

**2022 Poetry Festival at Birch Wathen Lenox School
with Tom Sleigh
and artists from ArtsAhimsa: Music for Peace**

PROGRAM

POEM 1, Tom Sleigh

José White (1836-1918)

Arr. Moshe Knoll

"La Bella Cubana": Habanera

Pedro Ruiz, choreographer

Elisa Toro Franky, dancer

Leonel Linares, dancer

Laura Jean Goldberg, violin

Moshe S. Knoll, piano

POEM 2 Tom Sleigh

Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 1992)

Quatuor pour la fin du temps (Quartet for the end of time)

for Violin, Clarinet, Cello and Piano (1941)

Anton Rist, clarinet

Laura Jean Goldberg, violin

Kate Dillingham, cello

Taka Kigawa, piano

I. Liturgie de cristal (Crystal Liturgy)

II. Vocalise, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps (Vocalise, for the Angel who announces the end of time)

III. Abîme des oiseaux (Abyss of birds)

POEM 3 Tom Sleigh

IV. Intermède (Interlude)

V. Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus (Praise to the eternity of Jesus)

POEM 4 Tom Sleigh

VI. Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes (Dance of fury, for the seven trumpets)

VII. Fouillis d'arcs-en-ciel, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps (Tangle of rainbows, for the Angel who announces the end of time)

POEM 5 Tom Sleigh

VIII. Louange à l'Immortalité de Jésus (Praise to the immortality of Jesus)

POEM 6 Tom Sleigh

ArtsAhimsa Artist's Biographies

KATE DILLINGHAM is a **cellist**, [recording artist](#), and proponent of the music of living composers who enjoys a multifaceted career on varied frontiers of the musical world. She has performed concerti of Dvorak and Haydn in musical capitals from Salzburg to Moscow and has appeared in concert at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and The MET Museum. Ms. Dillingham has driven innovation in the composition and performance space, commissioning contemporary works and collaborating with many artists in original multimedia events. She has produced and recorded audio/video projects, is a voting member of the Recording Academy (GRAMMY's) and serves as President of the Violoncello Society of New York ([VCS](#)). Kate is Artistic Director of [ArtsAhimsa: Music for Peace](#), a global network of artists working together to promote non-violence through affirmative power of the Arts. A skilled teacher and inventor, she founded [MyBlueSkiesMusic.com](#) an online meeting platform for musicians to connect, teach, and live-stream in high quality audio/video. Kate is both architect and facilitator of ideas and is passionate about her craft and [engagement](#) in the full spectrum of music from composition to performance.

ELISA TORO FRANKY is a professional **dancer**, teacher, choreographer, and voiceover artist based in New York City. She is featured in works that integrate ballet, tango, ballroom, and Middle Eastern styles. Elisa currently performs with FJK Dance, with whom she toured to China in 2017. She also worked as Program Director of Accent Dance NYC, an education and performance organization that provides access to dance in underserved communities. Elisa has performed with Dardo Galletto Dance at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and with Christopher Caines Dance. In May of 2021, Elisa was invited to collaborate with El Puente Presente and a New York Philharmonic string quartet as part of the Bandwagon series. In June of 2021, Elisa performed at I Heart Dance NYC, where dancers from top NYC companies were invited. She was a featured ballerina in Rhina Valentin's 'Sancocho' production, in celebration of the Hispanic Heritage Month at Lincoln Center Restart Stages. In December of 2021, Elisa was featured guest artist in the roles of Snow Queen and Arabian in the Westchester Ballet Company's Nutcracker season."

Violinist LAURA JEAN GOLDBERG is a seasoned chamber music player, a dynamic soloist and teacher, and also the founder of ArtsAhimsa, an international network of artists and friends creating concert events dedicated to promoting cross cultural understanding and non-violence. A graduate of The Juilliard School, she has performed as soloist with the BSO and as chamber musician at venues across the US and abroad. She was a founding member of the Cassatt Quartet, which earned top prizes at Banff, Coleman and Fischhoff competitions and held residencies at Caramoor, Tanglewood, Juilliard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, and the Bowdoin International Music Festival. Goldberg plays with the Sullivan String Quartet, teaches chamber music at The Juilliard School in the pre-college division and at Belvoir Terrace, a summer program that empowers young women through the arts in Lenox, MA. She has presented more than fifty ArtsAhimsa concert events since 2004 including multi-art events in New York, Boston, Kolkata, New Delhi, and London. Upcoming events include the 2022 ArtsAhimsa Chamber Festival Workshop at Belvoir Terrace, a weeklong festival for both professional and amateur chamber music players. She is a board member of the Dvorak American Heritage Association.

