



# SILKROAD ENSEMBLE



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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2019 • 7:30 PM  
PEACE CONCERT HALL

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## *Silkroad Suite*

Kayhan Kalhor

Trad. Chinese, Arr. Wu Man, Wu Tong

Henry Purcell

John Zorn, arr. Silkroad Ensemble

Gallop of A Thousand Horses

White Snow in Sunny Spring

O Solitude

Briel, from *Book of Angels*

Shawn Conley

Yann's Flight

Oswaldo Golijov

Falling Out of Time (excerpt)\*

## **Intermission**

Kayhan Kalhor,

with electronics by Jeremy Flower

Improvisation

Jason Moran

Moderato 400, from *Heroes Take Their Stands*

Oswaldo Golijov

Quisiera Yo Renegar (Aria de Judas),  
from *La Pasión Segun San Marcos*

Oswaldo Golijov

Tancas Serradas a Muru  
(Walls Are Encircling the Land)

## **The Silkroad Ensemble**

Shawn Conley, *bass*

Nicholas Cords, *viola*

Nora Fischer, *vocals*

Jeremy Flower, *guitar, electronics*

Johnny Gandelsman, *violin*

Kayhan Kalhor, *kemancheh*

Karen Ouzounian, *cello*

Shane Shanahan, *percussion*

Mazz Swift, *violin*

Wu Man, *pipa*

Wu Tong, *vocals, sheng*  
*with guests*

Dan Brantigan, *trumpet*

Biella Da Costa, *vocals*

## **Production Staff**

Jody Elff, *Sound Designer*

Nicholas Houfek, *Lighting Designer*

Ashley Martin, *Stage Manager*

Sebastian Schinkel, *Monitor Engineer*

\**Silkroad is grateful to the members of the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, for their partnership in the development of this work.*

## Tour Management

Mary Pat Buerkle, *Senior Vice President and Manager,  
Artists & Attractions, Opus 3 Artists*

## Staff

Nicholas Cords, *Co-Artistic Director*

Kathy Fletcher, *Executive Director*

Adam Gurczak, *Artistic Programs*

*Administrator*

Liz Keller-Tripp, *Producer & Artistic*

*Programs Director*

Jennifer Klahn, *Acting Director*

*of Development*

Shea Mavros, *Acting Director of Learning*

Shane Shanahan, *Co-Artistic Director*

Jessica Shuttleworth, *Director of Marketing*

Lori Taylor, *Learning Advisor*

Jennifer Tester, *Bookkeeper*

Jacqueline Worley, *Director of Finance*

## Exclusive Management

*Opus 3 Artists LLC • 470 Park Ave South • New York, NY 10016*

## ABOUT SILKROAD

Yo-Yo Ma conceived Silkroad in 1998 as a reminder that even as rapid globalization resulted in division, it brought extraordinary possibilities for working together. Seeking to understand this dynamic, he began to learn about the historical Silk Road, recognizing in it a model for productive cultural collaboration, for the exchange of ideas and tradition alongside commerce and innovation. And in a radical experiment, he brought together musicians from the lands of the Silk Road to co-create a new artistic idiom, a musical language founded in difference, a metaphor for the benefits of a more connected world.

The Grammy® Award-winning Silkroad Ensemble has been at the core of Silkroad's work to build a more hopeful and inclusive world since 2000. These artists represent dozens of nationalities and artistic traditions, from Spain and Japan to Syria and the United States. Today, Silkroad artists seek and practice cultural collaboration in many forms, creating and presenting new music, teacher and musician training workshops, and residency programs in schools, museums, and communities.

Silkroad has recorded seven albums. *Sing Me Home*, which won the 2016 Grammy for Best World Music Album, was developed and recorded alongside the documentary feature *The Music of Strangers*, from Oscar®-winning director Morgan Neville.

Silkroad gratefully acknowledges the support of individuals, foundations, and corporations, including the Barr Foundation, Hyosung Corporation, and Alice L. Walton Foundation.

To learn more about Silkroad, please visit [silkroad.org](http://silkroad.org) on the web and @silkroadproject on social media.

## A LETTER FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

It's been 20 years since Yo-Yo Ma first gathered musicians from many corners of the world to play together in the hills of Massachusetts. It was an experiment, inspired by a vision for a new artistic language to model the power of radical cultural collaboration.

