

THE
NEW
SERIES

David Serkin Ludwig, *Artistic Director*

Vox Celli

Juilliard

Welcome Back to The New Series!

The second season of The New Series continues our exploration of the music of our time through the lens of active interdisciplinary collaboration. I co-curate each New Series performance with guests who are among the leading artistic voices of today. The programs are highly personal, unique experiences that include onstage conversations about the ever-evolving world of the arts.



Tonight's concert is called Vox Celli. The cello choir has a richly beautiful sound, and the program follows an arc from the spiritual mysteries of Pärt's *Fratres* to the kineticism of Gity Razaz's *The Strange Highway* and the otherworldly lyricism of Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras*. The evening concludes with two breathtaking works by the great American composer Julius Eastman, *The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc* preceded by its a cappella prelude.

Vox Celli is a collaboration between our cello and vocal arts departments as well as the Center for Innovation for the Arts (CIA), which has created a stunning backdrop to Eastman's work using footage from the classic 1928 silent film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. Much gratitude to faculty member Joel Krosnick and Creative Associate Joshua Roman, both of whom coached the ensemble.

Our next concert, on December 7, is a portrait of Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, the first woman to receive a doctorate from Juilliard and the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize. She will join me to discuss her journey as a composer and introduce her works during the concert. The February 3 performance is a Dance Division collaboration at Chelsea Factory, where we will present the complete solo *Argoru* works of New York composer Alvin Singleton paired with direction and choreography by Creative Associate Caili Quan.

On March 25, the Music Division collaborates with the CIA on *The Mad King*: dramatic performances of three works for singer, actor, and ensemble—Saariaho's *From the Grammar of Dreams*, Schoenberg's *Ode to Napoleon*, and Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*. Directed by faculty member Mary Birnbaum, it features a set made out of light and projections designed by the CIA.

This season's final New Series program, on May 9, is the Juilliard Pride Songbook, a celebration of the LGBTQIA+ community that includes songs written for a range of voices, including eight newly commissioned works from alumni.

As always, we are grateful to have you in the audience—we wouldn't be here without you!

Yours in music,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "David Serkin Ludwig". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D'.

David Serkin Ludwig
Dean and Director of the Music Division
Artistic Director of The New Series

The Juilliard School
presents

The New Series: Vox Celli

Joshua Roman, Juilliard Creative Associate, Lead Coach
Shavon Lloyd (MM '24), Baritone
Evelyn Saavedra (Artist Diploma '24), Soprano

Tuesday, October 3, 2023, 7:30pm
Peter Jay Sharp Theater

6:30pm Preconcert talk with David Serkin Ludwig, Ed Bilous, Gity Razaz, Joshua Roman,
and Astrid Schween

ARVO PÄRT *Fratres* (1977; arranged for 12 cellos, 1982)
(b. 1935)

GITY RAZAZ *The Strange Highway* for cello octet (2010)
(b. 1986)

HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 5 (1938, 1945)
(1887–1959) *Ária* (Cantilena)
Dança (Martelo)
Evelyn Saavedra, Soprano

Music Preparation: Kayo Iwama
Language Preparation: Josani Pimenta

Intermission

JULIUS EASTMAN *Prelude to The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc* (1981)
(1940–90) **Shavon Lloyd**, Baritone

EASTMAN *The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc* (1981)

Please be advised that Julius Eastman's work, *The Holy Presence of Joan of Arc*, is accompanied by scenes from Carl Theodor Dreyer's 1928 film, which depicts violent images that may be upsetting to some viewers.

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes, including an intermission



Large
Print

Please make certain that all electronic devices are turned off during the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not permitted in this auditorium.

Juilliard's creative enterprise programming, including the Creative Associates program, is generously supported by Jody and John Arnhold.

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This performance is supported, in part, by the Muriel Gluck Production Fund.

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Notes on the Program

By Noémie Chemali

Fratres ARVO PÄRT

Arvo Pärt

Born:

September 11, 1935,
in Paide, Estonia

To understand the historical and cultural significance of Arvo Pärt's *Fratres*, one must look at the sociopolitical backdrop of 1977 Estonia. Since it was a Soviet satellite, the Kremlin maintained strict control over the social life of the Estonian SSR. During this period, Estonia experienced the suppression of its national identity, censorship of cultural and political expression, and the promulgation of Soviet values and ideology.

