

CHAN CENTRE  
*presents*

MAY 5 / 8 PM

# The Journeyed Compass:

Dinuk Wijeratne, Layale Chaker, Kinan Azmeh



Canada

# The Journeyed Compass

Dinuk Wijeratne, Layale Chaker, Kinan Azmeh

## PERFORMANCE


8PM Chan Shun Concert Hall

Dinuk Wijeratne - Piano  
Layale Chaker - Violin  
Kinan Azmeh - Clarinet  
Tom Easley - Bass  
Nick Halley - Drums/Percussion

Program to be announced from stage.

**Photography and videography are prohibited.**

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łā tā ŋā Chan Centre for the Performing Arts ʔamət  
ʔi ʔə tā ŋā šx"məθk"əyəmaʔt təməx"

The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts is situated  
within the heart of Musqueam traditional territory

The Chan Centre would like to thank the Chan Endowment Fund and the  
UBC Faculty of Arts for their continued support.

The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts welcomes all Chan Centre Youth  
Pass guests in attendance at tonight's performance and gratefully  
acknowledges Chan Family Foundation and Heritage Canada for  
making this program possible.

# Dinuk Wijeratne

Sri Lankan-born Canadian Dinuk Wijeratne is a JUNO and multi-award-winning composer, conductor, and pianist who has been described by *The New York Times* as “exuberantly creative”, by the *Toronto Star* as “an artist who reflects a positive vision of our cultural future”, and by the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra as “a modern polymath”. His boundary-crossing work sees him equally at home in collaborations with symphony orchestras and string quartets, tabla players and DJs, and takes him to international venues as poles apart as the Berlin Philharmonie and the North Sea Jazz Festival.



Dinuk was featured as a main character in ‘What would Beethoven do?’ – the 2016 documentary about innovation in classical music featuring Eric Whitacre, Bobby McFerrin and Ben Zander. Forthcoming projects include new works for Grammy-winning baritone Elliot Madore (featuring Dinuk as pianist) and Grammy-nominated mandolinist Avi Avital, the test piece for the Banff International String Quartet Competition 2022, and conducting debuts with the Calgary Philharmonic and Qatar Philharmonic, Doha.

Dinuk made his Carnegie Hall debut while still a student in 2004 as a composer, conductor, and pianist performing with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble. A second Carnegie appearance followed in 2009, alongside tabla legend Zakir Hussain. Dinuk has also appeared at the BoulezSaal (Berlin), Kennedy Center (Washington DC), Opéra Bastille (Paris), Lincoln Center (New York), Teatro Colón (Buenos Aires), Sri Lanka, Japan, and across the Middle East. Dinuk grew up in Dubai before taking up composition studies at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM), Manchester, UK. In 2001, he was invited by Oscar-winning composer John Corigliano to join his studio at New York’s Juilliard School. Conducting studies followed at New York’s Mannes College of Music, and doctoral studies under Christos Hatzis at the University of Toronto.

Dinuk has composed specially for almost all of the artists and ensembles with whom he has performed; to name a few: Suzie LeBlanc, David Jalbert, James Ehnes, Kinan Azmeh, Bev Johnston, Joseph Petric, Sandeep Das, Tim Garland, Ed Thigpen, Ramesh Misra, Barry Guy, Eric Vloeimans, Buck 65, DJ Skratc Bastid, the Gryphon Trio, the Afiara, Danel & Cecilia String Quartets, the Apollo Saxophone Quartet, TorQ Percussion, and the Symphony orchestras of Toronto, Vancouver, the National Arts Centre, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Buffalo, Illinois, Fresno, Asheville, Saskatoon, Windsor, Victoria, PEI, and Thunder Bay. Dinuk is the only artist to have served both as Conductor-in-Residence and Composer-in-Residence of a Canadian orchestra (Symphony Nova Scotia).

