

Monday, September 19, 2022, 7:30 PM  
Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall

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# SŌ PERCUSSION

Composer/Performers Bora Yoon and Princeton faculty member Nathalie Joachim join Sō Percussion for an evening of new percussion music, featuring works by Yoon, Joachim, Robyn Jacob, and Eric Cha-Beach.

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*The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited. Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.*

***For more information about the Department of Music and other upcoming events, and to sign-up for our mailing list, please visit [music.princeton.edu](https://music.princeton.edu).***

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PROGRAM

**Eric Cha-Beach**

(b. 1982)

*Four and Nine* (2017)

**Bora Yoon**

(b.1980)

*the wonder that's keeping  
the stars apart* (2022)

featuring Bora Yoon

**World Premiere**

**Robyn Jacob**

(b.1988)

*Collective Ungraspable*  
(2022)

**Nathalie Joachim**

(b. 1983)

*Note to Self* (2021)

- *Much More*
- *Maybe*
- *Motivated*

*Nathalie Joachim,*  
Vocalist

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Four and Nine (2017) – Eric Cha-Beach**

*Four and Nine* was written for the Sō Percussion Summer Institute 2017. The piece explores all of the ways that a bar of 9/4 can be subdivided: There are 36 sixteenth notes in the bar (9 beats x 4 sixteenth notes per beat) - and 36 can be divided evenly by 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12, and 18. The various combinations of different overlapping divisions in the bar make the underlying groupings of 16th notes constantly sound different. I used this basic idea in a piece for Sō Percussion's project 'A Gun Show' in 2016, but *Four and Nine* explores simply the pure process of hearing each possible combination in turn.

—Eric Cha-Beach

### **the wonder that's keeping the stars apart (2022) – Bora Yoon**

Commissioned by the Composers Guild of New Jersey and Sō Percussion.  
Special thanks to Mark Zuckerman, Juri Seo, Courtney Orlando, Princeton Department of Music, and CGNJ.

#### LYRICS

I am singing of something that cannot be lost,  
That cannot be changed like your clothes or your voice

I am singing of something that cannot  
Be found, as the querying steel first confessed

I am singing of something loose in your blood  
Where it roves without homecoming, never turns back,  
Traveling even when you are at rest:  
that wears you away

Like the diamond tip of a phonograph needle  
Tracking the seams of your bones, scoring  
The delicate tissues, and singing  
I am singing the truth that your skin tries to hide

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— Blood Matter Carbon Bone —

the bodies we live in  
shape the worlds we experience

If you change the way you look at things  
The things you look at change

Nothing ever changes  
Nothing ever stays the same  
so many simultaneous realities.

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i carry your heart with me (i carry it in  
my heart) i am never without it (anywhere  
i go you go, my dear; and whatever is done  
by only me is your doing, my darling)  
i fear

no fate (for you are my fate, my sweet) i want  
no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true)  
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant  
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows  
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud  
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows  
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)  
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart (i carry it in my heart)

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I carry your heart with me (I carry it in my heart)  
Poem by e. e. cummings (1952)  
Used with permission.

Poem excerpts from 'Splinter' by Jeff Dolven  
Poet, and Professor of English, Princeton University  
Used with permission.

Additional words by Bora Yoon.

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## **Collective Ungraspable (2022) – Robyn Jacob**

*Collective Ungraspable* explores subtle and slow textural shifts, inspired by the diverse movement that exists in what might seem a serene and stationary landscape of stillness. Inspired by the drift of spores, the collective movement of schools of fish, the growth of mycelium and the murmuration of birds, the piece meditates on the seemingly mysterious and unpredictable yet coherent systems of movement of masses of beings. One must react to their surroundings, and act accordingly, but still from a place of improvisation based on one's own experiences, knowledge, and particular styles. The piece attempts to explore these patterns of movement from the macro to the micro.

This work was commissioned by Sō Percussion and the Music Academy of the West.

— Robyn Jacob

## **Note to Self (2021) – Nathalie Joachim**

Though I've spent much of my life trying to quiet my inner voice, for this work, I chose to focus on and explore the thoughts that occupy my headspace as a result of my chronic anxiety.

