

presents...

PIVOT FESTIVAL

TANNER PORTER | Vocals THE LIVING EARTH SHOW

Travis Andrews | Guitar

Andy Meyerson | Percussion

Friday, January 30, 2026 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

Legacies

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|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ANDREW NORMAN | CA AB1780 (2025) |
| ANUJ BHUTANI | will you (2025) |
| JACOB COOPER | Tracing The Letters (2025) |
| CHRISTINA J. GEORGE | Erasing The Edges (2025) |
| TED HEARNE | Mother's Mouth (2025) |
| ROHAN CHANDER | stones don't lie (2025) |
| ROBERT HONSTEIN | Music To Hear (2025) |
| AKSHAYA AVRIL TUCKER | Through (2025) |
| TIMO ANDRES | At The San Francisco Airport (2025) |
| DANIEL CASTELLANOS | other places to reside (2025) |
| CHRISTOPHER CERRONE | Canto Selah (2025) |
| NATHANIEL PARKS | Rear-View Mirror (2025) |

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ARTISTS PROFILES

San Francisco Performances presents *The Living Earth Show* (Travis Andrews, Andy Meyerson) for the third time. Their first appearance was in 2017. This is Tanner Porter's SFP debut.



Tanner Porter is a composer-performer and songwriter. In her “original art songs that are by turns seductive and confessional” (Steve Smith, *The New Yorker*), Tanner explores her passion for storytelling, often framing her work within the imagery of the California coast she grew up on. Tanner’s orchestral music, described as “drop-dead gorgeous” (Jim Munson, *Broadway World*), has been commissioned by the San Francisco Ballet, Louisville Orchestra, Albany Symphony Orchestra, Reno Chamber Orchestra, Nu Deco Ensemble, and the New York Youth Symphony, among others.

Music as a vehicle for the mingling of artistic mediums is at the heart of Tanner’s work, stemming from a reverence for theatrical productions, and a deep love of song arrangement. She is thrilled to have collaborated with choreographer Claudia Schreier on two new ballets: *Slipstream*, for the Boston Ballet, and *Kin*, commissioned by the San Francisco Ballet and hailed as “a total-stage spectacle” (Rachel Howard, *SF Chronicle*).

As a songwriter, Tanner has been commissioned to write and perform song-cycles by institutions such as Dumbarton Oaks (*A Sky To Love More*, premiered by Eric Jacobsen and Friends) and the Louisville Orchestra (*True Lover’s Knot*, premiered by the LO under the baton of Teddy Abrams). Her short opera, *Boughs*, was commissioned and premiered by Barnard College and Columbia University’s New Opera

Workshop. Her most recent record, *One Was Gleaming*, was released in 2024 with mixing by Christopher Botta and mastering by David Peters of Oak House Recording. Called “an outstanding, genre-defying album from a uniquely talented composer-songwriter...a rare, must-listen recording from an important artist with much to say” (Lauren Ishida, *I Care if You Listen*), *One Was Gleaming* features colorful arrangements and “songs imbued with nothing less than life itself” (*Adobe and Teardrops*). Her previous record, *The Summer Sinks*, was recorded with LA-based studio Oak House Recording and can be heard on all streaming platforms.

As a performer, Tanner had the privilege of being in the original Broadway cast of *ILLINOISE*, with music by Sufjan Stevens, direction and choreography by Justin Peck, a book by Jackie Sibblies Drury and Justin Peck, music direction by Nathan Koci, and new orchestrations by Timo Andres. She was the vocal/guitar understudy for two roles played by Tasha Viets-Vanlear and Shara Nova (*My Brightest Diamond*)/Becca Stevens.

As an arranger, Tanner orchestrated Grammy® award-winning songwriter Aoife O’Donovan’s *All My Friends* for premiere with the Orlando Philharmonic, with a 2024 record featuring orchestrations for The Knights of New York, the Westerlies, and the San Francisco Girls Chorus.

