

*For Immediate Release*

**VIOLINIST JENNIFER KOH PRESENTS *LIMITLESS* RECITAL SERIES  
AT NATIONAL SAWDUST, MARCH 15 AND 31 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**Featuring works by Lisa Bielawa, Zosha Di Castri, Vijay Iyer, Missy Mazzoli,  
Qasim Naqvi, Tyshawn Sorey, Wang Lu, Nina Young, and Du Yun**

**Composers join Ms. Koh on stage for duo performances  
of their own works, including seven new commissions**



Photo credit: Chris Lee

NEW YORK, NEW YORK (February 12, 2018) — As one of National Sawdust's ten curators for the 2017-18 season, violinist Jennifer Koh presents *Limitless*, a two-night recital series that celebrates the collaborative relationship between composer and performer through duo performances, including seven world premieres, by Ms. Koh and the composers themselves. This spirit of collaboration contrasts with the conventional notion today that composition and performance are discrete and detached parts of the musical process, while also re-connecting with an older, pre-modern tradition of composers as performers. The participating artists are Lisa Bielawa, Zosha Di Castri, Vijay Iyer, Missy Mazzoli, Qasim Naqvi, Tyshawn Sorey, Wang Lu, Nina Young, and Du Yun. *Limitless* recitals take place at National Sawdust on Thursday, March 15 at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, March 31 at 7:00 p.m.

Advance tickets are \$29, and are available at [NationalSawdust.org](http://NationalSawdust.org), the venue's box office (80 North 6th Street, Brooklyn), or by calling 646.779.8455.

An advocate for more inclusive and diverse models of classical music-making, Ms. Koh says:

"I believe in building collaborative and creative projects that reflect the world that I live in and want to see in the future as a member of a community that loves music and cares about the future of classical music. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with the wonderful composers in this project and perform with them on stage, together as a community."

In addition to her work as a performer, Ms. Koh is Founder and Artistic Director of arco collaborative, an artist-driven nonprofit that fosters a better understanding of our world through a musical dialogue inspired by ideas and the communities around us. arco collaborative commissioned the new works premiered at both *Limitless* recitals.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 15 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**Zosha Di Castri — Sprung Testament (world premiere; arco collaborative commission)**

**I. A generosity of belief**

**II. Tears of elation at a liminal moment**

**III. Its presence lingered a while, then it was gone**

Zosha Di Castri is a Canadian composer-pianist living in New York. Her work (which has been performed in Canada, the US, South America, Asia, and Europe) extends beyond purely concert music to include projects with electronics, sound arts, and collaborations featuring video and dance. She has worked with such ensembles as the San Francisco Symphony, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the L.A. Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, ICE, Wet Ink, Ekmeles, the NEM, and Talea Ensemble among others. She is currently the Francis Goelet Assistant Professor of Music at Columbia University.



Ms. Di Castri composed the solo violin work *Patina* for Ms. Koh's 2016 *Shared Madness* project. The new work for *Limitless* is in three movements.

For more information, visit [zoshadicastri.com](http://zoshadicastri.com).

**Missy Mazzoli — *Tooth and Nail* for Violin, Synthesizer, and Electronics (2010)  
*A Thousand Tongues* for Violin, Piano, and Electronics (2009)  
*Vespers for Violin* for Violin and Electronics (2014)**

The music of Missy Mazzoli has been performed globally by Kronos Quartet, eighth blackbird, LA Opera, New York City Opera, the Minnesota Orchestra, Cincinnati Opera, and many others. She has been Composer-in-Residence with the Albany Symphony, Gotham Chamber Opera, Music Theatre-Group, and Opera Philadelphia. Recent highlights include the premiere of her third opera, *Proving Up*, at Washington National Opera; the premiere of *Vespers for a New Dark Age*, an extended work for her ensemble Victoire and Wilco drummer Glenn Kotche, commissioned by Carnegie Hall; and new works performed by pianist Emanuel Ax, the BBC Symphony, LA Philharmonic, and Detroit Symphony. Upcoming commissions include new works for Opera Philadelphia, the National Ballet of Canada, Opera Omaha, and Miller Theatre. She is the recipient of a Fulbright Grant, a 2015 Music grant from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, and four ASCAP young composer awards. Along with composer Ellen Reid she recently founded Luna Lab, a mentorship program for young female composers in collaboration with the Kaufman Music Center. She teaches composition at the Mannes School of Music (The New School), and her works are published by G. Schirmer.



