

## MUSIC IN THE MANSION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

### Shining Sound Ensemble

Los Angeles-based soprano **Marina Hovhannisyan** is a vocal performer and Master's candidate at the USC Thornton School of Music. Her work is focused on Armenian sacred and folk music, as well as on European, Renaissance, and Baroque repertoires. As the Graduate Teaching Assistant for the USC Thornton Baroque Sinfonia, Marina places active emphasis on performance and interpretation of ancient Armenian melodies. With experience in leading choral and instrumental ensembles and participating as soloist in groups based in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Paris, Marina's musical interests extend into vocal performance and ensemble direction. [marinahov.com](http://marinahov.com)

**Grygorii Koval** graduated from Zurich University of the Arts in 2017 with a B.A. in Music Performance and an M.A. in Music Pedagogy. A soloist and chamber musician, in 2021 Koval received his second Master's Degree in Music Performance at Lugano Conservatoire, where he studied with famous Prof. Lorenzo Micheli. Currently he is pursuing his DMA in classical guitar performance and is a teaching assistant at USC Thornton School of Music with renowned faculty Bill Kanengiser.

**Bradley Adam J. Bascon** began studying violin when he was four years old, and at age six, won grand prize at the Southwestern Youth Music Festival. Winner in the Junior Division of Redlands Bowl in 2015, he has performed as a soloist at the Disney Concert Hall, in Spain, Portugal, and at the 2012 London Olympics with the Irvine Classical Players Orchestra. He recently performed the Korngold Violin Concerto with the American Modern Orchestra. Bascon graduated with BM in Performance at the Thornton School of Music where he is currently pursuing his MM.

**Eric Tinkerhess** is a cellist, viola da gambist, composer, and musicologist with a B.A. in cello performance from the Oberlin Conservatory, M.A. from the Paris Conservatory, and M.A. in Interpretation of Early Music from the Sorbonne. His recordings with Audax Records have received awards from the international press and his compositions have been performed at the Chautauqua Music Festival in New York, the Music Academy of the West in California, and the Salle Cortot in Paris. He is currently a PhD student of musicology at the University of Southern California. [erictinkerhess.com](http://erictinkerhess.com)

## **Latsos Piano Duo**

Formed in 2014 by pianists **Giorgi Latso** and his wife **Anna Fedorova-Latso**, the Latsos Duo is a favorite among many concert organizers and promoters. The Internationale Chopin-Gesellschaft calls their performances “thrilling and flamboyant” and the MTNA Society hails their “intelligence, liveliness and enormous charm.” Their recent performance of Mozart has been praised by the *Daily News* as “impeccable by any standard, highlighted with exquisite trills, drizzling runs and precise Mozartean dynamics”.

The Latsos have performed and recorded a number of unusual and largely unknown treasures from the duo-piano repertoire, including all the Schubert duets and duos, and also arranged two-piano and piano four-hands transcriptions from American movie scores by composers such as John Williams, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, and John Philip Sousa. They were hailed as “one of the finest transcribers of our time” in the European press. The Latsos are often guests on radios such as K-USC Radio, “Classic FM” Sunday Live, NDR Kultur, America Matters, KCKQ-AM 1180. More info: [www.thelatsos.com](http://www.thelatsos.com)

## **The OC Classical Trio**

**The OC Classical Trio** was brought to life in Irvine, California, in 2023 by the flutist **Antonina Styczeń**. Winning Beverly Hills National Audition in 2022 allowed Antonina a long-awaited opportunity to create a trio with musicians—**Pola Benke** (cello) and **Phillip Matsuura** (piano) — with whom she has been collaborating for many seasons on different chamber music and recording projects in Orange County and Los Angeles. This year’s Music in the Mansion marks the trio’s debut.