This was especially difficult for Pärt, whose Lutheran faith seeped into every area of his life, including his compositions. The Soviet Union was officially an atheist state, and the promotion of religious themes or expressions of faith were viewed with suspicion by the government. A major crossroads in Pärt's style, which was largely neoclassical up until 1968, was his *Credo*, in which he gradually distorts Bach's C-Major Prelude from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* using Schoenberg's 12-note row. Since it didn't adhere to the state's religious or aesthetic guidelines, *Credo* was effectively banned from public performances and publication within the Soviet Union, rendering Pärt an outcast and a cultural dissident.

In the early 1970s, Pärt, who had been spiritually lost amid this ideological turmoil, faced a period of creative drought. It was through his study of monody and two-part counterpoint of medieval and renaissance music that he took an interest in the spirituality and mysticism of Russian Orthodoxy. His conversion to the faith marked a stark turning point in his musical life and career as he developed a new style known as "Tintinnabulation." This refers to his use of bell-like tones, triadic harmony, and sparse textures. In 1977, he wrote *Fratres*, scored without fixed instrumentation, and arranged the work for different combinations of instruments over the course of the next several years. This cello choir version, commissioned by the Berliner Festwochen, was arranged for the 12 cellists of the Berlin Philharmonic.

Fratres—which means "brotherhood"—is based on intelligible rhythmic and intervallic patterns. It consists of a primary theme and eight subsequent variations. The theme is made up of six irregularly lengthed bars comprising seven, nine, and eleven quarter notes. It is composed of two voices that sit an interval of a tenth apart. The outer voices are largely stepwise, while the inner bell-like voice moves triadically. In Pärt's sonic universe, the outer voices represent the worldly, and the middle voice represents the divine. Beneath this is a steady drone in the bottom-most voice, adding a deep sense of groundedness to the overall texture. Between each variation are two "interruption" bars of 6/4 reminiscent of a death knell. With each repetition of the theme, the tonal center shifts down a triad, and the textures and voices shift subtly, just enough to keep the audience on its toes without truly knowing why.

In a world where more is better, and the pace of life only seems to accelerate by the minute, *Fratres* offers us pause. Pause to breathe and embark on our own journey of meditation and contemplation. With timeless beauty and transcendent depth, we are encouraged to untangle our thoughts and luxuriate in Pärt’s powerful gift of serenity and introspection.

The Strange Highway GITY RAZAZ

Iranian-American Gity Razaz (BM ‘10, MM ‘12, composition), who was named a 2022 rising star by *BBC Music Magazine*, composes music that ranges from concert solo pieces to large symphonic works. Beginning her musical studies in piano at a young age, she also began composing at 9. While at Juilliard, she studied with Samuel Adler, Robert Beaser, and John Corigliano. *The Strange Highway* for cello octet was commissioned by Juilliard cello faculty member Richard Aaron for the third Amsterdam Cello Biennale.

Gity Razaz

Born:
March 22, 1986,
in Tehran

The inspiration for this piece came from the eponymous poem by the Chilean novelist Roberto Bolaño, whose text reads:

<i>Esperas que desaparezca la angustia</i>	You wait for the anguish to disappear
<i>Mientras llueve sobre la extraña carretera</i>	While it rains over the strange highway
<i>En donde te encuentras</i>	Where you are

<i>Lluvia: sólo espero</i>	Rain: I only hope
<i>Que desaparezca la angustia</i>	That the anguish disappears
<i>Estoy poniéndolo todo de mi parte</i>	I am trying as hard as I can

Marked “Vigorous and Relentless,” the piece opens with languishing glissandi and jumps straight into highly charged 16th-note motifs that are passed around the group throughout. The textures coming from the eight cellos are well defined; Razaz writes tremolos, snap pizzicati, and extreme dynamic contrasts to add dissonance and tension to the music.

The composer writes, “I was moved by the subtle but potent sense of desolation and vulnerability expressed through the poem’s powerful imagery. My attempt in writing the piece was to capture and recreate these emotions through rhythmic and violent opening and closing sections that engulf a lyrical, emotionally and dramatically charged middle section that uses dense, contrapuntal melodies and rich harmonies.”

The Strange Highway challenges classical conventional forms. Its stream-of-consciousness approach mirrors the various emotions in Bolaño’s poem; its purpose is to embrace the journey. From this mindset, we are empowered as audience members to piece together our own narrative and imagine a storyline with a personal sense of wonder and curiosity.