Tanner was a composer-in-residence with the Louisville Orchestra’s 2023-24 Creators Corps, a 2022 Early Career Musician in Residence at Dumbarton Oaks, and has been a fellow of the Aspen Music Festival, Djerassi Resident Artists Program, Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, and the Next Festival of Emerging Artists. Her works have been presented at Carnegie Hall, the New World Symphony’s New World Center, the Prototype Festival, the Miami Light Box, the Mizzou International Composers Festival, New Music Detroit’s Strange Beautiful Music, New Music Gathering, and the American Composers Orchestras Connecting ACO Community virtual series. She was a 2019 recipient of the American Academy of Arts and Letters Charles Ives Scholarship. Tanner holds degrees in composition from the University of Michigan’s SMTD (BM) and the Yale School of Music (MM). She is a member of ANTiCX collective.

Travis Andrews is the co-founder, executive director, and electric guitarist in **The Living Earth Show**. In that capacity, Andrews’ performances have been praised



as “mind-blowing” and “a vanguard effort of new chamber music” by the *San Francisco Examiner* and “emotional, transcendent, and at times bursting with raw post-rock power” by the *Charleston City Paper*. In his work, he strives to use the tools of classical and contemporary music to foreground the voices and perspectives often marginalized by the tradition and its presentation.

Highly in demand as a solo artist, Andrews has been a featured soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Eco Ensemble, and the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble.

He has performed with John Doe of X, Bryce Dessner of The National, Terry Riley, & Kronos Quartet. A musical omnivore, Andrews also performs with avant-thrash trio Freightier, chambercore band miRthkon, and queer nü metal band COMMANDO.

Andrews has authored articles and books for String Letter Publishing and has been an artist in residence at universities and conservatories around the country. He is an endorsing artist for Fishman Transducers.

Andy Meyerson is a drummer and percussionist based in San Francisco, California. He is the Artistic Director, co-founder, and percussionist of *The Living Earth Show*, one of the premier experimental classical ensembles in the United States.

He is also the drummer and co-founder of queer nü metal collective COMMANDO, music director of renegade dance company Post:ballet, frequent drummer for Russian feminist protest and performance art group Pussy Riot, the artistic director and CEO of uncompromising experimental chamber music record label Earthy Records, and a renowned solo artist.



Andy Meyerson has released two solo percussion recordings: *My Side of the Story*, a collection of percussion solos written for him by Adrian Knight, Jude Traxler, Brendon Randall-Myers, Samuel Adams, and Danny Clay on slash/sound recordings; and *Extra Time*, an album of percussion solos written for him by Sarah Hennies on Hasana Editions.

He is an endorsing artist for Spaun Drums, Innovative Percussion, and Marimba One.

Praised by *The New Yorker* as “among the most talented and original of young American composers” and “a master of a uniquely dazzling and mercurial style,” **Andrew Norman** (b. 1979) is a Los Angeles-based composer and educator whose work has been hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* as “the leading American composer of his generation” and by *The New York Times* as “one of the most gifted and respected composers of his generation.” Drawing on an eclectic mix of classical and avant-garde traditions, Norman explores nonlinear narrative techniques inspired by film and video games, earning recognition for a voice described as “daring,” “audacious,” and “staggeringly imaginative.” He has written for many of the world’s leading orchestras—including the Berlin Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, London Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Royal Concertgebouw—and his music has been championed by Gustavo Dudamel, Simon Rattle, Kirill Petrenko, Klaus Mäkelä, Dalia Stasevska, John Adams, and David Robertson. His chamber work has been featured at major festivals and series such as Bang on a Can, Lincoln Center, Ojai, MATA, Tanglewood, Monday Evening Concerts, and the Aspen Music Festival, and he has created significant concertos for Eman-

uel Ax, Jeffrey Kahane, and Colin Currie, as well as the children’s opera *A Trip to the Moon*, premiered by the Berlin Philharmonic and London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle. Recent and upcoming premieres include projects with Hamburgische Staatsoper, Garsington Opera, the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, and HUB New Music. A recipient of the Grawemeyer Award, the Rome Prize, the Berlin Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, two Pulitzer Prize finalist nods, and *Musical America*’s 2017 Composer of the Year, Norman has served as composer-in-residence with Carnegie Hall, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Utah Symphony, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and Opera Philadelphia; his orchestral works *Play* and *Sustain* have been widely acclaimed, with *Sustain* earning Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic a Grammy® for their Deutsche Grammophon recording. A dedicated educator, Norman has taught at The Juilliard School and currently serves on the faculty of the University of Southern California, where he also directs the L.A. Phil’s Composer Fellowship Program for high-school composers. His music is published exclusively worldwide by Schott Music.

