

Creating *Creation*

Oswaldo Golijov

Monday, October 20
Luth Concert Hall
Prior Presents 2025–26

PRIOR
Performing Arts Center

Welcome

Dear Friends,

Today, we capture invention, inspiration, improvisation, curation and composition in mid flight. In "Creating *Creation*," Prior Composer-In-Residence Osvaldo Golijov invites us into his personal creative space to preview his latest work as well as understand the processes and conditions that make his journeys possible.

Collectively, we will be peering into a kitchen where a chef is experimenting with core ingredients, measurements, preparatory techniques, spices and even final presentation notes. While a general direction is in his brain, the collaborative process of its evolution has as much to do with the final outcome as anything else. Not unlike the heritages and surroundings of the farmers and ranchers whose elements end up in a final culinary dish, the collaborators that Golijov has brought to this table bring their own cultures, expressions and emphases to the mix, resulting in a kind of artistic terroir. Their own experiences of how their contributions have been prepared and presented in the past color the current effort. Three days immersed in the Luth Concert Hall environment have provided opportunities of introduction, improvisation, interactivity, inspiration and introspection. From this stew of activity, Golijov will cull threads of idea stems and complete musical themes and overarching philosophies from which to eventually weave his final tapestry.

Tonight's journey will include a Prologue to provide context for the composer's initial inspiration, followed by a sampling of the harvest from the creative residency, and will conclude with a discussion about the right conditions for such a process to flourish.

I hope you'll leave energized to pursue your own creativity with purpose, maybe even with some hacks on how to maximize collaborative input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeffrey de Caen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeffrey de Caen
Nancy Savage Skinner '79 Director
Prior Performing Arts Center

Program

I. Prologue

Osvaldo Golijov, composer

Leah Hager Cohen, contributing librettist

Jeffrey de Caen, moderator; *Nancy Savage Skinner '79* Director, Prior Performing Arts Center

II. Elements of Creation

Cyro Baptista, percussion

Edmar Colón, saxophone

Jeremy Flower, modular synthesizer

Kayhan Kalhor, kamancheh

III. Discussion

Jimena Bermejo, Professor of Practice and Senior Lecturer in Dance

Cristin Canterbury Bagnall, creative producer

Osvaldo Golijov, composer

Leah Hager Cohen, contributing librettist

Jeffrey de Caen, moderator; *Nancy Savage Skinner '79* Director, Prior Performing Arts Center

Program Notes

Making music with the people I love is one of the greatest joys in my life. This past weekend, which I spent experimenting together with Cyro, Edmar, Jeremy, and Kayhan, and tonight, playing for you what we came up with, is one of those moments in time. I am immensely grateful to them and to Jeffrey de Caen, *Nancy Savage Skinner '79* Director of The Prior, and Kyle Frisina, the previous interim director of The Prior, for inviting us to play and develop a new work in this beautiful and inspiring space.

Each of tonight's musicians is the carrier of an entire mythology. Working with them means being open to untap the potential that the collisions and fusions of their worlds may bring. Cyro is the embodiment of Brazil's exuberant "musical cannibalism;" Edmar channels the spirit of Jazz and Latin American cultures in every note he plays; Jeremy reassures us that the future has a soul, and Kayhan is not just a vessel of the great classical Persian tradition, but brings to us a sound so ancient that it seems to have been the first music heard in the universe after the big bang.

Speaking of the universe: the sketches we bring you tonight are part of a large work I'm writing, depicting the story of Creation. But no, there's no Big Bang or "In the Beginning" here. In fact, there's no beginning, only a constant swirl of atoms that gives birth and brings death to everything except for the dancing atoms themselves.

One of the sketches, "Starbound," is inspired by a few lines from a letter that Vincent Van Gogh sent to his brother Theo: "Looking at the stars always makes me dream, as simply as I dream over the black dots representing towns and villages on a map. Why, I ask myself, shouldn't the shining dots of the sky be as accessible as the black dots on the map of France? Just as we take a train to get to Tarascon or Rouen, we take death to reach a star."

In that sketch mentioned above, the starbound journey begins with a cosmic lullaby, very much inspired by the Star Child in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*:



Another sketch, called "Swerve," represents that atomic dance I told you about earlier. And there's more: we will tell you from the stage.

I hope you'll be inspired by this music to think about Creation. Thank you for being here,

Osvaldo Golijov

Biography



Composer-in-residence Osvaldo Golijov at The Prior Performing Arts Center.

