



WASHINGTON
PERFORMING ARTS

2023-24 SEASON

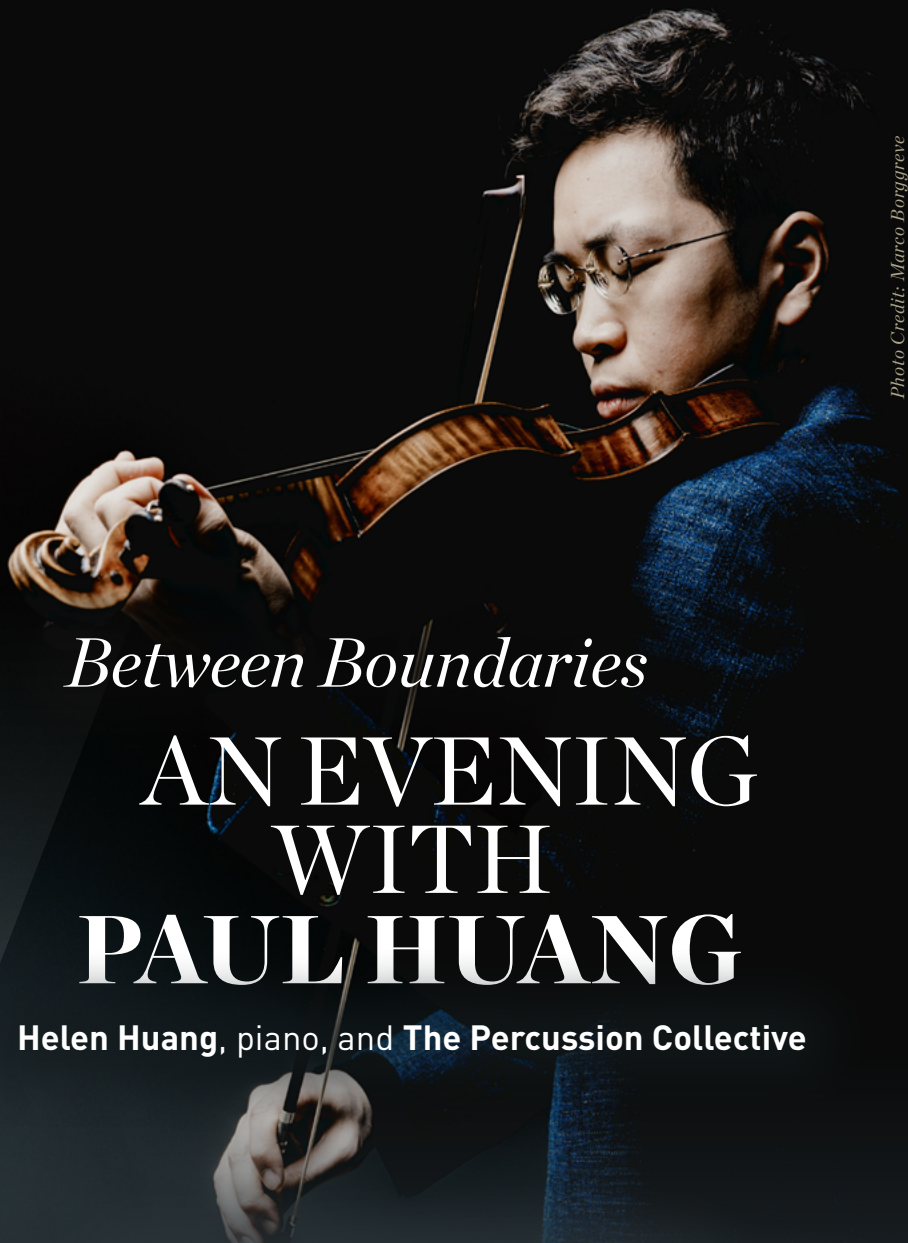


Photo Credit: Marco Borggreve

Between Boundaries

AN EVENING
WITH
PAUL HUANG

Helen Huang, piano, and The Percussion Collective

THURSDAY, October 19, 2023 / 7:30 p.m.