Ms. Mazzoli composed the solo violin work *Kinski Paganini* (2016) for Ms. Koh's *Shared Madness* project, and also composed *Dissolve, O My Heart* (2010) for Ms. Koh's *Bach and Beyond* project, including a 2012 recording on Cedille Records.

About the works programmed for *Limitless*, Ms. Mazzoli says: "*Tooth and Nail* was inspired by the extraordinary musical traditions of Uzbekistan, where jaw harp (also called Jew's Harp or mouth harp) plays a prominent role"; *A Thousand Tongues* "is a short but intense response to the following text by Stephen Crane [the poem "Yes, I Have A Thousand Tongues"]"; and *Vespers for Violin* "began as a reimagining of my recent composition *Vespers for a New Dark Age* [and turned into] something completely separate from the original work, with only distant, nostalgic connections to the source material."

For more information, visit [missymazzoli.com](http://missymazzoli.com).

**Qasim Naqvi — *The Banquet* for Violin and Modular Synthesizer (world premiere; arco collaborative commission)**

Qasim Naqvi is a drummer, composer and member of the group Dawn of Midi. His most recent work focuses on the timbres of analogue synthesizers and orchestral configurations. His film music has appeared on HBO, NBC, PBS, *The New York Times*, The Guggenheim Museum, dOCUMENTA 13 + 14, Vice TV, and the Tribeca, Sundance, and Toronto Film Festivals, among other venues and outlets. His concert works have been performed by yMusic, The Now Ensemble, The Contemporary Music Ensemble of NYU, The Crash Ensemble, Stargaze, The Helsinki Chamber Choir, The Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW, The Bienen Contemporary/Early Vocal Ensemble, TEN PEN CHii, Nimbus Dance Works, and others. He is a 2016 N.Y.F.A. Fellow in Music and Sound and has received other fellowships and awards from Chamber Music America, Harvest Works, The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, The Foundation for Contemporary Art, Mid-Atlantic Arts Council, S.T.E.I.M., and Art OMI. He is represented by Erased Tapes Publishing.



"With this piece [for *Limitless*]," he says, "I wanted to express timbral distances between an un-amplified resonating body such as the violin and a collection of electronic textures. As the piece progresses, the violin moves from a lyrical space towards the nature of the electronics."

For more information, visit [qasim-naqvi.com](http://qasim-naqvi.com).

**Wang Lu — *Her Latitude* for Violin, Electronics, and Piano (world premiere; arco collaborative commission)**

Composer and pianist Wang Lu received the 2019 Berlin Prize in music composition. She is a 2014 Guggenheim Fellow and an Assistant Professor of Music at Brown University. Her works reflect a very natural identification with influences from traditional Chinese music, urban environmental sounds, linguistic intonation and contour, and freely improvised traditions, through the prism of contemporary instrumental techniques and new sonic possibilities.



Describing her new work, she says, "*Her Latitude* is written for violin, electronics and piano, with a special role for myself

to play. The piano part is quasi-improvised, in which I intend to follow Jenny's intuitive treatment of time on stage. The electronics part includes processed sounds from various sources of spiritual calm and catastrophic unrest: Buddhist chants, rusty bell sounds, faint old Korean pop songs, nuclear alarms, and the clanging of earthenware symbolizing early civilization. I thought a lot about the artistic and emotional journeys a woman artist of a non-mainstream heritage in the western world goes through before proudly performing on stage, often the most challenging compositions. For me, and certainly for Jenny as well, music is never just about the delivery of notes. The richness of her playing and character is the primary inspiration for this piece.”

For more information, visit [wanglucomposer.com](http://wanglucomposer.com).

