator, appearing at major festivals and concert halls around the world. She performs regularly with AMOC*, Ruckus, the New York New Music Ensemble, the Handel and Haydn Society (where she is principal flute), and the Manhattan Chamber Players. As music director of Camerata Pacifica Baroque, she curates bold, genre-defying programs that highlight the Baroque for Southern California chamber music audiences.

Chamber music and its spirit of collaboration has been at the heart of Emi's artistic journey. Her experiences at festivals like Marlboro, Lucerne, Ojai, Bach Virtuosi, and June in Buffalo have deepened her ability to listen, respond, and create dialogue in front of and within an ensemble. The intimate musical exchange and exploration inherent to chamber music informs all of her performances, whether she's reimagining Baroque sonatas, weaving historical performance with contemporary techniques, or bringing new compositions to life.

Emi's ability to connect through music has resonated in some of the world's most meaningful moments. Her performance of *Amazing Grace* at the 10th Anniversary Memorial Ceremony of 9/11 at Ground Zero alongside Yo-Yo Ma, Paul Simon, and James Taylor was broadcast globally and is now part of the permanent collection at the 9/11 Museum.

Her recordings reflect her curiosity and willingness to push boundaries. Her debut album, *Amour Cruel*, an indie-pop song cycle inspired by 17th-century French music, spent four weeks on the Classical, Classical Crossover, and World Music Billboard charts. *Fly the Coop: Bach Sonatas and Preludes*, her 2019 collaboration with Ruckus, debuted at #1 on the iTunes classical charts and #2 on the Billboard classical charts, earning praise from *The New York Times* as "blindingly impressive... a fizzing, daring display of personality and imagination." Up next: a new album with Ruckus, *By George!* exploring the unexpected connections between baroque and contemporary musics. Emi's discography also includes releases on New Focus Records, Old Focus Records, Orchid Classics, Canteloupe Music, National Sawdust Tracks, Brontosaurus Records, Coro, and MSR Classics.

Emi became the first student to earn Undergraduate and Graduate degrees with Scholastic Distinction (for her simultaneous studies in Epidemiology) in flute performance. She later earned a second Graduate degree in Historical Performance as the only flutist accepted into Juilliard's inaugural Historical Performance class as a Paul and Daisy Soros Fellow.

Emi can often be found dreaming up programs that collide various musical disciplines, composers, and that feature her as a flute player, singer, arranger, and composer. Upcoming projects include *By George!* with Ruckus, *The Enchanted Dawn*, with harpist Ashley Jackson, and *Pastures of Plenty*, a program developed for Frankly Music that features the music of Franz Schubert, Woody Guthrie, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Harry T. Burleigh, and Thomas A. Dorsey. She was also a resident artist at the Hermitage Artist Retreat in 2023-2024. Recent collaborations have been Roscoe Mitchell's *Metropolis Trilogy* with the Immanuel Wilkins Quartet, Ruckus, Metropolis Ensemble, and DACAMERA, the *Art of Invention* with Dan Tepfer, and *Book of Ayres* with Cécile McLorin Salvant.

As an educator, Emi has served on the faculties of The Juilliard School, the Bach Virtuosi Festival, and the University at Buffalo in addition to being sought after for masterclasses at universities around the country. Born in Japan and raised in London and Boston, she now resides in New York.

AH YOUNG HONG

A “transfixing” (*The New Yorker*) soprano of “fearlessness and consummate artistry” (*Opera News*), Ah Young Hong has interpreted a vast array of repertoire, ranging from the music of Monteverdi, Bach, Mozart, and Poulenc, to works of Shostakovich, Babbitt, Kurtág, and Haas. *The New York Times* has praised Hong as “the opera’s blazing, lone star,” *The Chicago Tribune* called her “absolutely riveting,” and the *Kronen Zeitung* writing “her stage presence, her soprano voice ... Breathtaking.” In high demand as a concert and chamber soloist, Ah Young has performed with violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Ensemble Phoenix Basel, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Camerata Bern, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, FLUX Quartet, the Netherland-based contemporary music group Ensemble Klang, Konzerthaus Berlin’s ensemble-in-residence, Ensemble unitedberlin, Ensemble Dal Niente, The Daedalus Quartet, Wiener KammerOrchester, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Charleston Symphony Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, and Tempesta di Mare, amongst others. She has also appeared as soloist at the Aldeburgh Music Festival, CalPerformances series, Seattle Symphony recital series, and the Ojai Festival.