Described as “a force multiplier with more talents than time” (*PATRON Magazine*), “with a special gift for taking the personal and making it universal” (Beth Morrison), **Anuj Bhutani** is a quickly emerging composer, performer, vocalist, and producer whose “alternately celestial and dark” music (John Schaefer, *WNYC New Sounds*) often features visceral grooves; ethereal, meditative spaces; a combination of acoustic instruments and electronics, narrative depth, and genre-fluidity. His work has been presented by Beth Morrison Projects and LA Performance Practice at venues including National Sawdust and the Banff Centre. He’s won an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Grant and taken part in American Composer’s Orchestra’s Earshot, NewAm Composer’s Lab and residencies at Loghaven, Avaloch Farm Music Institute and Atlantic Center for the Arts, among others. His work has been commissioned or performed by Ashley Bathgate, Raleigh Civic Symphony, Metropolis Ensemble, Verdant Vibes, Switchensemble, the William Paterson University Percussion Ensemble, and more. He earned his master’s degree at University of Southern California where he was award-

ed Outstanding Graduate in Composition and his bachelor’s degree at University of North Texas.

Composer **Jacob Cooper** enjoys collaborating with performers, poets, and directors, as well as with machines, environments, and questionable histories. He has been lauded as “richly talented” (*The New York Times*) and a “maverick electronic song composer” (*The New Yorker*), while *Pitchfork* praised his album *Terrain* (New Amsterdam Records) as “vital and compulsive.” *Threnos* (for the Throat), his vocal-theater production with Karmina Šilec, was selected for a Music Theater Now International award. Jacob is a 2020 Pew Center for Arts & Heritage; Heritage Fellow, and he has also earned awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, ASCAP, Chamber Music America, and New Music USA. His recent work as a hip-hop producer includes credits with Lil Baby, Skrilla, and Lola Brooke, and his songs have reached the *Billboard* Heatseekers chart twice.

Currently based in Boston, **Christina J. George** is a composer-flutist whose compositions fuse ambient music with popular styles and classical forms, drawing inspiration from the organic shapes of the natural world. Her commissions range from indie rock-inspired art songs for *The Living Earth Show* to collaborative interdisciplinary works for Novum Dance Collective. Her multi-movement setting of her own poetry, *liminal songs*, was recently released on loadbang’s latest album, *A Garden Adorned*. Her music has also been performed by the Byrne:Kozar:Duo, Radius Ensemble, Chroma Collective, the Voices Unheard Ensemble, Vox Venti, and Aruna Quartet. A dedicated performer, Christina was part of the inaugural season of *Voice of Iris*, an organization committed to providing staged performance opportunities for women and gender nonconforming treble voices. Her playing is also featured on the genre-bending album *All Things Endless*, a project designed by composer-bassist Hannah Vokal. Christina holds a Bachelor of Music in Composition and Flute Performance from West Chester University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Music in Composition from Longy School of Music of Bard College. Her favorite sound in the world is the cry of the loon reverberating around a quiet cove.

Ted Hearne is a composer, singer, bandleader, and recording artist. Inspired by the overlay of different viewpoints and their sonic possibilities, he creates personal and

multi-dimensional works that often explore unconventional interactions of text and music and are rooted in a sense of inquiry.

