

Asia Society
Presents

Fragility: An Exploration of Polyrythms



Friday-Saturday, June 8-9, 2018
7:30 P.M.

Asia Society
725 Park Avenue
New York City



Creative Common Ground is an Asia Society initiative that expands contemporary performance practice by commissioning, producing, and presenting artists who explore beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Fragility: An Exploration of Polyrhythms is the world premiere of composer/percussionist **Susie Ibarra**'s new immersive performance. Using polyrhythms as a model for human interdependence, Ibarra captures the concept of fragility through music, exploring the subtle intersections that affect relationships. Ibarra conceives the musical structure of *Fragility* as a 'game piece' in which the rules require performers to take turns conducting action: shifting roles and perspectives in live experimentation

Drawing on deep knowledge of Asian and jazz percussive traditions, Ibarra leads audiences on a journey into a mesmerizing musical environment. An ensemble of seven musicians creates multi-layered, expansive sonic textures. Dancer **Souleymane Badolo** interacts with custom-built motion capture technology in which the dancer's movements trigger recorded sounds to create a live rhythmic composition. The performance of *Fragility* takes place in the Asia Society Museum's Starr Gallery with musicians at the center, audience surrounding them, and all enveloped by the multi-channel surround sound installation.

"Ibarra has made a career out of exploring the dimensions of rhythm and texture; she doesn't approach the drumkit with a sense of rigid utility or preconceived methodology."
- WBGO Jazz 88.3

Concept and Music Compositions: **Susie Ibarra**
Choreography: **Souleymane Badolo**
Stage Design and Lighting: **Clifton Taylor**
Sound Design: **Justin Frye**
Sound Engineering: **Andrya Ambro**
Interactive Systems Design: **Tommy Martinez**
Stage Manager: **Dathan Manning**

DreamTime Ensemble: **Claudia Acuña**, vocals; **Jennifer Choi**, violin; **Yves Dharamraj**, cello; **Yuka C. Honda**, electronics; **Susie Ibarra**, drumset and percussion; and **Jake Landau**, guitar and keyboard

Commissioned and produced by Asia Society as part of *Creative Common Ground*, an initiative that expands contemporary performance practice by commissioning, producing, and presenting artists who explore beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. The initiative is supported by a generous grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. *Fragility: An Exploration of Polyrhythms* has been developed in partnership with Pioneer Works.

About the Artists:

Susie Ibarra, composer/percussionist, creates live and immersive music that explores rhythm, indigenous practices, and interaction with cities and the natural world. Ibarra is a Yamaha, Paiste and Vic Firth Drum Artist, and 2014 TEDSenior Fellow. Ibarra has premiered a new project, DreamTime Ensemble (2017), with a forthcoming new album on Decibel Collective titled *Perception*, a collection of pieces around the idea of finding unfixed meaning in sensory experiences and interaction in one's environment. Her latest works include *Musical Water Routes in the Medina of Fez*, a music and river route mobile app in collaboration with architect Aziza Chaouni for the Sacred Music Festival of Fez (2016). She is a Faculty member at Bennington College where she teaches Performance, Percussion, and at the Center for Advancement of Public Action.

Souleymane 'Solo' Badolo is a Brooklyn-based choreographer and dancer born in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Badolo has created a number of solo and small ensemble projects commissioned and presented by Danspace, New York Live Arts, Harlem Stage, the 92nd Street Y, the Museum of Art and Design, River to River Festival, and BAM. In 2015, his dance for two dancers and one percussionist, *Yimbégré*, was recognized with a Bessie Award for Outstanding Production. Mr. Badolo is the recipient of Wesleyan University's 2014 Mariam McGlone Emerging Choreographer Award and the 2015 Harkness Foundation Dance Residency at BAM Fisher. Since graduating from Bennington College with an MFA in June 2013, he has been a guest instructor at The New School, Bennington College, Williams College, and Bard College.

Claudia Acuña is a Chilean vocalist, composer, songwriter and arranger. Her debut album, *Wind from the South*, was released in 1999 on Verve Records, followed by *Rhythm of Life* in 2001 and *Luna* in 2004. Acuña's first recording on the Marsalis Music label, *En Este Momento*, was released in 2009. After taking time off to enjoy motherhood, Claudia is back currently working on new music for her 6th studio album.

