



CURRENTS Artist Biographies

Conductor **Michael Morgan** was born and raised in Washington DC and is recognized worldwide for innovative and thematically rich programs that make connections between a wide range of artists and musical cultures. A key part of the Bay Area's artistic and community fabric for three decades, he serves as Music Director of the Oakland Symphony and Artistic Director of the Oakland Youth Orchestra. Morgan's ties to the San Francisco Symphony stretch back to 1994, when he first led Concerts for Kids performances. In 2022 he will present a boldly varied SF Symphony subscription program of works by Carlos Simon, Price, Brahms, and Franck—a concert that was originally to have taken place in April 2020 and was canceled due to COVID-19.

From a young age, Canadian conductor **Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser** turned to orchestral music to bring light, beauty, and healing to his personal and professional life. Currently Artist-in-Residence and Community Ambassador at Symphony Nova Scotia, he is also on the Board of Orchestras Canada, where he serves as chair of the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Committee. Bartholomew-Poyser was the subject of the CBC/Iron Bay Media documentary *Disruptor Conductor*, which features footage of him conducting the San Francisco Symphony during the 2018–19 season, in addition to documenting other significant projects he was involved in throughout that season. Since December 2015, when he led his first holiday Deck the Hall concert with the San Francisco Symphony, Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser has returned to lead the Orchestra almost every season. In addition to Deck the Hall, he has conducted the San Francisco Symphony's Music for Families and Adventures in Music concerts, and led a set of SoundBox performances in December 2019.

CURRENTS Episode I: Enter the Pipa

A native of China, **Shenshen Zhang** has made her home in the San Francisco Bay Area since 2006. In addition to performing the traditional Chinese pipa repertory, she has also appeared with ensembles including Houston Grand Opera, Alonzo King Lines Ballet, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and Symphony Silicon Valley. Shenshen teaches classical Chinese music at her pipa studio in the Silicon Valley.

Born in China and raised in San Francisco, **Strauss Shi** began studying violin and erhu as a young boy. He received degrees in violin from the Juilliard School and USC Thornton School of Music and is an alumnus of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra.

San Francisco Symphony Musicians:

[Yun Jie Liu](#) Associate Principal Viola

[Amos Yang](#) Assistant Principal Cello

[Jessie Fellows](#) Assistant Principal Second Violin

CURRENTS Episode II: Bay Area Blue Notes

A native of Houston, TX, saxophonist/composer/arranger **Jason Hainsworth** has led his own quartet throughout the world; performed and recorded with Michael Dease, Johnathan Blake, Renee Rosnes, Randy Brecker, Lewis Nash, Glenn Zaleski, Tim Warfield, and Martin Bejerano; and toured as a member of Ed Calle's Mamblue, Tito Puente, Jr's. Latin Jazz All Stars, and Melton Mustafa Jazz Orchestra. Mr. Hainsworth's albums include *Kaleidoscope* and his latest release, *Third Ward Stories*. He serves as Assistant Director of the Roots, Jazz, and American Music (RJAM) program at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. For more on Jason Hainsworth, visit jasonhainsworthmusic.com.

Tammy L Hall began playing the piano at age four, in Dallas, TX. Her early musical experiences helped form the triad of her core sound: a fusion of Jazz, Gospel, and Classical. After attending Mills College in Oakland, CA, she spent time living and performing in Brussels before returning to the Bay Area in 1989. She has since collaborated with leading artists including Mary Wilson, Kim Nalley, Marcus Shelby, Houston Person, David “Fathead” Newman, Pamela Rose, Queen Esther Marrow, Ernestine Anderson, and Regina Carter, among dozens of others. In addition to her work as a pianist, musician, composer, arranger, musical director, and conductor, she is an instructor at the California Jazz Conservatory, lead teaching artist for SFJAZZ, co-minister of music at Oakland’s Heart & Soul Center of Light, and she has worked with the San Francisco Symphony’s Adventures in Music program. For more on Tammy L Hall, visit tammyhall.com.

Soleil Ho is the restaurant critic at the *San Francisco Chronicle* and is a co-host of its food podcast, *Extra Spicy*. She was previously a freelance food and pop culture writer, co-founder of the *Racist Sandwich* podcast, and restaurant chef. Learn more at soleilho.com.

San Francisco Symphony Musicians:

[Mark Inouye](#) Principal Trumpet

[Scott Pingel](#) Principal Bass

[Ed Stephan](#) Principal Timpani

CURRENTS Episode III: From Scratch

Kev Choice is a pianist, composer, emcee, producer, educator, and activist, hailing from Oakland, CA. He began studying piano and rapping at the age of eleven. After graduating from Skyline High School in Oakland, he went on to earn music degrees from Xavier University of Louisiana and Southern Illinois University. Kev has worked and toured with artists such as Lauryn Hill, Michael Franti, Goapele, Too Short, and more. His own band, Kev Choice Ensemble, combines elements of Hip Hop, Jazz, soul, funk, and classical to create his own unique sound as a pianist and lyricist. He has also produced five solo albums, including his most recent work *Social Distancing*, created while sheltering-in place. In 2018, he composed the orchestral Hip Hop work *Soul Restoration Suite* on commission from the Oakland Symphony. Kev Choice is currently on the faculty at Oakland School for the Arts, and he also serves as Vice-Chair of Oakland’s Cultural Affairs Commission. For more on Kev Choice, visit kevchoice.wordpress.com.

