Recitals from the World Stage
Streaming from Wednesday, July 29, at 8pm through Tuesday, August 4

SILKROAD ENSEMBLE
from Studio E, Linde Center for Music and Learning, Tanglewood, Lenox, MA

Featuring SILKROAD artists SANDEEP DAS, MAEVE GILCHRIST, KEVORK MOURAD, EDWARD PEREZ, KOJIRO UMEZAKI, and KAORU WATANABE

with special guest RHIANNON GIDDENS
and remarks by YO-YO MA

TRADITIONAL PERSIAN
Ascending Bird
(arr. Colin Jacobsen and Siamak Aghaei)
from Live from Tanglewood: The Silkroad Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma, June 2012

MAEVE GILCHRIST / KEVORK MOURAD
How the Knot Binds
(world premiere; made possible with support from Silkroad)

EDWARD PEREZ / KAORU WATANABE
Fragments
(world premiere; made possible with support from Silkroad)

SHANBEI FOLK SONG
Lan Hua-Hua (“Blue Little Flower”)
(arr. Wu Tong and Li Cang Sang)

TARAF DE HAIIDOUKS
Turceasca (“Turkish Song”)
(arr. Ljova, Osvaldo Golijov, Silkroad Ensemble)

VISHNU DIGAMBAR PALUSKAR/
MAHATMA GANDHI
Raghubati Raghava Raja Ram
(arr. Rhiannon Giddens, Kojiro Umezaki, Sandeep Das)

WILLIAM MATTHEW GOLDEN
Where the Soul Never Dies
(arr. Hank Williams, Sr., Rhiannon Giddens, Kojiro Umezaki, Sandeep Das)

ARTISTS

SILKROAD ENSEMBLE
The Silkroad Ensemble creates music that engages difference, sparking radical cultural collaboration and passion-driven learning to build a more hopeful world. Founded by cellist Yo-Yo Ma in 2000, the Silkroad Ensemble appears in many configurations and settings, from intimate groups of two and three in museum galleries to rousing complements of eighteen in concert halls, public squares, and amphitheaters. Off the stage, they lead professional development and music training workshops, create residency programs in schools, museums, and communities, and experiment with new media and genres to share Silkroad’s approach to radical cultural collaboration. Silkroad musicians and composers hail from more than twenty countries, drawing on a rich tapestry of traditions to create a new musical language—a uniquely engaging and accessible encounter between the foreign and the familiar that reflects our many-layered contemporary identities. The Silkroad Ensemble has performed in more than 100 cities in more than thirty countries and has recorded seven albums. Its 2016 release, “Sing Me Home,” won the Grammy Award for Best World Music Album. The Music of Strangers, a documentary about the ensemble directed by the Academy Award-winning filmmaker Morgan Neville, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2015 and was released worldwide in 2016. Please visit our website at silkroad.org.

RHIANNON GIDDENS
Rhiannon Giddens is a celebrated artist who excavates the past to reveal truths about our present. A MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipient, Rhiannon Giddens has Grammy-nominated six times, and won once, for her work with the Carolina Chocolate Drops, a group she co-founded. She was nominated this year for her collaboration with multi-
instrumentalist Francesco Turrisi, *there is no Other* (2019), an album that is at once a condemnation of “othering” and a celebration of the spread of ideas, connectivity, and shared experience. She has performed for the Obamas at the White House and acted in two seasons of the hit television series *Nashville*. Giddens has been profiled by *CBS Sunday Morning*, the *New York Times*, and NPR’s *Fresh Air*, among other outlets. With the Boston Pops in 2019, she curated a two-concert program celebrating the music of black Americans from folk song to Duke Ellington. She is featured in Ken Burns’s *Country Music* documentary series, which aired on PBS. In 2019, Giddens also formed the band Our Native Daughters with three other black female banjo players and contributed to and produced their album *Songs of Our Native Daughters* (2019), which tells stories of historic black womanhood and survival.