In opera, Ah Young has premiered Michael Hersch’s *On the Threshold of Winter*, a one woman opera, and *Poppea* in the title role. Other roles include the title role in Monteverdi’s *L’incoronazione di Poppea*, Morgana in Handel’s *Alcina*, Gilda in Verdi’s *Rigoletto*, Fortuna and Minerva in Monteverdi’s *Il ritorno d’Ulisse in patria*, and Asteria in Handel’s *Tamerlano*. She has also appeared with Opera Lafayette in Rebel and Francoeur’s *Zélindor, roi des Sylphes* at the Rose Theater in Lincoln Center and as La Musique in Charpentier’s *Les Arts Florissants* at the Kennedy Center.

A prolific recording artist, Ah Young recorded the American premiere of Johann Sebastian Bach’s *Alles mit Gott und nichts ohn’ ihn*, BWV 1127, for National Public Radio’s Performance Today. Other recordings include the world premiere of Rebel and Francoeur’s *Zélindor, roi des Sylphes* (Naxos), Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater* (Peter Lee Music), and *Sentirete una Canzonetta* with Harmonious Blacksmith. Ah Young is a featured soloist in Ensemble Klang’s recording of Michael Hersch’s *cortex and ankle*. Early 2018 saw the commercial release of her debut solo CD on Innova Recordings featuring Milton Babbitt’s *Philomel* and Hersch’s *a breath upwards*. Ah Young was hailed as “an important new soprano undaunted by difficult contemporary challenges” (*The WholeNote*), who gives “landmark performances of two landmark works” (*GappleGate Classical-Modern Music Review*). Fall 2022 saw the release of Michael Hersch’s *the script of storms* with BBC Symphony Orchestra on the New Focus label. Recent performances include those with Ensemble Phoenix Basel in the world premiere of Michael Hersch’s *one step to the next, worlds ending* and with the Talea Ensemble in Georg Friedrich Haas’s *... wie stille brannte das Licht*. Ah Young currently serves as associate professor in the Vocal Studies Department at the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University.

MIRANDA CUCKSON

Praised recently for “a rare style that fuse[s] precision and elegance with passionate intensity and successful risk-taking,” violinist/violist Miranda Cuckson’s playing has, for many years, generated tremendous audience excitement and critical acclaim. In her wide variety of solo and collaborative performances, she continues to evolve and explore. Engaging with Western classical traditions and

the many modern musical avenues she has ventured on, Miranda has pursued a personal path motivated by sincere interest and exploration, the expression of any human feelings and experiences, and the realization of virtuosity, craft, and invention. Her particular interests include the playing of stringed instruments in musical cultures and contexts, and the porousness of the arts of interpretation and composition.

In the past few years, Miranda has given celebrated concerto debuts at the Vienna Musikverein (playing Georg Friedrich Haas’s Violin Concerto No. 2, which she premiered in four countries), and with John Adams at the Ojai Music Festival. Her live performance of the Ligeti Violin Concerto with the UC Davis Orchestra was released as a commercial recording to great acclaim.

In addition to performing around the USA and in her hometown of New York City, she has been a featured performer internationally at festivals including Wien Modern, Grafenegg, Sinus Ton, Le GuessWho, West Cork, Bard, Frequency, TimeSpans, Lincoln Center, and Ojai, and such presenters as St. Paul’s Liquid Music, 92NY, Miller Theatre, Tokyo’s Suntory Hall, Mexico City’s Palacio de Bellas Artes, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, the Library of Congress, and the Cleveland Museum.

She is a core member of the American Modern Opera Company (AMOC*), which is working at the forefront of interdisciplinary creation.

She and her frequent pianist partner Blair McMillen gave a recital at San Francisco Performances in 2023 and they perform at Boston’s Gardner Museum and the Detroit Institute of Art in 2025. Their recordings include their ECM Records album of duos by Bartok, Schnittke, and Lutoslawski, the Grammy-nominated *Songs and Structures* with a duo written for them by Harold Meltzer; Michael Hersch’s *the wreckage of flowers*, and a landmark run of albums of duo and solo violin music by American composers Elliott Carter, Jason Eckardt, Roger Sessions, Ralph Shapey, and Donald Martino.

Her album, with sound artist Christopher Burns, of Luigi Nono’s *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura* was named a Recording of the Year by *The New York Times*, and they have performed it live a dozen times, exploring its spatial and theatrical possibilities in a wide variety of settings. Miranda’s solo albums, also acclaimed, include *Világ* featuring the Bartok Solo Sonata along with folk-flavored recent works; the Korngold and Ponce violin concertos; and *Melting the darkness*, a forward-looking compilation of seven microtonal/electronic pieces.