Hearne's selected works include *The Source* (2014 BAM Next Wave, 2016 LA Opera, 2017 San Francisco Opera, with director Daniel Fish and librettist Mark Doten, adapting words of Chelsea Manning and redacted Department of Defense cables); *Sound from the Bench* (2018 Pulitzer Prize finalist, written for The Crossing and Volti, text appropriated from US Supreme Court oral arguments by poet Jena Osman); *Place* (2021 Pulitzer Prize finalist, written for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, with poet Saul Williams and director Patricia McGregor); *Law of Mosaics* (2012 orchestral work for A Far Cry, adapted in 2022 by Pam Tanowitz for New York City Ballet); *Freefucked* (2022 suite of songs for cellist Seth Parker Woods, text by Kemi Alabi); and *Farming* (2023, a speculative work for The Crossing setting texts by Jeff Bezos and William Penn among others, directed by Ashley Tata).

Rohan Chander (a.k.a BAKUDISCREAM) is a media artist and electronic musician based in the United States. Described as "hypersensory" (Washington Post), "remarkably alive" (The Wire Magazine), and of "transcendent metamorphosis" (I Care If You Listen), Chander's work considers questions of postcoloniality in the diaspora through hindoo historical research and speculative fiction. Built on the creative practices of DJs and long form composition, his work manifests as cyberpunk performance art pieces with costumes, dance, music, and light. He was named the winner of the 2022 Gaudeamus Prize for Music Composition.

Celebrated for his "waves of colorful sounds" (New York Times) and "smart, appealing works" (The New Yorker), **Robert Honstein** (b. 1980) is a New York-based composer of orchestral, chamber, vocal, and film music. His music has been performed by leading ensembles and artists from around the world and has been released by New Amsterdam Records, New Focus Recordings, Cedille Records, and Other Minds Records, among others. His debut film score, *The Real Charlie Chaplin*, was nominated for a News & Documentary Emmy in Outstanding Music Composition. Robert is a founding member of the New York-based composer collective Sleeping Giant. He is Program Director and Clinical Assistant Professor of Music Composition at NYU, Steinhardt.

Akshaya Avril Tucker (she/they) is a Los Angeles-based composer, songwriter, and dancer. Their work explores themes of care

and presence, investigating our relationship to self, community, the natural world, and the climate crisis. Her music has been called "affirming" (The Washington Post) and "an eloquent response to Californian wildfires and an elegy for the awesome beauty lost within them" (The New York Times). Her music has been performed worldwide by Brooklyn Rider, A Far Cry, members of the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and more. They are currently pursuing a DMA in Music Composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music.

Timo Andres (b. 1985, Palo Alto, CA) is a composer and pianist who grew up in rural Connecticut and lives in Brooklyn, NY. Andres' season is threaded through by an ongoing collaboration with pianist Aaron Diehl; the duo performs a two-piano recital (including a new work by Andres) at Carnegie Hall and Howland Chamber Music in January. Diehl also performs Andres's 2024 concerto, *Made of Tunes*, at the Minnesota and Cleveland Orchestras. Andres performs his third piano concerto, *The Blind Banister*, with the Maryland Symphony led by Elizabeth Schulze, and writes new commissions for the Heida Hermanns Competition, cellist Arlen Hlusko, and The Living Earth Show. In recent seasons, Timo made his sold out solo recital debut at Carnegie Hall; received a Tony nomination for his work orchestrations and arrangements of Sufjan Stevens's *ILLINOISE* for the acclaimed theatrical production by Justin Peck and Jackie Sibblies Drury; served as advisor and editor of a 2023 edition of the Philip Glass Etudes published by Artisan; and performed with the Pomegranate Arts productions of the Glass Etudes internationally, including recent dates at Lincoln Center, the Chicago Humanities Festival, the Elbphilharmonie, the Philharmonie Berlin, and for NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts.

Daniel Castellanos is a composer, vocalist, and pianist based in NYC. His music has been described as "serene" and "attractively harmonized" by The New York Times. His musical influences span a wide range, from salsa to classical, indie folk to Anglican choral music. Castellanos has written for a range of musical ensembles, including JACK Quartet, The Orchestra NOW, Semiosis Quartet, The Living Earth Show, and the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, where he sang treble as a kid and currently sings as both a tenor and countertenor. For more information, visit www.Daniel-Castellanos.com

Christopher Cerrone (b. 1984) is internationally acclaimed for compositions characterized by a subtle handling of timbre and resonance, a deep literary fluency, and a flair for multimedia collaborations.