**SATURDAY, MARCH 31 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**Lisa Bielawa — *Sanctuary Songs* for Violin and Voice (world premiere; arco collaborative commission)**

Composer-vocalist Lisa Bielawa is a recipient of the 2009 Rome Prize in Musical Composition and 2017 Music Award from the American Academy of Arts & Letters. She takes inspiration for her work from literary sources and close artistic collaborations. In the 1990s, she was a vocalist with the Philip Glass Ensemble and co-founded the MATA Festival, which celebrates the work of young composers. She was appointed Artistic Director of the San Francisco Girls Chorus in 2013 and recently completed her residency at Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana, California. Her discography includes albums on the Tzadik, TROY, Innova, BMOP/sound, Orange Mountain Music, and Sono Luminus labels.



Her music is frequently performed throughout the US and Europe, with recent highlights including two world premieres at the 2016 NY PHIL BIENNIAL, *Drama/Self Pity* premiered by the Orlando Philharmonic, performances as composer and soloist at The Kennedy Center's *KC Jukebox* series and SHIFT Festival, and a concert of her works at National Sawdust. She recently completed her made-for-TV-and-online opera *Vireo: The Spiritual Biography of a Witch's Accuser* with librettist Erik Ehn and director Charles Otte. *Vireo* was filmed across the country, featuring over 350 musicians, and the opera was broadcast online and on TV by KCET.

Ms. Koh was among the musicians featured in *Vireo*, and Ms. Bielawa's related solo violin work, *Vireo Caprice*, was commissioned as a part of Ms. Koh's 2016 *Shared Madness* project.

Part of a growing collection of songs composed by Ms. Bielawa for her and Ms. Koh to perform, the new work comprises three songs with texts by American women poets writing between the World Wars (Virginia Stait, Elise M. Baker, and Elinor Wylie). Ms. Bielawa says, "Each text has the word "Sanctuary" as its title or in its first line. "Sanctuary" is a word that carries significant political weight today in the discussion around immigration; I wanted to find instances of its use within a broad range of American writings, in order to reach a greater understanding of its layered meanings within American consciousness."

For more information, visit [lisabielawa.net](http://lisabielawa.net).

**Vijay Iyer — *The Diamond* for Violin and Piano (world premiere; arco collaborative commission)**

Composer-pianist Vijay Iyer was named *Downbeat Magazine's* Jazz Artist of the Year for 2012, 2015, and 2016. He received a 2013 MacArthur Fellowship, 2012 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, and 2011 Grammy nomination. He has released 21 albums, including *Far From Over* (2017), with his Sextet, which topped numerous year-end critics polls and was cited by *Rolling Stone* as "2017's jazz album to beat"; *A Cosmic Rhythm with Each Stroke* (2016) with composer-trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith, named "Best New Music" by *Pitchfork*; *Break Stuff* (2015) with his Trio, winner of the German Record Critics' Award for Album of the Year; the live score to the film *Radhe Radhe: Rites of Holi* (2014) by filmmaker Prashant Bhargava; and *Holding it Down: The Veterans' Dreams Project* (2013), with poet-performer Mike Ladd, named Album of the Year in the *Los Angeles Times*.

His compositions have been commissioned and premiered by Bang on a Can All-Stars, The Silk Road Ensemble, Brentano Quartet, Brooklyn Rider, Imani Winds, American Composers Orchestra, International Contemporary Ensemble, and Matt Haimowitz. He is the Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts at Harvard University and director of the Banff International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music.



Past compositions for Ms. Koh comprise the violin concerto *Trouble* for her recently launched *New American Concerto* project; the solo violin work *Zany, Cute, Interesting* for her 2016 *Shared Madness* project; and *Bridgetower Fantasy* for her and pianist Shai Wosner's 2015 *Bridge to Beethoven* project.

Mr. Iyer describes his new work as a duo piece in four sections, "corresponding roughly to [the] four disparate visions of impermanence: four distinct moments of interplay between form and emptiness, four corners of a diamond" in *The Diamond Sutra*, an early Buddhist text.

For more information, visit [vijay-iyer.com](http://vijay-iyer.com).

