



Art in Conversation:

# Presenting the Continuum Chamber Collective and the NYC Premiere of the Jie Yang Duo Sonata

James Cohan Gallery  
48 Walker St.  
New York, NY

Thursday, June 13, 2024  
Doors open at 6:30p  
Performance at 7:00p

Suggested ticket price \$20  
Light refreshments will be served  
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information

Michael Romans, violin  
Diane Yang, violin  
Ivan Mendoza, viola  
Erica Ogihara, cello



continuum chamber collective

## Program

Two Pieces for Viola and Piano

Rebecca Clarke

- I. *Lullaby*
- II. *Grotesque*

Ivan Mendoza, viola; Erica Ogihara, violoncello

Duo for Violin and Cello

Jessie Montgomery

- I. *Meandering*
- II. *Dirge*
- III. *Presto*

Michael Romans, violin; Erica Ogihara, violoncello

Sonata for Violin and Cello: Two Mountain Tunes and a Wild Dance

Jie Yang

- I. *Moderato con moto spirito*
- II. *Adagio espressivo*
- III. *Allegro con fuoco*

Diane Yang, violin; Erica Ogihara, violoncello

~ Intermission ~

8 Chinese Folk Songs for String Quartet

Zhou Long

- I. *Lan hua-hua*
- II. *Driving the Mule Team*
- III. *The Flowing Stream*
- IV. *Jasmine Flower*
- V. *A Horseherd's Mountain Song*
- VI. *When Will the Acacia Bloom?*
- VII. *A Single Bamboo Can Easily Bend*
- VIII. *Leaving Home (a wife bids farewell to her husband who is going westward to seek a livelihood)*

Diane Yang, violin; Michael Romans, violin; Ivan Mendoza, viola; Erica Ogihara, violoncello

## About Continuum Chamber Collective

Founded in 2020 by friends hungry for connection, the Continuum Chamber Collective takes pride in its dynamic programming. Continuum spotlights underperformed music and presents it at the highest artistic quality by balancing contemporary works alongside well-loved classical repertoire. The Collective has given the world premiere of Akshaya Avril Tucker's "Could Only Be Fantasy" and the New York City premieres of Lisa Heffter's "Carbon Fiber String Quartet" and Jie Yang's Sonata for Violin and Cello: Mountain Tunes and Dances.

Continuum has performed extensively throughout the DMV, New York City, and Michigan. As multifaceted artists, Continuum connects audiences by performing in familiar and unconventional spaces within their communities – from living room concert series to art galleries and concert halls.

Composed of versatile leaders in performance and education, Continuum members hold faculty positions at the collegiate level and play in various ensembles. In 2022, Continuum members held the string quartet residency at the ArtsAhimsa Chamber Music Festival in Lenox, MA, serving as faculty artists in addition to performing regularly.



## About Our 2024 Program

The Continuum Chamber Collective is excited to return for its 3rd annual tour with this year's program titled "Postcards from Home". This season comprises multiple American stories about how migration affects the ritual of homecoming, through works by Rebecca Clarke, Jessie Montgomery, Jie Yang, and Zhou Long. Each member of the Collective will shine in string duos before finishing off as a quartet with Eight Chinese Folk Songs. This program reflects on how the idea of home has affected the development of American art and culture.

All composers featured in this program regarded New York City as their home, despite living in many places throughout their lifetimes. The Zhou Long quartet and Jie Yang sonata reflect issues of migration and labor in these artworks as both Chinese-Americans were displaced from their families at the end of the Cultural Revolution. At 14, Yang became exempt from working in labor farms in rural China when he was chosen to play flute in the Beijing Opera House Orchestra. Dr. Zhou won the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for music and has been jointly Grammy nominated for a piece co-written with his wife. Zhou is currently a Distinguished Research Professor of Composition at University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Jessie Montgomery and Rebecca Clarke are two violinist-violist-composers whose voices also emerged through major historical events on both ends of the 20th century. Clarke identified as Anglo-American after visiting the US during World War II, remaining in New York City until she passed away at 93. The Rebecca Clarke Society was founded in 2000 to uncover and perform her unpublished works. Montgomery grew up in Manhattan's Lower East Side to a family of artist-activists during the political movements of the 1980s. She has continued to call NYC home while maintaining residencies with orchestras nationwide. Montgomery is this year's 2024 Grammy Award Winner for Best Classical Composition.

## Performer Bios



### **Dr. Michael Romans, violin**

Dr. Michael Romans is the most recent violinist to join the Premier Air Force Band based in Washington D.C. He has held leadership positions in the Virginia Symphony, Ann Arbor Symphony, Adrian Symphony, and Lansing Symphony Orchestras. Originally from Springfield, Virginia, Michael began studying violin at the age of 10 under the instruction of Jim Batts. An avid chamber musician, Michael is a founding member of the Continuum Chamber Collective, a professional ensemble dedicated to performing chamber works of marginalized composers. Past notable performances include a residency at Beethoven Haus in Bonn, Germany. He has also had the opportunity to collaborate on projects with distinguished artists such as