Recent works include *Beaufort Scales*, an oratorio commissioned by Lorelei Ensemble; *In a Grove*, an opera co-produced by LA Opera and Pittsburgh Opera that had its New York premiere at the PROTOTYPE Festival in 2025, where The New York Times praised: "Cerrone's coolly caressing music, with its eerie haze of electronic and acoustic textures, deepens the mystery and leaves listeners suspended between ambiguity and wonder"; *Don't Look Down*, his latest album featuring Sandbox Percussion; *Breaks and Breaks*, a violin concerto for Jennifer Koh and the Detroit Symphony; *A Body, Moving*, a brass concerto for the Cincinnati Symphony; *The Year of Silence* for the Louisville Symphony and baritone Dashon Burton; *The Air Suspended*, a piano concerto for Shai Wosner; and *The Insects Became Magnetic* for the LA Philharmonic. His first opera, *Invisible Cities*, was a 2014 Pulitzer Prize finalist. Cerrone is a six-time Grammy® nominee, with nominations for *The Pieces that Fall to Earth*, *The Arching Path*, *Beaufort Scales*, and three nominations for *Don't Look Down*. He won the 2015–16 Samuel Barber Rome Prize and was a resident at the Laurenz Haus Foundation in Basel, Switzerland from 2022–23.

Christopher Cerrone holds degrees from Yale and the Manhattan School of Music. He is published by Schott NY and Project Schott New York, and joined the composition faculty at Mannes School of Music at The New School in 2021. He lives in Jersey City with his wife and their young son.

Nathaniel Parks is a Los Angeles-based composer and singer whose work is rooted in connection and relationship. His music explores themes of vulnerability, community, and resonance, whether emotional, cultural, or acoustic. Nathaniel's music has been performed around the country by ensembles such as Telos Consort, Dualis, Confluss, and Bergamot Quartet. It has been presented at numerous festivals and conferences including the Florida State University Festival of New Music (2024), New Music on the Point (2023), Walden's Creative Musicians Retreat (2022), the Society of Composers, Inc. National Conference (2017), and the Society of Composers, Inc. Region VI Conference (2018). He has received fellowships from the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts (2023) and Millay Arts (2023). Nathaniel has been

the recipient of an ASCAP Foundation Morton Gould Young Composer Award (2025), third prize in the Cantori New York Score Competition (2024), and the Otto Ortmann Award in Composition (2020). He currently serves as an Adjunct Professor in Music Composition at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, NC.

As a singer, Nathaniel possesses a deep affinity for choral music and has served many choirs both on the stage and behind the scenes. He served as the Director of Operations for the Washington Master Chorale, a staff tenor at Grace and Saint Peter's Episcopal Church in Baltimore and was selected as a tenor vocal fellow for the Baltimore Choral Arts Society's 2021-22 season.

He holds an M.M. in Composition from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, and a B.M. in Music Composition from Gardner-Webb University. His primary teachers include Christopher Cerrone, Michael Hersch, Bruce Moser, and Matt Whitfield. He is pursuing his doctorate at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California in the fall of 2025.

PROGRAM NOTES

Legacies is a collection of songs written for The Living Earth Show: electric guitarist Travis Andrews and percussionist Andy Meyerson, with lead vocalist Tanner Porter.

Spanning classical chamber music, indie and alternative rock, experimental electronic music, contemporary classical music, and musical theater, the trio presents a cohesive collection of art songs that explore the story of who we are and where we're going.

Legacies was built in collaboration with the Sleeping Giant Composer Collective: Timo Andres, Christopher Cerrone, Jacob Cooper, Ted Hearne, Robert Honstein, and Andrew Norman.