You'll see and hear the evolution of that experiment today, an evolution that continues with new urgency as we celebrate Silkroad's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Our music began deeply rooted in the lands of the historical Silk Road; today, it is an exploration of difference and collaboration that extends far beyond that place and that time. It is, we hope, an invitation to listen, to be curious, and to collaborate. Listening, curiosity, and collaboration are essential to what we do on stage, and they are habits we believe are critical to living in a hopeful, inclusive, and democratic society.

Tonight, the program features pieces written or arranged for the Silkroad Ensemble by artists from the Silkroad collective, including composer and friend Osvaldo Golijov, whose worldly approach to composition has expanded the boundaries of Silkroad's musical language even further.

Thank you for joining us as we celebrate 20 years of collaborative music-making, and we'll see you along the way!

Nicholas Cords & Shane Shanahan  
Co-Artistic Directors, Silkroad

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Born in 1963 in Iran, Kayhan Kalhor is of Kurdish descent. He began studying music at the age of seven, and is considered a master of the *kemancheh*, a bowed Persian spike fiddle. *Gallop of a Thousand Horses* is based on the folk melodies of the Turkmen people, who live in northeastern Iran, Turkmenistan, and parts of several other nations. The nomadic Turkmen are deeply connected to their horses, and this piece suggests the wild freedom of a large herd crossing the plains. The rhythms of the *tombak* (Persian drum) are complemented by the sense of motion provided by the *kemancheh* and other strings. *Gallop of a Thousand Horses* was recorded by the Silkroad Ensemble and Yo-Yo Ma on *Silk Road Journeys: Beyond the Horizon* (Sony Classical 2005).

*O Solitude*, a 1685 song by the enduring English baroque master Henry Purcell, is by far the oldest selection on tonight's program. Set on a verse from Antoine Gerard de Saint-Amant and translated by Purcell's contemporary Katherine Philips, the achingly poignant vocal line paints the poem through tones over a beguiling and repetitive ground bass. Silkroad's performance of the work attempts to honor the boundless invention of the Elizabethan era and the forward-thinking music of Purcell with a uniquely 21<sup>st</sup> century lens.

*Briel* is a selection from John Zorn's *Book of Angels*. The song's title refers to one of the Jewish angels invoked during childbirth to protect the newborn and its mother from harm and illness. In this highly original arrangement, the Ensemble has created an all-play occasion that is full of joyful surprises. The piece can be heard on Silkroad's fifth album, *A Playlist Without Borders*.

Shawn Conley composed *Yann's Flight* for his friend Yann Romanson, whose two passions are videography and flight. Shawn writes that "Yann's idea of a good time is jumping off a mountain with a paraglider strapped to his back and a camera to his head. On a trip we took to Hawaii, he brought his paraglider with him. By the time I would get up in the morning, Yann would already be back from an early morning flight. I'd find him sitting at the kitchen table finishing up edits on breathtaking video from his flight. While I never got up the nerve to join him, the images he captured made me feel as if I were there, soaring over the mountains and ocean."

*Falling Out of Time* comes face to face with a raw and vulnerable state of grief through Osvaldo Golijov's exquisite and nuanced interpretation of David Grossman's book by the same name. It is a journey to nowhere – or more accurately, a journey to no where. For the dead are no longer in time or place, and those who love them and would follow them must seek a route beyond linear boundaries. Golijov, for whom the novel is “a book of questions,” has distilled from it three counterpoints, which we hear again and again. At times a cry to pierce the sky, at times an echo swollen with tenderness: *Where are you? Who are you there? How are you there?* Perhaps more than an act of making art, the joining of Golijov's musical voice to Grossman's literary one is an act of accompaniment. And by collaborating with the Silkroad Ensemble in the creation of this piece, Golijov widens the circle of accompaniment. Accompaniment is not a cure for grief. But it may be the opposite of madness. (adapted from notes by Leah Hager Cohen)

