

yMusic

Sunday, March 29
Luth Concert Hall
Prior Presents 2025–26

PRIOR
Performing Arts Center

Program

Gabriella Smith: **Tessellations** (2018)
Timo Andres: **Safe Travels** (2013)
yMusic Suite I: **Zebra - Unison Duet - the Wolf** (2019-2024)
Judd Greenstein: **Together** (2020-2022)

-Intermission-

Andrew Norman: **Music in Circles** (2012)
yMusic Suite II: **Flood - Whosay - Three Elephants** (2019-2020)
Sufjan Stevens (arr. Rob Moose): **Year of the Dog / Year of the Dragon** (2001)

yMusic is:

Alex Sopp, flutes / voice
Mark Dover, clarinets
CJ Camerieri, trumpet / french horn
Keir GoGwilt, violin
Nadia Sirota, viola
Gabriel Cabezas, cello

Program Notes

Tessellations

When yMusic's cellist Gabriel Cabezas introduced the band to his onetime college roommate, the composer Gabriella Smith over a decade ago, we had no idea it would be the beginning of one of our most fruitful and inspiring collaborations. *Tessellations* is the first piece Gabriella wrote for us, and it's visceral bop of an opener. We love how she teases out unexpected textures from the group and has us blending in new ways, eventually ceding rhythmic ideas to quasi-baroque figurations and harmony.

Safe Travels

Both individually and as a group, the members yMusic spend a lot of time in the sky, getting from one concert or recording session to another. Much to the chagrin of some (many) around us, we have a competitive and borderline obsessive relationship with the real-life video game that is Frequent Flyer Status. When composer Timo Andres set to writing us a piece, he wanted to riff on this frenetic travel scheme with a piece named after his most common farewell to us, "Safe Travels!" This piece seems to always be changing altitudes, moving upwards and downwards while bouncing through different textures and orchestrations and thicknesses. It's many ascents and descents all piled one on top of each other.

yMusic Suites I & II

yMusic started to collaboratively compose our own music in 2019. While it's not unexpected for a band to write new material in this manner, classical ensembles usually stick to interpreting pre-written scores. The impetus to write came after spending a significant amount of time on concert tours with artists Ben Folds and Paul Simon performing "off the page" — memorizing, re-writing, and sometimes creating arrangements on-the-fly. During these tours, we started working out little ideas together backstage, right before concerts, or in an idle moment of rehearsal. Eventually, it was Paul Simon who took us aside and encouraged us to dedicate time to writing music together. We immediately realized this group was meant to work this way! As six finely-tuned and opinionated musicians, we had literally been training for this our whole lives.

Together

"'Together' was commissioned as a new chamber work for yMusic, some of my oldest and dearest collaborators," says Judd Greenstein. "When Covid shut down the world, and yMusic was unable to come together to perform or even rehearse, I rewrote the first movement as a piece that could be performed over video, from wherever the individual members were. The six players don't need to be in sync, but move together through the movement as a kind of "cloud"—together, but not precisely together. The second and third movements were meant to be performed once the band was able to be in the same space again, and as the piece goes on, more and more 'togetherness' takes hold."

Music in Circles

The maybe-apocryphal story goes that composer Andrew Norman, faced with a premiere deadline (we first played this piece on the Festival of New Trumpet at Rockwood Music Hall in September of 2012), was sitting at his writing desk on an extremely hot summer day, with writers block. Unable to come up with an idea, he started listening closely to his Air Conditioner, a window unit right by his desk. All of a sudden, he started to hear, in the knocking and wheezing of the machine, a whole piece emerge.

Year of the Dog / Year of the Dragon

These arrangements, adapted from Sufjan Stevens' 2001 album *Enjoy Your Rabbit*, were some of the first pieces yMusic experimented with when we formed the band in 2008. We have always loved the way they move with propulsive abandon, and over the years we have musically embroidered them in so many places with improvisations and reworkings that the pieces have really come to feel like our own.

Biography

yMusic is a genre-leading American chamber ensemble. Now in its 17th season, the group is renowned for its innovative and collaborative spirit. Since their inception, yMusic has had a unique mission: to work on both sides of the classical/popular music divide, without sacrificing rigor, virtuosity, charisma or style. They were recently praised by NPR Music as “deeply, profoundly skilled. They’ve formed a language all their own.”