A passionate performer and enthusiastic participant in many music groups and collaborations, Miranda is also the founder/director of non-profit Nunc, with which she has curated concerts and residencies and produced numerous premieres, including ensemble works and opera. She frequently writes and speaks to audiences about music and she earned her doctorate (and all her music degrees) from The Juilliard School. Dedicated to education, she is on faculty at the Mannes School of Music at New School University.

JOHN LENTI

John Lenti, described by the *Seattle Times* as "a joy to behold" is regularly beheld playing lute, theorbo, and baroque guitar with orchestras, choirs, and opera companies on both coasts of the United States, as well as in the interior, and internationally. While orchestral work as an accompanist and concerto soloist comprises most of his career, chamber music is John's primary interest and he

enjoys touring with his groups Wayward Sisters, the I-90 Collective, and Ostraka, while appearing as a guest with many other notable ensembles. With various groups he is frequently heard on many early music concert series and festivals. His recording credits include several well-received albums with some of the aforementioned bands, and his liner notes, program notes, and lectures have drawn praise. With a focus on historical instruments and some teaching, his intense musical love is the English golden-age lute song repertoire. His repertoire extends from the early 16th century to the present day. A native of South Carolina, John attended the North Carolina School of the Arts and Indiana University, and he studied lute with Jacob Heringman, Elizabeth Kenny, and Nigel North, also receiving valuable guidance from Pat O'Brien, Walter Gray, and Ricardo Cobo.

KEVIN SMITH

Violinist Kevin Smith, a native of Dallas, Texas, joined the Baltimore Symphony as Acting Assistant Concertmaster in 2015. Kevin earned his Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance as a student of Julia Bushkova at the University of North Texas. At the Cleveland Institute of Music, he earned Master of Music degree in the studio of Stephen Rose, Principal Second Violin of The Cleveland Orchestra. While attending CIM, Mr. Smith was awarded the 2015 Helen C. Webster Award for Outstanding Graduate Student. As a chamber musician, he has been coached by the Cavani, Juilliard, Shanghai, and Takács Quartets, and studied under Peter Salaff of the Cleveland Quartet. He has attended the Mimir Chamber Music Festival, the Round Top Festival Institute, and the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan. Kevin has performed under the acclaimed conductors, Franz Welser-Möst, Osmo Vänskä, and Valery Gergiev. Before joining the Baltimore Symphony, Kevin was a member of the Akron and Canton Symphony Orchestras, acted as concertmaster for the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra, and has performed with The Cleveland Orchestra.

JACOB SHACK

Violist Jacob Shack is based in Baltimore, Maryland, where he is Associate Principal Viola of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Appointed to this position in 2022, Jacob was previously Fourth Chair Viola of the BSO. He maintains a highly varied career of orchestral, contemporary, and chamber music performance. As an orchestral musician, Jacob has appeared with symphony orchestras across the United States, including those of Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, the National Symphony, New World Symphony, and New York Philharmonic. His festival appearances include Arizona MusicFest, Aspen Music Festival, Grand Teton Music Festival, Lake George Music Festival, Lakes Area Music Festival, New York String Orchestra Seminar, Sarasota Music Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, and Tanglewood Music Center, where he was a recipient of the Maurice Schwarz Prize. As a passionate proponent of contemporary music, Jacob was a member of the New Fromm Players at Tanglewood, which also served as the ensemble-in-residence at Bright Sheng's Intimacy of Creativity Festival in Hong Kong. A native of Andover, Massachusetts, Jacob earned his bachelor's degree in Comparative Religion from Harvard University in 2014. While an undergraduate, Jacob studied with Martha Strongin Katz of the New England Conservatory. He went on to pursue a master's degree at The Juilliard School under the tutelage of Heidi Castleman and Misha Amory.