During the Great Migration, millions of African Americans left the South, begging the question for those who stayed in places like Montgomery, Alabama, of how to secure the most basic rights, such as walking down the street, riding on public transportation, and being a part of a community. A visitor, in the form of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., comes to address a crowd gathered in the safe space of an African American church: to let them know they're heard, to voice his concern, to signal change that can be brought about, and to confront “the oppressive state,” in King's words, that terrorize and surround them everywhere outside that building. King's attempt to motivate and unleash action from a terrified populace causes an eruption of emotion — emotion related to fear, anguish, recognition, and hope for change. Composer Jason Moran uses sheng, pipa, and percussion in a call-and-response relationship to capture the hymn, rhythm, and drama of King's address and the crowd's experience of it. This piece is titled *Moderato 400*, adds Moran, “because somehow we flatten the terror of the South with images of rabid citizens when it is the moderate who have oppressed African Americans for 400 years — casually, with a moderate foot on the necks of generations.” The work is one of five newer compositions that comprise the multimedia project *Heroes Take Their Stands*.

Osvaldo Golijov's *La Pasión Según San Marcos* has become an international success, matching the text's direct, vernacular quality with Golijov's popular musical and ritual styles, particularly from Brazil and Cuba. With a few exceptions, the text is in Spanish, but a sort of street Spanish from different areas. A selected three arias within the work come from almost symmetrical points in the Passion's 34 movements; Judas' aria, *Quisiera Yo Renegar*, occurs after his meeting with the high priest. It is a fantasy on a traditional flamenco song (“I'd Like to Forsake this World”) that Golijov heard in an old recording by the cantaora La Niña de los Peines.

*Tancas Serradas a Muru* (Walls are Encircling the Land) is a protest song from 18th century Sardinia, and Osvaldo Golijov notes, “The sentiment of oppressed people struggling to overthrow power can be applied to all persecuted people today.” Drawn from Golijov's *Ayre*, a song-cycle for soprano and ensemble, the piece is a meditation on the intermingling of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish cultures in medieval Spain. “With a little bend, a melody goes from Jewish to Arab to Christian,” Golijov says. “How connected these cultures are and how terrible it is when they don't understand each other. The grief that we are living in the world today has already happened for centuries but somehow harmony was possible between these civilizations.”

## SILKROAD BIOS

As a trumpet player and composer, **Dan Brantigan** offers a unique sound and textural perspective to a diverse range of musical projects and films. He has performed around the world with notable artists including Osvaldo Golijov, David Byrne, Macy Gray, Bonobo, Sarah Brightman, Doyle Bramhall II, Kaki King, DJ Krush, and as a featured soloist in multiple Ken Burns documentary series. His composition and sound design work have received accolades from the Bourges Institute and the ASA and can be heard regularly in feature and documentary films.

Honolulu-born bassist **Shawn Conley** won a position with the Honolulu Symphony while in high school and went on to earn degrees in Music Performance from Rice University. Conley won the 2009 International Society of Bassists Jazz Competition, was a semifinalist in the Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition, and received a Wagoner Fellowship. He has performed with Sting, Peter Gabriel, and Emanuel Ax, among many others. He teaches at the Hawaii Contrabass Festival and regularly performs with The Hot Club of Detroit, The NOW Ensemble, and The Knights.

Violist **Nicholas Cords** has devoted his career to the advocacy of music drawn from a strikingly broad historic and geographic spectrum. Cords serves as one of Silkroad's inaugural co-artistic directors. He is also a founding member of the string quartet Brooklyn Rider and a member of The Knights. Cords performs internationally as an acclaimed soloist and guest chamber musician. His recent solo recording, *Recursions*, features music ranging from Biber to his own compositions. A prize-winning violist in his student days at the Juilliard School and the Curtis Institute, he currently teaches viola and chamber music at New England Conservatory in Boston.

**Biella Da Costa** is one of Venezuela's most acclaimed and versatile vocalists. She was awarded the "Premio Nacional del Artista" on two occasions. Da Costa has shared the stage with international artists such as Eric Clapton, Ray Charles and others. She has appeared in prestigious jazz festivals and venues throughout Europe, North America, Russia, and Australia. Since November 2000 she has been performing Osvaldo Golijov's *La Pasión Según San Marcos*, *Ayre*, and *Oceana*. Da Costa has numerous recordings to her credit, *El Sueño* with Casablanca, *Solo Jazz*, *Jazz & Blues*, and *Biella Da Costa en Navidad*, and now she is releasing a new work. Da Costa is also featured on *Monk in The Sun*, a tribute to Thelonious Monk released in the U.S. In 2009 she recorded Golijov's *La Pasión Según San Marcos* at the Carré Theatre in Holland. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, Boston Symphony, Sydney Opera House, and many other theaters around the world.