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5 HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

Heitor Villa-Lobos

Born:

March 5, 1887, in
Rio de Janeiro

Died:

November 17, 1959,
in Rio de Janeiro

What are the commonalities between the music of the Leipzig Court and the streets of Rio? Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos sought to answer that question in his set of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras*. Inspired by the eponymous reference to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, these works fuse together Brazilian folk music with that of Bach's. Though the former initially appears to be a far cry from the latter, somewhere along the spectrum, these two worlds collide.

The fifth of these *Bachianas Brasileiras* is scored for the rare combination of eight cellos and soprano. Composed in 1938, the first movement, *Aria* (*Cantilena*), follows the typical form associated with the Baroque da capo aria (A-B-A). The A section is a distinguishable wordless melody sung by the soprano accompanied by a solo cello and guitar-like pizzicato accompaniment. The mercurial B section suddenly introduces words by the soprano, which come from Ruth Valadares Correa's ode to the beauty of the moon. This moonlight serenade subsides and makes way for the recapitulation of the wordless *Aria*.

Composed in 1945, the second movement, *Dança* (*Martelo*), is an *embolada*, or fast song in 2/4 time, commonly found in northern Brazil. The text for this movement is inspired by Manuel Bandeira's *saudade* poem *Irerê*, which expresses nostalgia for the birds of the Cariri, a region in eastern Brazil. This movement's rhythm reflects a deeply rooted connection to the land, which is home to a large indigenous community, and embraces the unique syncopations of Brazilian dance music. The movement becomes increasingly exuberant and serves as an anthem celebrating Brazilian culture.

"If one accepts that melody is the essence of music, and that the essence of melody is song, then one can easily see the connection between the worlds of J.S. Bach and Heitor Villa-Lobos," pianist Albert Combrink says. Like Bach's mellifluous Arias, the melodies in this piece are flowing and rhapsodic. The second movement harkens back to Baroque dance suites—it is evident that both composers' music was meant to accompany dances. Such parallels in Villa Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras* are not merely invigorating but also revelatory.

Prelude to The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc
The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc
JULIUS EASTMAN

In 1981, Julius Eastman wrote *The Holy Presence of Joan of Arc*, 18 years after graduating from the Curtis Institute of Music, where he started as a piano major, studying with the great Mieczyslaw Horoszewski. Soon after, though, he switched to composition, which he studied with George Rochberg. With his commanding bass voice and fresh ideas, Eastman was destined to make a lasting impact on the field. In 1966, he made his New York solo debut at Town Hall. He was part of a group of avant-garde composers including Morton Feldman, John Cage, and Lukas Foss. Beginning in 1970, he briefly was a professor at the University of Buffalo. Eastman was also celebrated for performing Peter Maxwell Davies' fiendishly difficult vocal piece, *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, which will be the centerpiece of a New Series performance on March 25.

Julius Eastman

Born:

October 27, 1940,
in New York City

Died:

May 28, 1990,
in Buffalo

Eastman was also ahead of his time but, unfortunately, was met by a society that was unkind toward him for being, as he described to the *Buffalo Evening News*, "Black to the fullest, a musician to the fullest, and a homosexual to the fullest." Often, his unadulterated pride in his intersecting identities affronted his collaborators and audience members, further alienating Eastman from his peers. With often extremely provocative titles, many of his works were deemed unfit for the concert hall despite their cultural relevance straddling the minimalist and the avant-garde. Sadly, Eastman died destitute in a Buffalo hospital at age 49.

The Holy Presence of Joan of Arc, though palatable in nomenclature, externalizes Eastman's interior battles. In the unadorned and poignant *Prelude*, the text tells, in bits and pieces, the tale of Joan of Arc: She hears voices and visions from Saint Michael, Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret, urging her to support Charles VII, the Dauphin of France, and help him reclaim the French throne from English control.

The following movement scored for 10 cellos is characteristic of Eastman's proclivity to write for multiples, a reflection of his inclination toward likeness in timbre and texture. It begins with all 10 cellos playing a theme in unison, which organically unravels into separate lines. His musical language becomes increasingly atonal throughout the piece, marked by brief periods of consonance. Eastman's use of the recurring 16th-note motif adds to the cyclical nature of the work, reflecting Joan of Arc's profound and enigmatic journey.

Violist Noémie Chemali, who earned her Master of Music from Juilliard in 2022, freelances in New York City as a performer, teacher, music journalist, grant writer, and arts administrator.

Texts and Translations

HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5

Ária (Cantilena)

Text: Ruth Valladares Corrêa

Tarde, uma névem rósea lenta e transparente
sobre o espaço sonhadora e bela!