Osvaldo Golijov grew up in an Eastern European Jewish household in La Plata, Argentina. Born to a piano teacher mother and physician father, Golijov was raised surrounded by classical chamber music, Jewish liturgical and klezmer music, and the new tango of Astor Piazzolla. His blending of genres and seamless integration of voices speak volumes about his approach and style, a musical language that can only be termed "Golijovian."

Since the early 1990s, Golijov has enjoyed collaborations with some of the world's leading chamber music ensembles such as the Kronos Quartet, the St. Lawrence String Quartet and the Silkroad Ensemble; in addition to relationships with artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Dawn Upshaw, and Robert Spano; and orchestras including the Atlanta, Boston, and Chicago symphony orchestras. In 2000, the premiere of Golijov's *La Pasión según San Marcos* (*St. Mark Passion*) took the music world by storm. *The Boston Globe* called it "the first indisputably great composition of the 21st century!" Golijov has also received acclaim for groundbreaking works such as his opera *Ainadamar*, the clarinet quintet *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*, and the song cycle *Falling Out of Time*, based on the novel by David Grossman. Reviewing the recording by the Silkroad Ensemble on In a Circle Records, *The Guardian* called *Falling Out of Time* "a Kindertotenlied for our fragile present."

During the 2024-2025 season the Metropolitan Opera and LA Opera presented a new critically acclaimed production of *Ainadamar* by Olivier Award-winning choreographer and director Deborah Colker, co-produced by Detroit Opera, Opera Ventures, Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, and The Metropolitan Opera.

Golijov has composed music for a number of Francis Ford Coppola's films, including *Youth Without Youth*, *Tetro*, *Twixt* and *Megalopolis*. Other recent works include *The Given Note*, a violin concerto for soloist Johnny Gandelsman and The Knights; *LAIKA* for countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, which premiered with The Met Orchestra Chamber Ensemble at Carnegie Hall; *Ever Yours* for string octet, premiered by St. Lawrence String Quartet and Telegraph Quartet; and *Um Día Bom* for string quartet Brooklyn Rider, available on In a Circle Records. An album of Golijov's chamber music including *Ever Yours* will be released on Phenotypic Recordings in 2026.

Golijov served as the Debs Composer's Chair at Carnegie Hall during the 2012–13 season. He is Composer-In-Residence at the Prior Performing Arts Center at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, where he taught from 1991 until 2022.

The Prior Performing Arts Center

An uncommon commons for transformative experiences with the arts

Prior Presents

The keystone of the Prior Performing Arts Center's public-facing programming, Prior Presents merges thrilling live events by visiting artists with robust educational and outreach activities. Defined by exceptional artistic quality, interdisciplinary impulses, and the potential to spark both wonder and reflection, this annual series celebrates artistic risk-taking and the exchange of ideas and perspectives from around the globe. Short- and long-term visiting artist residencies include performances, artist talks, installations, workshops, and experiential learning opportunities for Holy Cross students and the greater Worcester community.

The internationally acclaimed artists of current and previous seasons embody our vision for artist residencies at The Prior Performing Arts Center. Their performances and lectures offer an exhilarating complement to the creativity and innovation of emerging student artists and Holy Cross faculty and staff also featured in our season this year.



1) Rhiannon Giddens in concert | Spring 2024; 2) Compagnie Hervé Koubi | Spring 2024

Stay in touch!



Scan to sign up for our email list and stay up to date with announcements and upcoming events from The Prior Performing Arts Center.

Upcoming Prior Presents Events



American Patchwork Quartet

A potent symbol of unity in diversity, the American Patchwork Quartet draws influences from American folk, jazz and country as well as West African and East Asian styles to blend tradition and innovation in a celebration of America's cultural mosaic. A co-presentation with historic local arts presenter Music Worcester.

Nov 14 @ 7:30 p.m. | Tickets \$35 | \$45 | \$55



LayeRhythm | SWITCH

Dedicated to serving transformative art experiences to all-age audiences, LayeRhythm invigorates communities from clubs, festivals, and stages, with interactive and improvisational games between the audience and performers. In *SWITCH*, audience ideas are collected and turned into music, lyrics and movement by the MC and performers.

Nov 21 @ 7 p.m. | Free entry, open to all.