A dynamic flutist and entrepreneur, **Antonina Styczeń** has appeared in unlikely spaces as a concerto soloist and created large-scale, crowd-sourced projects, emphasizing performances that include improvisation, electronics, deejay, her own compositions, and works by female composers. A First Prize and special prize winner for the Best Performance at the National Flute Association Young Artist Competition, Styczeń is a winner of numerous competition and awards, including International Classical Music Award and the Prize of German Critics for her debut album. In 2020, Ms. Styczeń initiated the Sunbeam Project, devoted to commissioning and recording new works created in COVID conditions. Ms. Styczeń is an Acting President of the San Diego Flute Guild and leads private teaching studio in Irvine. She is touring worldwide with popular Iranian singer Googoosh while pursuing graduate studies at the University of Southern California. [www.antoninastyczen.com](http://www.antoninastyczen.com)

Polish-born cellist **Pola Benke** holds a master’s degree in Cello Performance from The Boston Conservatory at Berklee, with postgraduate studies at Azusa Pacific University, where she also earned a Master's Degree in Conducting in 2021. Awarded full scholarships throughout her education, she was one of 12 conductors selected worldwide to participate in master classes

with renowned conductor Neeme Järvi. As a cellist she has been performing as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestra member in the United States, Canada and Europe and participated in many major music festivals. Pola has also appeared on *Glee*. From 2015-2021 she was a member of Sinfonietta Cracovia in Poland under the patronage of Krzysztof Penderecki. In 2017 she initiated a foundation “Cykada” where she holds the position of an artist director of the “Hello-Cello” festival. She is currently living and performing in Los Angeles.

**Phillip Matsuura** enjoys an active and varied career as a pianist in many mediums. Highly sought-after as a collaborator, chamber musician and ballet pianist, his recital partners have included principals of Jacksonville and Kansas City Symphonies, and vocal clients have included singers affiliated with the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Staatstheater Darmstadt and the Wiener Kammeroper. He is currently a studio pianist for American Ballet Theatre's School at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa, and has played for such companies as the Bolshoi Ballet, Boston Ballet, Ballet Arizona, Ballet Chicago and Visceral Dance Chicago. Presently, he is pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts from the Thornton School of Music at USC. He holds MM from the Northwestern University and a BM from the Conservatory of Music at Oberlin College.

### **Duo Violino: Yuan Tian and Zi Zygmund Wang**

**Yuan Tian** was born in Harbin, the city of music. He began learning violin at the age of three with his father and first public performance at the age of four. He continued his studies at the Beijing School of Central Conservatory of Music where he received the highest scholarship from the Conservatory and Hong Kong Brothers Fund. In 2011, Tian gave a solo concert in the Harbin concert hall, performing 11 solo compositions and the virtuosic Vieuxtemps's Fourth Violin Concerto. Winner of numerous international competitions including Outstanding Performance Award at the Schoenfeld International String Competition in 2014, Tian was selected to the NYO-China Youth Symphony Orchestra concert in the US' Carnegie Hall and a world tour with pianist Yuja Wang, followed by European tours in Germany, UK, Italy. In the fall of 2018 Tian was accepted in the international class of Prof. Eduard Schmieder as a full scholarship recipient at Temple University in Philadelphia, received his BM in 2022, and continues his violin studies toward MM. As a winner of the First Prize of the Young Talent World Festival of Performing and Visual Art 2019, he had his solo debut at Carnegie Hall.

**Zi Zygmund Wang** was born in Shanghai and began to learn the violin at the age of four. He attended High School for Gifted Children of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. During 2016-2018 seasons he was selected to work in violin section of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and Shanghai Opera Orchestra, and performed with the Zurich Youth Symphony Orchestra. He participated in numerous music festivals, including Summit in New York, and Talented Summers in Brescia, Italy. In 2018, Zi was accepted into Professor Schmieder international violin class at the Boyer College of Music at Temple University where he is currently working toward his Bachelor's Degree. As the first prize winner of the 2019 World Youth Talent Festival, he performed solo at the Carnegie Hall in New York in the 2020 season and in 2022, as a winner of

the Talent Masters International Competition performed Paganini concerto with orchestra in Italy. Zi's father is a well-known luthier in China, and he is playing violin and viola made by his father.

The Duo was "born" out of friendship and, following numerous requests for performances has performed to great success in Philadelphia, New York, at iPalpiti Festival in Los Angeles, and in Italy.