**Tyshawn Sorey — *Violin and Glockenspiel, in Memoriam Muhal Richard Abrams* (world premiere; arco collaborative commission)**

Newark-born multi-instrumentalist and composer Tyshawn Sorey is celebrated for his incomparable virtuosity, effortless mastery and memorization of highly complex scores, and an extraordinary ability to blend composition and improvisation in his work. He has performed nationally and internationally with his own ensembles and such artists as John Zorn, Vijay Iyer, Roscoe Mitchell, Wadada Leo Smith, George Lewis, Claire Chase, Evan Parker, and Anthony Braxton.



He has been commissioned by such ensembles and institutions as the Spektral Quartet, Ojai Music Festival, International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), for which he also performs as a percussionist, and recently Carnegie Hall and Opera Philadelphia for Carnegie Hall's 125 Commissions Project, for which he has composed a new work for tenor Lawrence Brownlee

addressing themes associated with Black Lives Matter. He was also artist-in-residence at the 2017 Berlin Jazz Festival.

He has taught and lectured at Columbia University, The New School, Hochschule für Musik Köln, and Berklee College of Music, among other institutions. His work has been premiered at the Mostly Mozart Festival, Ojai Music Festival, The Kitchen, and Walt Disney Hall, among other venues and festivals. He is Assistant Professor of Composition and Creative Musics at Wesleyan University.

For more information, visit [tyshawnsorey.com](http://tyshawnsorey.com).

**Nina Young — *Sun Propeller* for Violin and Electronics (2012)**

New York-based composer Nina C. Young writes music characterized by an acute sensitivity to tone color, manifested in aural images of vibrant, arresting immediacy. Her experience in the electronic music studio informs her acoustic work, which takes as its given not melody and harmony, but sound itself, continuously metamorphosing from one state to another.

Her music has been performed by the American Composers Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, the Aspen Philharmonic Orchestra, the Argento Chamber Ensemble, Divertimento Ensemble, Either/Or, the JACK Quartet, mise-en, and Yarn/Wire. Her honors include the 2015-16 Rome Prize in Musical Composition, a Koussevitzky Commission from the Library of Congress, and a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, among others. She has been in residence at the Aspen and Atlantic Music Festivals, the Nouvel Ensemble Modern's 2014 FORUM, and the Tanglewood Music Center.



She is an Assistant Professor in the Arts Department of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), and a Visiting Composer at the Peabody Institute. She serves as Co-Artistic Director of NY-based new music sinfonietta Ensemble Échappé. Her music is published by Peermusic Classical.

According to Ms. Young, the work programmed for *Limitless* “draws inspiration from the physical and poetic principles behind the Tuvan sound world [i.e., the Tuvan tradition of throat singing].” Regarding the title of the work, she says, “The term “sun propeller” refers to the propeller-like rays of light that occur when sunbeams pierce through openings in the clouds. ... This phrase is the literal translation of the Tuvan word for these special sunbeams, *Huun-Huur-Tu*.”

For more information, visit [ninacyoung.com](http://ninacyoung.com).

**Du Yun — *give me back my fingerprints* for Violin and Voice (world premiere; arco collaborative commission)**

Du Yun, born and raised in Shanghai, China, currently based in New York, is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, performance artist, and curator working at the intersection of orchestral music, opera, chamber music, theatre, cabaret, pop music, oral tradition, visual arts, electronics, and noise.



She was selected by NPR as one of its 100 composers under 40. Her music is championed by some of today's finest performing artists, ensembles, orchestras, and organizations. In addition, she has also made works in the art world, including the 4th Guangzhou Art Triennial, Sharjah Biennial (UAE), Auckland Triennial, and Istanbul Biennial. Du Yun is on the composition faculty at SUNY-Purchase. She was a founding member of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and currently she serves as the Artistic Director of MATA, a pioneering organization dedicated to commissioning and championing young composers from around the world. Du Yun won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for music for her opera *Angel's Bone*.

For more information, visit [channelduyun.com](http://channelduyun.com).