Jennifer Choi has charted a career that breaks through the conventional boundaries of solo violin, chamber music, and the art of improvisation. Hailed by *The New York Times* as an "excellent violinist," and "soulful, compelling," Jennifer has performed worldwide since giving her debut recital at Carnegie Hall's Weill Hall in 2000. In 2001, Jennifer found another voice with her violin through the art of improvisation when she joined the Susie Ibarra Trio. A dedicated music educator, Jennifer is a veteran Teaching Artist for the New York Philharmonic and the 92nd Street Y. Jennifer is a graduate of the Juilliard School and Oberlin Conservatory of Music.

Yves Dharamraj is a Franco-American cellist working as a soloist, chamber musician, teaching artist, and composer. His multifaceted career has taken him to the major stages of US and abroad, including appearances at Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center; the Kennedy Center; Orchestra Hall; Chicago Cultural Center; Disney Hall; and Spoleto Festival USA, among others. Dr. Dharamraj earned his Bachelor and Masters of Music degrees at Yale and his Doctorate of Musical Arts at Juilliard.

Justin Frye is a multi-instrumentalist, composer and sound artist/engineer from Virginia Beach, known primarily for his genre bending project PC Worship, where his work typically focuses on blending spontaneous elements and improvisation with carefully composed sonic environments. As an acoustic and electric bass player, Frye has performed locally and internationally. Frye has also spent the last decade in NYC, working as an audio engineer and music programmer at the New Music venues Pioneer Works and Roulette, where he has curated concerts and helped artists cultivate new work.

Yuka C. Honda is a composer, producer, performer and improviser, originally from Japan and currently living in New York. In the 1990's, she founded the band Cibo Matto, the band released 2 LPs and 1EP and toured the world extensively. Recently, as a solo artist, Honda has expanded her work in new directions, including creating an multi-sensory opera that includes a collaboration with dancers.

Jake Landau is a multi-instrumentalist and composer who plays drums/percussion, piano and guitar. He has a fluid musicality that blurs the line between his instruments and musical genres. Having studied music composition, history and performance at Bennington College, he is now based in New York and is a founding member of the jazz/improv duet 'The 6/8's,' and has been invited to play and record alongside Susie Ibarra in her DreamTime Ensemble as well as at the Rio 2016 Olympics.

Clifton Taylor's design work spans the worlds of music, theater, opera and dance. In addition to US projects, his work has been recently commissioned in China, Japan, Indonesia and Singapore as well as in countries across Europe and South America. In 2001, he was awarded an ACC grant to teach and study in Cambodia. He has worked in association with the Asia Society on projects since 1993.

About Performing Arts at Asia Society

Asia Society's Performing Arts Program is an intrinsic component of Asia Society's commitment to sharing vital aspects of Asian culture by placing creative expression at the center of a more comprehensive understanding of culture. Whether it is experimental artists exploring new territory or traditional artists bringing to life the voices of a great legacy, the Performing Arts Program has created a powerful platform for connecting and engaging with Asian culture within a deeper cultural context. We have presented extraordinary artists from renowned names such as Lang Lang, Tan Dun, Abida Parveen, Shen Wei, David Henry Hwang, Sardono and Malavika Sarukkai, to the latest emerging voices such as Samita Sinha and Susie Ibarra. Beginning in 1957, with New York's first performance by Indian maestro Ravi Shankar, the Performing Arts Program has since presented over a thousand performances, including original commissioned work from Asian and Asian-American artists, as well as American artists influenced by Asia, such as Phillip Glass, DJ Spooky and Vijay Iyer. From Indonesian hip-hop to electronica from Shanghai; experimental dance to the deeply moving traditions of India's *Kuttiyatam*, Burmese *Zat Pwe*, we foster artistic exchange and provide creative opportunities for artists.

Creative Common Ground; Catalyzing Artistic Encounters in Contemporary Art and Performance is a new Asia Society initiative to commission, produce and present artistic works of differing scales. The initiative seeks to bring together contemporary boundary-crossing Asian artists (both Asian-born and American-born) to explore the confluences of art as it cuts across genres. *The Creative Common Ground* initiative will deepen our capacity to nurture a more holistic, cohesive programmatic expansion and exploration in new directions in the arts. By breaking the silos of genre and geography, we aim to create the space needed to find the voices of a new generation of artists.

For more information, please visit AsiaSociety.org

Asia Society Staff:

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