



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 12, 2021

Clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and visual artist Kevork Mourad explore the Syrian revolution and its aftermath in the Silkroad Ensemble production *Home Within*

OF NOTE:

- Acclaimed artists well known for their work with the Silkroad Ensemble founded by Yo-Yo Ma
- Unique combination of music and electronics alongside live illustrations created spontaneously throughout the performance
- March 2021 marked the tenth anniversary of the beginning of the Syrian civil war

Vancouver, BC — The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts at the University of British Columbia presents Silkroad Ensemble's *Home Within*, part of the virtual Dot Com Series. Recorded in New York City at the Baryshnikov Arts Center's Jerome Robbins Theater, the digital performance will premiere on Friday April 23, 2021 at 7pm PST. The video will remain available for on demand viewing until May 31, 2021.

Home Within is a new audio-visual performance created by Syrian composer and clarinetist **Kinan Azmeh** and Syrian-Armenian visual artist, **Kevork Mourad**. In this work, instrumental music, electronics, and live illustrations are used to create an impressionistic reflection on the Syrian revolution and its aftermath. Rather than following a narrative, the artists document specific moments in Syria's recent history and reach into their emotional content in a semi-abstract way. The foundation of this performance piece was the single sound-image work, *a sad morning, every morning* released in March 2012.

"*Home Within*, like any other art project I think, is about asking questions," says Azmeh. "And making people look within also, and to try to make their own story from what they see. We're not trying to impose a slogan on the project, but I hope that we're opening a little window to research beyond the project. To research beyond the art. Because this is art that is inspired by a huge tragedy that continues to happen."

"It's a privilege to have the poignant and captivating work of Kevork and Kinan close out our virtual Dot Com Series," says Pat Carrabré, Director of the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts. "Initially planned for our concert hall stage, the online multimedia performance is just as impactful, highlighting both the musical and visual art aspects with great intimacy and detail. *Home Within* is an incredibly moving exploration of what the Syrian revolution meant—and continues to symbolize—for its citizens, and the world."

Hailed as "intensely soulful" by the *New York Times* and "spellbinding" by the *New Yorker*, Kinan Azmeh has gained international recognition for his distinctive compositional voice across diverse musical genres. Originally from Damascus, Syria, and now based in New York City, Azmeh brings his music to all corners of the world as a solo clarinetist, composer and improviser. Notable appearances include the Opera Bastille, Paris; Tchaikovsky Grand Hall, Moscow; Carnegie Hall and the UN General Assembly, New York; the Mozarteum, Salzburg; Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie; and in his native Syria at the opening concert of the Damascus Opera House.

Azmeh's compositions include several works for solo, chamber, and orchestral music, as well as music for film, live illustration, and electronics. He was Composer-in-Residence with Classical Movements for the 2017/18 season, and won Germany's prestigious Opus Klassik award in 2019. He is a frequent guest faculty at the Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music and is on the advisory board of the Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra.

Born in Qamishli, Syria, Kevork Mourad now lives and works in New York City. Mourad employs his technique of live drawing and animation in concert with musicians, developing a collaboration in which art and music harmonize with one another. Collaborators include Yo-Yo Ma, Kim Kashkashian, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Brooklyn Rider, The Knights, Perspectives Ensemble, and Paola Prestini. He has performed his work in countless institutions around the world.

Mourad's recent commissions include *Israel in Egypt*, for the Los Angeles Master Chorale, and *Sound of Stone* to accompany the exhibition "Armenia!" for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 2019, he was commissioned by the Aga Khan Foundation to create a site-specific 20-foot drawing-sculpture called *Seeing Through Babel*, at London's Ismaili Center, addressing the importance of diversity in our contemporary times. The piece was exhibited starting in October 2020 at the Asia Society Triennial in New York City. In October 2020, he premiered the visuals for Beethoven's *Fidelio* for the Korea National Opera. His works are in the permanent collection of the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.

Both Azmeh and Mourad are longtime members of Yo-Yo Ma's Silkroad Ensemble. Azmeh features as a clarinetist and composer on the ensemble's GRAMMY-winning album *Sing Me Home* (2017), and both artists appear in the highly acclaimed Silkroad documentary film *The Music of Strangers* (2015).

About the Dot Com Series

The Chan Centre Dot Com Series launched in September 2020 in light of restrictions on gatherings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Delivered 100% online, the series features a wide range of remarkable performing artists, both locally and internationally based, bringing Chan Centre audiences exclusive performances filmed both at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts and elsewhere around the world. Past performers include Jeremy Dutcher, PIQSIQ, Cristina Pato, Lan Tung, Shane Koyczan, and Brendan McLeod, whose film *Ridge* was named one of the best arts performances of 2020 by the *Globe and Mail*.

About the Chan Centre for Performing Arts at UBC

Since 1997, the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts has earned an international reputation for its striking design, stellar acoustics, and exceptional programming. Artists, critics, and patrons alike are unanimous in their praise of the facility, winning it a place among North America's top-rated performing arts spaces. Featuring three unique venues—the Chan Shun Concert Hall, the Telus Studio Theatre, and the Royal Bank Cinema—the Chan Centre is a vital part of UBC campus and community life where artistic and academic disciplines merge to inspire new perspectives on the world around us. Past performers and speakers include Wynton Marsalis, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Renée Fleming, Dan Savage, Yo-Yo Ma, Jane Goodall, Herbie Hancock, Lila Downs, and Anoushka Shankar.

LISTING INFORMATION

Dates:	Silkroad Ensemble: Home Within (online only) Watch online from April 23, 2021 at 7pm PST
Online Ticket Prices:	\$0/\$10/\$20 (Supported/General/Supportive)
Address:	Chan Centre for the Performing Arts University of British Columbia 6265 Crescent Road Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1
Ticket Office:	chan.tickets@ubc.ca
Website:	chancentre.com
Link to Artist Photos:	chancentre.com/press-downloads/

-30-

For further media information:
Claire Mohun | 604-822-1241
claire.mohun@ubc.ca
Chan Centre for the Performing Arts