



# **Virginia Tech New Music + Technology Festival IX**

## **September 29 - October 2, 2025**

**Creativity and Innovation District LLC, 185  
and  
Cube, Center for the Arts  
Blacksburg, VA**

**Kyle Hutchins, Director**

[Website](#)



## CONCERT 1

Monday, September 29, 2025 | 7:30 pm  
Creativity and Innovation District LLC, 185

### Galan Trio presents... Kinesis



**Shelton Laurel Dialogues: The Traveler** by Damon Sink

***A certain Slant of light*** by Mark Zanter

***Towards the Flame*** by Sophia Serghi

***UT-tuning-O N-exercise-A LI-no.TY-9*** by Navid Bargrizan

*Intermission*

***Game Changers*** by Chelsea Loew

**I. Tiger's Eye**  
**II. Cityscape #3**

***Voces Magicae*** by Charles Nichols

***Kinesis*** by Anne Neikirk

Known for the passionate and energetic spirit of their performances, the Athens-based **Galan Trio** is active both in Greece and internationally. Focused primarily on presenting new compositions, the trio creates original programs, the most recent being Kinesis. For this project, Galan Trio commissioned five distinguished composers from the United States to write works on this theme, leading to their first tour in October 2021. Since then, they have presented Kinesis at more than 30 U.S. universities, with additional performances scheduled through fall 2025. Galan Trio's discography now includes seven albums: Switch (Akanthos Int. LTD), Sonnets of Midwinter, Ararat (Melism Records), Kinesis and Kinesis Vol.2 (Neuma Records), De Chirico (Phasma Music), and Embrace (Neuma Records). Their debut album, Switch—a musical blend of cultures featuring works composed for and dedicated to the trio by Thomas Bramel (USA), David Haladjian (Armenia), Vincent Kennedy (Ireland), Vasco Pereira (Portugal), Harald Weiss (Germany), and Nikos Xanthoulis (Greece) received critical acclaim and was broadcast on radio stations in Greece, Switzerland, the United States, Portugal, Germany, and Armenia. In July 2016, the ensemble traveled to Gulangyu, China, known as “Piano Island” for Greek Inspirations in China, the first festival in the country dedicated to Greek music. Galan Trio has collaborated with accomplished composers and musicians, including mezzo-soprano Alexandra Gravas, flutist Jessica Quinones, and composers Dirk Brosse, Igor Vorobyov, Yiorgos Vassilandonakis, Paul Richards, Arthur Aharonian, Martin Gendelman, Philip Blackburn, Patricia Alessandrini, and Richard Lavenda, among others. In 2019, the trio composed and recorded the original soundtrack for the documentary Y1: Silence of the Deep, directed by Philippos Vardakas. Schott Editions published Secret Dancing by Harald Weiss, dedicated to the trio. Galan Trio has performed in the USA, Spain, Italy, Armenia, the Netherlands, and Greece, appearing at prestigious events such as the Athens & Epidaurus Festival, the Komitas Festival, the 4th online festival of the Greek National Opera, the Onassis Foundation “Open Day”, and the Athens Megaron “Music Portraits” series. In December 2021, they premiered their project Ararat at the Archaeological Museum of Athens. Recently they performed for the first time in Mozarteum as guests performers in “Mikrotöne:Small is Beautiful” Symposium in Salzburg. Future plans include the project Women in Front in collaboration with “New York Women Composers Association”, as well as the 9th edition of the Kinesis concert series in Tennessee.

## CONCERT 2

Tuesday, September 30, 2025 | 8:00 pm  
Cube, Center for the Arts

**Beyond This Point presents... Verify You Are Human**



***Hypochondriac*** by David Bird

For 2 performers, video, and live electronics

***Longevity of Lightbulbs (and how to make them last longer)***

by Stefano D'Alessio

Solo for amplified IKEA desk lamp and live electronics

***TacocaT*** by Julie Zhu

For 2 performers, amplified plywood board, 4-channel audio,  
live video, live electronics





Verify You Are Human, a new program from Chicago-based collective **Beyond This Point**, takes a sly yet apprehensive look between neurons and CPUs. From CAPTCHA requests to AI slop, the gap between biological and computational "minds" seems to be on a rubber band—contracting and expanding with accelerating fervor as the relationship becomes increasingly entangled. Including intermedia works by David Bird, Julie Zhu, and Stefano D'Alessio, Verify You Are Human is at once a frantic reestablishment of the brain's supremacy and a capitulation to our silicon-based minders.

**Beyond This Point** is an exploratory collaboration seeking to investigate resonances and intersections across several practices including theater, movement, media/film, non-traditional musical forms, sculpture, text, and installations both static and performative.