Critically acclaimed **pianist TAKA KIGAWA** has earned outstanding international recognition as a recitalist, soloist, and chamber music artist since winning First Prize in the prestigious 1990 Japan Music Foundation Piano Competition in Tokyo, and the Diploma Prize at the 1998 Concurs Internacional Maria Canals De Barcelona in Spain. His New York City recital in 2010 was chosen as one of the best concerts of the year by The New York Times. His New York City recital in August 2011 was picked as one of the most notable concerts in the 2011-2012 season by Musical America. He has performed extensively as a recitalist and soloist in New York, Washington DC, Boston, Cleveland, Paris, Milan and Barcelona. He frequently tours in his native Japan, appearing in Tokyo, Osaka, Nagano and Kyoto, both as a recitalist and a soloist with orchestra and in chamber music groups. He has performed with such distinguished institution as The Cleveland Orchestra. He has been a featured artist on many television and radio networks throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Shinshu University, and his Master of Arts degree from Tokyo Gakugei (Liberal Arts) University, graduating with honors in Piano Performance. During both his undergraduate and graduate years, he also studied composition and conducting, receiving high honors in both disciplines. He furthered his studies in the United States at The Juilliard School in New York, where he earned his Master of Music degree. Mr. Kigawa currently lives in New York City. Taka Kigawa is a Steinway Artist. For more information, visit [takakigawa.com](#)

Composer and Pianist MOSHE S. KNOLL is the son of Eastern Europeans who immigrated to Venezuela. Schooled in the US, and living for more than a decade in Israel, Knoll's compositions reflect these diverse cultures. Having earned degrees from The Juilliard School and the University of Arizona, Tucson, Knoll embarked on a career of concertizing and composing. He has performed in many well-known venues in New York, as well as in London. His compositions have been performed throughout the Northeastern US, California, Israel, in Venezuela, Taiwan, and Brazil. He is currently Composer-in-Residence and Director of Musical Research at ArtsAhimsa and sits on the board of the board of the Dvorak American Heritage Association. He plays regularly in ArtsAhimsa concerts, is a faculty member at the ArtsAhimsa Chamber Music Festival at Belvoir Terrace, and is on the music staff at Ballet Hispanico School of Dance in NYC.

Dancer LEONEL LINARES began his training in his hometown of Mérida, Venezuela. His studies included Venezuelan folklore, Latin, jazz, hip hop, contemporary, acrobatics, Modern, and Ballet. He was awarded a scholarship to study with the Joffrey Ballet School in New York City from 2004-2006. His professional career includes performing with Ballet Nuevo Mundo de Caracas under the direction of Zandra Rodriguez, Ballet Teresa Carreno, Compania Danza Actual under the direction of Macarena Solorzano, and Ballet de Marjorie Flores. Leonel choreographed for Venezuela's TV network VENEVISION under the production of Joaquin Riviera, performed for many Latin singers, Dancing

with the Stars, Miss Venezuela Pageant, and TV series such as “Somos tu y yo”. He was invited to dance with Compania Imagen Latina in Los Angeles for the World Salsa Congress, Minnesota Dance Theatre, Ajkun Ballet Theatre, Contemporary Ballet Theatre, Revolucion Latina, Morales Dance, Ballet Des Moines, and FJK Dance. Leonel Linares is the Ballet Master of Staten Island Ballet, Founder of La Casa de la Cultura Venezolana en NY and earned his certification in Vaganova technique. He has collaborated with Latin Artists including Liz, Rosa López, Diveana, Oscar de Leon, Alejandra Guzmán, Olga Tañón and J Balvin, and holds the position of Executive/Artistic Director of Sol Dance Center.