Surge no infinito a lua docemente,
enfeitando a tarde, qual meiga donzela
que se apresta e alinda sonhadoramente,
Em anseios d'alma para ficar bela,
Grita ao céu e a terra, toda a natureza!
Cala a passurada aos seus tristes queixumes,

E reflete o mar toda a sua riqueza ...

Suave a luz da lua desperta agora,
A cruel saudade que ri e chora!

Translation: ©2023 Josani Pimenta

Evening, a dreamy and beautiful slow
and transparent rosy cloud over the space!
In the infinite, the moon arises sweetly
Bedecking the evening like a kind maiden
that dreamily prepares and beautifies herself
In yearnings of soul to look beautiful,
She shouts to the Sky and the Earth, all Nature!
The flock of birds silence themselves at her sad
complaints
and the Sea reflects all her richness ...
The soft light of the moon now awakens
The cruel longing that laughs and cries!

Dança (Martelo)

Text: Manuel Bandeira

Irerê, meu passarinho do Sertão do Cariri,
Irerê, meu companheiro
Cadê viola?
Cadê meu bem?
Cadê Maria?
ai triste sorte a do violeiro cantadô!
Ah! Sem a viola em que cantava o seu amô,
Ah! Seu assobio é tua flauta de Irerê
Que tua flauta do Sertão quando assobia,
Ah! A gente sofre sem querê
Ah! Teu canto chega lá no fundo do sertão,

Ah! Como uma brisa amolecendo o coração,
Ah! Ah! Irerê solta teu canto!
Canta mais!
Prá alembra o Cariri!
Canta, cambaxirra! Canta, juruti!
Canta, Irerê
Canta, canta, sofre Patativa!
Bem-te-vi! Maria acorda que é dia!
Cantem todos vocês passarinhos do sertão
Bem-te-vi!
eh! Sabiá!
Lá! Liá!
Eh! Sabiá da mata cantadô!
Eh! Sabiá da mata sofredô! Ô!
O vosso canto vem do fundo do sertão

Como uma brisa amolecendo o coração

Translation: ©2023 Josani Pimenta

Irerê¹, my little bird from the Cariri² Backland
Irerê, my companion
Where is the guitar³?
Where is my dear?
Where is Maria?
Ah! Sad fortune, that of the guitarist singer!
Ah! Without the guitar in which he sang his love,
Ah! His whistling is your flute of Irerê
Because when your Backland flute whistles
Ah! We suffer without willing to
Ah! Your singing arrives from the deep of the
Backland,
Ah! Like a breeze softening the heart,
Ah! Ah! Irerê release your singing!
Sing more!
To remind me of Cariri!
Sing, cambaxirra⁴! Sing, juriti⁵!
Sing, Irerê.
Sing, sing, suffer Patativa⁶
Bem-te-vi⁷! Wake up Maria because it is morn!
Sing all of you, little birds of the Backland.
Bem-te-vi!
Hey! Sabiá⁸!
Lá! Liá⁹!
Hey! Singer Sabiá of the woods!
Hey! Sufferer Sabiá of the woods! Oh!
Thy singing comes from the deep of the
Backland
Ah! Like a breeze softening the heart

¹ Irerê: white-faced whistling duck

² Cariri: a vast backland area in the Northeastern Region of Brazil.

³ Guitar: Brazilian 10-string guitar

⁴ Cambaxirra: wren

⁵ Juriti: leptotila

⁶ Patativa: plumbeous seedeater

⁷ Bem-te-vi: great kiskadee

⁸ Sabiá: rufous-bellied thrush

⁹ Onomatopoeia for the bird's singing

About the Artists



David Serkin Ludwig

David Serkin Ludwig (Graduate Diploma '02, composition) has enjoyed a career of collaboration with many of today's leading musicians, filmmakers, and writers. In 2023, he received the award in music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2022, he was awarded the Stoeger Prize from the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the largest chamber music award of its kind. He received the prestigious 2018 Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage Fellowship, the Independence Foundation Fellowship (two-time recipient), the Theodore Presser Career Grant, and the A. I. duPont Award. In 2012, NPR named Ludwig in its list of Top 100 Composers Under 40. The following year, his choral work *The New Colossus* opened the private prayer service for President Obama's second inauguration. He holds positions and residencies with nearly two dozen orchestras and music festivals in the U.S. and abroad, and he was named a Steinway Artist in 2021. Before beginning his administrative position at Juilliard, Ludwig was at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he served as dean of artistic programs, chair of composition studies, director of Ensemble 20/21, and artistic director of Curtis Summerfest. In addition to Juilliard and Curtis, he also holds degrees and certificates from Oberlin Conservatory, and Manhattan School of Music as well as a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. Ludwig also studied at the University of Vienna, and he taught at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania while attending Juilliard. Ludwig has received commissions and notable performances from artists and ensembles including the Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Minnesota, and National symphony orchestras as well as Jonathan Biss, Jeremy Denk, Jennifer Koh, Jaime Laredo, David Shifrin, Eighth Blackbird, Imani Winds, the Dover Quartet, and the PRISM Saxophone Quartet. In addition to his position as dean and director of the Music Division, Ludwig also serves on the Juilliard faculty and is the artistic director of its collaborative contemporary music project *The New Series*. He lives in New York City with his wife, violinist Bella Hristova, and their four beloved cats.