The collaboration aims to engage diverse audiences on multiple levels through its exploration of resonances between artistic mediums with a goal of developing a platform in which to create works that are intrinsically coalesced along these resonances from their point of inception.



Percussionist, **John Corkill**, is a passionate advocate for the development, process, and creation of new artistic works that provide accessibility to the public at large. He is currently serving as the percussionist for the University of Chicago's Grossman Ensemble, an ensemble-in-residence at the University's Center for Contemporary Composition. Recently, John has joined Clocks in Motion, a percussion quartet dedicated to building upon the body of percussion repertoire through commissioning and workshopping new chamber percussion works.

In similar capacities, he has collaborated with groups such as Third Coast Percussion, Eighth Blackbird, and Ensemble Dal Niente. He has also appeared on the Chicago Symphony's MusicNOW Series as well as the Chamber Music Northwest, Norfolk, and Yellow Barn Festivals. Recently, John finished his tenure as the curator for Fulcrum Point New Project's Discoveries and Aux In concert series that promote meaningful conversations and inquiry between composers, performers, and listeners.

Originally trained in the realm of orchestral percussion, John has performed with ensembles such as the Milwaukee Symphony, Elgin Symphony, and NOVUS Orchestra. He has also had the privilege of working with many of today's leading musicians including conductors Marin Alsop, Peter Oundjian, Matthias Pintscher, and Reinbert de Leeuw; composers, Krzysztof Penderecki, Oliver Knussen, David Lang, Augusta Read Thomas, Aaron Jay Kernis, Sam Pluta, Christopher Cerrone, Samuel Adams, and Seung-Won Oh.

John currently serves as the Lecturer of Percussion at the University of Chicago as well as the Percussion Ensemble Director at Loyola University. John received his Bachelor of Music from Northwestern University where he graduated cum laude and Master of Music Degree from the Yale University School of Music. His teachers include Robert van Sice, Michael Burritt, and James Ross.



Chicago-based percussionist and performer **Adam Rosenblatt** has a penchant for finding interesting and uncommon ways to present and perform contemporary music. He has a keen interest in growing an interdisciplinary performance practice, believing that a mix of media and art forms can speak directly and powerfully to our current context.

Adam's variegated skillset has brought him to perform in venues and festivals throughout the US and Europe, from Bang On a Can's "LOUD Weekend" at MassMoCA with experimental rock group Horse Lords, to a solo performance at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York, to the Bregenzer Festspiele in Austria, to the Big Bang festival for children at the Onassis Cultural Center in Athens, Greece.

Adam earned a Bachelor of Music Degree from the Peabody Conservatory and a Master of Music Degree from the Yale School of Music, both under the tutelage of Robert van Sice. Through grants from the Flemish Government, the Frank Huntington Beebe Fund, and the Belgian American Education Foundation, Adam performed and studied contemporary chamber music with the Ictus and Spectra Ensembles in Belgium as part of their Advanced Masters academy program.

## CONCERT 3

Wednesday, October 1, 2025 | 8:00 pm  
Cube, Center for the Arts

### Virginia Tech Faculty & Friends



***Temazcal*** by Javier Alvarez  
Solo maracas + Tape  
Annie Stevens, maracas

***Cacophony*** by Jenni Brandon  
Solo Amplified B-flat Clarinet and Delay  
Bryce Newcomer, clarinet

***Rave*** by Kornel Thomas  
Amplified Clarinet and Fixed Media  
Bryce Newcomer, clarinet

***Awakening*** by David Biedenbender  
for fixed media

***Before the Red Sky Reaches Us*** by David Biedenbender  
for tenor, violin, cello, percussion (text by Robert Fanning)  
October Sky  
-World Premiere-  
Jessie S. Yee Memorial Composition





**David Biedenbender** is interested in the expressive power of combining strange and unusual elements—often timbres and textures—with things that are more familiar—like harmony and melody. He often embeds the resonance of imagined spaces into the music itself, using acoustic instruments to emulate electronic processes. He is also drawn to exploring the perception of time and memory in music through the relationships between various temporal layers, rhythm, and meter.

David has collaborated with many renowned performers and ensembles, including Alarm Will Sound, Albany (NY) Symphony Orchestra, PRISM Saxophone Quartet, Stenhammar String Quartet (Sweden), New Jersey

Symphony Orchestra, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, VocalEssence, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Music from Copland House, American Brass Quintet, and the New York Virtuoso Singers, among many others. His works for wind ensemble have been performed by distinguished ensembles around the world, including La garde Républicaine, the United States Navy Band, "President's Own" Marine Band, "Pershing's Own" Army Band, Army Field Band, Coast Guard Band, and Air Force Band," as well as many leading collegiate and conservatory wind ensembles. He was also the 2022 Guest Composer at Fermilab National Accelerator Laboratory, a Department of Energy national laboratory specializing in high-energy particle physics.

