

ENCUENTRO PUERTORRIQUEÑO DE CREACIÓN MUSICAL / CONCERT 5:  
ETERNO PRESENTE DEL SENTIDO: COMPOSICIÓN EN TIEMPO REAL,  
ROCO CÓRDOVA, GIOVANNI PÉREZ, AND GUESTS

Recital Hall  
Smith Memorial Hall  
Saturday, April 1, 2023  
6:00 PM

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Roco Córdova, *voice / electronics*  
Giovanni A. Pérez, *flute*  
Athena Carson, *violin*  
Jason Finkelman, *percussion*

*This concert is co-sponsored by Improvisers Exchange*

## **Roco Córdova**

Born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Roco Córdova is a vocalist, composer, producer and improviser based in the San Francisco Bay Area. They possess a B.Mus. in Composition from the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music and an M.A. in Composition from Mills College in Oakland, California. They have studied under the guidance of Carlos Carrillo, Manuel Ceide, Roscoe Mitchell, Zeena Parkins and James Fei. As a singer they have trained under the instruction of countertenor Paul Flight and have participated in vocal advancement workshops with Meredith Monk.

Their music has been described as "slow-boiling, apparently timeless" with "an odd momentum of its own" (The Washington Post). Cordova's work fuses diverse influences with electronic media, chance operations, gradual processes, noise, improvisation, and timbral techniques of composition. Their compositions explore intersections between literature, visual arts and sound. Voice is at the core of their music making: they incorporate extended techniques like throat singing, overtone singing, falsetto, yodeling, and vocal clicks and pops into live performances that emphasize the electronic processing of these sounds. Recently, they have been focused on exploring the intersection between their practice as vocalist-improviser with electronic dance musics.

As a touring vocalist and improviser with The Art Ensemble of Chicago, they have performed in venues including but not limited to: The Tennessee Theater in Knoxville, Tennessee; The Pritzker Pavilion in Chicago, Illinois; SESC Pompéia in São Paulo, Brazil; The Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.; and the Maison des Arts in Créteil, France. Roco recently soloed and performed the role of Pilate with the California Bach Society in their 2022 performances of the St. John Passion. They have also collaborated with artists like Monopiece, Dirt and Copper, Theresa Wong, Gerald Casel Dance, La Macacoa and Danistha Rivero.

## **Giovanni A. Pérez**

Dr. Pérez has received awards and nominations including a 2015 Latin GRAMMY® Award Nomination for Best Latin Jazz/Jazz Album as Producer, Recording Engineer, and Piccoloist; 2018 Global Music® Award (Gold Medal) Winner as Mixing Engineer for Best Meditation Music Album; and 2015-2016 10-time DownBeat® Music Award Winner as an Ensemble Member (flutist), Producer, & Mixing Engineer for Blues/Pop/Rock Group and Latin Group. Dr. Pérez believes in the power of maintaining a spirit of authenticity, collaboration, and intercultural and intergenerational empathy to improve the impact value of creative products and services. As one of the few Global Ambassadors for Worldwind Music UK, Dr. Pérez provides the 8-time UK Music Industry® Award Winning company with high-quality musical content, strategic communications, and career-preparation-focused interviews to advance both the company and

the field of professional digital musicianship.

As CEO of GP Music Enterprises, Dr. Pérez is regularly contracted to produce, audio engineer, perform flute and percussion, orchestrate, and arrange for albums by top-tier industry professionals within the styles of Classical, Jazz, & Global Music. Such professionals include Jim Walker, José Valentino, Bruno Miranda, Viviana Guzman, and others. As a member of the Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts' Victory Players (an acclaimed socio-centric global/contemporary music ensemble), Dr. Pérez can be seen performing new works that promote access, equity, and inclusivity for under-represented composers. Dr. Pérez's arrangements and orchestrations have been world-premiered at The Midwest Clinic, National Association of Music Merchants, National Flute Association (x3), Jazz Education Network, and at numerous universities.

Uncompromising in his quest to equip students for global adaptability and translatability within musical, missiological, education, and entrepreneurial contexts, Dr. Giovanni André Pérez, arrived at Liberty University in Fall 2021 as the inaugural Assistant Professor of Global Music and Applied Flute. He directs the Global Music Ensemble & Flute Choir, facilitates Entrepreneurship in Music and Ethnomusicological courses, and provides guidance for Music & Worship ensembles. Dr. Pérez teaches Flute Performance within traditional, contemporary, global, and commercial styles, and supports numerous departments through his skill in performance, production, and arranging throughout the School of Music.

### **Athena Carson**

Athena Carson graduated from Montana State University with a BA in music, where she studied composition and orchestration with Eric Funk and counterpoint with Dr. Greg Young. She also studied composition with Dr. Young while in high school. Athena plays violin in the Bozeman Symphony and studies violin with Angella Ahn and baroque violin with Carrie Krause. In 2019 Athena's composition Dialogue won the state level and earned honorable mention in the regional level of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) composition competition and was premiered on a faculty recital by Greg Young and Carrie Krause later that year. Athena was commissioned to write a symphonic work (titled Anima Mundi) for the MSU symphony as part of NCUR 2020 (the premier was postponed due to COVID).

Athena's music is inspired by her broad musical interests, including historical performance practice, Soviet musicology and her experience as a violinist in the symphony. She is particularly inspired by the music of Alfred Schnittke and connects with his polystylism technique in which contrasting musical elements are combined through means of quotation and allusion. In developing her own use of polystylism, Athena has been able to combine her musical interests

into a unique idiom.

## **Jason Finkelman**

Jason Finkelman's artistic concerns focus on improvised music, cross-cultural collaborative projects, and composition for dance, theater, and film. A Philadelphia-born percussionist, Finkelman specializes in the berimbau, an Afro-Brazilian musical bow, and performs on African and Brazilian instruments, many handcrafted by Adimu Kuumba. Finkelman currently combines laptop electronics and acoustic percussion in a duo with Ben Wheeler, blending ambient and noise with music traditions of the world, and with IO Mining Corp, an improvising ensemble featuring four generations of musicians bridging diverse musical backgrounds. He is a founding member of the New York-based ambient, avant world trio Straylight featuring Charles Cohen and Geoff Gersh. Finkelman's extensive work with choreographer Cynthia Oliver includes BOOM! (2014-15), Rigidigidim de Bamba de: Ruptured Calypso (2009-10), the dance film AfroSocialiteLifeDiva (2004), and the New York Dance and Performance ("Bessie") Award-winning works SHEMAD (2000) and Death's Door (1996). In 2012, Finkelman was appointed director of Global Arts Performance Initiatives, an outreach program of Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, and has enjoyed accompanying for dance at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign since 2000.