A passionate educator, Dinuk is committed to helping emerging and mid-career classical artists navigate the classical music industry in today’s increasingly complex, diverse, and globalized world. As a Creativity Consultant he serves private clients as well as students of the Banff Centre (Evolution Classical) and Toronto’s Glenn Gould School. His educational guide ‘Define Your Artistic Voice’

was downloaded 150 times from his blog within the first two days of its release. Dinuk also served as Music Director of the Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra for thirteen seasons. He is also the recipient of the Canada Council Jean-Marie Beaudet award for orchestral conducting; the NS Established Artist Award; NS Masterworks nominations for his Tabla Concerto and piano trio Love Triangle; double Merritt Award nominations; Juilliard, Mannes, & Countess of Munster scholarships; the Sema Jazz Improvisation Prize; the Soroptimist International Award for Composer-Conductors; and the Sir John Manduell Prize – the RNCM's highest student honour. His music and collaborative work embrace the great diversity of his international background and influences.

## Kinan Azmeh

Hailed by critics and audiences alike, winner of the Opus Klassik award in 2019, clarinetist and composer Kinan Azmeh has gained international recognition for his distinctive voice across diverse musical genres.

Originally from Damascus, Syria, Kinan Azmeh brings his music to all corners of the world as a soloist, composer and improviser. Notable appearances include the Opera Bastille, Paris; Tchaikovsky Grand Hall, Moscow; Carnegie Hall and the UN General Assembly, New York; the Royal Albert Hall, London; Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires; Philharmonie, Berlin; the Library of Congress, the Kennedy Center, Washington DC; the Mozarteum, Salzburg, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie; and in his native Syria at the opening concert of the Damascus Opera House.



He has appeared as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Dusseldorf Symphony, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, The Azerbaijan State Symphony, Winnipeg Symphony, Symphony Nova Scotia, Toronto Symphony, A Far Cry, The Knights Orchestra, Calgary philharmonic, Qatar Philharmonic and the Syrian Symphony Orchestra among others, and has shared the stage with such musical luminaries as Yo-Yo Ma, Daniel Barenboim, Marcel Khalife, John McLaughlin, Francois Rabath, Aynur and Jivan Gasparian.

Kinan's compositions include several works for solo, chamber, and orchestral music, as well as music for film, live illustration, and electronics. His recent works were commissioned by The New York Philharmonic, The Seattle Symphony, The Knights Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Elbphilharmonie, Apple Hill string quartet, Quatuor Voce, Brooklyn Rider, Cello Octet Amsterdam, Aizuri Quartet and Bob Wilson.

An advocate for new music, several concertos were dedicated to him by composers such as Kareem Roustom, Dia Succari, Dinuk Wijeratne, Zaid Jabri, Saad Haddad and Guss Janssen, in addition to a large number of chamber music works.

In addition to his own Arab-Jazz Quartet CityBand and his Hewar trio, he has

also been playing with the Silkroad Ensemble since 2012, whose 2017 Grammy Award-winning album “Sing Me Home” features Kinan as a clarinetist and composer.

Kinan Azmeh is a graduate of New York’s Juilliard School as a student of Charles Neidich, and of both the Damascus High institute of Music where he studied with Shukry Sahwki, Nicolay Viovanof and Anatoly Moratof, and Damascus University’s School of Electrical Engineering. Kinan earned his doctorate degree in music from the City University of New York in 2013.

His first opera “Songs for Days to Come” which is fully sung in Arabic, was recently premiered in Osnabruck, Germany in June 2022 to a great acclaim. He has recently been appointed to the National Council for the Arts on a nomination by President Joe Biden.

## Layale Chaker

Deemed a “Rising Star” by *BBC Music Magazine*, violinist and composer Layale Chaker was raised on the verge of several musical streams since her childhood. She debuted her musical training at the National Higher Conservatory of Beirut in her native Lebanon, Conservatoire de Paris and the Royal Academy of Music in London.



Layale’s musical world lies at the intersection of classical contemporary music, jazz, arabic music, and improvisation. As a violinist and composer, she has worked with Daniel Barenboim and the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, Ziad Rahbani, Johnny Gandelsman, Holland Baroque, Oxford Orchestra, New World Symphony, London Jazz Festival, Alderburgh Festival, Junger Kunstler Festival Bayreuth, Lucerne Festival, Beethoven Festival Bonn and Avignon Festival among others, with features at The Berlin Philharmonic, Abbaye de Royaumont, Hancher, The Stone, National Sawdust, Royal Albert Hall and the Wigmore Hall.