Composer collectives play a crucial role in classical music history by forging new communities, aesthetics, and systems of support. Russia's Mighty Handful (including Modest Mussorgsky and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov) championed a distinctly nationalistic style, while France's *Les Six* (including Francis Poulenc and Darius Milhaud) rejected impressionist excess in favor of wit, clarity, and Parisian modernism. The Depression-era Composers Collective (including Henry Cowell and Aaron Copland) united politically minded artists, and the Bay Area's Common Sense gathered figures including Dan Becker, Mark Mellits, and Belinda Reynolds

around post-minimalist experimentation, while New York's Bang on a Can (David Lang, Michael Gordon, Julia Wolfe) built a global platform for boundary-pushing, post-minimal composition. Finland's Ears Open launched the careers of composers like Magnus Lindberg, Kaija Saariaho, and Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Chicago's AACM, home to Muhal Richard Abrams, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Henry Threadgill, and Wadada Leo Smith, redefined experimental music as a community-driven practice. Together, these collectives reveal how musical revolutions emerge not from isolation, but from artists building new worlds in collaboration.

Within this history, *Sleeping Giant* has shaped the story of classical music in 2025. Since they met as graduate students at the Yale School of Music in the late 2000's, the members of *Sleeping Giant* have become some of the most influential composers of our generation.

Crucially, each member is now a composition teacher in their own right. As has been the tradition in our field for centuries, the composers continue the lineage they inherited from their teachers by building their own thriving composition studios at some of the most influential music schools in the United States.

In *Legacies*, each *Sleeping Giant* composer has an art song for The Living Earth Show with vocalist Tanner Porter (scored for guitar, percussion, and vocals) loosely based around their own conception of legacy: where they come from, what they would tell their younger self, and where they fit into an organism so much larger than any one individual.

Each *Sleeping Giant* composer has also selected one of their former students to join them in the project. These six vital emerging voices—Akshaya Tucker (a former student of Robert Honstein), Anuj Bhutani (who studied with Andrew Norman), Christina George (who studied with Jacob Cooper), Rohan Chander (who studied with Ted Hearne), Nathaniel Parks (who studied with Christopher Cerrone), and Danny Castellanos (who studied with Timo Andres)—have written songs for the project with the same prompt, presented as the second half of a pair with their former teacher on the program.

These twelve songs, then, represent our best attempt to reckon with our own responsibility to steward our tradition. In the process, we strive to allow audiences to see and hear, in real time, how musical communities grow and how the lineage of our classical music tradition unfolds.

Built over two years in partnerships with the University of Texas at Austin, West Chester University, Mannes School of Music, and a variety of other institutions across the United States, *Legacies* activates musical communities spanning generations, geography, musical training, and background to tell the story of who we are, where we came from, and where we're going.

ABOUT THE WORKS

CA AB1780

ANDREW NORMAN

will you

ANUJ BHUTANI

CA AB1780 is a bill passed by the California State Legislature in September 2024 that prohibits the practice of legacy and donor admissions preferences at private colleges and universities.

—Andrew Norman

will you

When my previous teacher Andrew Norman asked me in 2024 if I wanted to write a song for The Living Earth Show and Tanner Porter as part of the *Legacies* song cycle they were doing with the *Sleeping Giant* Collective, I was about to set a passage from Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* (which I'd been obsessed with for years) for a different piece, since the book had finally entered the public domain. In that passage, there was one sentence that I realized wasn't going to make it in that piece, which contained the phrase "...where gold letters on marble pages describe death in battle and how bones bleach and burn far away in Indian sands." The imagery of burning by the ocean stuck with me as I thought about both Woolf's and my own meditations on the uncertainty of time, impermanence, loss, and, of course, legacy, and the lyrics for this song are inspired by (and allude to) this phrase.

I was also excited to write a song for a group of highly talented, similarly genre-fluid musicians in an instrumentation that felt much closer to the non-classical world I grew up in, and it seemed only fitting that I should use the musical materials of my youth as directly as I could as a way to reach back to my younger self across time, reflect on the journey that brought me here, and remind myself that none of us know where the journey will end.