Recognition for David's work includes the 2025 Barlow Prize, Rudolf Nissim Prize, Revelli Prize, two Sousa/Ostwald Awards, and two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, and the Suzanne and Lee Ettelson Composers Award, among others. His music has been heard in many diverse venues, including Carnegie Hall, Gaudeamus Muziekweek/TivoliVredenberg (Netherlands), Symphony Space (NYC), Smithsonian Museum, Antonín Dvořák Museum (Prague), Harris Hall (Aspen Music Festival), National Sawdust (NYC), the Interlochen Center for the Arts, as well as at numerous universities and conservatories, and it has been broadcast on NPR stations around the country. David's music can also be heard on many commercially available recordings, including on Blue Griffin, Naxos, XAS, Summit, Cobra, GIA, Centaur, Bright Shiny Things, and Innova record labels, among others.

In addition to composing, David is a dedicated teacher. He is Associate Professor and Chair of Composition in the College of Music at Michigan State University, and he has served previously on the composition and theory faculty at Boise State University, Eastern Michigan University, Oakland University, Madonna University, Music in the Mountains Summer Conservatory in Durango, CO, and the Interlochen Arts Camp. His composition students have achieved regional and national recognition for their creative work, including numerous awards and acceptance into renowned summer music festivals and undergraduate and graduate composition programs.

He holds degrees from the University of Michigan (DMA, MM) and Central Michigan University (BM). His musical mentors include Evan Chambers, Kristin Kuster, Stephen Rush, Michael Daugherty, Bright Sheng, Christopher

Lees, David R. Gillingham, José Luis-Maurtua, John Williamson, and Mark Cox. He also studied at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study with Anders Hillborg and Steven Stucky, the Aspen Music Festival and School, and in Mysore, India where he studied South Indian Carnatic music, focusing on the mridangam with Vidwan G.S. Ramanujan. For more information, visit [www.davidbiedenbender.com](http://www.davidbiedenbender.com).



**Bryce Newcomer** is an established performer, music theorist, and educator. Bryce is the Collegiate Assistant Professor of Clarinet at Virginia Tech. As an orchestral performer, Bryce is 2nd/E-flat Clarinet of the Johnson City Symphony, 2nd/bass clarinet of the Opera in the Ozarks Orchestra, and freelances nationally. Recent performances include the Symphony of the Mountains, Dayton Philharmonic and Ballet, Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, Lexington Philharmonic, Kentucky Symphony, and Springfield Symphony. Bryce was a finalist in the International Clarinet Association's Orchestral Audition and Research Competitions and a semi-finalist in the Young Artist Competition.

An avid chamber musician, Bryce is the clarinetist of Some Light Reeding and Panoply Winds: A international touring wind quintet committed to sharing culture through music. Panoply was a guest ensemble in residence at the Stellenbosch International Chamber Music Festival in South Africa. Joined by bassoonist Andrea C. Baker, Some Light Reeding duo is driven by a shared mission: to enhance accessibility and equity in woodwind education. With a

focus on mentorship and skill development, they provide workshops, masterclasses, and educational resources, aiming to make quality music education universally accessible. Their recent performances include the College Music Society South Central Conference, the American Single Reed Summit, and as guest artists in residence at the Northeastern State University Instrumental Day.

As a theorist, Bryce's primary research interests include semiotics, performance analysis, timbre, form, and pedagogy. Most recently, he presented research on woodwind Eingänge at the International Clarinet Association's Clarinetfest and semiotic research on the E-flat Clarinet's orchestral repertoire at the American Single Reed Summit.

Bryce holds DMA and MM degrees from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in clarinet performance and music theory, and a BM from the University of North Texas.





**October Sky Ensemble** is a mixed-instrument quartet based in Blacksburg, Virginia, that actively commissions, records, and performs new music. Comprised of Virginia Tech faculty members Brian Thorsett (tenor), John Irrera (violin), Alan Weinstein (cello), and Annie Stevens (percussion), the ensemble has presented concerts, masterclasses, and conference presentations across the United States and throughout Europe, most recently at the English Music Festival at Conway Hall in London, England, at the National Library of Wales, in Aberystwyth, and at the College Music Society National Conference in Miami, Florida.

The ensemble debut album release, *October Skies*, was released in the summer of 2023 on the MSR record label. Since then the album has received critical acclaim with *Fanfare* magazine stating, “They play with arresting spirit, tonal richness, and razor-sharp ensemble”, as well as the ensemble “performed with technical mastery and near-improvisational freedom. This album is an unexpected delight.” The ensemble currently has numerous active commissions, including from composer Jon Grier, and composer/percussionist, Michael Burritt.

