



*2023-2024: Tonescapes
39th Season*

What Do We Know?

Germantown Jewish Centre
400 W Ellet St, Philadelphia, PA 19119
January 27, 2024
7:30pm

American Society for Jewish Music
YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011
January 29, 2024
7:00pm

NETWORK ENSEMBLE MEMBERS

Flute

Susanna Loewy

Clarinet

Antonello DiMatteo

Violins

Min Young Kim

Rachel Segal

Viola

Hannah Rose Nicholas

Cello

Tom Kraines

Bass

Nicholas Hernandez

Piano

Charles Abramovic

Voice

Daniel Taylor

Guitar

Jordan Dodson

Electronics

Evan Kassof

Special Side-by-Side Partners

Philadelphia Sinfonia

Chamber Ensemble

Adah Kaplan, violin I

Isabella Zhang, violin II

Alexander Hilliard, viola

Micah Abraham, cello

Kevin Lim, bass

Gary White, conductor

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NETWORK FOR NEW MUSIC

The mission of Network for New Music is to commission and perform a diversity of new musical works of the highest quality by both established and emerging composers; to strengthen the new music community in the Philadelphia region; and to build support for new music by engaging in artistic and institutional collaborations, as well as educational activities. Network is recognized for its excellent performances, innovative programming, in-depth education programs and cross-genre collaborations with other art forms – all created with the purpose of enriching the life of the greater cultural community and supporting the important work of musicians and composers. We thank you for attending *What do We Know?*, our second live performance of the 2023-2024 season.

For more information and updates about next season, visit:
networkfornewmusic.org

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PROGRAM

Songs of Transcendence (6') **Daniel Asia** (b. 1953)
Jordan Dodson, guitar

Why (?) Jacob (6') **Daniel Asia**
(Only in NYC)
Charles Abramovic, piano

***Sh'veekeen, Sh'veeteen:
Forgiven, Eradicated*** (10') **Adah Kaplan** (b. 2006)
Min Young Kim, violin
Hannah Rose Nicholas, viola
Tom Kraines, cello

Elijah's Chariot (18') **Judith Shatin** (b. 1949)
Min Young Kim, violin
Rachel Segal, violin
Hannah Rose Nicholas, viola
Tom Kraines, cello
Evan Kassof, electronics

Breath in a Ram's Horn (Songs for my Father) (12') **Daniel Asia**
1. What do We Know
2. Old Medals, Prayer Shawls
3. Job Longed for the Grave
4. Rosh Hashana/Yom Kippur
5. My Father's Name was...
Daniel Taylor, voice
Susanna Loewy, flute
Antonello DiMatteo, clarinet
Min Young Kim, violin
Tom Kraines, cello
Charles Abramovic, piano

Waltz for a Hesitant Era (5') **Adah Kaplan**
(Only in Philadelphia)
Adah Kaplan & Min Young Kim, violin I
Isabella Zhang & Rachel Segal, violin II
Alexander Hilliard & Hannah Rose Nicholas, viola
Micah Abraham & Tom Kraines, cello
Kevin Lim & Nicholas Hernandez, bass
Gary White, conductor

DIRECTOR STATEMENTS

The music on this rich and varied program was curated to inspire and uplift, and appropriately begins with aspirations for transcendence in the songs for solo guitar. Song continues to inspire Adah Kaplan's trio. She describes her source-song as "gut wrenching and familiar" and it provides an essential inspiration to her composition. Judith Shatin makes full dramatic use of the "folk melody" Eliyahu HaNavi in her work for string quartet and electronics. The ensemble and the electronics each have their own symbolic significance. The five songs that comprise Dan Asia's song cycle offer a personal perspective on history and heritage. The timbre of each individual instrument in the chamber ensemble creates colorful lines to support the lyrics of the vocal line which is sometimes soft and other times harsh. We live in a time of profound divisions, yet those of us gathered here turn to music and together we form a community. This concert celebrates all of us. We come together to listen and to discover and our experiences here together form an important testament to the times.

— *Thomas Schuttenhelm, Artistic Director*

As the 6-month mark of my work at Network approaches, I'm truly happy with the work that we've all accomplished together. This second concert of our season promises to be beautiful and meaningful, and we're all thrilled we get to perform it both in Philadelphia and New York. We're especially pleased to welcome Rachel DiBlasio as our new Community Education Coordinator. This new position is a direct result of our just-launched Strategic Plan, and the staff and board alike are proud to be able to actualize these ideals that were put in place last summer. Thank you to everyone who has supported all of these efforts; we couldn't do it without you! The rest of the season is busy, with performances in February, March, and May; this is an exciting time for Network (our 40th anniversary is next season!), and we hope to see you again soon.