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Terrace Theater

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Jenny Bilfield, President & CEO / Rudy Burwell, Chair, Board of Directors

Presents

Between Boundaries

AN EVENING
WITH
PAUL HUANG

Helen Huang, piano, and The Percussion Collective

PROGRAM

LOU HARRISON

[1917-2003]

Varied Trio for Violin, Piano, and Percussion

Gending

Bowl Bells

Elegy

Rondeau in Honor of Fragonard

Dance

MAURICE RAVEL

[1875-1937]

Violin Sonata No. 2 in G Major, op. 77

Allegretto

Blues: Moderato

Perpetuum mobile

Intermission

KENJI BUNCH

[b. 1973]

Transcontinental (World Premiere)

Transcontinental was commissioned by Washington Performing Arts and Taiwan Philharmonic, the National Performing Arts Center-National Symphony Orchestra.

KE-CHIA CHEN

[b. 1979]

Witness Tree (World Premiere)

Witness Tree was commissioned by Washington Performing Arts and Taiwan Philharmonic, the National Performing Arts Center-National Symphony Orchestra.

SPONSORS

Washington Performing Arts's presentation of this project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Honorable Mary V. Mochary, Dr. Gary Mather and Ms. Christina Co Mather, Dallas Morse Coors Foundation for the Performing Arts, and Susan S. Angell.

Washington Performing Arts's classical music performances this season are made possible in part through the generous support of Betsy and Robert Feinberg.

This is one of fourteen 2023-24 season performances included in Washington Performing Arts's The World in Our City initiative, which promotes cross-cultural understanding and cultural diplomacy via the presentation of international visiting artists, globally inspired local programming, and the award-winning Embassy Adoption Program, a partnership with D.C. Public Schools.

Special thanks to the following lead supporters of Washington Performing Arts's mission-driven work: Jacqueline Badger Mars and Mars, Incorporated; D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities; and the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs Program and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Photo by Marco Borggreve



Paul Huang, violin

Recipient of a 2015 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2017 Lincoln Center Award for Emerging

Artists, violinist Paul Huang's recent appearances include the Detroit Symphony Orchestra with Leonard Slatkin, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra with Markus Stenz, and Houston Symphony with Andrés Orozco-Estrada.

In the 2023–24 season, he makes debuts with the Rotterdam

Philharmonic Orchestra with Lahav Shani, San Francisco Symphony with Mei-Ann Chen, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra with Otto Tausk, and Dallas and NHK Symphony orchestras with Fabio Luisi. In addition, he makes his Barbican Center debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, returns to the Kennedy Center for a recital evening, and makes a recital debut in Singapore at the Victoria Concert Hall.

Paul Huang plays on the legendary 1742 ex-Wieniawski Guarneri del Gesù on loan through the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

Photo by Wang Te Fan



Helen Huang, piano

Born in Japan of Taiwanese parents, Ms. Huang has enjoyed a multi-faceted career

as a soloist and chamber musician, performing with orchestras such as The Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic, and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, among others. She is also one of the youngest recipients of the Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Huang has several recordings with Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 1*, Mozart's Piano Concertos K. 488 and K.467, Mendelssohn's *Piano Concerto No. 1*, and Shostakovich's *Piano Concerto No. 2*.

Huang graduated from The Juilliard School and the Yale School of Music, studying with Yoheved Kaplinsky and Peter Frankl. A dedicated teacher, Helen has taught at the Juilliard Pre-College and currently resides in New Jersey with her husband and two daughters.



The Percussion Collective

Ji Hye Jung
Michael Compitello
Jeff Stern
Matt Keown

At the pinnacle of his legendary career, performer and pedagogue Robert van Sice has assembled a stunning collection of young artists who are reinventing the concert experience. The Percussion Collective transcends the medium of percussion through uncommon performances that surprise and engage audiences at a profound emotional level.

Since the group's inception in 2018, one of their hallmarks has been close collaborations with some of today's most respected composers. In the 2023-24 season, they premiere a new piece for chorus and percussion by Alejandro Viñao at Yale University and at New York's Kaufman Cultural Center. They also premiere new works by Ke-Chia Chen and Kenji Bunch with violinist Paul Huang under the auspices of Washington Performing Arts.