### **About Jennifer Koh**

Violinist Jennifer Koh is recognized for intense, commanding performances, delivered with dazzling virtuosity and technical assurance. An adventurous musician, she collaborates with artists across disciplines and curates projects that find connections between music of all eras. She believes that all the arts and music of the past and present form a continuum, and she has premiered over 60 works written especially for her. Ms. Koh has appeared with orchestras worldwide, including the New York, Los Angeles, and Helsinki Philharmonics; Cleveland, Mariinsky, Minnesota, Philadelphia, and Philharmonia (London) Orchestras; and Atlanta, Baltimore, BBC, Chicago, Cincinnati, National, New World, NHK, RAI (Torino), and Singapore Symphonies.

This season she returns to the Detroit, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Nashville and Sydney Symphonies and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, among others. Among her projects, in addition to *Limitless*, she has also embarked on a new project titled *The New American Concerto*, which explores the role of the violin concerto in contemporary American culture, featuring commissions this season from Chris Cerrone and Vijay Iyer. Ms. Koh is an active recording artist, principally for Chicago-based Cedille Records, and her latest album comprises Tchaikovsky's complete works for violin and orchestra.

Born in Chicago of Korean parents, Ms. Koh made her debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at age 11. She was named *Musical America's* 2016 Instrumentalist of the Year, and won the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, Concert Artists Guild Competition, and an Avery Fisher Career Grant. She has a BA in English literature from Oberlin College and studied at the Curtis Institute, where she worked extensively with Jaime Laredo and Felix Galimir.

For further information, visit [jenniferkoh.com](http://jenniferkoh.com).

### **About National Sawdust**

National Sawdust's mission is to build new audiences for classical and new music by providing outstanding resources and programmatic support to both emerging and established artists and composers. Centered on discovery within music, its programming introduces audiences to new artists and styles, and introduces artists to new audiences. An incubator of new music, NS also provide artists the space, time, and resources they need to create their art.

National Sawdust is both a state-of-the-art performance venue and a recording studio, housed within a preserved century-old sawdust factory. The building—which has won multiple architecture awards—also houses Rider, a two-story bistro and bar led by James Beard Award-winning chef Patrick Connolly. Rider completes the audience experience by offering an exceptional menu of food and drink during performances.

### **About National Sawdust Curators**

National Sawdust is more than a music venue. It is music, hand-picked by curators, just for you. National Sawdust doesn't use an algorithm to find music for you, instead relying on a curation model where master artists in their own genres function as artistic guides by bringing their unique points of view to

programming. This program gives curators a platform to advance the field through promoting emerging artists as well as established voices from around the world.

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## **LIMITLESS**

**Jennifer Koh**, *violinist and curator*

**Thursday, March 15 at 7:00 p.m.**

National Sawdust  
Brooklyn, NY

Composer-Performers:

Zosha di Castri, *piano*  
Missy Mazzoli, *piano, synthesizer, and electronics*  
Qasim Naqvi, *modular synthesizer*  
Wang Lu, *piano and electronics*

DI CASTRI *New Work\**

MAZZOLI *A Thousand Tongues* for Violin, Piano, and Electronics (2009)

MAZZOLI *Tooth and Nail* for Violin, Synthesizer, and Electronics (2010)

MAZZOLI *Vespers for Violin* for Violin and Electronics (2014)

NAQVI *The Banquet* for Violin and Modular Synthesizer\*

WANG LU *Her Latitude* for Violin, Electronics, and Piano\*

\*World premieres commissioned by arco collaborative

**Saturday, March 31 at 7:00 p.m.**

National Sawdust  
Brooklyn, NY

Composer-Performers:

Lisa Bielawa, *voice*  
Vijay Iyer, *piano*  
Tyshawn Sorey, *glockenspiel*  
Nina Young, *electronics*  
Du Yun, *voice*

BIELAWA *Sanctuary Songs\**

DU YUN *New Work\**

IYER *The Diamond* for Violin and Piano\*

SOREY *Violin and Glockenspiel, in Memoriam Muhal Richard Abrams* \*

YOUNG *Sun Propeller* for Violin and Electronics (2012)

\*World premieres commissioned by arco collaborative

Advance tickets are \$29, and are available at NationalSawdust.org, the venue's box office (80 North 6th Street, Brooklyn), or by calling 646.779.8455.

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