— *Susanna Loewy, Executive Director*

PROGRAM NOTES

Daniel Asia

The three works presented over these two concerts by composer Daniel Asia span a significant part of his output. *The Songs of Transcendence* for solo guitar are based on three songs found within a Jewish prayer service for the Sabbath morning. In a prayer context, these songs are often sung in a number of repetitions, often leaving the words behind altogether towards the end. Thus the spirit of the words is distilled in the melody, as its essence drifts up to the Divine. In these pieces, the melody is stated very clearly at the beginning, and then these materials are elaborated upon using various variation techniques. Given the simple nature of these melodies, the variation processes never take the original very far away from its origins. This work was commissioned by Michael Jacobson, in memory of his deceased wife, Simone Jacobson, of blessed memory.

Why (?) Jacob (heard only on the NYC concert) was originally for chorus (SSAATTBB) and piano, written in 1979. "The present adaptation for piano alone uses very few new materials; only a few measures at various points of transition and at the conclusion are added. The shape and emotive content of the piece remain the same." It is "An elegy written in memorial for a childhood friend killed in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War."

Lastly, the chamber ensemble piece *Breath in a Ram's Horn* is a song cycle of five poems. They range from the sublime to the mundane, from the sacred to the profane. From the composer:

The texts are by the writer/poet Paul Pines. He and I first met at the MacDowell Colony, an artist's retreat in Peterborough, New Hampshire. We became close friends, partly as the result of a shared ferocity brought to the game of table tennis. I requested books of poetry. I have so far written five works based on his writings.

His poems seem to bring together very disparate worlds, uniting a wealth of emotional perspectives. The imagery ranges from Ecclesiastes to the Blues, stating something universal that is culled from the simple and earthy. At the core of the work is man's uneasy place in the universe; that of a curious bystander to his own inner world, living in a physical world he also hardly understands. How these interior and exterior worlds meet and interact is the enigma at the center of these

poems. However it is an enigma that is often imbued with a wry and delicate sense of humor.

The poems in this cycle are imbued with images of family and Judaism, and their intertwining. One finds memories of the poet's father, mother, and grandfather; memories of prayer shawls, phalacteries, praying; imagery of the high holydays, Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and the power of recollection; and a reflection on Job and David. And just like the lives of these two Biblical characters, the poems are not pretty or easy, but rather filled with the difficulties and anguish of a life as it is really lived.

Together, these works showcase Daniel Asia's compositional breadth and style, and help frame his extensive and successful career as a composer. He has enjoyed grants from Meet the Composer, a UK Fulbright award, Guggenheim Fellowship, DAAD, MacDowell and Tanglewood fellowships, ASCAP and BMI prizes, Copland Fund grants, and Fromm and Barlow Foundation commissions, among numerous others. He was honored with a Music Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. From 1991-1994 he was the Meet the Composer Composer-in-Residence of the Phoenix Symphony.

His five symphonies have received wide acclaim from live performance and their international recordings. The Fifth Symphony, commissioned for the Tucson and Jerusalem symphony orchestras in celebration of Israel's 60 th anniversary, is based on the poetry of the Jewish-American writer Paul Pines, the Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai, and Psalms.

He has written for, and been championed by, the Dorian Wind Quintet, American Brass Quintet, Meadowmount Trio, Cypress Quartet, Andre-Michel Schub (piano), Carter Brey (cello), Alex Klein (oboe), Benjamin Verdery (guitar), John Shirley-Quirk and Sara Watkins (baritone and oboe), and Jonathan Shames (piano), among others. Under a Barlow Endowment grant, he completed work for The Czech Nonet, the longest continuously performing chamber ensemble on the planet, founded in 1924.

Judith Shatin

Judith Shatin is a composer and sound artist whose musical practice engages our social, cultural, and physical environments. She draws on expanded instrumental palettes and a cornucopia of the sounding world, from machines in a deep coal mine, to the calls of animals, the

shuttle of a wooden loom, a lawnmower racing up a lawn, the ripping of tape. Timbral exploration and dynamic narrative design are fundamental to her compositional design, while collaboration with musicians, artists and community groups are central to her musical life.

Shatin's music has been commissioned by organizations including the Barlow Endowment and Fromm Foundations, Carnegie Hall, the McKim Fund of the Library of Congress, the Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Arts Partners Program, Music-at-LaGesse Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts .

Educated at Douglass College (AB, Phi Beta Kappa; studied with Robert Moevs), The Juilliard School (MM, Abraham Ellstein Prize; studied with Hall Overton, Otto Luening and Milton Babbitt) and Princeton University (MFA, PhD; studied with Milton Babbitt and JK Randall), Judith Shatin is William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor Emerita and Founder of the Virginia Center for Computer Music at the University of Virginia. She has been honored with four Composer Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as awards from the American Music Center, Meet the Composer, the New Jersey State Arts Council and the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

Long an advocate for her fellow composers, Shatin has served on the boards of the American Composers Alliance, the League/ISCM, and the International Alliance for Women in Music (IAWM) and as President of American Women Composers Inc.; she currently serves on the National Council of the Atlantic Center for the Arts. In demand as a master teacher, she has been BMI composer-in-residence at Vanderbilt University, Master Artist at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, and Senior Composer at the Wellesley Composers Conference, among many others.

Her music on this program is the incredible string quartet *Elijah's Chariot*, which includes an electronics part. She shares the background of this piece below:

The story of the prophet Elijah is fantastic. He did not die but was swept up to Heaven in a blazing chariot drawn by horses of fire. Afterwards, he was said to return to earth to help the Jews and will also return to blow the shofar announcing the coming of the Messiah. This led to the Passover custom of preparing a full cup of wine for Elijah and opening the door for him.

The folk melody Eliyahu HaNavi (Elijah the Prophet), also inviting his

return, is often sung at the close of the Sabbath and forms a melodic thread, emerging clearly at some points, obliquely at others. The scoring for string quartet and electronics symbolically suggests the source of inspiration: the four instruments represent the four wheels of the chariot, moving between earth and heaven. They also represent the dialogue between Elijah and Elisha, one of his followers who did not want to desert him. The electronic part represents Heaven's call to Elijah and intimates his rise to heaven. The original recording, by Dr. Mel Siegel of Minneapolis, was of shofar blasts played during the High Holidays. Elijah's Chariot was commissioned by the Kronos Quartet, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and is dedicated to the memory of Adam Francis Harrington. The Kronos Quartet toured it internationally, presenting it throughout Europe, the Middle and Far East, as well as the US, including the Next Wave Festival at BAM. It was recorded by the Cassatt Quartet on Time to Burn, a Shatin portrait album on the Innova label.

Adah Kaplan

Adah Kaplan is a violinist and classical composer in Philadelphia, and currently attends Laurel Springs School. She studies violin with Kimberly Fisher, and her playing has received recognition from the Pennsylvania MTNA, Tricounty Annual Youth Festival, Crescendo International Music Competition, Bloomsburg Young Artist Competition, and Elite International Music Competition. This is Adah's fifth year in the Philadelphia Sinfonia Association, where she currently sits as Concertmaster of both Philadelphia Sinfonia and Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra.

Adah currently works as the assistant for composer Melissa Dunphy, with whom she also studies privately. She attended Wildflower Composers (formerly known as the Young Women's Composers Camp) during the Summers of 2020 and 2021, and Interlochen Arts Camp's High School Composition Program in the Summer of 2022. Her work has received awards from Pennsylvania MTNA, New Music on the Bluff, and the Penn State Ballora Wang composition competition. Her composition career began at the age of 10 when "String Quartet of the Ghetto" was recorded by the Ton Beau Quartet and performed in Chicago, Toronto, and Nashville as a part of the Silent Voices Project organized by Zachary Ebin. However, though she wrote for fun now and then, it was not until the last couple years when composition took over as the main focus of her life. Recently, Adah's solo violin piece "whitewashed" was recorded by Lara St. John for her album "She/

her/her's," and has been performed in numerous live concerts by the violinist. "Beware of Road Hazards" for solo cello and looper pedal was workshopped and recorded by Tom Kraines through American Composers Forum, and her Stepford-Wives-inspired string quartet "On Autopilot" was selected through JACKStudio and workshopped by the JACK quartet in May 2022. This Spring, two of Adah's larger works are set to premiere: "Waltz for a Hesitant Era" by the Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra, and "she dances toward the light" by the orchestra at the Lawrenceville School in New Jersey.

Her two works, *Sh'veekeen, Sh'veeteen: Forgiven, Eradicated* for string trio and the *Waltz for a Hesitant Era* for string ensemble (performed only in Philadelphia) both explore her interests through a narrative structure. Below, Adah has shared some program notes about these two works.