ANTON RIST, clarinet, was appointed principal clarinetist of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in 2016. He previously held principal positions with the Princeton and New Haven Symphony Orchestras. In addition, Rist has performed with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Grant Park Festival Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Louisiana Philharmonic, and the American Ballet Theater. Rist has toured Japan with the New York Symphonic Ensemble, and has performed as a chamber musician throughout Europe and Asia. A dedicated teacher, Rist has taught at the Juilliard and Manhattan School of Music Precollege divisions, and has presented masterclasses across the country. He has performed and taught at the Colorado College Summer Music Festival, the Interlochen Arts Camp, Festival Mozaic, the St. Barts Music Festival, Bravo!Vail, and is a founding member of the Montserrat Music Festival in the West Indies. Born and raised in New York City, Anton Rist received two degrees from the Juilliard School, where he studied with Jon Manasse. His other major teachers included Larry Guy and Jo-Ann Sternberg. While a student, Rist attended the Verbier, Pacific, and Aspen Music Festivals.

PEDRO RUIZ is a celebrated **choreographer** and internationally recognized dancer. Ruiz is the recipient of The Bessie Award, the Choo-San Goh Award, The Cuban Artist's Fund Award and The Joyce Foundation Award. The FBI honored Ruiz for his Public Service during 2012's Hispanic Heritage Month. Mr. Ruiz has performed at the White House for several presidents. In 2010, Ruiz founded The Windows Project—a groundbreaking cultural exchange program celebrating the art of dance between the U.S. and Cuba. Ruiz has been the subject of two PBS documentaries: *Pas de Deux* (part of the “In The Life” series), and *Coming Home*, a PBS documentary nominated for a NY Emmy Award. Ruiz's highly successful ballet, *Club Havana* was featured in *Lincoln Center at the Movies: Great American Dance*. And Ruiz's celebrated poetic duet, *Lasting Embrace*, premiered in the US in July 2016 at the Dancers Responding to AIDS Dance Festival on Fire Island. In 2019 under the auspices of the *¡Cuba Aquí!* Festival, the *Ballet Contemporáneo de Camagüey* from Cuba made its American debut at Hunter College's Kaye Playhouse on March 13th bringing a joyful, exuberant program of three dances by their Cuban-American artistic director Pedro Ruiz. For more info visit www.thewindowsproject.org.

ArtsAhimsa Mission Statement

ArtsAhimsa is a global network of artists and friends working together to promote non-violence through affirmative power of the Arts and our common desire for a more peaceful world.

Artsahimsa concert events support inclusive communities, cross cultural understanding, social justice and environmental conservation.

The Artsahimsa experience is to listen, learn, and collaboratively create the future we envision. The Arts can bring us together and remind us that what we share, our humanity, is greater than our differences.

Laura Jean Goldberg, Founder and Executive Director

Kate Dillingham, Artistic Director

Notes on the program by Moshe S. Knoll, D.M.A.

José White: "La Bella Cubana", Habanera

José Silvestre White Lafitte was a Cuban composer and violinist. His father was Spanish and his mother was Afro-Cuban. He was born in Matanzas in 1836. In 1854 he gave a concert with the visiting American pianist-composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk, who encouraged him to go to Paris for further study. José White went on to receive First Prize in violin at the Paris Conservatoire in 1856. He became a French citizen in 1870, and was admired by Rossini. After a long and fruitful career he died in Paris in

1918. Today we are going to hear his celebrated Habanera "La Bella Cubana" as the musical setting to a new, original Choreographic Composition by the eminent dancer and choreographer, Pedro Ruiz.