Aima Paule, aka **AĪMA the DRMR**, is a multidisciplinary artist who has been performing, as well as creating and hosting events, for more than a decade. She is co-founder of Oakland’s beloved Soulovely, a QTBIPOC dance party now going into its ninth year. Aima has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area for twenty years and continues to be inspired by the beauty and brilliance of the art, music, and activism that is fostered here. No stranger to collaboration, she believes in the power of using art and music as a bridge between communities. Aima has rocked crowds from Oakland to Barcelona as a vocalist and emcee with groups such as Jazz Mafia, J-Boogie’s Dubtronic Science, and Femme Deadly Venoms, with whom she recently recorded *Femmenomenon*, to be released later this year. As a visual artist she has explored multimedia concepts, installations, and set designs. She is drawn towards natural materials, sacred geometry, healing frequencies, and ancestral wisdom and medicines as inspiration for her work. Learn more at aimathedreamer.bandcamp.com.

DJ/turntablist, producer, and vocalist **Lady Fingaz** began studying piano at an early age in her hometown of Austin, TX before discovering the art of DJing and turntablism as a teenager. After relocating to San Francisco from New Orleans, she joined forces with the all-female super group Femme Deadly Venoms, placing second in the 2010 US Team DMC competition. She is currently a member of trumpeter Nicholas Payton’s latest project and band, Afro-Caribbean Mixtape. To learn more, visit ladyfingaz.com.

A Bay Area native, **Andrew Levin** embarked on a full-time music career in the multicultural and countercultural center of Oakland following his graduation from college. His songs are firmly rooted in his personal story of building a life around music and overcoming trauma. Andrew has been a creative member of projects including the Kev Choice Ensemble, Emily Afton, and the Jazz Mafia, and he has performed and recorded with the likes of Jody Watley, Terrace Martin, Hans Zimmer, Lyrics Born, Zion, and i. Learn more at andrewlevinmusic.com.

Born and raised in San Francisco, CA, **Marcus Phillips** was introduced to music at a young age, playing drums and keyboards in his grandfather's church. Currently bassist for Jennifer Hudson, he has traveled the world playing for artists such as Leela James, Ledisi, Dave Hollister, Tina Campbell, Tony! Toni! Toné!, DJ Quik, Eric Roberson, Mike Phillips, Keyshia Cole, Joe, Eric Benet, Mali Music, Iyanla Vanzant, Kelly Clarkson, and Goapele. His band Top of the Marc features some of the Bay Area's leading musicians.

A native of Cleveland, OH drummer/singer/songwriter/producer **Dame Drummer** hails from a musical family. Following a professional basketball career, he returned to music and made his way to California. He has collaborated with artists such as Los Rakas, LeVICE, Jazz Mafia, Martin Luther, Marcus Machado, Uriah Duffy, Aisha Fukushima, Shapeshifter, DaM-Funk, Kev Choice, Conya Doss, Alvin Frazier, Myron, Mugpush, DJ Teeko, Predestined Muzic, Sylvia Benford, Sarah's Girl, Fantastic Negrito, and Liv Warfield. He is currently wrapping up his full-length LP entitled *Loveolution*. [Learn more at damedrummer.com](#).

Mix'd Ingrdnts is a multi-ethnic, multi-genre dance collective composed of female-identified artists, who work together with the intent to contribute to the impact of social change. Established in 2010, the company accomplishes its mission through urban performance, dance education, and connection, while cultivating a stronger community of artists of all ages and mediums through process workshoping and mentorship. Co-founder and Company Director **Jenay "ShinobiJaxx" Anolin** is an Oakland native who has been community organizing in the Bay Area since 2006. She is classically trained in ballet and graduated from UCLA where she was introduced to various street styles. Dancer **Yeni Lucero** was born in Chalchuapa, El Salvador. A graduate of San Francisco State University, she extended her training at the Alvin Ailey School. She has performed work by West African Dance Company-Diamanou Coura, Paco Gomes, Alayo Dance Company, Annie Rosenthal, Robert Moses' Kin, Ron K. Brown, Delina Patrice, and Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble. For more information, visit [mixdingrdnts.com](#).

Maddy "MADlines" Clifford is a writer, musician, and educator born and raised in Seattle, WA. Currently based in Oakland, she has spent the past ten years teaching literary arts workshops to youth on college campuses, within locked-down facilities, and even as far away as Uganda. She recently made a guest appearance on the Oakland web series *The North Pole*, and she was featured on the song, "Black Grxl Magic" by Grammy-nominated Hip Hop-for-kids group, Alphabet Rockers. Learn more at [madlinesinfo.com](#).