Sh'veekeen, Sh'veeteen: Forgiven, Eradicated, was written for my own string trio, the Ben and Carol Auger Contemporary Music Advanced Studies Ensemble, and completed in the winter of 2021. The single movement piece draws its title from a line of the Kol Nidre prayer and tells the history of the "holiest night of the year" in Judaism from beginning to end. Fascinatingly, the Kol Nidre prayer is not actually a prayer at all, but a legal statement which states that all vows given between the current Yom Kippur and the next will be "Sh'veekeen, Sh'veeteen," or forgiven and eradicated. At the time this text emerged, potentially as early as the 8th century, vows were the highest form of promise that one could give and were reserved for the most extreme of circumstances -- the Kol Nidre offered protection for Jews that were forced to convert to Christianity against their will. Every possible loophole is cited in the prayer to guarantee that any type of vow given will be nullified and Jews would be able to return to their faith.

The piece is bookended by passages reflecting on why the custom is still observed today: the trio opens with an introduction representing present-day Jews entering the synagogue on Kol Nidre as the sun sets. From here, the music is transported back to the medieval-era Iberian Peninsula, where Jewish citizens were subject to continuous and repeated persecution throughout history. Tension builds throughout the first portion of the piece, culminating in a passage of chaos and panic in which each musician is playing something with no relation to the other parts. At this first major climax, the Jewish people find their savior in the Kol Nidre prayer, reciting it three times as is often done in synagogues, growing stronger with each repetition. For some

time, I pondered why this prayer is still recited today, as vows are a thing of the past and the prayer therefore does not hold its previous power. Ultimately, I concluded that this service is not just a way for us to apologize in advance for our sins of the coming year, but a way for us to remember our religion's history and recognize all we have overcome. Similarly, the trio concludes with pride. In the concluding section of the piece, present-day Jewish community uses Kol Nidre to reflect and remind themselves of their culture's stories -- the trials and the strength of their ancestors -- as they move forward into the new year.

I began working on Waltz for a Hesitant Era in the fall of 2021, during an incredibly uncertain time for us all, and was drawn towards the structure of a waltz because of its simplicity and the freedom it grants. Though most classic waltzes have a number of similarities -- slow and steady harmonic rhythm, a memorable and singable melody, and the trademark "oom-cha-cha" accompaniment -- in practice, as long as a piece is in triple meter with a rhythmic accompaniment, any of these other elements can be removed and the piece will still feel like a waltz. A waltz feels familiar and comfortable to the audience, yet it has few true requirements or rules, making the form appealing to many contemporary composers. Waltz for a Hesitant Era was written under the encouragement of Maestro Gary White for the musicians of Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra, an ensemble which I have now been a part of for six years and has truly helped me grow into the musician that I am today.

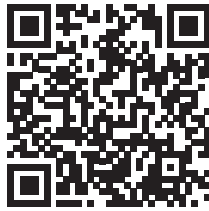
This piece is based specifically on the "Hesitation Waltz," a very simple type of waltz that is known for its "hesitation" move, in which the music pauses at the end of each phrase and the female dancer slowly drags her foot across the ground before the dance continues. In my composition, this is reflected in the molto ritardandos that predictably appear at the end of each phrase in the opening portion of the waltz, marking the end of each small section and giving the piece a comfortable cadence. However, the piece is missing the "oom-cha-cha" that the audience has come to expect in a waltz, creating an air of uncertainty that grows as the music develops and modulates through different keys, before rapidly accelerating into an unnaturally joyful and flashy middle section. The "oom-cha-cha" rhythm appears in a tongue-in-cheek manner, and the regular molto ritardandos disappear as the piece loses its stable foundation and begins to feel like it may spiral out of control at any given moment. The section very quickly breaks

down and gives way to a wandering and vague passage featuring viola and cello solos but lacking a clear tonal center. Eventually, the orchestra begins to gain its strength back, rising to a strong climax before settling back into a place of comfort and satisfaction, ending calmly and serenely.

Waltz for a Hesitant Era paints a picture of a time of rumination, uncertainty, and questioning. The piece takes us through the journey of losing stability, trying a number of methods to gain that stability back as hastily as possible, and ultimately learning that there is no way to rush the process. We must grant ourselves patience and time as we navigate unsure periods, and I hope that Waltz for a Hesitant Era provides the listener with a comfortable space for meditation and reflection.