As active and passionate pedagogues, the ensemble has also been in residence at the Conservatori Superior de Música Óscar Esplà, in Alicante Spain, where in addition to teaching duties also presented concerts as

chamber musicians and soloists in Ontinyent and Alicante Spain. This experience helped the ensemble launch a new study abroad program at Virginia Tech, The Iberian Experience, in which students partake in a culturally immersive experience that tours important sites in Madrid and Toledo, followed by an intensive musical experience in Alicante.



Hailed as “a strikingly gifted tenor, with a deeply moving, unblemished voice” ([sfmusicjournal.com](http://sfmusicjournal.com)), tenor **Brian Thorsett** excels in opera, oratorio and recital across the world. Since taking to the stage, he has been seen and heard in over 100 diverse operatic roles, ranging from Monteverdi to Britten, back to Rameau and ahead again to works composed specifically for his talents. As a concert singer, he fosters a stylistically diversified repertoire of over 250 works, which has taken him to concert halls across the US and Europe.

An avid recitalist, Thorsett is closely associated with expanding the vocal-chamber genre, and has been involved in premieres and commissions of Ian Venables, Stacy Garrop, David Conte, Scott Gendel, Michael Scherperel, Peter Josheff, Shinji Eshima, Gordon Getty, Michel Bosc, Eric Choate and Noah Luna among many others. Recent projects include the premiere of Ian Venables *The Last Invocation* and Christopher Stark’s *Scream*.

Thorsett has also been heard in recordings, commercials and movies as the voice for SoundIron’s library *Voice of Rapture: Tenor*. His CD releases include song cycles of David Conte and Scott Gendel’s *Barbara Allen*. He is a graduate of San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program, Glimmerglass Opera’s Young American Artist program, American Bach Soloists’ Academy, the Britten-Pears

Young Artist Programme at Aldeburgh, England and spent two summers at the Music Academy of the West. He is currently Associate Professor of Voice at Virginia Tech's School of Performing Arts and served on the faculties as Lecturer at UC Berkeley and Santa Clara University.



**Annie Stevens**, an active soloist and chamber musician throughout the U.S. and internationally, is the Associate Professor of Percussion at Virginia Tech, member of the Escape Ten Duo, and Principal Timpanist of the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. Annie has performed and lectured at over 40 universities, numerous international conferences, and was featured on NPR's "Performance Today." As an educator, Annie's students have won several awards and competitions, including acceptance into Carnegie Hall's prestigious NYO2 and NYO touring orchestras, winning first place at the Percussive Arts Society Chamber Music Competition at PASIC, and being awarded full scholarships for graduate study after completing their degrees at Virginia Tech. In 2023, she was awarded the Alumni Enterprise Award from the Music Academy of the West.

As a member of the percussion duo [Escape Ten](#), Annie maintains an active performance calendar around the United States and abroad, having recently given performances in 2024 in Montreal, Texas, Delaware and Indiana, as well as giving the U.S. premiere of John Psathas' double concerto, *The All-Seeing Sky*, in 2023 with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. Escape Ten has released



several [video recordings](#), publishes new works under the [Escape X Series](#) through Keyboard Percussion Publications, and their [Escape Ten Signature Mallets](#) are available through Mallettech. The duo has also performed a keyboard showcase concert at the 2016 PASIC, the Leigh Howard Stevens Summer Marimba Festival, Atlanta's prestigious Spivey Hall, Orlando's Steinmetz Hall, the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, Jacksonville's Cummer Museum, and numerous universities in the U.S. and abroad. They have released two albums, *Colours of a Groove* and *Our Favorite Things*.

As the principal timpanist for the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, she was recognized as "impeccably responsive" by the Roanoke Times. She has also performed with the festival orchestras of the Music Academy of the West, the National Orchestral Institute, the Aspen Music Festival, Ensemble Evolution with the International Contemporary Ensemble, the Metropolis Ensemble, and the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra (Florida).

As an advocate for new percussion solos and chamber music, Annie has been a part of commissioning over 45 new works for percussion. She has been featured in performances at the International Computer Music Conference, the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the U.S., and the New Interfaces for Musical Expression conference. She performs in a faculty quartet, October Sky, whose mission is to actively commission, record, and perform works for tenor, violin, cello, and percussion. Their debut album, *October Skies*, was released on the MSR Label in 2023.