Fabiola Kim, Yizhak Schotten, and Chi-Yi Chen, to name a few. In 2024, Dr. Romans completed his Doctorate in Violin Performance at the University of Michigan where he served as a Graduate Student Instructor under the guidance of Fabiola Kim and Danielle Belen. In addition to maintaining a private studio in Michigan, Michael has also been a P.A.L.S instructor at the Aspen Music Festival and a teaching artist for the Ann Arbor Symphony. In 2020, he received his Masters Degree from U of M and was a recipient of the prestigious full merit scholarship. Michael also holds a Bachelor's degree from Indiana University with a double major in Violin Performance from the Jacobs School of Music, and Business Studies from the Kelley School of Business. Michael has appeared in music festivals across the country as well as internationally. Most recently, Michael appeared as co-concertmaster of the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra and concertmaster of the National Repertory Orchestra for the 2021 season and performed Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1. He was also co-associate concertmaster of the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra performing in venues in northern Germany including the Berlin Konzerthaus and the Elbphilharmonie. Other notable festival appearances include performances in Carnegie Hall for the 50th anniversary of the New York String Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival and Sarasota Music Festival.

## Performer Bios



### **Diane Yang, violin**

Praised for her “lusty” sound and leadership of the orchestra by the Texas Classical review, violinist Diane Yang is currently at the Louisville Orchestra for the 2023–2024 season. Hailing from a family with three generations of professional musicians, Diane has won numerous competitions and given recitals across the US and China, including soloing with the Columbia Orchestra. As an orchestral player, she regularly plays with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Louisiana Philharmonic, Illinois Philharmonic, New World Symphony, and has held fellowships at the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, National Repertory Orchestra, and Texas Music Festival Orchestra. Also an avid chamber musician, Diane has collaborated

with the Dover, Brodsky, and Argus String Quartets, in addition to Steve Dann, Vera Beths, and the International Contemporary Ensemble.

A passionate community advocate and firm believer in the healing powers of music, Diane works to unite and strengthen her communities through teaching and organizing. In 2020, she co-founded the Continuum Chamber Collective, which focuses on bringing underperformed chamber works to intimate performance spaces. The Continuum quartet has served on faculty and held string quartet residency at the ArtsAhimsa Chamber Music Festival in Lenox, MA.

Diane holds a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Michigan, where she was Vice President of Sigma Alpha Iota, Alpha and graduated with honors.

## Performer Bios



### **Ivan Mendoza, viola**

Praised by the Strad Magazine for “warm sound [and] much joy”, violist Ivan Mendoza began his musical studies at the age of ten in his hometown of Baltimore, Maryland. He received his degree from John J. Cali School of Music under the tutelage of Honggang Li and Kathryn Lockwood. Recent notable engagements include a recital at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall, performing Felix Mendelssohn’s Octet with the Shanghai Quartet, the music of Charles Loeffler with soprano Barbara Dever and pianist Ron Levy, and performances at Encore Chamber Music Festival, Intersections Festival, and Bargemusic. A recipient of the Oscar Ravina Talent Grant, Ivan has held chamber music residencies at Montclair State University, Lunenburg

Academy of Music Performance, and Shenandoah Conservatory. In addition to being an avid chamber musician, Ivan regularly appears with the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, New Orchestra of Washington, and the Montclair Orchestra. Ivan is currently based in the Greater Washington DC/Baltimore area and is on the viola faculty of the ArtsAhimsa Chamber Music Festival in Lenox, Massachusetts..

## Performer Bios



### **Erica Ogihara, cello**

Hailing from Miami, Florida, Erica Ogihara is a passionate performer and teacher. Her repertoire ranges from works as recent as John Adams' riveting *Fellow Traveler*, to familiar classics such as Franz Joseph Haydn's beloved Opus 64 String Quartets. Erica's concert programming balances traditional masterpieces with delightfully contemporary and undiscovered works. She has put together numerous chamber projects which have led to her participation in masterclasses with artists such as composer Nico Muhly, pianist Ursula Oppens, and violinist Ida Kavafian. Heard as a soloist with orchestras including the Alhambra Symphony Orchestra and the Ars Flores Symphony Orchestra, Erica has also been a laureate at several competitions including the Walenstein Music Competition and the Artist Series of Sarasota Competition.

As an educator, Erica wishes to cultivate a love of music through her teaching and provide music education to as many people as possible. A Suzuki Association of the Americas registered instructor, she completed her teacher training in books 1-8 with Pam Devenport and books 9 and 10 with Tanya Carey. As a 2021 Fellow at ArtistYear, the premier AmeriCorps program dedicated for artists, Erica taught music and cello to District I Schools in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley through her service year. In addition, she taught cello lessons and group classes to young cellists at The School for Strings' Start-Up Program and was a Morse Teaching Fellow and Gluck Community Engagement Fellow through The Juilliard School. Erica currently serves on faculty at the Jacobs String Academy, directed by Mimi Zweig.

Erica began her cello studies at the age 10 with Audrey Pilafian. She is pursuing her Doctorate in Cello Performance at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music under the tutelage of Brandon Vamos of the Pacifica Quartet. Erica completed her Master's Degree from The Juilliard School and also holds a Bachelor of Music from Oberlin Conservatory. Her teachers include Darrett Adkins, Natasha Brofsky, Ross Harbaugh, and Judith Serkin.