

2023 QUAD STATE CONFERENCE



Hosted by
The Vermont Music Teachers' Association

October 21, 2023

**Brattleboro Music Center
Brattleboro, Vermont**

2023 Commissioned Composers for Vermont and Massachusetts

Evan Premo, Vermont

Composer/Musician Evan Premo creates musical experiences for exploring the intersection of consciousness, spirituality, and artistic expression. His cutting-edge work traverses the boundaries of knowing through the language of sound. Evan has extensive experience engaging audiences of all ages in music as an educational and connective tool, and has performed at Carnegie Hall and on National Public Radio's *Performance Today* as well as many other stages globally. Evan's compositions have been commissioned by the Pittsburgh Symphony Chamber Orchestra, The Pine Mountain Music Festival, and Aizuri Quartet, among others. Evan is the Founder and co-Artistic Director of Scrag Mountain Music and the genre-bending Beethoven and Banjos festival. When Evan's not performing and composing, he may be found communing with nature or tinkering with his latest homemade instrument.

About "Return to Self"

"Return To Self" explores the inner workings of the human psyche as a multiplicity of personalities: Angry part, sloth part, superior part, inferior part, fitting in part, thinking part, we all contain multitudes. Those parts (this "ego") are the story of this life. But behind them, often hidden, is the Self. The Self has no agenda, no fear of mortality because it understands eternity. The Self is Love. This piece represents the sacred work of uncovering the Self by coming into relationship with the parts and discovering the young versions of ourselves that they struggle to protect.

The pre-recorded track contains recordings of Bb Clarinet and Eb Clarinet digitally manipulated to represent the parts of the ego. The live bass clarinet represents the Self: often blended, often obscured but ever-present.

Yoko Nakatani, Massachusetts

Yoko Nakatani received a B.A. from the Osaka College of Music in Japan, M.M. from the University of Oregon, and Ph.D. from Brandeis University in Music Composition and Theory. She is the recipient of the Ira Gershwin Prize in Music Composition in 2005 at Brandeis University. Ms. Nakatani gave a recital in Japan in 2010 as well as in Belgium in 2011, all based on her original compositions. Her first CD, "Résonance Poétique" is based on the recording from the recital in Japan. She was commissioned by the Lowell Chamber Orchestra as well as Mu Phi Epsilon Boston Alumni Chapter in 2020, and again commissioned by the Lowell Chamber Orchestra for their recording project in 2021. The CD, "Miniature Symphonies" by LCO was released in summer 2022. Ms. Nakatani is the founder of the music non-profit organization, Vivace, Inc.

About "Entre Noir et Blanc"

Entre Noir et Blanc (Between Black and White) - When I decided to compose a piano piece, I looked at the piano (though I have been playing the keyboard instrument since I was five) and realized that the music I create would be something woven between black and white keys, no matter my thoughts and intentions.

When we say, "black and white" in my culture, it implies "life and death". It is not all the time, of course, and could mean anything, such as a monochromatic picture for instance. I did, however, imply "life and death" in this composition. In our lives, we live "now" but might face death at any moment - we literally exist between "black and white." Rather than being pessimistic, I wanted to focus on what this amazing instrument can do and pursued the possibilities of timbre on the piano, exploring the overtone series and studying masterpieces by Impressionistic composers.

Lastly, I would like to express how grateful I was to have the opportunity from the State MTA and MNTA to create this new composition.

6 2023 Commissioned Composer Première Concert

Return to Self

Paul Wonjin Cho, bass clarinet
With recorded clarinets

Evan Premo
Vermont

Entre Noir et Blanc for piano solo

Shizuyo Le Nestour, piano

Yoko Nakatani
Massachusetts

Brief pause

Who Else? Composing a New Standard Repertoire

Kevin Michael Sullivan

Somewhere along the way performers stopped composing, or was it that composers stopped performing? In any event we forgot that Mozart played a lot of Mozart, and Bach played Bach, Schubert Schubert, Chopin Chopin, and the list goes on. One way to bring more diversity and expand the rep our students play and study is to get them composing. This session will explore a few ways to open that door for our students, and ourselves.

Composer Kevin Michael Sullivan is a native of Providence RI. He has taught and given masterclasses throughout the USA, as well as in England and China, and has held key administrative roles at Idyllwild Arts Academy and Kaufman Music Center's Special Music School. Mr. Sullivan sits on the board of the of the International Foundation for the Theory and Analysis of World Musics, a research unit in the Brook Center for Music Research and Documentation at the CUNY Graduate Center, where he is the Co-Managing Editor of the Analytical Approaches to World Music Journal. Additionally he is on the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Music Teachers Association, as chair of Composition. A versatile performer, Mr. Sullivan has played funk with the Neo 90's Dance Band, with jazz legend Cecil Taylor, early music with harpsichordist Jacob Stott, and most recently liturgical music at St. George Maronite Church. His compositions have been featured in many venues. He holds an A.F.A in music from the The Community College of RI; a B.M. in Jazz Studies, and an M.M. in Music Theory, both from the New England Conservatory.

Described as a "stylish clarinetist" by The New York Times, Korean-American **clarinetist Paul Wonjin Cho** is a member of Hartford Symphony and Binghamton Philharmonic. Recently Cho joined the Cleveland Orchestra in its 2022 European tour and continues to play with them. Cho served as a guest principal clarinetist with Cayuga Chamber, American, New Haven, and Vermont Symphony Orchestras. In NYC, Cho plays with Decoda, The Knights, and at Redeemer Presbyterian Church. Cho has taught at the Juilliard School MAP program, Manhattan School of Music, New York University, Skidmore College, and Vassar College and is currently a faculty member at the Horace Mann School. Cho holds degrees from the Korean National University of Arts, Seoul National University, University of Southern California, and Yale School of Music. Cho is a F. A. Uebel Clarinets artist.

Pianist Shizuyo Le Nestour was born in Nara, Japan. She received a Master of Arts in Piano Performance from Osaka College of Music in Japan and a concert artist diploma from École Normale de Musique de Paris by unanimous consent. She has received many awards, including *Rosita Lopes Communion* and *Rosa Sabatel* at the Santiago de Compostela International Music Academy in Spain. Also, she received prizes at the *Henri Sauget* International Music Competition in France and at the Paris International Chamber Music Competition. She was invited to Berklee College of Music in U.S.A. to give a solo piano recital in Spring 2010 and Fall 2011. She was also invited to give a piano solo recital at the Ogose Plum Blossom Festival in Saitama, Japan in Spring 2016. Ms. Le Nestour is a pianist, poet, and expert in French vocal technique. She is a resident of Paris, France.

2:30 – 2:45 PM Break