Composer and pianist **JooWan Kim** began his formal training in composition at Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA, where he graduated a Bachelor of Music in composition in 2003. He continued his education at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, receiving a Master of Music in composition in 2006. JooWan founded Hip Hop Orchestra Ensemble Mik Nawooj in 2010. For more information, visit [ensemblemiknawooj.com](#).

San Francisco Symphony Musicians:

[Jessie Fellows](#) Assistant Principal Second Violin

[Jonathan Vinocour](#) Principal Viola

[Barbara Bogatin](#) Cello

[William Ritchen](#) Bass

[Carey Bell](#) Principal Clarinet

[Jerome Simas](#) Bass Clarinet

[Aaron Schuman](#) Associate Principal Trumpet

[Nick Platoff](#) Associate Principal Trombone

[Douglas Rioth](#) Principal Harp

[Ed Stephan](#) Principal Timpani

CURRENTS Episode IV: ¡Viva México!

Los Cenzontles (The Mockingbirds), is a nonprofit organization, cultural arts academy, band, and production team that has taught and promoted Mexican-American culture in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond since 1989. Los Cenzontles has received the Presidential Committee on the Arts and Humanities Coming Up Taller Award, as well as awards from National Endowment for the Arts, Ford Foundation, and Rockefeller Foundation, among many others. Their performances

include national appearances at the Kennedy Center and Library of Congress in Washington DC and abroad in collaboration with the US State Department. Their most meaningful endorsement, however, comes from the trust of local families, who have formed its staff and faculty for more than thirty years. Learn more at loscenzontles.com.

Eugene Rodriguez is Founder and Director of Los Cenzontles Cultural Arts Academy. A Grammy-nominated producer and US Artist Fellow, he holds a master's degree in music. He has produced more than thirty musical albums and has collaborated with David Hidalgo, Los Lobos, Jackson Browne, Ry Cooder, Taj Mahal, The Chieftains, Linda Ronstadt, Flaco Jimenez, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, and numerous Mexican folk artists. His documentary productions have been widely broadcast nationally on PBS.

Lucina Rodriguez was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. She came to California at the age of eleven and joined Los Cenzontles at the age of fifteen. She learned the traditional folk style dances of Veracruz, Michoacan, and Jalisco from folk master artists like Julian Gonzales and Atilano Lopez. She also works for the Los Cenzontles Mexican Arts Center organization as the External Program manager, dance and music teacher.

Fabiola Trujillo grew up in Jerez, Zacatecas, Mexico and moved to the US at the age of seven. At fifteen she joined Los Cenzontles where she blossomed into a strong and charismatic singer. She draws inspiration from artists such as Mexican ranchera singer Lola Beltrán and Patsy Cline. He serves as the Program Manager at Los Cenzontles Academy.

Verenice Velazquez, a recent graduate of UC San Diego, has studied dance and music at Los Cenzontles Academy since the age of seven. With Los Cenzontles, she has performed widely and appeared in a number of video productions.

Cascada de Flores is a bi-national combination of musicians who find the joy of creation, individual expression, and musical communication within Mexican and Latin traditions. In twenty years, Cascada de Flores has recorded five albums; creatively collaborated with theater, film and dance; and performed throughout the US, Canada, Mexico, and Cuba. Vocalist, dancer, and instrumentalist **Arwen Lawrence** is co-founder of Cascada de Flores. Originally from New York, she was raised in Southern California and found her voice among the Mexican community in Los Angeles. She traveled and recorded with Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano and later toured with Jorge Saldaña. In the San Francisco Bay Area, she has taught music in bilingual public schools, led workshops for music teachers about curriculum in Spanish, and presented musical stories for children with Cascada de Flores. **Jorge Liceaga** is a guitarist, composer, arranger, children's music composer and educator, and culinary phenomenon. As a youth in Mexico City, he was mentored on the guitar by Yucatecan Leonardo "El León" Salas, and later became immersed in the art of the Flamenco guitar. Jorge furthered his studies in the ethnomusicology program of the Escuela Nacional de Música. He has been part of notable groups such as Fuego Vivo (Flamenco music and dance), and the innovative quintet Potaje, which explores the musical bridges between Spain and Cuba. He is the musical director and guitarist of Virginia Iglesias' Flamenco Dance Company. Learn more at www.cascadeflores.com

San Francisco Symphony Musicians:

[Melissa Kleinbart](#) Violin
[Wyatt Underhill](#) Assistant Concertmaster
[David Chernyavsky](#) Violin
[Matthew Young](#) Viola
[David Gaudry](#) Viola
[Amos Yang](#) Assistant Principal Cello
[Jill Rachuy Brindel](#) Cello
[Charles Chandler](#) Bass