—Anuj Bhutani

Tracing The Letters

JACOB COOPER

Erasing The Edges

CHRISTINA GEORGE

While contemplating the open notion of "legacy," W.S. Merwin's poem *Tracing the Letters* resonated deeply with both of us—the way it beautifully but subtly connects human progress and literacy to the environment, the way it places our consciousness within the vast global scale of what's been and what's to come, of what we know and don't know, of what we can see and can't see. We decided that I (Jacob) would set the Merwin text itself, while I (Christina) would craft a personal response to Merwin's poem.

Much of the imagery for my (Christina's) text was inspired by a trip to Colorado, a landscape largely devoid of green in a way that was so alien to me, a native of the northeast, I could hardly comprehend the vastness of its haunting beauty. Reflecting on this terrain in the context of Merwin's poem, I began to understand his use of the word "green" as a metaphor for ancestral knowledge—a knowledge which felt palpably inaccessible in this place that was so stark, spacious and distinctly red. *Tracing the Letters* meditates on the hopeful pervasiveness of our inheritance; even as it is commodified and codified, the land has a way of compelling us to understand ourselves as a part of it. *Erasing the Edges* addresses the difficulty of this relationship in today's world, nearly 50 years after Merwin's poem was published. Our generation was born into a climate crisis which we had no part in creating and yet are weighed down with the responsibility of reversing. It is certainly easier to hide from that reality, to fall into nihilism and allow ourselves to be distracted by every other color in the landscape. But as Merwin suggests in his poem, the green has a way of finding us again, no matter how numb and separate we have become.

—Jacob Cooper & Christina George

Mother's Mouth

TED HEARNE

stones don't lie

ROHAN CHANDER

Mother's Mouth is a song written as a response to, and an embodiment of, the idea that we should listen to our elders, follow in their footsteps, learn our behavior and values from them. A contradiction to this

assumption, and/or a conversation with older voices, may be found in Andy's part, as he creates a dialogue between live and electronic percussion, built from samples.

—Ted Hearne

stones don't lie was written in response to Hearne's *Mother's Mouth* and sources audio recordings from James Baldwin and Nikki Giovanni's interview "A Conversation."

—Rohan Chander

Music to Hear

ROBERT HONSTEIN

Through

AKSHAYA AVRIL TUCKER

Music to Hear by Robert Honstein and *Through* by Akshaya Avril Tucker offer distinct yet complementary meditations on human connection and continuity. While Honstein looks to the past to understand our artistic lineage, Tucker grounds us in the urgent present, asking how the bonds of community might carry us into a livable future.

Honstein's *Music to Hear* explores the transmission of legacy, inspired by a re-interpretation of William Shakespeare's Sonnet 8. In this reading, the poet uses the physical mechanics of a stringed instrument—where one vibrating string induces sympathy in another—as a metaphor for the idea of lineage. Honstein's setting traces a journey from solitary questioning to resonant union. The opening portrays the isolated artist with sparse, uncertain textures, echoing the poem's initial melancholy. As the work unfolds, independent musical lines begin to vibrate in sympathy, weaving a rich, sonic web that mirrors the "mutual ordering" described in the text. Ultimately, the piece strides toward an affirmation, where the "speechless song" of the past is no longer a static artifact, but a living, breathing foundation for the future.

If Honstein's work is a conversation with history, Akshaya Tucker's *Through* is a love song to the present. Inspired by the tradition of American folk protest music, the piece acts as a resistance song rooted in the intimacy of friendship and the specific, complex landscape of Los Angeles. Tucker's original text addresses modern anxieties—"poisoned air," "fire and flood"—not with grandiosity, but with the humble tools of community: a shared table, bread and jam, and the resolve to "sew our hearts together."

The music navigates the tension between the fragility of the individual and

the strength of the collective. The title—and the work's recurring mantra—draws on a lineage of thought ranging from Dante's *Inferno* to Robert Frost, and even the philosophy of game master Brennan Lee Mulligan: "there's no way out but through."