**Jody Elff** is a Grammy Award-winning audio engineer and sound designer. For 25 years he has worked with some of the world's most adventurous artists in the pursuit of the ideal representation of their sonic intention in music performances and recordings. His fine art sound works have been presented in galleries, museums, and public spaces internationally. His commercial work includes sound design and implementation for live television and corporate events, as well as architectural spaces.

**Nora Fischer** is challenging the way we listen to the voice. The Amsterdam-based singer is renowned for her adventurous approach to live performance and her innovative projects fusing classical and contemporary repertoire. This can range from traditional concert programs to genre-defying collaborations – such as her debut album *HUSH*, which was released on Deutsche Grammophon in April 2018. Using her voice as a versatile instrument, Fischer's repertoire ranges from Monteverdi to the many compositions that have been written for her in the present day. Her "affinity with experimental classical styles and sharp dramatic instincts" (*The New York Times*) have led to many collaborations with leading contemporary composers, including Louis

Andriessen, Osvaldo Golijov, David Lang, and Michel van der Aa. Fischer's unique approach has taken her around the globe, from the Philharmonie de Paris and Walt Disney Concert Hall to the Lowlands Pop Festival and a mysterious forest at the Oerol Theatre Festival.

**Jeremy Flower** is a multi-instrumentalist and composer of acoustic and electronic music. His work with electronics has landed him on stage as a guest artist with orchestras and chamber groups all over the world as well as with world-renowned electronic producers in experimental, ambient, and minimal techno genres. Flower has been commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for their Music NOW series, James Sommerville and the Hamilton Philharmonic for their new music festival "What Next?" and Carnegie Hall's Weill Institute. He writes music for the Mediated Matter Group from MIT's Media Lab and is part of David Krakauer's Ancestral Groove project, which explores the heritage of traditional Jewish music through the lens of the modern experience, fusing Klezmer with hip-hop, jazz, and house music. He has also collaborated extensively with Argentine-American composer Osvaldo Golijov. Currently Flower is working on a couple children, a second recorded song cycle to follow 2016's *The Real Me*, and building modular synthesizers.

The son of a musical family from Moscow, by way of Israel, violinist, composer, and producer **Johnny Gandelsman** combines his classical training with a restless desire to reach beyond the concert hall in exploring contemporary music. As a concert soloist and a founding member of the quartet Brooklyn Rider, Gandelsman has premiered dozens of new works and has released albums by The Knights, the Silkroad Ensemble, Brooklyn Rider, and others on his label, in a Circle Records.

**Nicholas Houfek** is a NYC based Lighting Designer working in music, dance, and theater. His work in music and theater includes: Patti Smith (Tribeca Film Festival/ Beacon Theater,) International Contemporary Ensemble, Maya Beiser, Ojai Music Festival, *Family Play* (Collaboration Town/The New Ohio), *The Capables* (Gym at Judson), *The Highwayman* (ARSNOVA, Dickson Place) and *The 39 Steps* (Olney Theatre Center). Houfek has worked with the Martha Graham Dance Company, Cedar Lake Contemporary Dance, and William Isaac's Kymera Dance. As Lighting Supervisor: Parsons Dance Company, Limon, Martha Graham Dance Company, and Jonah Bokaer. Co-Lighting Designs include: Li'l Buck and Yo-Yo Ma at (le) Poisson Rouge, and Natalie Merchant tours.

**Kayhan Kalhor** is an internationally acclaimed virtuoso on the kamancheh. A native of Iran, born in the Kurdish city of Kermanshah, he was a musical prodigy who travelled in Iran to perform and explore the music of its many regions. Internationally, he has appeared as soloist with a variety of symphony orchestras and ensembles. Kalhor is co-founder of the renowned ensembles Dastan; Ghazal: Persian & Indian Improvisations; and Masters of Persian Music. Kalhor's compositions are prominent in Silkroad's repertoire, and his recordings have received four Grammy Award nominations.