ARIANA NELSON

Cellist Ariana Nelson is a member of the Carpe Diem String Quartet. In addition, she frequently performs with the National and Baltimore Symphonies, and the Washington National Opera. She was a core member of the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and has performed with other ensembles in the Houston area, including the Houston Symphony, Houston Ballet, and Texas New Music Ensemble. She has taught and coached as an adjunct faculty member at Texas Southern

University, and at AFA's Chamber Music Academy. Ariana is a co-founder of the Pacific Crest Trio. Her eclectic tastes have also led her to appearances at Jazz at Lincoln Center, performances for patients recovering in Mount Sinai Hospital's transplant ward, and a performance with the Silk Road Ensemble at Tanglewood. In 2015 Ariana was invited to perform in a small chamber orchestra to accompany Yo-Yo Ma as part of the Kennedy Center Honors event. She is the recipient of many honors as a soloist, including third prize at the 2016 Eisemann Young Artists Competition in Dallas. Her extensive chamber music experience has included coaching with musicians such as Emanuel Ax, James Dunham, David Finckel, John Harbison, amongst others. In recent summers, she has performed at the Grand Teton Music Festival, Strings Musical Festival, The Spoleto USA Festival, Fontainebleau Conservatoire Américain, Aspen Music Festival and School, Le Domaine Forget Chamber Music Festival, the Olympic Music Festival and the Zephyr International Chamber Music Festival in Italy. At the Tanglewood, she was the recipient of the James Taylor Fellowship. Other appearances include those with the AXIOM contemporary ensemble and Tanglewood's Festival of Contemporary Music. Ariana received her Master of Music degree at the Juilliard School where she studied with Darrett Adkins. She completed her Bachelor of Music degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, where she graduated cum laude. There she studied with Norman Fischer of the famed Concord Quartet.



*Pana fugit Syriux ripam Ladonis ad vdam,
Dumq; fugit nimen fluminis orat' opem*

*Vertitur in calanum resonantis arundinis, hunc Pan.
Clangorem dulci flamine semper amat.*

EVENT CO-ORGANIZERS

JENNIFER STAGER

Jennifer Stager is an art historian specializing in the art and architecture of the ancient Mediterranean. Her areas of focus include theories of color and materiality, feminisms, disability studies, ancient Greek and Roman medicine, performance, and classical receptions.

Stager's first book, *Seeing Color in Classical Art: Theory, Practice, and Reception from Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge University Press 2022), offers a critical account of color as material in ancient Mediterranean art and architecture. Traversing sites from Athens to Antioch, *Seeing Color* traces color across media, including handheld panel paintings, painted monumental reliefs, alloyed bronzes, and mosaic floors. Artistic practices also shaped a literary and philosophical landscape encompassing Sapphic lyric, Presocratic atomism, and Theophrastan natural history and produced a discourse on color by ancient Greek writers that reverberates in the present. Despite these abundant traces of color, ancient Mediterranean art has long been reduced to the white marble of its ruins to stage an idealized, monochrome picture of the past. *Seeing Color* examines the process by which this reception tradition has elevated whiteness and feminized and racialized color. In response, this book illuminates the construction of the category of the classical in modernity and challenges its claims to order and exceptionalism. Ultimately, *Seeing Color* harnesses ancient ideas of materiality, care, landscape, visual exchange, and artistic atomism to theorize color in the ancient Mediterranean and its afterlives.

Ancient artists and healers often put the same materials to different use—making art and healing people—a connection that Stager explores in her next book. *Making Medicine: The Craft of Ancient Greek Medicine* (in progress) explores the importance of the visual arts for the development of ancient medicine.

In January 2020, Stager launched the *Antioch Recovery Project* (ARP) using digital tools to analyze mosaic fragments excavated from Antioch in the 1930s and now dispersed to over thirty-four institutions across the globe, including the Baltimore Museum of Art. Connected with a suite of public-facing, digital components, Stager is working on a book of essays, *Antiochene Echoes: antiquity, archaeology, and archive*.

An Archaeology of Disability, a research station curated for La Biennale di Venezia Architettura (May-November 2021) with David Gissen and Mantha Zarmakoupi, reconstructs elements of the Acropolis in Athens through the lens of disability and impairment and in languages and forms developed by and for contemporary disabled people. After Venice, the research station traveled to La Gipsoteca di Arte Antica, Pisa (January-April 2022), to the Canellopoulos Museum in Athens (June-October 2023), and to the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki (December 2023-June 2024).

As a curator, Stager has collaborated on a range of institutional and extra-institutional exhibitions and she writes for academic and public audiences at *Art Practical*, *ASAP*, *Classical Receptions Journal*, *Eidolon*, *Hesperia*, *Open Space*, *Post 45 Contemporaries*, *RES*, and *West 86th*. With Leila Easa, she guest-edited "Locating a Collective Lyric I" for *The Hopkins Review* 17.1. The folio's exploration of the frictions between individuals and collectives expands from a book of essays in classical receptions and feminist criticism, *Public Feminism in Times of Crisis: From Sappho's Fragments to Viral Hashtags* (2022), co-written with Easa.