PERFORMERS

Performer biographies are available on our website,
networkfornewmusic.org/whatdoweknow



CO-CURATORS

The Germantown Jewish Centre (GJC) has been the heart of the Jewish community in Northwest Philadelphia and the surrounding suburbs for 75 years. We are a vibrant, pluralistic and egalitarian synagogue located in Mount Airy and committed to sustaining and strengthening Jewish life in greater Philadelphia.

Affiliated with the Conservative movement and receptive to the wisdom of many sources in Judaism, we engage in life-long Jewish learning and strive to make Judaism relevant and important to our members' lives. As a welcoming community, we embrace a wide diversity of Jewish lifestyles and households. Encouraging a variety of styles

and setting for religious practice, we foster multiple prayer communities. We sustain each other by celebrating holidays and life-cycle events, and by sharing in cultural and social activities, social activism, and community building.

Network would like to thank Rabbis Zeff and Sultar for their assistance in programming and producing this concert.

The American Society for Jewish Music traces its roots back to the Society for New Jewish Music of St. Petersburg, Russia (1908-1918). After the Bolshevik Revolution, members of the group published their compositions under the imprint of JUWAL Publication Society for Jewish Music. Among these members were three composer-musicologists, Joseph Achron, Solomon Rosowsky and Lazar Saminsky, who emigrated to the United States, where, along with Abraham W. Binder and others founded Mailamm (Makhon Eretz Yisraeli L'Mada'ey ha-Musika, 1932-39). From 1939-62, this was refashioned by A.W. Binder as the Jewish Music Forum, which in turn became the Jewish Liturgical Society of America (1963-74). In 1974, the latter group was reorganized as the ASJM under the direction of Albert Weisser. The ASJM serves Jewish music professionals and interested lay people by publishing a scholarly journal, *Musica Judaica*, producing concerts, through its academic arm – The Jewish Music Forum – hosting lectures by experts in their fields, sponsoring a Composers Competition, and establishing links with Jewish communities, universities and seminaries throughout the world.

Philadelphia Sinfonia Association

One of the premier youth orchestra organizations in the tri-state area, Philadelphia Sinfonia Association is in its 27th season. Since 1997, we have been providing talented young musicians with a challenging, engaging, and in-depth musical education. Sinfonia students range in age from 10 to 23 and have exceptional artistic ability. In addition to honing their musical proficiency and orchestral skills, Sinfonia musicians learn the importance of civic responsibility, which they demonstrate through benefit concerts, artistic mentoring, participation in a national food drive supporting Philabundance, and most recently a highly successful clothing drive for St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

Philadelphia Sinfonia Association's youth orchestra program includes an advanced full symphonic orchestra (PS), an advanced-intermedi-

ate full symphonic orchestra (PSP), an introductory string ensemble (PSS), and a string chamber orchestra (PSCO). Our conductors choose diverse and adventurous musical repertoire, comprised of works from the standard classical canon alongside 20th and 21st century pieces, including world and Philadelphia premieres. Philadelphia Sinfonia has performed at the Kimmel Center, the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, the Liberty Medal Ceremony honoring Colin Powell, and the 2000 Republican National Convention. Our musicians have opportunities each season to work with top-notch guest artists and coaches through our collaborations with musicians from The Philadelphia Orchestra and other performing arts groups including Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, Network for New Music, Tempesta di Mare, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society (PCMS), the Philadelphia Boys Choir, Commonwealth Youthchoirs, Enchantment Theatre Company, and many others.

Philadelphia Sinfonia Association (youth orchestra) supports the artistic growth of young musicians by providing high-level ensemble experience in a supportive educational environment. Learn more about Sinfonia, including upcoming concerts and audition information, by visiting our website, philadelphiasinfonia.com, and follow us on Facebook and Instagram @PhilaSinfonia.

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In 2014, Network celebrated 30 years of commissioning, performing and promoting new music. To mark this milestone, a Network for New Music Commissioning Fund was established to underscore the essence of Network's mission and contribute to its sustainability. The name of the fund was changed in 2018, in honor of Co-Founder and Artistic Director Emerita, Linda Reichert.

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(09/01/2023 - present)

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\$50-99

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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In addition, Network would like to thank the following for their support: Alice M. Ditson Fund, The Amphion Foundation, Anne M. and Philip Glatfelter III Family Foundation, The Daniel W. Dietrich II Foundation, Independence Foundation, Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Cultural Fund, The Presser Foundation, Robert Black Foundation Trust, and William Penn Foundation. Network for New Music is a recipient of state arts funding through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This program is supported by a grant from the Philadelphia Cultural Fund.



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Scan the QR code to the right for more information on our season and links to more information about tonight's performance including interviews with featured composers.

