

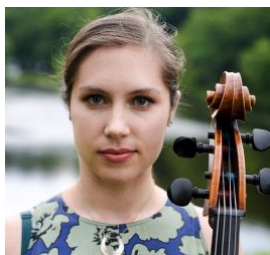


DownEast New Music

PRESS RELEASE – Artist Bios

DOWNEAST NEW MUSIC announces its inaugural season July 7-15, 2023.
Tickets available now at <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/downeastnewmusic>.

About our Artistic Directors



Cellist **Clare Monfredo** grew up in Seal Harbor, Maine, and has performed as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral leader all over the world. She has collaborated with a diverse array of notable artists, from Patricia Kopatchinskaja to Jon Batiste, to groups such as Ensemble Intercontemporain, A Far Cry, and the International Contemporary Ensemble. Festival appearances include Chamber Music Northwest, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Piatigorsky International Cello Festival, Tanglewood Music Center, Lucerne Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, and Kurt Weill Fest. Clare holds a BA in English from Yale University and a masters from the Rice University Shepherd School of Music, where she received the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Graduate Arts Award. She attended the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Leipzig, Germany on a Fulbright Scholarship. Clare lives in Brooklyn, New York where she is pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts at the CUNY Graduate Center and teaches at Hunter College. She is co-founder and co-artistic director of DownEast New Music.



Bassist **Edward Kass** performs frequently with new music groups such as Ensemble Dal Niente and Callithumpian Consort, and has appeared at festivals such as Tanglewood Music Center, Lucerne Festival, and Pacific Music Festival. He is currently a Lucerne Festival Contemporary Leader, serving as a curator for the Lucerne Forward Festival and coach at the Festival Academy. Since 2016, he has performed with soprano Nina Guo as Departure Duo, which performs, commissions and researches music written for soprano and double bass. Recognized by Chamber Music America for commissioning, recent duo performances include recitals at Spoleto Festival USA, Yellow Barn, Omaha Under the Radar, and KM28. Kass completed his studies at New England Conservatory, where he received the John Cage Award for Outstanding Contribution to Contemporary Music Performance. Edward resides in Boston and is co-founder and co-artistic director of DownEast New Music.

About our Artists



Michelle Barzel Ross is an Iraqi(Mizrahi)-American violinist, composer, and improviser. A protégé of Itzhak Perlman, Michelle is known for her debut album, pop-up project and blog Discovering Bach: Complete Sonatas and Partitas of J.S. Bach. A gifted improviser across genres, Michelle is featured on Movement 11' of the GRAMMY winning Best Album of the Year: We Are, by Jon Batiste. Michelle tours frequently with Musicians from Marlboro and has performed with the Juilliard String Quartet as guest first violinist for their winter International and US tours this past season. Guest concertmaster appearances include with Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre Philharmonique de la Radio France, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse. Michelle holds a M.M. from the Juilliard School and a B.A. in English Literature from Columbia University.



Julia Danitz, violin, is a graduate of The Juilliard School with a Masters of Music and currently a Doctorate of Musical Arts candidate at CUNY Graduate Center. She completed a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at Columbia University, where she was enrolled in the rigorous dual degree Columbia-Juilliard program. Her violin tutelage includes noteworthy professors such as Daniel Phillips, Yoko Takebe Gilbert, Masao Kawasaki, and Li Lin. A prizewinner at the 2022 Ravel Prix competition, Julia has appeared at festivals including Fontainebleau School, Tanglewood Music Center, Spoleto Festival USA, Aspen Music Festival, and Lake George Music Festival. At Tanglewood she had the privilege of collaborating with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble. Julia is also the co-founder of Sonora Collective, which commissions living composers and performs underrepresented repertoire in unusual spaces around NYC.



Carrie Frey is a violist, teacher, improviser, and composer based in New York City. Frey is the violist of the Rhythm Method (“a group of individuals with distinct compositional voices and a collective vision for the future of the string quartet” - I Care If You Listen) and a founding member of string trio Chartreuse and string quartet Desdemona. She has performed with many of New York City’s notable new music groups, including Wet Ink Large Ensemble, AMOC*, Talea Ensemble, Wavefield, Cantata Profana, and International Contemporary Ensemble. Her compositions, described as “a moldering compost heap” (I Care if You Listen), have been performed by the Rhythm Method, Arco Belo, Adrienne Munden-Dixon, and Kal Sugatski. Her debut sonata album, *The Grey Light of Day*, with pianist Robert Fleitz, was released in 2016. Carrie is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and the Manhattan School of Music, and is currently pursuing a doctorate at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.



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Pianist, percussionist, and composer **Danny Holt** recently relocated from Southern California to Washington County, Maine. Praised as “phenomenal” by the late music critic Alan Rich, and a “local hero” of the Los Angeles music scene (LAcitybeat.com), Holt performs around the globe in concert halls (Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Hollywood Bowl), clubs (Joe’s Pub, The Blue Whale, Copenhagen Jazzhouse) art galleries (MASS MoCA, Hammer Museum), churches, living rooms, and wherever else he can find a piano and someone to listen. He has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Blue Man Group, the Bang on a Can All-Stars, the California EAR Unit, and the Calder Quartet. His recorded catalog includes the recent solo album “Piano Music of Mike Garson ” and others on Innova Recordings label, pfMENTUM, New World Records, Deutsche Grammophon, and I’st records. As a composer, has been commissioned by the Hammer Musuem (Los Angeles) and University of Wisconsin (Eau Claire). Holt holds degrees from California Institute of the Arts, Hampshire College, Smith College, and Interlochen Arts Academy.



Soprano **Nina Guo** is interested in the sounds of recent and ongoing times, and her performance practice includes interpreting notated music, improvising, and collaborating on interdisciplinary projects. After receiving a Bachelor’s degree in classical voice from the New England Conservatory of Music (2015), she completed a Master’s degree in Sound Studies and Sonic Arts at the Universität der Künste in Berlin (2020). As a contemporary music specialist, Nina has upcoming solo appearances with Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt) and Decoder Ensemble (Hamburg), and featured performances at Acht Brücken (Köln), Passion:SPIEL at the Deutsches National Theater (Weimar), and Spoleto Festival (Charleston). Nina’s own projects include Departure Duo, a soprano+double bass duo with Edward Kass, which released its debut album ‘Immensity Of’ on New Focus Recordings (NYC).



Nicholas Tolle is one of America's premiere cimbalom artists. He has performed as soloist in Pierre Boulez’ Repons with the composer conducting at the Lucerne Festival in 2009, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal with Péter Eötvös in 2012, and with Steven Schick at UC San Diego in 2017. Based in Boston, MA, he plays regularly with such groups as the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Emmanuel Music, and Sound Icon, and with his own group, the Ludovico Ensemble. He has performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, New York Philharmonic, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the International Contemporary Ensemble, and Ensemble Signal. He is featured performing Boulez’s Repons in the EuroArts documentary Inheriting the Future of Music: Pierre Boulez and the Lucerne Festival Academy, and in Kurtág's music for cimbalom and voice on soprano Susan Narucki's 2019 album The Edge of Silence, which was nominated for a 2020 Grammy award. His recording of Kurtág’s Seven Songs from The Edge of Silence was named one of the best classical tracks of 2019 by the New York Times.

