



PROGRAM

Air..... Aaron Jay Kernis

Caroline Rothstein, *violin*
Talar Khosdeghian, *piano*

Facsimile..... Griffin Candey

- I. Facsimile—
- II. You Know Me by a Different Name—
- III. The Transfiguration

Kelly Quesada, *cello solo*
Caroline Rothstein, *violin*
Bridget Andes, *viola*
Daniel Williams, *clarinet*
Talar Khosdeghian, *piano*
Justin Peters, *percussion*

Tight Sweater..... Marc Mellits

- I. Exposed Zipper
- II. Trans Fatty Acid's Rein
- III. Mara's Lullaby
- IV. Pickle Trousers
- V. Evil Yellow Penguin
- VI. Mechanically Separated Chicken Parts

Daniel Williams, *bass clarinet*
Justin Peters, *marimba*
Talar Khosdeghian, *piano*

COMPOSERS' NOTES

Air

Air is a love letter to the violin. Songlike and lyrical, it opens up a full range of the instrument's expressive and poignant possibilities. Composed with two main themes and open in harmony, the first poses melodic questions and their response, while the second is very still, rising ever-upward into the highest range of the violin. Following a middle section of dramatic intensity, it cycles back to the themes in reverse, developing each along the way, and ending quietly after a final plaintive ascent.

Air is dedicated to pianist Evelyne Luest, the composer's wife, and was composed in 1995 for violinist Joshua Bell. Since its premiere, it has been arranged in many versions with solo instrument and orchestra, chamber ensemble or piano.

—Aaron Jay Kernis

Facsimile

Facsimile delves into memory—how memory can be something both big and small, personal or collective, quiet or weaponized—how we tend to view memory as reliable when it is often rewritten by our own insecurities or by the input of others—how it can be the small boat we send down the river when we're gone. This is a small window in an almost limitless subject.

The first and title movement, *Facsimile*, focuses primarily on the mutability of memory, how it can betray us sometimes—a trait that can apply to both personal and historical memory. Personal memory can be skewed by others' needs or beliefs, by the repetition of a lie until we believe it to be true, or by shaping thoughts around how we *want* it to be rather than how it is or was. More and more research even suggests that depression and anxiety disorders can affect our ability to effectively log memories. Historical memory, too, constantly falls prey to revision (via individuals, governments, all skewing narratives in their favor and choosing which voices control the narrative). It brought to mind what happens to an image when it's copied a few times too often—when we print an image, then copy it, then copy the copy, *ad infinitum*. The picture sometimes retains a bit of its original character, but this repetition tends to smudge out most of the details, the individuality.

The second movement, *You Know Me by a Different Name*, comes from a conversation that my wife, Susan, and I have had several times: about how younger versions of ourselves seem, when we look back, like wholly different people—with different goals, tastes, and ideals. (The American poet Walt Whitman apparently held the same belief: when confronted with the many photographs of himself later in his life, he said that looking at these younger iterations of himself was like looking at a stranger—someone he vaguely remembered, but not well.) It made me think about what parts of us we leave behind as we change and what parts of us remain. What do these versions of ourselves mean to us now? What do we owe them? What do they owe us?

The third movement, *The Transfiguration*, is about becoming a memory. If memory *is* mutable—if we *do* so often become a new person—then how can we create something that lives beyond us? Do we have any say over that?

While writing this piece, I was serving as the music director for a little Presbyterian church in Michigan. (As a music director, one sits through a *whole lot* of Sundays in a choir loft with far too much time to think—and, suffice it to say, often completely ignoring the message being provided that Sunday.) While I sat, turning over

the piece in my head, the pastor dove into the week's passage, from the book of Matthew: the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain, joined by Moses and Elijah. The primary detail of the story that grabbed my attention was not actually the reveal of Jesus' divinity to the disciples present, but the fact that he asks the disciples not to speak of it until after the crucifixion (*"Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead."*) This was something experienced in real time but intended to live far beyond those present—a placeholder, a bookmark.

I have no idea how to build something that lasts—I suspect that I'll never figure it out—but I do recognize that the dearest memories I have of those closest to me were not of them trying to be particularly memorable, but of them *being themselves*, unapologetically. That's the most that we can ask of ourselves, day to day—and hopefully, that's enough for us to send down the river, to whomever. There's comfort in that thought.

—Griffin Candey

OUR ARTISTS

Violist **Bridget Andes** has created a diverse musical career in her adopted home of Chicago. A fierce advocate of public school music education, Bridget is head of the Music Department and Director of the Strings Program at Chicago Bulls College Prep High School. She also maintains an active home studio and coaches for the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra. Outside of her busy teaching schedule, Bridget currently plays with many orchestras including Camerata Chicago, the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, and Quad City Symphony.