**Notes on the Program**


**MAEVE GILCHRIST / KEVORK MOURAD**

**How the Knot Binds**

As our current situation suspends our normal realities, we as a community are being forced to hone in on what remains consistent in our lives. A sharpening of observation and inward reflection allow us to experience what is the essence of our lives. Around us, the planet carries on its cycle, allowing the tedium and challenge of the winter months to bear fruit in a spring performance, only to carry on the work after the blossoms have fallen.

In this collaboration of sound and imagery, Maeve and Kevork seek to harness the linear energy of time relentlessly moving forward in spite of our current sedentary state. Drawing motivic inspiration from the elaborate knotwork of the Armenian Khachkar sculptures and the remarkably similar early Christian knotwork of the Celtic Isles, these two artists come together to create a vignette that both celebrates the irrepressible movement of the natural world while creating a moment of suspension in our personal experiences of time, honoring the past to inform the present.

The piece is divided into three sections involving a live harp performance and a pre-recorded “wash” of sound which is embedded into Kevork’s video. In the pre-recorded soundscape, the sounds of the brush on the canvas as well as the kinetic “clicking” of the metal levers on the harp create a “working backdrop” from which the melodies emerge, morphing into one another and hinting harmonically and texturally at the two respective cultures until they coalesce into an overt celebration of the connection found. As the melodic line evolves and morphs in shape and mood, Kevork will follow the rhythm and melody of the music, using improvisatory and gestural lines to conjure Celtic motifs, then meld them into Armenian motifs, transforming these manmade sculptural designs into the natural landscape that inspired them.

**EDWARD PEREZ / KAORU WATANABE**

**Fragments**

2020 is a year marked by a shattered and fragmented world: a global pandemic and resulting quarantine, further exposing underlying systemic racism in all levels of society and exacerbating the dissonance in the worlds of culture, politics, health care, commerce, and philosophies, as well as a sense of distrust in media, in science, in our leaders, in institutions, in government and other long-held beliefs.

When we were given the opportunity to co-create a new musical work while separated in quarantine, we discussed what aspect of the world or current life the piece might reflect. We found ourselves overwhelmed. What music could possibly speak to the reality of a world fallen apart?

We decided to take a step back and simply send each other musical fragments, without a plan or judgment, and through an intense back-and-forth process of writing, re-writing, discarding and writing more, we wove them into a single piece, a unified whole. Through the therapeutic process of creating music together we discovered that parts of our lives had ended up in the piece. The resulting composition took on an insistent, urgent, yet hopeful tone.

Beyond the solace and comfort found in music, we are hopeful that this historic moment will produce meaningful change that our world so desperately needs and we so fervently desire. We have chosen to contribute the artist fees from the debut of this composition to the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and Black Lives Matter.

**LAN HUA-HUA** (‘Blue Little Flower’) is a beloved traditional Chinese folk song, which sheng player Wu Tong introduced to the Silk Road Ensemble for their 2002 album “Silk Road Journeys: When Strangers Meet.” Brimming with a free-spirited passion typical of melodies from China’s highlands, *Hua-Hua* tells the tragic love story of a girl trying to escape a forced marriage. The arrangement by Wu Tong and Li Cang Sang added strings and
percussion to the traditional instrumentation, further enhancing the song’s poetic impact. This is yet another variation on this well-known melody, inspired by the unique combination of instruments and musical traditions that have become part of the Silk Road Ensemble's global family.

**TURCEASCA** (“Turkish Song”) is the signature piece of the Romanian gypsy band Taraf de Haiidouks. In 1991, Taraf de Haiidouks performed outside Romania for the first time. Their music drew such interest that filmmaker Tony Garlif featured them in his documentary about the music of the Roma, *Latcho Drom*. Composer Osvaldo Golijov, whose broad, eclectic musical training (including Western classical, Jewish liturgical, klezmer, and Argentinean tango) made him an ideal translator, worked with the band to arrange Turceasca for the Kronos Quartet. The Silkroad Ensemble, further bolstered with an arrangement by Ljova, provides additional embellishments to the work with the inclusion of instruments from other traditions, including the cajón, a Peruvian drum. The piece, based on a Turkish folk song traditionally played at the end of a wedding party, explodes with rhythmic joy that altogether dissolves standard written notation in favor of momentum and fun.

From notes by SILKROAD (Tanglewood 2012)