Annie's primary teachers include Michael Burritt, Alan Abel, Chip Ross, Bill Cahn, She-e Wu, and Tom McGowan, and she holds degrees from Northwestern University (B.M.), Rutgers University (M.M.) and The Eastman School of Music (D.M.A). Annie endorses Mallettech, Remo, Blackswamp Percussion, and Dream Cymbals and Gongs, and she is the Chapter President for the Percussive Arts Society, Virginia/D.C. Region. She lives in Blacksburg, VA with her husband and violinist, John Irrera, and their two daughters.



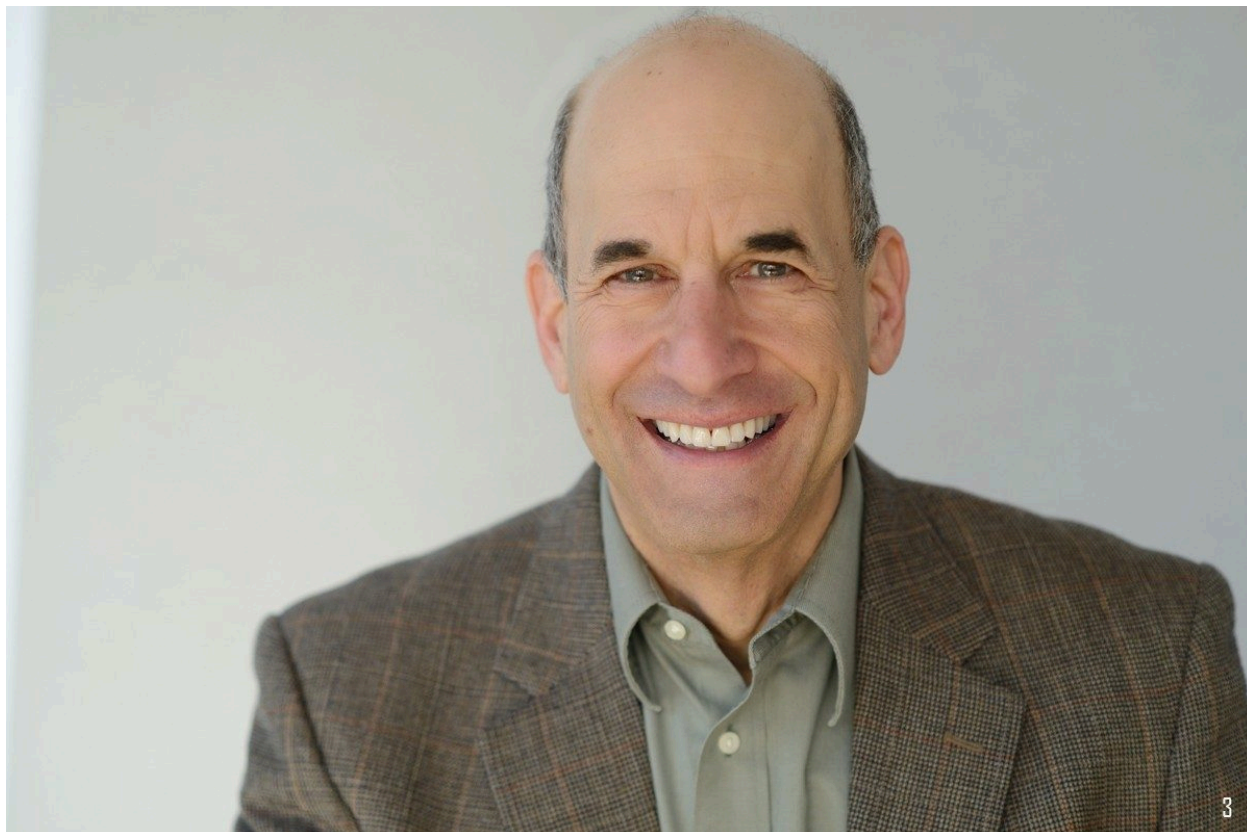
Praised by the Santa Barbara Daily Sound for his “moving” and “hypnotic” performances and Fanfare magazine for his “impeccable precision”, violinist **John Irrera** is flourishing as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral musician, and pedagogue. Irrera’s Carnegie Hall debut was lauded as a “riveting and dynamic performance’ by the New York Concert Review. His concerto debut was with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra performing the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto under the baton of Maestro Jeff Tyzik. Irrera has gone on to be heard in concert halls such as Lincoln Center, a return to Carnegie Hall, the Eastman Theatre, Spivey Hall, and across North America, Latin America and Europe.

As a chamber musician, he has co-founded, with his brother Joseph, the [Irrera Brothers Duo](#), which has concertized around the globe. The duo premiered “Drawn Onward- Fantasy for Violin and Piano” by composer Robert Morris in November of 2014. Since then the duo released [Morris’ complete works for violin and piano](#), on the Centaur label, having received positive reviews, with Fanfare Magazine stating “The Irrera’s are impressive. John negotiates an often demanding, disjunct violin part with subtle finesse, without sacrificing a sense of musical line.”