**Ashley R. Martin** is a proud Silkroad artist since April 2018, joining the group through the US Northeast, Florida, West Coast, and Asia tours. Martin is a freelance music touring stage and production manager, event show caller, and AEA union stage manager. Based in California, she enjoys spending her year jumping between the music, corporate, and theater worlds.

Praised for her "radiant" and "expressive" performances (*The New York Times*), cellist **Karen Ouzounian** is a winner of the S&R Foundation's Washington Award and at home in diverse musical settings. She is a founding member of the Aizuri Quartet, which was awarded the Grand Prize at the 2018 M-Prize Chamber Arts Competition, and First Prize

at the 2017 Osaka International Chamber Music Competition in Japan. Its debut album, *Blueprinting*, was released by New Amsterdam Records in Fall 2018. Her commitment to adventurous repertoire and the collaborative process has led to her membership in the Grammy-nominated chamber orchestra A Far Cry, and the critically-acclaimed new music collective counter)induction. Born to Armenian parents in Toronto, Ouzounian holds Master of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees from The Juilliard School, where she was a student of Timothy Eddy.

Percussionist, composer, and arranger **Shane Shanahan** has combined his studies of drumming traditions from around the world with his background in jazz, rock, and Western art music to create a unique, highly sought after style. He is one of Silkroad's inaugural co-artistic directors, and has performed with Bobby McFerrin, James Taylor, Aretha Franklin, Philip Glass, Alison Krauss, Chaka Khan, and Deep Purple, among others, and has appeared at the White House, playing for President and First Lady Obama. He frequently hosts workshops and clinics at the world's leading universities and museums and collaborates actively with the dance, theater, and yoga communities in the New York area, including several stints on Broadway.

Critically acclaimed Violin/Vox/Freestyle Composition artist **Mazz Swift** engages audiences with her signature weaving of composition and improvisation called MazzMuse. Several of her compositions for atypical chamber ensemble have been heard on NPR. Swift has performed and taught workshops on free improvisation on six continents, most notably traveling to Suriname, Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon, Senegal, Albania, and Siberia as cultural ambassador at the invitation of the United States Department of State. She is a teaching artist with Carnegie Hall's "Future Music" and "Lullaby" programs, where she coaches an ensemble of talented teens from every corner of NYC, writes lullabies with incarcerated mothers and mothers-to-be, and leads professional development sessions for professional symphony orchestra members and their students. Swift sits on the artistic board for the Jersey City-based chamber music collective, Con Vivo, and is a proud performing member of that organization. She is currently working on a solo CD: *Solo MazzMuse*.

Pipa virtuoso and composer **Wu Man** is an ambassador of Chinese music, creating a new role for her lute-like instrument in both traditional and contemporary music. Brought up in the Pudong school of pipa playing, Wu Man became the first person to receive a master's degree in pipa performance from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. She is a frequent collaborator with the Kronos Quartet and Shanghai Quartet, and has performed in recital and as soloist with major orchestras around the world, regularly premiering new works. Wu Man has recorded more than 40 albums, five of which have been nominated for Grammy Awards. She was named *Musical America's* 2013 Instrumentalist of the Year, but the best measure of her achievement is that her instrument, which dates back 2000 years, is no longer an exotic curiosity.

Born into a musical family, **Wu Tong** graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music in 1994 and has appeared as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, London Sinfonietta, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. He is the founding vocalist of Lunhui (Again), the first rock band ever to appear on Chinese television. In 2008 he made his operatic debut in *The Bonesetter's Daughter* (San Francisco Opera) and wrote the film score to Wong Kar-Wai's *Ashes of Time Redux*. A nominee for Best Crossover Album at Taiwan's 2011 Golden Melody Awards, he was named 2012 Musician of the Year by New York's China Institute. In 2013, he premiered Zhao Lin's *Duo*, a double concerto written for him and Yo-Yo Ma.

# CURIOSITY. CREATIVITY. GENEROSITY. PASSION.

The same qualities that make a performance great can build a more hopeful and inclusive world.

Learn more about Silkroad's work to spark passion-driven learning and radical cultural collaboration in communities around the world at [silkroad.org](http://silkroad.org).



**"Arts are about opening up to possibility. Possibility links to hope. We all need hope."**  
– Kojiro Umezaki, Silkroad Artist

We are grateful to our friends and partners who believe that by embracing our differences, we enrich our humanity.