Olivier Messiaen: 'Quatour pour la fin du temps', or 'Quartet for the end of time'

"The highest goal of music is to connect one's soul to its Divine Nature, not entertainment", Pythagoras

"The Soul is created in a place between Time and Eternity: with its highest powers it touches Eternity, with its lower ones Time." Meister Eckhart

Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 1992) is a complex, Protean figure, and his art cannot be summarized in few words. The sources of his artistic inspiration are manifold and seemingly unrelated. Both his sincere and unwavering Catholic faith, along with his lifelong interest in Classical Indian music, coexisted happily in his inner world with other passions, such as European literature and the science of ornithology. Musically speaking, he is the heir of Debussy and Stravinsky, building upon their legacies and taking their aesthetic further into the maelstrom of the twentieth century. Much has been written about the genesis of 'Quatour pour la fin du temps' and the story is well known to most chamber music aficionados. Messiaen had been drafted into the French Army during WWII, and had been captured by the Germans in June of 1940. Imprisoned at Stalag VIII-A in Görlitz, (now Zgorzelec, Poland); he had first met clarinetist Henri Akoka. Later, he met violinist Jean le Boulaire and cellist Étienne Pasquier. At first, Messiaen wrote a short trio for his new friends in prison. Eventually a piano was found, and with the help of a sympathetic prison guard, who had supplied the composer with pencils and music paper, Messiaen created this epic masterpiece, right in the middle of a wartime prison camp. Only a great artist could have the desire to conceive of such beauty, while living amid the worst imaginable squalor.

According to the composer's testimony, the work is directly inspired by a text from the Book of Revelation:

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire....and he set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the earth....And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever....that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished...." (Revelation, chapter 10; verses 1-2; 5-7) KJV

Messiaen goes on to explain that the Quartet has 8 movements, because 6 days are sanctified by the divine Sabbath, and 7 stretches into eternity, becoming the 8 of eternal light and peace. Considering this highly specialized subject matter, we thought it better to simply copy an English translation of the composer's own comments. In the notes he wrote for the Quartet we can sense the composer's literary proclivities. These are no mere program notes. This is a piece of highly artistic creative writing unto itself. Let us read what Messiaen has to say:

- I. Liturgy of crystal. Between the morning hours of three and four, the awakening of the birds: a thrush or a nightingale soloist improvises, amid notes of shining sound and a halo of trills that lose themselves high in the trees. Transpose this to the religious plane: you will have the harmonious silence of heaven.*
- II. Vocalise, for the angel who announces the end of Time. The first and third parts (very short) evoke the power of that mighty angel, his hair a rainbow and his clothing mist, who places one foot on the sea and one foot on the earth. Between these sections are the ineffable harmonies of heaven. From the piano, soft cascades of blue-orange chords, encircling with their distant carillon the plainchant-like recitativo of the violin and cello.*
- III. Abyss of the birds. Clarinet solo. The abyss is Time, with its sadnesses and tediums. The birds are the opposite of Time; they are our desire for light, for stars, for rainbows and for jubilant outpourings of song!*
- IV. Interlude. Scherzo. Of a more outgoing character than the other movements but related to them, nonetheless, by various melodic references.*
- V. Praise to the eternity of Jesus. Jesus is here considered as one with the Word. A long phrase, infinitely slow, by the cello expatiates with love and reverence on the everlastingness of the Word, mighty and dulcet, "which the years can in no way exhaust." Majestically the melody unfolds itself at a distance both intimate and awesome. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

VI. *Dance of fury, for the seven trumpets. Rhythmically the most idiosyncratic movement of the set. The four instruments in unison give the effect of gongs and trumpets (the first six trumpets of the Apocalypse attend various catastrophes, the trumpet of the seventh angel announces the consummation of the mystery of God). Use of extended note values, augmented or diminished rhythmic patterns, non-retrogradable rhythms – a systematic use of values which, read from left to right or from right to left, remain the same. Music of stone, formidable sonority; movement as irresistible as steel, as huge blocks of livid fury or ice-like frenzy. Listen particularly to the terrifying fortissimo of the theme in augmentation and with change of register of its different notes, toward the end of the piece.*

VII. *Cluster of rainbows, for the angel who announces the end of Time. Here certain passages from the second movement return. The mighty angel appears, and in particular the rainbow that envelops him (the rainbow, symbol of peace, of wisdom, of every quiver of luminosity and sound). In my dreamings I hear and see ordered melodies and chords, familiar hues and forms; then, following this transitory stage I pass into the unreal and submit ecstatically to a vortex, a dizzying interpenetration of superhuman sounds and colors. These fiery swords, these rivers of blue-orange lava, these sudden stars: Behold the cluster, behold the rainbow!*