Sunny Jain | *Wild Wild East*

Composer, drummer and dhol player Sunny Jain celebrates cultural diaspora and the interconnectedness of global styles with his band in *Wild Wild East*, a raucous, powerful, and jubilant recognition of a truly American spirit. A co-presentation with the Department of Music.

Mar 12 @ 7:30 p.m. | Tickets \$35 | \$45 | \$55



Scan to purchase tickets and learn more about our schedule of upcoming presentations.

Currently at the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Art Gallery



The Vietnamese Áo Dài in a Time of War: Fashion, Citizenship, and Nationalism (1954-1975)

This exhibition explores the significance of Vietnam's national costume—the áo dài—during the Vietnam War. Honoring the 50th anniversary of a conflict, the legacies of which continue to haunt us to this day, the exhibition highlights the contributions of Vietnamese women to politics, society, and culture.

Open now through Dec 19

Upcoming Events from the Arts Ecosystem at Holy Cross

Rasa String Quartet | *Soundtrack to a Nightmare*

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC. This Halloween-inspired program follows the arc of a classic horror movie. Featured musicians include Kiyoshi Hayashi, Violin; Maura Shawn Scanlin, Violin; Emma Powell, Viola; and Mina Kim, Cello. Funded by The Patrick E. Moriarty, M.D. '57 Visiting Scholars Program.

Oct 28 @ 8 p.m.

Six Characters in Search of an Author

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE. In this production of Luigi Pirandello's 1921 modern classic from the Department of Theatre & Dance, a theatre company preparing their latest production is disrupted by the appearance of six figures who claim to be characters abandoned by their author.

Oct 30 - Nov 9

Working Writers Series: Ferris Jabr

CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM. Ferris Jabr, New York Times-bestselling author of *Becoming Earth*, will read from and discuss his work followed by a Q&A in this Working Writers Series presentation from the Creative Writing Program.

Nov 13 @ 7:30 p.m.



Scan to purchase tickets and learn more about our schedule of upcoming presentations.

Prior Performing Arts Center Staff

Jeffrey de Caen, *Nancy Savage Skinner '79* Director

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Marta Beyer, Manager of Artistic and Engagement Initiatives

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Brenda Shepard, Manager of Production

Matthew Freije, Pro Audio/Video Supervisor

Christine Goguen, Costume Shop Manager

Stephen McGonagle, Technical Director

Judi Olson, Costume Shop Assistant

Mason Parece, Production Technician

Betsy Pierce, Assistant Technical Director

PATRON ENGAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Katrina Lewonczyk, Manager of Operations & Administration

Ethan Bates, Arts Marketing & Communications Manager

Evan Crocker, Event & Front of House Manager

Morgan Fitzpatrick, Office Coordinator

STUDENT STAFF

Students play a crucial role in the operation of the Prior Performing Arts Center, working as Production Assistants, Front of House Assistants, and more: Adele Feldberg, Alyshia Solomon, Andrea Gomez, Angela Almanza, Anna Rowley, Brigit O'Connell, Camila Müller-Juez, Elise O'Neill, Emily Fox, Emma Buchanan, Frank Amuso, Gabriellie De Gouveia, Gracie Lopez, Jamie Schmid, Jazmin Lopez, Kiera Ryan, Laurel Deneen, Maya Pinto, Morgan Kane, Nadia Frempong, Natalia Salinas, Rose Knoll, Sophia Rowley, Adelaide Abstoss, Alejandro Irizarry, Alexa Rodriguez Villatoro, Atiya Woolman, Billy Suter, Brandon Curtis, Daniel Hickey, Eliza Simpson, Emelia Jones, Emily Karlson, Emma Butler, Fiona Nelson, Gail Durkin, Gracyn Epstein, Irene Mandile, Jake Sidell, Joshua Love, Julia Divine, Katelyn Murphy, Lee (Leah) Varela, Lily Jaramillo, Luis Ramirez, Margaret DeWald, Maxim Tereshchenko, Melina Valencia, Meredith Brady, Meredith Shaw, Natalie Gasowski, Nevaeh Fleming, Osmaly Bonilla, Paige Thomson, Phoebe Wong, Piper Guiney, Savannah Rhodes, Scarlett Dawson, Sebastian Torres, Sofia Corvo, Solar (Ciara) Bello, Sophia Tran, Sophia Suffoletto, Sophie Sundaram, Vivian Higgins, Xiaoyi Wang, Yasmin Fernandez

