



## DERRICK SKYE: WHERE CAN WE GO, FROM HERE?

APRIL 2, 2022

8:30pm

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CaLARTS

*We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples—including the Gabrieleño, Fernandeño, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles. We honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society..*

# DERRICK SKYE: WHERE CAN WE GO, FROM HERE?

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

Composer, Concert Curator, & Performer  
Creator & Librettist  
Sound Designer  
Choreographer & Dancer

Derrick Skye  
K Allado-McDowell  
Ian Smith  
Yeko Ladzekpo-Cole

## **PERFORMERS**

Tar  
Tonbak  
CalArts African Ensemble Performers

Pirayeh Pourafar  
Houman Pourmehdi  
Andrew Grueschow  
Yeko Ladzekpo-Cole  
Kevin O'Sullivan  
Justin Bardales  
Shane Vincent  
Lucas Lenique  
Rachel Iba  
James Waterman  
DeLisa Bass  
Mia Lucero-Garcia  
Genevieve Fletcher  
Lindsay Patterson Abdou  
Mindy Ella Chu  
Edmond Rodriguez  
Rachel Mellis  
Chrysanthe Tan  
Derrick Skye

Violin  
Percussion & Electronics  
Dancers

Mezzo Soprano  
Alto  
Tenor  
Flute & Alto Flute  
Viola  
Electronics

## **SCIENTISTS**

Assistant Research Scientist  
Ethnomusicologist and Cognitive Scientist

Ying Wu  
Alex Khalil

## **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Producer  
Producing Consultant  
Associate Producer  
Student Technician  
Student Technician

Madeline Falcone  
Ben Newman  
Shaharoh Chism  
Olivia Popejoy  
Drea Turk

Special thanks to my mentors, friends and family: Kobla Ladzekpo, Dzidzogbe Beatrice, Lawlivi Yeko Ladzekpo Cole, Pirayeh Pourafar, Houman Pourmehdi, Swapan Chaudhuri, Tzvetanka Varimezova, Randy Gloss, Andrew Grueschow, Ian Krouse

## PROGRAM

### Classical Persian Music

Pirayeh Pourafar, tar; Houman Pourmehdi, tonbak

### CalArts African Ensemble

Andrew Grueschow, Yeko Ladzekpo-Cole, Kevin O'Sullivan, Justin Bardales, Shane Vincent, and Lucas Lenique

### Derrick Skye: Mind the Rhythm

Rachel Iba, violin; James Waterman, electro-acoustic percussion; Derrick Skye, electronics; DeLisa Bass, Mia Lucero-Garcia, Genevieve Fletcher, dancers; Yeko Ladzekpo-Cole, choreographer and dancer

—intermission—

### Song of the Ambassadors

Lindsay Patterson Abdou, mezzo soprano; Mindy Ella Chu, alto; Edmond Rodriguez, tenor; Rachel Mellis, flute & alto flute; James Waterman, percussion; Chrysanthe Tan, viola; Derrick Skye, electronics; K Allado-McDowell, libretto

## ABOUT THE WORKS

### Classical Persian Music

Persian music is mainly melodic. A typical classical Persian performance consists of five parts including pishdaramad (prelude), caharmezrab (a fast metric piece), avaz (improvised central piece), tasnif (a composed metric song), and reng (a rhythmic closing composition). Classical Persian music has been heavily influenced by Sufism, with the lyrical basis of composition formed by the work of classical poets such as Rumi, Hafez, Sadi, and Attar.

**CalArts African Ensemble** performs traditional music and dance from the country of Ghana, West Africa. The ensemble's repertoire consists of different regional styles of music from ethnic groups such as the Ewe's from the Volta Region and the Dagombas from the Northern Region. Tonight they will perform a small processional, then transition into another piece called Atsia. The musical elements of this performance each contain social significance, including **Praise Name Dances**, and **Atsia Suite**. Among the Dagomba, praise names are given to chiefs and then set to drumming rhythms by the drummer in the drumming community. Praise names are usually played for individual dancers upon their request. In this evening's performance, there will be a selection of praise names played with short stops in between. The word Atsia amongst the Ewe speaking people means style or to display. There are many different Atsia styles which are played and danced at various social occasions.

**Mind The Rhythm** interweaves the dynamic range and tempo fluctuations of melodies found in the classical music of many different cultures together with the intimacy of folk music, and the driving, endlessly contrasting elements of electronic music. Part 1 is a slow introduction to this sonic environment between the electronics and the violin. Part 2 is a frenetic expansion of how

the violin and electronics engage in call-and-response and compete for the foreground. The piece can be performed using one of two concert setups: Version I with two live performers (amplified solo violin and electro-acoustic percussion) and Version II with one live performer (amplified solo violin).

### **Song of the Ambassadors**

A Work in Development with music written by Derrick Skye and a libretto by K Allado-McDowell using the AI language model GPT-3, Song of the Ambassadors reimagines opera as a musical ritual producing scientific understanding about the effects of music on the body and mind. The piece is a hymn to life, the sun, and space, featuring a small ensemble of vocalists and instrumentalists with imagery and projections (driven by ECG, and EEG brain signals and generated with AI) by Refik Anadol Studio with Neurotech and BCI studies performed by scientists Ying Wu and Alex Khalil and their teams from the Swartz Center for Computational Neuroscience, University of California San Diego. Future presentations of Song of The Ambassadors are planned for June, 2022 on the campus of Lincoln Center at Alice Tully Hall with an anticipated World Premiere during a future season in the newly renovated David Geffen Hall.

### **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

**Derrick Skye** is a composer and musician based in the Los Angeles area who often integrates music practices from different cultural traditions around the world into his work with classical music communities. The Los Angeles Times has described his music as “something to savor” and “enormous fun to listen to.” During his studies at the University of California, Los Angeles and the California Institute of the Arts, music across many cultures became an integral part of his musical vocabulary. Skye passionately believes in music as a doorway into understanding other cultures and different ways of living. Through learning the music of other cultures, the opportunity for dialogue rather than conflict between strangers is opened, and our society can become one with less conflict due to cultural misunderstanding. He is deeply invested in fostering creative and effective collaboration between artists of different disciplines and traditions.

**K Allado-McDowell** is a writer, speaker, and musician. They are the author, with GPT-3, of the books Pharmako-AI and Amor Cringe, and are co-editor of The Atlas of Anomalous AI. They record and release music under the name Qenic. Allado-McDowell established the Artists + Machine Intelligence program at Google AI. They are a conference speaker, educator and consultant to think-tanks and institutions seeking to align their work with deeper traditions of human understanding.

### **REDCAT TECHNICAL STAFF**

Technical Director: Bill Ballou  
Ass. TD, Sound and Video: Pete Pace  
Ass. TD, Lighting Director: Chu-Hsuan Chang  
Audio Engineer: Joshua Hill

Lighting Programmer: Dan Stevens  
Deck: Megan Cooper  
Camera Operator: Emory Royston  
Stage Manager: Sarah Dawn Lowry