VIII. *Praise to the immortality of Jesus. Expansive violin solo balancing the cello solo of the fifth movement. Why this second glorification? It addresses itself more specifically to the second aspect of Jesus – to Jesus the man, to the Word made flesh, raised up immortal from the dead so as to communicate His life to us. It is total love. Its slow rising to a supreme point is the ascension of man toward his God, of the Son of God toward his Father, of the mortal newly made divine toward paradise. And I repeat anew what I said above: All this is mere striving and childish stammering if one compares it to the overwhelming grandeur of the subject!"*

From the perspective of our own era, we might add that perhaps Messiaen had more than one specific meaning in mind for the phrase "end of time". A second interpretation could reflect the composer's belief that the concept of Time as expressed in European Art Music of the Common Practice Period (with familiar, regular, predictable rhythmic structures) was no longer the only way for music to be conceived. In 1930 Messiaen had published an analysis of Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring" in which he discussed this concept. The "tyranny of the bar line", which had informed Western music from the 1600's through the 1900's was felt to be an expression of an outdated vision of the world: The mechanical cosmos, envisioned by Descartes, Galileo and Newton. Such a clockwork universe was presumed to be fully knowable and amenable to control by the human mind. This vision of the world had collapsed during the first decades of the twentieth century following the phenomenal development of physics, astronomy and all the sciences. After Einstein it was no longer possible to describe the universe as a clockwork mechanism. The advent of Quantum mechanics made any hope of fully predicting natural phenomena in the universe further recede into oblivion.

The fabric of the universe was now perceived (at least by some) as organically asymmetrical. Unlike the Deity of Descartes and Newton, conceptually a fully rational being, Stravinsky and Messiaen worship a God that is inscrutable, ineffable, and ultimately beyond any kind of human understanding. Of course, for the majority of the world's population, the mechanical universe described by Descartes, Galileo and Newton, the fully understandable cosmos ruled by an eternal, supernatural clockmaker, is still a reality. For such people, the creative use of rhythm (as in Stravinsky, Messiaen, etc.) bears no relation whatsoever to their perception of linear time.

In the words of British Theologian Alan Watts: "*We are living in a culture entirely hypnotized by the illusion of time, in which the so-called present moment is felt as nothing but an infinitesimal hairline between a causative past and an absorbingly important future. We have no present. Our consciousness is almost completely preoccupied with memory and expectation. We do not realize that there never was, is, nor will be any other experience than present experience. We are therefore out of touch with reality.*" The unpredictable rhythms of Stravinsky and Messiaen reflect this new vision of the world: by discarding traditional musical rhetoric, Stravinsky and Messiaen invite the listener to be fully invested in the musical here and now.

On a more immediate and down-to-earth level, "end of time" may have also referred to the camp inmate's dream to be released from the clutches of his Nazi captors, as well as to the general longing of the Western World for an end of the war. One could go further and state that both the effort towards the abolition of conventional musical time, and the longing for freedom from tyranny are one and the same. Many of the best minds felt something had gone very wrong with the evolution of Western Civilization, and that the proof was there for all to see: the rise of Fascism and world-wide war. The entire apparatus of science and technology had been pressed into the service of diabolical ideologies that preached hate and destruction.

Within the parameters of his Catholic faith, and of his position as a leading twentieth century French composer, Messiaen's agenda was nothing less than the transformation of the world. 'Quatour pour la fin du temps', or 'Quartet for the end of time' is a manifesto of freedom: freedom from tyranny, freedom from hate, and freedom from outdated cultural concepts. Messiaen took existing musical materials, such as the octatonic scale, Classical Indian rhythms, and fashioned a tantalizing new world of sound. This artistic achievement is nothing short of miraculous. Contemporary American thinker Charles Eisenstein has said "*We have to create miracles. A miracle is not the intercession of an external divine agency in violation of the laws of physics. A miracle is simply something that is impossible from an old story but possible from within a new one. It is an expansion of what is possible.*" These words apply beautifully to Messiaen's work. The longing for freedom, advocacy for human rights, protection of the environment, and the prevention of violence and war are also the themes that form the core of ArtsAhimsa's mission statement.

Moshe S. Knoll, D.M.A.