This season has seen her complete a year-long residency at WQXR, where she premiered new work with her chamber jazz quintet ; a recording with string quartet ETHEL, to be released in 2023 ; and a first public reading of “Ruinous Gods”, her debut opera commissioned by Spoleto Festival. She is also due to premiere a new work for violin and choir at Morgenland Festival Osnabruck with the choral ensemble Capella Amsterdam.

A 2020-2022 Jerome Hill Fellow, Layale is also recipient of the Opera America Discovery 2022 award, Nadia et Lili Boulanger 2019 laureate, finalist of the Rolex Mentor & Protege 2018 Prize, the recipient of the Diaphonique Franco-British Commission Prize 2019, the 2018 Arab Fund for Arts and Culture Grant, the Royal Academy of Music 2018 Guinness Award, and is the winner of the Ruth Anderson 2017 Competition.

# Tom Easley

Bassist, composer, and educator Tom Easley has earned a reputation as one of Canada's finest jazz bassists. Over the past 35 years, Tom has toured throughout Europe, Asia, and South America as part of numerous diverse musical projects. He has performed with several internationally recognized artists, including Dinuk Wijeratne, Mike Murley, Juan Martin, Ed Thigpen, Jeff Hamilton, John Abercrombie, Hal Galper, Mike Stern, Peter Erskine, Adam Rogers, Randy Brecker, and Los Lobos.



Tom formed his own group "The EQ" and released the recording "The Starting Point VS The Steep Decline," in 2018, which won the 2019 Best Jazz Recording of the Year from Music Nova Scotia. This recording showcased Easley's original compositions and the group was featured at the Ottawa Jazz Festival and Montreal Jazz festival in 2019. Originally from Fredericton, New Brunswick, Tom is Halifax-based and is on faculty at the Nova Scotia Community College's Music Arts Program.

# Nick Halley

Nick Halley is a drummer/percussionist, keyboardist, composer, and conductor based in Nova Scotia, Canada. Born in New York City, he studied drumming and percussion with Jamey Haddad from an early age, majored in jazz and classical percussion at Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan and spent a year training and performing in Brazil prior to returning to New York City to attend The New School University's jazz and contemporary music program.



As a drummer and world percussionist, Nick has performed and recorded internationally with a wide range of musicians including American musical icon James Taylor, Paul Halley, the late Oscar Castro-Neves, Glenn Patscha, Old Man Luedecke, Suzie LeBlanc, Chris Norman, David McGuinness & Revenge of the Folk Singers, Concerto Caledonia, and Viradouro Escola de Samba. Nick often performs with Dinuk Wijeratne in ensembles of musicians from around the world, including Kinan Azmeh, Nazih Borish, Joseph Petric, Roberto Occhipinti, and Sandeep Das. In 2008, Nick released his debut recording Barnum Hill, featuring Nick's own compositions and performed by Matt Brewer, Adam Niewood, and other young jazz stars. It was produced and engineered by the late, great Tom Bates. Nick has taught workshops in percussion, music theory, and rhythm at Boxwood Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, Interlochen Summer Festival, Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance (LAMP), and in other venues around the world.

As an educator, Nick is passionate about making musical excellence accessi-

ble to people of all ages and diverse backgrounds, and about helping people to – quite literally – find their voice. Nick is the Founder and Artistic Director of Capella Regalis Choirs, a Canadian charity and performing arts organization offering a unique and completely free music education and professional-level performance training program to children and young adults in Nova Scotia. Nick is also the Assistant Director of Music at the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Halifax, where he co-directs choral services and concerts and assists with pipe organ accompaniment. Nick founded and for 11 years directed The King's Chorus, a choral society for members of the King's and Dalhousie University communities in Halifax, where Nick instructed hundreds of university students and staff in the art of singing. Nick was also the Assistant Director of the University of King's College Chapel Choir from 2008 to 2021, where he helped to build a training program for young choral scholars and co-directed a major annual concert series. In 2012, Nick was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in recognition of his contribution to Canada and Nova Scotia through the arts. For the 2013-14 season, Nick was the Host of CBC's national radio program, Choral Concert.

Nick's breadth of experience as a singer, choral conductor, and keyboardist as well as a drummer and percussionist makes him a uniquely versatile musician, equally at home with classical English church music as with traditional jazz, with Brazilian percussion as with North African and South Indian rhythms.



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