Professor Stager's work has been supported by fellowships from the National Institute of Humanities and the Getty Research Institute, the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, and the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington DC, and the Johns Hopkins Catalyst Award.

MICHAEL HERSCH

A composer of "uncompromising brilliance" (*The Washington Post*) whose work has been described by *The New York Times* as "viscerally gripping and emotionally transformative music ... claustrophobic and exhilarating at once, with moments of sublime beauty nestled inside thickets of dark virtuosity," Michael Hersch is widely considered among the most gifted composers of his generation. Composer Georg Friedrich Haas has written that Hersch "is the explorer of an unconditional, radical expressivity that reveals the human abyss without any palliation." Recent events and premieres include his *Violin Concerto* at the Lucerne Forward Festival in Switzerland and the Avanti Festival in Helsinki; new productions of his monodrama, *On the Threshold of Winter*, in Chicago, Salt Lake City, and Washington D.C., and his elegy *I hope we get a chance to visit soon* at the Ojai and Aldeburgh Festivals, where Mr. Hersch was a featured composer. Other recent premieres include his 11-hour chamber cycle, *sew me into a shroud of leaves*, a work which occupied the composer for fifteen years, at the 2019 Wien Modern Festival. During the 2019/20 season, Mr. Hersch was the Composer-in-Residence with the Camerata Bern, and in early 2020, his work *Agatha* had its premiere performances in both Bern and Geneva. His work *the script of storms* also premiered that year with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and soprano Ah Young Hong. *Opera News* noted that Hersch is a composer whose ability "to probe the substructures of human suffering is unmatched," music "sometimes desolate, sometimes terrifying." In 2021, his opera *Poppaea*, again featuring Hong, premiered at the ZeitRäume Basel and Wien Modern Festivals. In 2022/23, major projects included new works for Ensemble Phoenix Basel and Ensemble Musikfabrik. In 2024, Hersch's newest opera, *and we, each*, after poetry of Shane McCrae, premiered by Mind on Fire in Baltimore, Washington D.C., and New York City.

Hersch has written works for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Ensemble Klang, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Alban Berg Ensemble Wien, Decoda Ensemble, the Library of Congress. Other notable events include European performances by the Kreutzer Quartet of *Images from a Closed Ward* in the U.K. and Sweden, a recording of the work by the acclaimed FLUX Quartet, and a work for unaccompanied violin commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, premiered at the orchestra's Biennial.

Notable past performances include *Night Pieces*, commissioned and premiered by the Cleveland Orchestra, and a song cycle for baritone and piano, *Domicilium*, commissioned and premiered by Thomas Hampson and Wolfgang Rieger. Hersch's second piano concerto, *along the ravines*, commissioned by pianist Shai Wosner, was given performances with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, and as part of the Enescu International Festival in Romania. Mr. Hersch's *end stages* was commissioned and premiered by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and his *Zwischen Leben und Tod* recently received its U.K. premiere at the St John's, Smith Square Festival of American Music. Hersch's *A Forest of Attics*, commissioned for the Network for New Music's 25th anniversary season, was selected as one of the year's most important classical music events by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. The paper said of the work, "*A Forest of Attics* threw a Molotov cocktail into the concert: Everything before it paled in comparison ... Hersch has written some towering works in recent years; this is yet another."

Also a pianist, noted for his “astounding facility at the keyboard” (*International Piano*), Mr. Hersch has appeared around the world including appearances at the Ojai Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, the Festival Dag in de Branding, the Warhol Museum, the Romaeuropa Festival, Phillips Collection, Festival of Contemporary Music Nuova Consonanza, Network for New Music Concert Series, Festa Europea della Musica, and in New York City at Merkin Concert Hall, the 92nd St. Y - Tisch Center for the Performing Arts, and Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall, among others.

Born in Washington D.C., Michael Hersch came to international attention at age 25, when he was awarded First Prize in the Concordia American Composers Awards. The award resulted in a performance of his *Elegy*, conducted by Marin Alsop in New York’s Alice Tully Hall. Later that year he became one of the youngest recipients ever of a Guggenheim Fellowship in Composition. Mr. Hersch has also been the recipient of the Rome Prize, the Berlin Prize, the Goddard Lieberman Fellowship and Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts & Letters, and the only artist to have received the Johns Hopkins University’s President’s Frontier Award, amongst many others.

This week’s events are made possible with the generous support of the Deans of KSAS, the Deans of The Peabody Institute, the Departments of Classics, Composition, and History of Art, and the Singleton Center for the Study of Premodern Europe