Featuring players from Europe, Asia, and the US, The Percussion Collective includes some of the world's most esteemed and dynamic

young virtuosi, representing the leading edge of innovation in concert conception and performance.

The Percussion Collective appears by arrangement with Colbert Artists Management, Inc., 180 Elm Street, Ste I #221, Pittsfield, MA 01201-6552

Ke-Chia Chen, composer

Ke-Chia Chen's compositions have been performed by leading music organizations throughout the United States and abroad including Lincoln Center's David Geffen Hall, The Kennedy Center Concert Hall, the Philadelphia Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Florida's Naples Philharmonic, Taiwan Philharmonic, The Harlem Chamber Players, and the Copland House Ensemble.

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* described Chen's viola concerto, *The Desires*, as "Lyrical expressions of longing launched into a fearless sense of confession...Even where Chen includes a delicate folk-like melody, anguish was never far off." Chen's *Broken Crystal*, was hailed by the *Indianapolis Star* as a work "orchestrated with lavish self-confidence and resourcefulness" which "made a coherent whole out of its pattern of abrupt contrasts, crowned by a broad, stunningly accented 'maestoso' episode." Chen's *The Silent Flame* was awarded first prize in the 2016 International Horn Society Composition Contest.

Ke-Chia Chen is on the Musical Studies faculty at the Curtis Institute of Music.

Kenji Bunch, composer

Kenji Bunch writes music that looks for commonalities between musical styles, for understandings that transcend cultural or generational barriers, and for empathic connections with his listeners. Drawing on vernacular musical traditions, an interest in highlighting historical injustices and inaccuracies, and techniques from his classical training, Bunch creates music with a unique personal vocabulary that appeals to performers, audiences, and critics alike. With his work frequently performed worldwide and recorded numerous times, Bunch considers his current mission the search for and celebration of shared emotional truths about the human experience from the profound to the absurd, to help facilitate connection and healing through entertainment, vulnerability, humor, and joy.

Bunch is widely recognized for performing his own groundbreaking works for viola. He currently serves as Artistic Director of the new music group Fear No Music and is deeply committed to music education in his hometown of Portland, Oregon.

PROGRAM NOTES

Varied Trio for Violin, Piano, and Percussion

Lou Harrison (1917-2003)

Program note by Eric Bromberger

Lou Harrison was one of those original figures who seem to be both quintessentially American and completely international at the same time. American in the sense that—like Ives, whom he deeply admired—Harrison was willing to rethink the entire nature of what constitutes music. International in the sense that he was open to the music of all cultures, particularly those of Asia, and was always seeking new sounds, making his own instruments (often out of such unusual materials as flowerpots, washtubs, pails, and tacks), employing new rhythms, finding new ways of making music. Harrison grew up in California and studied with Cowell and Schoenberg. He held a number of jobs (dancer, percussionist, and critic among them) before moving in 1943 to New York, where he worked as a music critic and championed the music of Ives: it was Harrison who conducted the premiere of Ives' *Third Symphony* in 1947 (35 years after it was written)—that performance earned the Pulitzer Prize for Ives, who generously shared the money from that award with Harrison. Harrison taught briefly at Black Mountain College in North Carolina before deciding that he needed to return to California, where he lived the remaining half-century of his life.

Harrison began work on the *Varied Trio for Violin, Piano, and Percussion*

in 1986 and completed the score on February 4, 1987, shortly before his seventieth birthday. The work was first performed as a quintet before Harrison settled on its final instrumentation. Trios that include violin and piano are common enough, but what makes this one unique is its “varied” percussion, and in the score, Harrison specifies exactly the instruments he requires:

**large tam-tam
vibraphone**

8 rice bowls tuned with water and struck with chopsticks

2 tambourines

6 baking pans of different sizes (tuning is random)

2 drums

To these should be added the gong, and the piano is sometimes used as a percussion and rhythmic instrument rather than a melodic one: Harrison instructs that at some points the piano's strings are to be plucked and its frame struck with a mallet; at other moments the piano accompanies very quietly with the rhythmic patterns of Indian music. Violin and piano play in all five movements, but each movement is scored for a different combination of percussion instruments, and so the sonority of the music changes with each movement.