As an active orchestral musician, Irrera has performed with the New World Symphony under conductors Michael Tilson Thomas and Thomas Adès, with the Grammy-nominated Metropolis Ensemble under the baton of composer Tan Dun and with the Charleston Symphony. Additional collaborations have included appearances with Peter Oundjian, Larry Rachleff, Nicholas McGegan, and Daniel Hege. Currently, he regularly performs in principal positions, with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra.

He received his Bachelor's degree with High Distinction from the Eastman School of Music in 2007, where he was awarded the Howard Hanson Scholarship, as well as the coveted Performer's Certificate. He continued at Eastman where he completed his Master's degree in 2009 as the recipient of the Christakis S. and Agnes C. Modinos Graduate Merit Scholarship, as well as his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 2014. His long time teacher and mentor during all three of his Eastman degrees was the late Zvi Zeitlin and Federico Agostini. Additionally John has had supplementary studies with violinists Ilya Kaler, Lewis Kaplan, Sergiu Schwartz, Juliana Athayde, Lynn Blakeslee, and Almita Vamos.

Dedicated to performing and teaching, He has previously taught at the University of Rochester and the Eastman School of Music, being selectively chosen as the Teaching Assistant for Professor Zeitlin, a position he continued to hold with Federico Agostini. Additionally, he has served as a guest teaching artist presenting performances, masterclasses, presentations, and lectures at Virginia Tech, Kennesaw State University, Clayton State University, Lee University, Bridgewater College and the Atlanta Music Project, as well as presenting at the 2015 MTNA National Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Former students have been accepted to continue their studies at major institutions, including The Eastman School of Music. Currently he resides in Blacksburg, VA, is Assistant Professor of Violin at Virginia Tech, and is on the artist roster of [Parker Artists Management Group](#).



Cellist, **Alan Weinstein**, has concertized throughout the US, Canada and Europe including New York City (Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall and Miller Theater), Washington D.C. (The Kennedy Center), Atlanta (Spivey Hall), Interlochen Festival, Piccolo Spoleto Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, InterHarmony International Music Festival in Archidosso and Acqui Terme, Italy and the Montecito International Music Festival. As cellist for the mixed chamber ensemble, October Sky, he has performed at the National Library of Wales and Conway Hall in London. His interviews and recordings have been broadcast over National Public Radio as well as hundreds of classical music stations. Live performances have been broadcast on National Public Radio's Performance Today and WNYC's Around New York. As a member of the Kandinsky Trio, he was the winner of national awards such as the Chamber Music America Residency Award, a NEA American Masterpieces Grant and a NEA Meet the Composers Award. The Kandinsky's CD, *In Foreign Lands* (Briosio) was selected by WNED (Buffalo and Toronto) as one of the best CD's of the year and London's Music and Vision dubbed it "one of the year's best chamber music recordings". Reviews and write ups for the Kandinskys include the Washington Post, the Charleston Post and Courier "a trio of

stunning talent”, American Record Guide “spirited and persuasive” and the Cincinnati Enquirer “virtuosity with spine-tingling precision”. The October Sky Ensemble’s debut recording on MSR Classics was met with critical acclaim by Fanfare : “They play with arresting spirit, tonal richness and razor-sharp ensemble”.

An advocate for electro-acoustic music, Weinstein has performed at the New York City Electro Acoustic Music Festival, the Splice Festival (Georgia), the Sonic Practice Now Festival (Ireland) Society of Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States and the New York City Electro-Acoustic Improvisation Summit. His dedication to new music has led him to premiere compositions by artists such as Mike Reid (“Tales of Appalachia” performed in over 150 cities), Richard Danielpour, John D’earth and Hilary Tann. His jazz collaborations have included performances with Larry Coryell, Kurt Rosenwinkle, Dave Samuels, the beatboxer Shodekeh and as a harmonica player with Ray Charles.

As Musical Director of documentary films, Weinstein has contributed to the internationally award winning Afghan Dreamers (2022) and the Blech Effect (2020). He is currently working on a new documentary titled Kalinsky.

Passionate about teaching, Weinstein has served as a faculty member at the Hindemith Institute in Blonay, Switzerland, the InterHarmony International Music Festival in Arcidosso, and Acqui Terme, Italy, the Montecito International Music Festival in California and has given numerous master classes at institutions including the Universities of Memphis, Michigan State, New Mexico, Penn State, Tennessee, Vanderbilt and the Interlochen Arts Academy. As an Associate Professor at Virginia Tech, he has developed an experiential Arts and Creativity class taught to thousands of students. The University has awarded him the Alumni Teaching Award, the Certificate of Teaching Excellence Award, the Sturm Award for Faculty Excellence in the Creative Arts and appointed him a Pathways Scholar.