## **Seraphour Voice Ensemble**

Presenting pieces from the Renaissance to present day and commissioning new works, Seraphour's music celebrates the tradition of beauty that spans centuries and inspires souls. The all-female vocal quartet, comprised of Heidi Vass, Melissa Birch, Emma Grace Roche, and Dana Rouse, was named a winner in the 2022 Beverly Hills National Competition. Their debut album, "Angele Dei," was released in October 2021 and has been featured on classical radio stations, syndicated NPR and PBS programs nationally. In addition to terrestrial radio, "Angele Dei" can be heard and downloaded on all streaming platforms. In addition to live performances, Seraphour is currently working on a series of audio/visual projects and a follow-up album. For more information visit [www.seraphour.com](http://www.seraphour.com) or follow them on social media @seraphour.

Soprano **Heidi Valencia Vass** has performed and recorded extensively in musical theatre, opera, oratorio, and crossover genres. She received her dramatic acting/speech training at Stella Adler Conservatory of Acting in New York City. She has sung with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Luke's Orchestra and New Jersey Symphony and has been a featured soloist with The Los Angeles Baroque Orchestra, New West Symphony, Palm Springs Opera Guild, and the Concordia Master Series among others. Vass has performed extensively on the recital stage and is a member of the Areté Vocal Ensemble. Winner in numerous vocal competitions focusing on both musical theatre and classical singing, her albums, *Reflections* (recorded with the Budapest Symphony) and *Shades* are available on iTunes and can be heard on Spotify and Pandora. Ms. Vass earned BM degree at Westminster Choir College and MM degree at the USC. She is also the author of the interactive textbook, *Foundations in Singing; A guidebook for singers*. A member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Recording Academy, ASCAP, and the Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society, she has held music faculty posts at USC, Pepperdine, and California Lutheran University.

Mezzo-Soprano **Melissa Birch** has performed both nationally and internationally in countries including England, Germany, Italy and throughout the United States. She has collaborated with groups such as the Leipzig Baroque Orchestra, the New West Symphony, and the San Bernardino Orchestra. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Vocal Performance from Valparaiso University. Throughout her university career, Melissa was music director and vice president of the VU Acabellas and a member the Sigma Alpha Iota. She has also enjoyed performing in multiple choirs including Valparaiso University Chorale, Anglia Ruskin Chamber Choir, The Church of the Epiphany's Schola, Los Robles Master Chorale, and Areté Vocal

Ensemble. At her own private music studio she teaches both voice and piano, and is currently pursuing a degree in Education.

**Dana Rouse**, Mezzo-Soprano, has been teaching and performing for over 25 years and has held teaching positions at SUNY Fredonia, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Rouse performs regularly both as a chorister and soloist. She sang with the Eastman Rochester Chorus, Cincinnati Opera Chorus, Los Robles Master Chorale, and is currently a member of the Arete Vocal Ensemble in residence at CLU. Rouse has performed in concert with the New West Symphony, Eastman Philharmonic, and Westlake Village Symphony. She regularly collaborates with Peace in Concert, Fall of Ai Productions, and the Westlake Chamber Society as a soloist and also serves as the worship leader Monte Vista Presbyterian Church in Newbury Park. Rouse received a Bachelor's Degree in vocal performance from Biola University. Her Master's Degree in operatic performance and literature is from Eastman School of Music. She also studied in the DMA program at Cincinnati Conservatory of Music in vocal performance and pedagogy.

**Emma Grace Roche** has performed with companies across the United States including the Los Angeles Master Chorale, San Diego Opera, The NY Philharmonic, The Pacific Symphony, Utah Festival Opera, and Los Angeles Opera. Her favorite roles include Kathie in *The Student Prince*, Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Servilia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Josephine in *HMS Pinafore*, and Belinda in *Dido & Aeneas*. As a soloist she has performed *Handel's Messiah*, *Bach's Magnificat*, *Mendelssohn's Elijah*, and the Fauré Requiem. Emma has received several honors and awards including an encouragement award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and a winner in regional competitions. Roche received a Masters of Music degree in Voice Performance from the USC Thornton School of Music.

### **Alexander Boldachev**

**Alexander Boldachev** is a virtuoso-harpist, composer, exclusive artist of Italian harp house Salvi Harps, initiator of the World Harp Day, founder of the Zurich Harp Festival, and co-founder of community "LYUDY". Boldachev is the laureate of more than a dozen prestigious international competitions, including composing competitions; awarded by the Britain's Brilliant Prodigies, Aoyama Music Award in Kyoto, Pro Europa in Austria, presented by Heinz Fischer for high achievements in the field of culture. A fellow of the international foundations Vontobel in Switzerland and Banque Populaire in France, as well as the Russian foundations for the development of young musicians Spivakov, Temirkanov, the Rotary Club and Houses of Music that gave a start to his career, he has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Gaveau in Paris, and the Great Hall of the Philharmonic in St. Petersburg, among others.