Just as Honstein finds "true concord" in the union of generations, Tucker suggests that our own legacy is built in the here and now—that by "cracking the walls" with the roots of friendship, we create a path forward through the rain.

—Robert Honstein and Akshaya Avril Tucker

At The San Francisco Airport

TIMO ANDRES

other places to reside

DANIEL CASTELLANOS

Airports have always interested me—as buildings both supporting an incredible technical purpose, and as spaces designed to contain and suppress any sort of real emotion. *At The San Francisco Airport*, one of Yvor Winters' most expressive poems, reminded me exactly of this unsettling dichotomy: surrounded by "glittering metal", an anxious parent mentally prepares to send their child out into the unknown.

—Timo Andres

I composed *other places to reside* using a poem written by my partner, Cloe Gentile Reyes. I saw both the poem and the piece as an ode to one's ancestors, ruminating on how children of immigrants carry on the legacy of both the joys and traumas through which their parents lived. The beginning of the piece starts off with the restless energy of a kid, defiantly donning new places of origin outside of traditional parameters. I create this restless feeling using a variety of percussion instruments that reflect the imagery in the poem (Taino güiro, beer bottles, and drums) as well as an eclectic mix of timbres from the electric guitar. Eventually, that initial energy simmers and becomes more contemplative and wistful as the speaker acknowledges the places of the body in which "our immigrant dads endured pain to bear us." When composing this middle section I thought of my own Cuban abuelos, who made the difficult and painful decision to leave their homeland in search of a more stable future for their children. In the closing section of the piece, the speaker dreams of coming from "other parts/Of the worlds that are our

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parents' bodies." I create a dreamlike sound world, via the use of soft yarn mallets on the vibraphone and a smooth, blurred sound from the electric guitar, to reflect the desire to come from somewhere yet undefined by the world in which we live.

—Danny Castellanos

Canto Selah **CHRISTOPHER CERRONE**

Rear-View Mirror **NATHANIEL PARKS**

Our pieces bring together two works that explore the act of looking back—at memory, at place, at the self. Both pieces grapple with reflection in its various forms: the mirror that endlessly repeats, the rear-view mirror that frames what we're leaving behind. Both works suspend us between presence and echo, between the moment we inhabit now and the moments that have already passed—caught in the act of becoming memory.

Canto Selah takes its name and inspiration from a poem by my friend G.C. Waldrep, written for the poet Karen Anhwei Lee. At the heart of Waldrep's poem is a haunting image: a mirror that "repeats its only curse, which is Son. Son. Son. Son." For this project, *Legacies*, that image spoke profoundly to me—the way a mirror can become a kind of trap, endlessly reflecting and refracting identity, memory, and voice.

The piece is built entirely around the concept of mirrors and mirroring. The vocalist engages in a dialogue with pre-recorded versions of herself, creating a conversation that splinters and multiplies across the sonic space—a kind of vocal counterpoint where the self talks to itself, questions itself, answers itself. The vibraphone and guitar extend this concept through cascading delays, each instrument playing with mirrored reflections and refractions of its own sound. What emerges is a work suspended between presence and echo, between the voice that speaks now and the voice that has already spoken, caught in the endless repetition of the mirror's curse.

—Christopher Cerrone

When I started writing *Rear-View Mirror*, I had just decided to move from Baltimore, my home of seven years, to Los Angeles. During those seven years, Baltimore had become an incredibly important city to me. I gave it the bulk of my 20s and it's where I first came into my own as both a person and a composer. As the reality of the move set in, I began to realize that *Rear View Mirror* would likely be the last piece of music I would write in Baltimore.

I wrestled with the piece before, during, and after the move, struggling to encapsulate the tension between what was and what would be. I eventually turned back to an older piece of mine, *little lovely images*, for inspiration, as it also explores ideas of transience and my relationship with Baltimore. I decided to make *Rear View Mirror* a sort of sequel to it. This piece is my attempt to look both forwards and backwards—to capture the past while moving towards something new.

—Nathaniel Parks