*Note to Self*, for percussion quartet and recorded samples of my voice, takes the listener through different phases of cyclical thoughts and states of being that I experience regularly. Composed in three short movements - Much More, Maybe, and Motivated - this work examines the notion of having my inner voice embodied elsewhere, in an attempt to create new space for processing emotion. It also plays with repetition as an opportunity to bring new meaning, understanding, and perhaps some levity, to the language itself. Each movement is a reimagining of vocal incantations that, driven by imaginative, virtuosic, and whimsical percussion scoring, re-center and re-purpose my voice as a tool for healing.

This work was co-commissioned for Sō Percussion by Andrew W. Siegel and Carnegie Hall. The World Premiere was given by Sō Percussion in Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall, New York City, on December 11, 2021.

— Nathalie Joachim

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## ABOUT

### **Bora Yoon**

Bora Yoon is a Korean-American composer, vocalist, and sound artist who conjures audiovisual soundscapes using digital devices, voice, and instruments from a variety of cultures and historical centuries to formulate a storytelling through music, movement and sound. Featured on the front-page of the *Wall Street Journal*, *WIRED* magazine, *TED* and the *National Endowment for the Arts* podcast for her use of unusual instruments and everyday found objects as music, she evokes what George Lewis describes as “a kind of sonic memory garden” – using voice, viola, Tibetan singing bowls, vocoder, Bible pages, bike bells, turntable, walkie-talkies, chimes, water, and electronics.

Yoon has presented her work at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, BAM, Visiones Sonoras (Mexico), Festival of World Cultures (Poland); and provided the live score for Haruki Murakami’s *Wind Up Bird Chronicle* – an interdisciplinary theatre adaptation, co-commissioned by Asia Society, Baryshnikov Art Center, Edinburgh International Arts Festival, and Singapore Arts Festival in addition to adtl featured music within Apple TV+’s *PACHINKO*, based on *The New York Times* bestselling novel by Min Jin Lee. In 2023, Bora joins the music faculty of Reed College. [www.borayoon.com](http://www.borayoon.com)

### **Nathalie Joachim**

Nathalie Joachim is a Grammy-nominated flutist, composer, and vocalist. The Brooklyn born Haitian-American artist is hailed for being “a fresh and invigorating cross-cultural voice.” (*The Nation*) She is co-founder of the critically acclaimed duo, Flutronix, and comfortably navigates everything from classical to indie-rock, all while advocating for social change and cultural awareness. Her authenticity has gained her the reputation of being “powerful and unpretentious.” (*The New York Times*)

Ms. Joachim, a United States Artist Fellow, has performed and recorded with an impressive range of today’s most exciting artists and ensembles, including Miguel Zenón, Bryce Dessner, and the International Contemporary Ensemble, and is the former flutist of the contemporary chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird. As a composer, Joachim is regularly commissioned to write for instrumental and vocal artists, dance, and interdisciplinary theater, often highlighting her unique electroacoustic style. Upcoming premieres include Joachim’s symphonic debut commissioned by St. Louis Symphony and the In Unison Chorus; new large scale chamber works for *Roomful of Teeth*, *Sō Percussion*, and *Fuse Ensemble*; a micro-chamber opera commissioned by Boston Lyric Opera; and a site-specific performance installation commissioned for Yale University’s Schwarzman Center.

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Joachim's current touring project, *Fanm d'Ayiti*, is an evening-length work for flute, voice, string quartet and electronics that celebrates and explores her personal Haitian heritage. Commissioned and developed in residence through St. Paul Chamber Orchestra's Liquid Music series, *Fanm d'Ayiti* was recorded with Chicago-based ensemble Spektral Quartet. The work, released in 2019 on New Amsterdam Records as Joachim's first featured solo album, received a Grammy nomination for Best World Music Album, and will make its orchestral debut in 2022 with the Oregon Symphony, where Joachim currently serves as an Artistic Partner. Other notable projects and collaborations include *Discourse*, an evening-length performance, community engagement and social change initiative commissioned by Carolina Performing Arts and continuing at additional sites nationally; new works for the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, Imani Winds, and Duo Noire; as well as solo instrumental works for cellist Seth Parker Woods and violinist Yvonne Lam.

Ms. Joachim has appeared as a featured performer on stages throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, and Japan, including performances at Carnegie Hall, the Big Ears Festival, Newport Jazz Festival, The Kimmel Center, Davies Symphony Hall, Alice Tully Hall and more. Her performances and compositions are regularly broadcast on NPR, WFMT, WBEZ, BBC Radio, WNYC, WQXR, and she has been featured in television segments on *BBC World News*, *Saturday Night Live*, and the *Late Show with David Letterman*, among others.