## **Tandru Trio**

**Yasmina Spiegelberg** is the laureate of the Rotary International Competition Madrid Velazquez, the USC Concerto Competition, and the Frances Walton Seattle Competition. She was an Ensemble Forward Grantee through Chamber Music America. She is a Fellow at Ensemble Connect, a program of Carnegie Hall. She holds an Artist Diploma from USC with Yehuda Gilad.

**Javier Iglesias Martin** born in Madrid, Spain. Javier has lived in the United States since 2010. He studied at the Peabody Conservatory, New England Conservatory, and completed a Doctorate in Musical Arts at USC with Ralph Kirshbaum. Javier is the cello professor at Pepperdine University and plays regularly with Delirium Musicum Chamber Orchestra.

**Katelyn Vahala** is a passionate soloist, chamber musician, and educator in the Los Angeles area. Highlights from this past year include becoming a finalist in the Leipzig International Bach Competition and winning the 2021 USC Thornton Concerto Competition. Katelyn also teaches piano at the Pasadena Conservatory of Music

## **Fiato String Quartet**

The **Fiato Quartet**, formed in 2008, features Carrie Kennedy, Joel Pargman, Aaron Oltman and Ryan Sweeney. They hold degrees in performance from USC, Rice, Northwestern and SUNY Stony Brook. They each have active concert careers with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Pasadena Symphony, Long Beach Symphony, New West Symphony, and Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra. As studio musicians, they record music for movies, television and records. Fiato has performed on many chamber music series throughout Los Angeles and toured Costa Rica as part of Festival Credomatic. Fiato has a passion for new music, having performed 10 world premieres.

**Carrie Kennedy** has soloed with orchestras throughout the U.S. and has given concerts in eleven countries. She is a member of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Pasadena Symphony, Long Beach Symphony, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, and Los Angeles Master Chorale. Carrie holds an MM from SUNY Stony Brook and a BM from USC.

**Joel Pargman** is a member of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, and the Pasadena Symphony. As a member of the Denali Quartet, Pargman spent eight years as artist-in-residence for the “Jacaranda” concert series. He has premiered new works by composers Andrew Norman, Donald Crockett, and Ben Johnston, among others.

**Aaron Oltman** performs with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera, Pasadena Symphony, and New West Symphony. He has appeared in chamber music concerts for Camerata Pacifica, Sundays Live at LACMA, South Bay Chamber Music Society, LA Philharmonic's Green Umbrella series, and is active in the Recording Industry.

**Ryan Sweeney** is a talented cellist known for his performances with major orchestras in the Los Angeles area, including the LA Philharmonic, LA Opera, and Pasadena Symphony & Pops. He has also performed on the soundtracks of several Hollywood films. In addition to performing, Ryan is a dedicated cello teacher

## **Sejin Park**

An opera singer and recitalist Korean baritone **Sejin Park** performed featured roles as Marcello, Belcore, Yamadori, Il Conte *Le nozze di Figaro* and Figaro *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Winner of numerous competitions including Verdi International Competition, 'Citta di Pesaro' and Medici International Music Competition in Italy, and 'Galina Vishnevskaya International Competition' in Moscow, Russia, he was a Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Artist and is an alumni of Palm Beach Opera Benenson Program. He will be singing Germont in *La Traviata* in 2023 in New York. He holds both an MM and BM from Yonsei University, and the graduate of the Professional Study program at Mannes.

**Pianist Hyemin Jeong** graduated from the Manhattan School of Music with an MM in Collaborative Piano. In demand as an opera pianist and coach, Ms. Jeong was a fellow at the Miami Music Festival and is an alumna of the Palm Beach Opera Bailey Apprentice program. She will be joining the Merola Program in 2023 summer.

Mr. Park and Ms. Jeong have been performing throughout Korea and the US including venues such as TLI Art Center, Carnegie Weill Hall, Mixon Hall, Auditorium of New School, Miller Hall, and at the Cleveland Art Song Festival.