Bridget's versatility is showcased in her playing on "Her Majesty the Decemberists" by Grammy-nominated rock band The Decemberists, and in her collaborations with Chance the Rapper and Kenny Loggins. A graduate of DePaul University, UC Santa Barbara, and St. Olaf College, Bridget is also an alumna of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's premier training orchestra. When not busy with musical pursuits, Bridget enjoys spending time with her husband, two toddlers, and their pet Shih Tzu, Bean. She is grateful for the opportunity to play with the outstanding musicians of CCE!

Pianist **Talar Khosdeghian** is a collaborative artist in the Chicago area. She holds Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts degrees in Piano Performance and English Literature from Northwestern University. She serves as Operations and Music Director for CHAI Collaborative Ensemble, principal accompanist for Chicago Chamber Choir, accompanist for William Ferris Chorale, and accompanist for Windy City Performing Arts.

Talar has performed as both a soloist and chamber musician in festivals around the world, including the Interharmony International Music Festival in Hinterzarten, Germany, the Amalfi Coast Music Festival, and the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in Lübeck, Germany. Most recently, she performed on Fourth Presbyterian's Noonday Concert Series with members of CCE. She is also featured on Chicago Chamber Choir's album *Live Art* and the album *Tollan*, recorded at the University of North Texas with oboist Jonathan Thompson.

When Talar isn't at the piano, she enjoys reading, hiking, and traveling solo.

Justin Peters is a percussionist, composer, and producer based in Chicago. As a performer, he splits his time between the classical and pop music worlds, appearing with groups such as Eighth Blackbird and Third Coast Percussion, as well as local outfits like Family of Geniuses and Villekulla. His debut solo album *Kinesthetics* was released in February of 2022. Justin is an alumnus of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Kelly Quesada is a cellist and educator based in Chicago. Active as both an orchestral and chamber musician, Kelly performs music of all eras. She currently performs as a member of the Tuuli Quartet, and is a founding member of Unsupervised, Chicago's conductorless chamber orchestra. Kelly has previously been principal cellist of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, where she shared the stage with the likes of Yo-Yo Ma, Riccardo Muti, and the future leaders of the classical music world.

Kelly is equally dedicated to teaching the next generation of musicians, currently teaching cello at South Side Suzuki and orchestra at Urban Prairie Waldorf School. Upcoming performances include premieres and other works for violin and cello with violinist Dan Galat on June 10 at Mu Gallery.

Caroline Rothstein has played with CHAI Collaborative Ensemble since 2017. Recent highlights with this group include performing at the Harris Theater, Pianoforte Studios, the Ear Taxi Festival, and Fourth Presbyterian's Friday Noonday concerts. In addition to her diverse performance career as an orchestral and chamber musician, Caroline is a devoted educator and maintains a thriving private violin studio.

Caroline received her master's degree in violin performance from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music, where she was the recipient of the Anna Schauffler Lockwood endowed scholarship for excellence in string music. Her principal teachers and mentors include Blair Milton and Frank Almond, and she has performed in master classes for renowned violinists and pedagogues Shmuel Ashkenasi, Cyrus Forough, Paul Kantor, Gerardo Ribeiro, and Arnold Steinhardt. She studied chamber music with Marion Feldman, Jeffrey Gilliam, Charles Pikler, Mathias Tacke, Roland Vamos, and Sylvia Wang. Caroline also attended Northwestern as an undergraduate, where she concurrently earned Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts degrees and graduated with honors in both programs.

Clarinetist **Daniel Williams** received his Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music and his Master of Music at the University of Southern California. He is a member of the CHAI Collaborative Ensemble and has performed locally with the Fifth House Ensemble, Chicago Philharmonic, Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, Joffrey Ballet, Chicago Sinfonietta, Chicago Opera Theater, Access Contemporary Music and with many of the suburban symphonies including those in Highland Park, Northbrook and Elmhurst as well as with many orchestras in the tri-state area.

In addition to performing, Daniel is an active teacher and has been on the faculties of the Merit School and People's Schools of Music. He has participated in the New Hampshire Music Festival, Music Academy of West, Chautauqua, Aspen, and Bowdoin Summer Music festivals.

His teachers have included Yehuda Gilad, Linnea Nereim, Daniel Gilbert, Eli Eban, Franklin Cohen, Charlene Zimmerman, Monica Kaenzig and David Howard.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CHAI Collaborative Ensemble extends its gratitude to Pastor Monte Johnson, Brad Whaley, Julia Steiner, and everyone at Immanuel Lutheran Church for allowing us to use this beautiful space not only for our performances this spring, but also as a recording and rehearsal space throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been a haven and a refuge for us, and we could not be more grateful.

Thank you to Griffin Candey for composing *Facsimile*. We are honored to premiere this profound piece of music: may it be the first of many performances.

Thank you to you, our audiences and donors, for sticking with us through an unprecedented two years. Your appreciation and support makes what we do possible and worthwhile, and we look forward to seeing you at many more live performances next season.

A special thank you to the Roster Artists of CCE for your dedication, both on and off the stage; these concerts would not be possible without your hard work.

Finally, a huge thank you to all of the featured musicians on this program; your artistry is a gift to all.



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