Named for "Generation Y", yMusic and their cohort of composer-collaborators, who include Andrew Norman, Missy Mazzoli, Nico Muhly, Marcos Balter and Caroline Shaw, have come to represent the vanguard of American Contemporary Music. Simultaneously, yMusic has been tapped to lend their orchestral sound and instantly-recognizable style to recordings and concert projects by a dizzying array of popular artists from ANOHNI to John Legend to Paul Simon.

In 2023, the ensemble released their first album of self-composed work titled, YMUSIC. Written collaboratively by all six musicians, YMUSIC represents a creative breakthrough for the ensemble. “They’ve transcended all the conventions that they were trained in” (NPR Music), presenting “one of the most exciting and confident chamber music releases of the year” (Strings Magazine). yMusic also launched an ongoing collaboration, Stories x yMusic, a series of filmed performances and streaming singles featuring prominent artists performing with the ensemble in an intimate acoustic setting such as Bruno Major, Amy Allen and Rufus Wainwright.

For their inaugural commission as a composition collective, yMusic was enlisted by the Park Avenue Armory to compose an original score for renowned choreographer Kyle Abraham’s production Dear Lord, Make Me Beautiful. This momentous collaboration was hailed by the New Yorker as “a deeply personal portrait” that “works organically, seeping into us through skin and eyes and ears. And it is a beauty.” The production, in which yMusic performed the score live, featured Abraham alongside a company of seventeen dancers. The world premiere run of ten performances took place in the Armory’s expansive Drill Hall in December 2024.

In addition to their most recent album, yMusic has released four full-length albums of commissioned music, 2020’s Ecstatic Science, 2017’s First, 2014’s Balance Problems, and 2011’s Beautiful Mechanical, Time Out New York’s “#1 Classical Record of the Year.” They can be found performing around the world in a variety of contexts and have performed venues such as the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, and Madison Square Garden.

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.

Currently at the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Art Gallery



Impetus: Visual Arts Faculty 2026

The faculty of the Studio Art program at Holy Cross are fundamental to the student creative experience. In addition to teaching and mentoring, these faculty members maintain a vibrant studio practice outside of the classroom and conduct scholarly research in areas ranging from the environment, feminism, the spectacle of religion, the body, memory and consumerism. Featuring work by Rachelle Beaudoin, John Carney, Marcus Clarke, Hilary Doyle, Colleen Fitzgerald, Matthew Gamber, Anna McNear, Victor Pacheco, Cristi Rinklin, and Leslie Schomp.
On view now through Apr 8

Upcoming Events from the Arts Ecosystem at Holy Cross

Curiouser & Curiouser

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE. In *Curiouser & Curiouser*, inspired by *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll, creator and director Lynn Kremer collaborates with Balinese artists for an evening that is sure to charm audiences of all ages.

Apr 16-26

Holy Cross Orchestra & College Choir: Academic Conference Concert

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC. The Holy Cross Orchestra and College Choir will perform together at the Academic Conference concert at The Prior, a can't-miss highlight of the semester.

Apr 22 @ 8 p.m.

Spring Dance Concert

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE. The highly anticipated annual dance concert grows in variety and excitement with the addition of hip-hop, breaking, Afro-Haitian dance and Broadway dance styles to a repertoire featuring contemporary dance and ballet.

Apr 30 @ 7 & 9 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

ARTIST & ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

Marta Beyer, Manager of Artistic & Engagement Initiatives
Morgan Fitzpatrick, Office Coordinator

PRODUCTION SERVICES

Brenda Shepard, Manager of Production
Elliot Cetinski, Production Technician
Matthew Freije, Pro Audio/Video Supervisor
Charlie Glaudini, Pro Audio/Video Technician
Christine Goguen, Costume Shop Manager
Stephen McGonagle, Technical Director
Judi Olson, Costume Shop Assistant
Mason Parece, Production Technician
Betsy Pierce, Assistant Technical Director

GUEST EXPERIENCE & 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

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