As an active educator of students of all ages and skill levels, Ms. Joachim is devoted to supporting music education with intention. She holds faculty positions at Princeton University, the Bang on a Can Summer Festival, the Perlman Music Program and the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music. She also serves as a mentor for The Juilliard School's BluePrint Fellowship with National Sawdust and the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. Her youth education workshops, presented internationally with Flutronix in partnership with The Juilliard-Nord Anglia Performing Arts Programme, focus on creative collaboration and igniting the spirit of composition in young people. Her work focused in this realm has led to innovative educational initiatives, including the 2020 release of *Transformation*, an album co-created with students at New York City's Special Music School High School as part of an artist residency through the Kaufman Music Center.

Ms. Joachim makes regular appearances as a guest lecturer and visiting artist at notable institutions, including recent presentations for the University of Michigan, Los Angeles Philharmonic's Composer Fellowship Program, Oberlin Conservatory, University of North Carolina School for the Arts, and New York University among others. Joachim is an alumnus of The Juilliard School, where she studied flute performance, and The New School, where her focus was audio production and sound design.

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## **Sō Percussion**

For twenty years and counting, Sō Percussion has redefined chamber music for the 21st century through an “exhilarating blend of precision and anarchy, rigor and bedlam” (The New Yorker). They are celebrated by audiences and presenters for a dazzling range of work: for live performances in which “telepathic powers of communication” (The New York Times) bring to life the vibrant percussion repertoire; for an extravagant array of collaborations in classical music, pop, indie rock, contemporary dance, and theater; and for their work in education and community, creating opportunities and platforms for music and artists that explore the immense possibility of art in our time.

Recent highlights have included performances at the Elbphilharmonie, Big Ears 2022 – where they performed *Amid the Noise*, premiered a new work by Angélica Negrón with the Kronos Quartet, and performed their *Nonesuch* album with Caroline Shaw, *Let the Soil Play Its Simple Part* – and a return to Carnegie Hall where they performed new collaborations with Nathalie Joachim, and Dominic Shodekeh Talifero. Their *Nonesuch* recording, *Narrow Sea*, with Caroline Shaw, Dawn Upshaw, and Gilbert Kalish, won the 2022 Grammy for Best Composition. Other albums include *A Record Of..* on Brassland Music with Buke and Gase, and an acclaimed version of Julius Eastman’s *Stay On It* on new imprint Sō Percussion Editions. This adds to a catalogue of more than twenty-five albums featuring landmark recordings of works by David Lang, Steve Reich, Steve Mackey, and many more.

In the Summer of 2022, Sō performed at the Music Academy of the West Festival, Newport Classical, at Time Spans in New York, and offers four concerts at Our Festival in Helsinki – including a performance of *Let the Soil* with Caroline Shaw. Other 22/23 dates include concerts for Cal Performances, at the Palau de la Musica Catalana in Barcelona, at the Barbican in London, the Kennedy Center, and at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

In Fall 2022, Sō Percussion begins its ninth year as the Edward T. Cone performers-in-residence at Princeton University. Rooted in the belief that music is an elemental form of human communication, and galvanized by forces for social change in recent years, Sō enthusiastically pursues a range of social and community outreach through their nonprofit organization, including partnerships with local ensembles including Pan in Motion and Castle of Our Skins; their Brooklyn Bound concert series; a studio residency program in Brooklyn; and the Sō Percussion Summer Institute, an intensive two-week chamber music seminar for percussionists and composers.

Sō Percussion – is Eric Cha-Beach, Josh Quillen, Adam Sliwinski, and Jason Treuting.

[www.sopercussion.com](http://www.sopercussion.com)



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## THANK YOU

Sō Percussion wishes to thank all of their donors. Sō Percussion's 2021-2022 season is supported in part by awards from:

- The National Endowment for the Arts. To find out more about how National Endowment for the Arts grants impact individuals and communities, visit [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)
- The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature
- The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council
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Sō Percussion uses Vic Firth sticks, Zildjian cymbals, Remo drumheads, Estey Organs, and Pearl/Adams instruments. Sō Percussion would like to thank these companies for their generous support and donations.



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