Joshua Roman

Cello soloist, composer, and Juilliard Creative Associate Joshua Roman's genre-bending programs and wide-ranging collaborations have grown out of his commitment to bringing classical music to new audiences. He has collaborated with world-class artists across genres and disciplines including Edgar Meyer, DJ Spooky, Tony winner/MacArthur Genius Bill T. Jones, Grammy-winning East African vocalist Somi, and Tony-nominated actor and playwright Anna Deavere Smith. Roman's concert of the complete Bach solo cello suites after the 2016 U.S. presidential election had nearly a million live viewers, and his solo performance with the YouTube Symphony at Carnegie Hall was viewed by 33 million people across nearly 200 countries, with Yo-Yo Ma introducing him as "one of the great exemplars of the ideal 21st-century musician." As a soloist, Roman has performed with leading orchestras including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco, and Toronto symphonies as well as the BBC Scottish and Mariinsky symphony orchestras. As a composer, he has been commissioned by the Music Academy of the West, Illinois Philharmonic, and ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, and he has also premiered new works composed for him by Mason Bates, Reena Esmail, Timo Andres, Gabriela Lena Frank, Aaron Jay Kernis, Lisa Bielawa, and others.



Shavon Lloyd

While maintaining an active career as a baritone, music educator, conductor, and award-winning composer, Shavon Lloyd is pursuing his master's in vocal performance at Juilliard, studying with bass-baritone Kevin Short. Lloyd has performed in multiple Juilliard productions, including *Atalanta* (Nicandro cover), *King Arthur* (Grimbald/Cold Genius), and *Gianni Schicchi* (Betto). This year, Lloyd was selected to be a Gerdine Young Artist for the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where he performed in *Tosca* (Sacristan cover) and made his professional debut as Simon in an all-Black production of Joplin's *Treemonisha*, including the world premiere of composer Damien Sneed and librettist Karen Chilton's prologue and epilogue detailing moments in Joplin's life.



- *Rondi Charleston Scholarship in memory of Ben Holt*



Evelyn Saavedra

Cuban-born soprano Evelyn Saavedra, hailing from Miami, is an Artist Diploma in Opera Studies candidate at Juilliard, where she studies with Amy Burton. This season, Saavedra makes her Madison Symphony Orchestra concert debut, returns to Nashville Opera to reprise the role of Rosalba in *Florencia en el Amazonas*, and returns to Vero Beach Opera for her role debut of Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*. Highlights of last season included being a prizewinner at the Gerda Lissner International Competition—Zarzuela and Operetta Division as well as making her Alice Tully Hall debut singing George Crumb’s *Ancient Voices of Children* with Juilliard’s AXIOM ensemble. Her recent operatic credits include Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Nashville Opera and Musetta in *La bohème* with Vero Beach Opera.

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Reinier Wink (BM '26)
Thomas Lim (MM '24)
Sara Scanlon (MM '24)
Stacey Chung (BM '25)
Wil Vanderslice (MM '25)
Ian Lum Hon Wah (MM '24)
Jackie Hager (MM '25)
Elisabeth Chang (MM '25)
Angeline Kiang (BM '26)
Alice Lee (BM '26)

RAZAZ

The Strange Highway

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Wil Vanderslice (MM '25)
Brendan Goh (MM '24)
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Jackie Hager (MM '25)
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VILLA-LOBOS

Bachianas brasileiras No. 5

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Reinier Wink (BM '26)
Angeline Kiang (BM '26)
Thomas Lim (MM '24)
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EASTMAN

The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc

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Alice Lee (BM '26)
Angeline Kiang (BM '26)
Reinier Wink (BM '26)
Sara Scanlon (MM '24)

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