The opening movement is titled *Gending*, a term that refers to the metric patterns of Indonesian gamelan music, specifically the overlay of different groups of instruments playing in different

metric units. This movement is scored for violin, piano, gong, and vibraphone. *Bowl Bells* is scored for rice bowls and chopsticks; their spiky sonority is intensified by the sound of pizzicato violin and staccato piano. The violin is the featured instrument in *Elegy*; its long, grieving melodic line is accompanied by piano and vibraphone. The fourth movement is titled *Rondeau in Honor of Fragonard* (after the great French painter, 1732-1806); this poised movement is the only one that does not include percussion. The *Varied Trio* concludes with an energetic Dance that features the sound of Chinese drums and baker's pans.

Violin Sonata No. 2 in G Major

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Program note by Eric Bromberger

Ravel began making sketches for his *Violin Sonata* in 1923, the year after he completed his orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. He was composing a number of works for violin during these years, including *Tzigane*, but the *Violin Sonata* proved extremely difficult for him, and he did not complete it until 1927. The first performance, by violinist Georges Enesco and the composer, took place on May 30, 1927, in Paris while that city was still in a dither over the landing of Charles Lindbergh the week before.

In the *Violin Sonata*, Ravel wrestled with a problem that has plagued all who compose violin sonatas—the clash between the resonant, sustained sound of the violin and the percussive sound of the piano—and he chose to accentuate these differences: “It was this independence I was aiming at when I wrote a sonata for violin and

piano, two incompatible instruments whose incompatibility is emphasized here, without any attempt being made to reconcile their contrasted characters.” The most distinctive feature of the sonata, however, is Ravel's use of jazz elements in the slow movement.

The opening *Allegretto* is marked by emotional restraint. The piano alone announces the cool first theme, which is quickly picked up by the violin. A sharply rhythmic figure, much like a drum tattoo, contrasts with the rocking, flowing character of the rest of this movement, which closes on a quietly soaring restatement of the main theme.

Ravel called the second movement *Blues*, but he insisted that this is jazz as seen by a Frenchman. In a lecture during his American tour of 1928, he said of this movement: “while I adopted this popular form of your music, I venture to say that nevertheless it is French music, Ravel's music, that I have written.” He sets out to make violin and piano sound like a saxophone and guitar, specifying that the steady accompanying chords must be played strictly in time so that the melodic line can sound “bluesy” in contrast. The “twang” of this movement is accentuated by Ravel's setting the violin in G major and the piano in A-flat major at the opening.

Thematic fragments at the very beginning of the finale slowly accelerate to become a virtuoso perpetual motion. Ravel brings back themes from the first two movements before the music rushes to its brilliant close, which features complex string-crossings for the violinist.

Transcontinental (World Premiere)

Kenji Bunch [b. 1973]

Program note by Kenji Bunch

Transcontinental celebrates the often uncredited role of Chinese workers in the connection of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railway lines in 1869 to create the first American transcontinental railroad. Offered as counterpoint to the traditional glorification of the American West as well as the emasculation of Asian men in American culture, this work imagines a day in the life of a Chinese railroad worker, from daybreak to the bustling energy of a camp breakfast, to a day of backbreaking and treacherous work, for which the Chinese workers were often paid less than half of their white co-workers. The sounds of nature in the beautiful Sierra Nevadas weave together with sounds of colliding cultures and the clang of the grueling task of forging this crucial artery for American commerce and the annexation of Native lands.

Witness Tree (World Premiere)

Ke-Chia Chen [b. 1979]

Program note by Ke-Chia Chen

During the beginning stage of the commission for *Witness Tree*, I received a phone call from Paul Huang which became one of the most unforgettable calls I had in some time. We exchanged ideas about the theme of this project and shared fond memories of our hometowns and upbringing in Taiwan. What especially touched me during our conversation was sharing our deep connection with our native land and Paul's profound observation of what Taiwan is about.