Weinstein holds degrees in music performance from the New England Conservatory of Music and the Eastman School of Music. His principal teachers include Alan Harris, Timothy Eddy and Steven Doane. He has recorded for Arabesque Records, Brioso, OmniTone and MSR labels and plays a cello attributed to Albani circa 1690.



## CONCERT 4

Thursday, October 2, 2025 | 8:00 pm  
Cube, Center for the Arts

### Masks and Mirrors



***Masks and Mirrors*** by Charles Nichols

Video by Zach Duer

Kyle Hutchins, saxophone

Charles Nichols, electronics

#### ***1. Alignment Faking***

with Kendra Wheeler, saxophone

#### ***2. The Music Makers and the Dreamers of Dreams***

#### ***3. Zugzwang***

#### ***4. World-Losers and World-Forsakers***

#### ***5. Serenity Mask***



**Kyle Hutchins** is an experimental performance artist, composer, improviser, and educator who pushes sonic boundaries. Called “epic” (*Jazz Times*) and “gripping” (*Star Tribune*), his music has been heard at Carnegie Hall, The Walker Art Center, National Sawdust, and major festivals in over twenty countries across five continents, including the World Saxophone Congress, Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt, and the International Computer Music Conference. His fearless approach has been recognized with awards and support from *DOWNBEAT*, New Music USA, The American Prize, and Virginia’s “40 Under 40” from *The Roanoker Magazine* (2024).

A driving force in experimental and electroacoustic music, Kyle has premiered more than 350 new works and appears on over 40 commercial recordings. He’s a core member of 113 Composers Collective, Fonema Consort, and Strains Ensemble, and has collaborated with leading figures including Pauline Oliveros, George Lewis, Chaya Czernowin, James Dillon, Michael Pisaro, Steven Takasugi, Claire Chase, Richard Barrett, and Douglas Ewart. Longstanding partnerships with artists like The Honourable Elizabeth A. Baker, Ted Moore, Tiffany M. Skidmore, Emily Lau, Charles Nichols, and Eric Lyon have fueled

projects that blur the lines between chamber music, noise, and multimedia art.

Described as “part of electroacoustic improv’s well-hewn dynasty” (*Downtown Music Gallery*), Kyle’s improvisations are “undoubtedly brave” (*Issues Magazine*) and “frankly unsafe” (*I Care If You Listen*). His projects—including Binary Canary, Kill All Kings, and Banshee—draw on free jazz, noise, and punk, with recordings on Carrier, Lurker Bias, Noise Pelican, and Mother Brain.

Kyle has been a guest artist and educator at major institutions worldwide, including Stanford University, California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), New York University, Manhattan School of Music, University of California – Los Angeles, Michigan State University, Arizona State University, McGill University, University of British Columbia, Shanghai Conservatory, University of North Texas, Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia (Rome), University of St Andrews, University of Limerick, Zagreb Academy of Music, Hanyang University (South Korea), Javeriana University (Colombia), and the Latvian Academy of Music, among many others. He has twice presented clinics at The Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference in Chicago, and regularly gives residencies, masterclasses, and lectures across North America, Europe, and Asia.

Since 2016, Kyle has been on faculty at Virginia Tech, where he is Assistant Professor of Practice in the School of Performing Arts and directs both the New Music + Technology Festival and the ARTx Program at the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology. He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts and a Master of Music from the University of Minnesota and dual Bachelor’s degrees in Music Performance and Music Education from the University of North Texas. His primary teachers include Eugene Rousseau, Eric Nestler, Marcus Weiss, and James Dillon.

Kyle is a Performing Artist for Yamaha, Légère, and E. Rousseau Mouthpieces.





Composer, violinist, and computer music researcher **Charles Nichols** explores the expressive potential of instrumental ensembles, computer music systems, and combinations of the two, for the concert stage, and collaborations with dance, video, and installation art. His research includes spatial audio, data sonification, motion capture for musical performance, telematic performance, and haptic musical instrument design.

He has worked with ensembles including the Beo String Quartet, Earplay, FLUX Quartet, Hypercube, Klang String Quartet, loadbang, PEN Trio, Sapphire Trio, Third Angle Ensemble, and Transient Canvas, and soloists including Brett Deubner, Susan Fancher, William Lang, Darragh Morgan, Sarah Plum, Kathleen Supové, and Steve Vacchi. He has collaborated with choreographers including Jane Comfort, Scotty Hardwig, and Amy Ragsdale, and artists

including Paola Zellner Bassett, Meaghan Dee, Marie Yoho Dorsey, Zach Duer, and Joan Grossman.

Nichols has received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Science Foundation, New Music USA, and PROP Foundation, and awards from the Institut International de Musique Electroacoustique de Bourges, Fundación Destellos, American Prize in Composition, National Academy of Music, Iowa Composers Forum, Montana Arts Council, Peoria Civic Federation, ABLAZE Records, and Phi Beta Kappa.

His recent premieres include [Flutter, Pulse, and Flight](#), three movements for amplified flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and computer, that he performed on computer with Earplay, in the Meyer Constellation sound system at the Taube Atrium Theater in San Francisco, CA; [Bluestone](#), for alto saxophone, electric guitar, piano, and drum set, performed by Hypercube, at the Charlotte New Music Festival in Charlotte, NC; [Meadows of Dan](#), a structured improvisation for amplified trombone and computer, that he performed on computer with William Lang, in the 134.2 channel immersive spatial audio system of the Cube at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA; and [Beyond the Dark](#), ambient synthesized sound and sonified space weather data accompanying kinetic installation art and 3D lighting, that he presented with architect Paola Zellner Bassett, at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, DC. In the band [Modality](#), he plays electric and MIDI violin, bass guitar, and computer.

Nichols teaches Composition and Creative Technologies at Virginia Tech, is a Faculty Fellow of the Institute for Creativity Arts and Technology, and previously taught at the University of Montana. He was a Technical Director at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA) at Stanford and a Research Associate at the Center for Studies in Music Technology at Yale. He has composed as a resident at the Ucross and Brush Creek artist retreats, conducted research as a visiting scholar at the Sonic Arts Research Centre at Queen's University Belfast, and taught computer music workshops at the University of Rome Tor Vergata, Banff Centre, CCRMA, and the Charlotte New Music Festival. He has earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Yale University, and Stanford University, where he studied composition with Samuel Adler, Martin Bresnick, Jacob Druckman, and Jonathan Harvey, computer music with Jonathan Berger, Chris Chafe, Max Mathews, and Jean-Claude Risset, and performance with Charles Castleman and the Cleveland Quartet.



**Zach Duer** is an educator and artist. He is an Associate Professor teaching in the Creative Technologies Program in the School of Visual Arts at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. His work lies at a series of intersections: sound and visualization; careful composition and improvised performance; intuitive musical spontaneity and structured digital systems. Spanning media including fixed-media sound and video collage, improvised multimedia performance, immersive environments, and projection mapped and 3D-printed sculpture, his works have been shown internationally. He holds an MFA in Kinetic Imaging from Virginia Commonwealth University (2014), an MA in Music Composition from Mills College (2009) and a BM in Music Composition from Minnesota State University Moorhead (2007).





**Kendra Wheeler** is a musician, saxophonist, and educator advancing the instrument through innovative performance, expanded repertoire, and inclusive pedagogy. Her practice spans traditional, contemporary, and experimental music, fostering collaborations that explore the saxophone's expressive possibilities. Dedicated to equity and representation, her research diversifies the saxophone canon and cultivates versatile musicianship to prepare students for varied careers. With an international career spanning performances, masterclasses, and residencies across 20 U.S. states and nine countries, Wheeler has appeared at premier venues including the Chicago Symphony Center and the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. She has delivered over 50 performances and lectures since 2020 and commissioned more than 25 new works, significantly expanding the saxophone repertoire. Her artistry and innovation have been recognized by prestigious organizations such as the Concert Artists Guild, Vandoren Emerging Artist Competition, and DownBeat Magazine. At Louisiana State University, Wheeler established the institution's first Communication-Intensive Saxophone Pedagogy curriculum, integrating rigorous technical training, expressive

interpretation, and cultural responsiveness. Her teaching emphasizes personalized instruction and reflective practice, preparing students to excel both artistically and professionally. Wheeler's commitment to mentorship extends through her role as founder of the Women of Color in Classical Saxophone Network, a vibrant advocacy and support group for women of color in the field. Widely respected for her leadership, Wheeler co-chairs the North American Saxophone Alliance's DEIBA Committee, championing diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and access nationally. She curates the Anthology of Saxophone Music by Black Composers, promoting underrepresented voices and fostering a more inclusive saxophone tradition. As alto saxophonist of the Medusa Saxophone Quartet, she actively collaborates with emerging composers, engages in educational outreach, and advocates for historically excluded musicians. "Through her artistically robust, research-driven, and socially conscious work, she fosters a visible, equitable, and sustainable future for saxophone artistry and pedagogy. Wheeler is an Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University, an Eastman Artist, performing on the EAS 850 Rue Saint Georges, and a performing artist for Légère Reeds and Key Leaves.