I contemplated these ideas after our conversation. Both Paul and I, as international artists, collaborate with musicians from around the world and thus exchange insights with a multitude of cultures. Music is an international language that, through concerts and performances, takes audiences on musical journeys that inspire, challenge, and unify. How do we, as musicians and composers, connect with the whole world more deeply? How do we expand the current cultural norms via music? With gratitude, how do we utilize our individual talent to pay tribute to the past, respond to the present, while looking forward to the future? *Witness Tree*, in its development, addresses this subject matter. One unique aspect of Taiwan is that it has a forest coverage rate of approximately 60 percent. The island has many giant and ancient trees; the oldest is more than 3,000 years old. These trees have a complex history, much like Taiwan itself, that is reflected above in the intertwining of its branches and below in its underground roots. Over centuries, like faithful guardians, these ancient trees witnessed and survived the many transformations and changes in Taiwan. Each tree seems to have endless legends and stories to tell, faithfully witnessing and documenting with an impartial gaze. Ancient trees are witnesses to the historical trajectory of our planet. I look forward to sharing *Witness Tree* with you and celebrating, in its development, the majestic beauty and cultural histories of all lands and of all peoples.

**Join us for an upcoming Washington
Performing Arts event at
The Kennedy Center Terrace Theater!**

Photo courtesy of Dworkin &
Company



Hayes Piano Series

MAHANI TEAVE, piano

Saturday, October 28, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

Easter Island pianist astonishes in a program of traditional Rapa Nui scores and beloved classics from Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff.

Special thanks: Susan S. Angell; Dallas Morse Coors Foundation for the Performing Arts; the Special Presenter Initiatives program of Mid Atlantic Arts with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities; His Excellency Juan Gabriel Valdés, Ambassador of Chile

Photos by Lisa-Marie Mazzucco
and Rob Davidson



**SIMONE DINNERSTEIN and
AWADAGIN PRATT, piano**

Monday, October 30, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

Dinnerstein and Pratt dazzle in this four-hand piano program featuring Brahms, Schubert, Beethoven, and more.

Special thanks: The Honorable Mary V. Mochary and Dallas Morse Coors Foundation for the Performing Arts

Washington Performing Arts's classical music performances this season are made possible in part through the generous support of Betsy and Robert Feinberg.

These performances are external rentals presented in coordination with the Kennedy Center Campus Rentals Office and are not produced by the Kennedy Center.

ABOUT WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, gospel music, jazz, international genres, and more.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events online and in a myriad of performance venues and neighborhoods, Washington Performing Arts engages international visiting artists in community programs and introduces local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

For its achievements, Washington Performing Arts has been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the D.C. Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

For more information, please visit [WashingtonPerformingArts.org](https://www.washingtonperformingarts.org)

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Women's Committee

THE RUTH BADER GINSBURG MEMORIAL FUND

The Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Fund was established in 2021 to honor the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's life, legacy, and passion for music with an annual award to a distinguished artist that includes the opportunity to choose a musical talent deserving of wider recognition to be presented in a Washington Performing Arts recital in Justice Ginsburg's memory.

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THE REGGIE AWARD

“The Reggie” is an annual award established in 2018 to honor former Washington Performing Arts Board Chair Reginald Van Lee, granted to a high school junior or senior member of the Washington Performing Arts Children of the Gospel Choir to pursue additional arts-related education or activities.

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Njambi and Earl Wynn
As of September 1, 2023

For more information about Washington Performing Arts’s endowed fund opportunities, contact Meiyu Tsung at MTsung@WashingtonPerformingArts.org.

WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS LEGACY SOCIETY

Legacy Society members appreciate the vital role that performing arts play in the community, as well as in their own lives. By remembering Washington Performing Arts in their will or estate plans, members enhance our annual fund, endowment, or donor-designated programs and help make it possible for the next generations to enjoy the same quality and diversity of presentations both on stages and in our schools and community.

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