

Saturday, April 1, 2023, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Kronos Quartet

with special guest Wu Man, *pipa*

KRONOS QUARTET

David Harrington, *violin*

John Sherba, *violin*

Hank Dutt, *viola*

Paul Wiancko, *cello*

Brian H. Scott, *lighting designer*

Brian Mohr, *sound designer*

*Special guest Wu Man will perform in all pieces on the program
except for Steve Reich's Different Trains.*

PROGRAM

TERRY RILEY (b. 1935) *The Cusp of Magic* (first movement)*

TRADITIONAL *Glimpses of Muqam Chebiyat***
(arr. Wu Man, real. Danny Clay) Chebiyat Muqam – Muqaddima †
Chebiyat Muqam – Third Dastan †

WU MAN (b. 1963) *Two Chinese Paintings***
(real. Danny Clay) WU MAN/Ancient Echo**
TRADITIONAL/Silk and Bamboo
(inspired by Huanlege)

STEVE REICH (b. 1936) *Different Trains**
America—Before the war
Europe—During the war
After the war

INTERMISSION

TAN DUN (b. 1957) *Ghost Opera**

* Written for Kronos

** Written for *Fifty for the Future: The Kronos Learning Repertoire*

† Arranged for Kronos

This performance is made possible, in part, by Linda and William Schieber.

Terry Riley*The Cusp of Magic*: Movement I (2004)With Wu Man, *pipa*

Terry Riley first came to prominence in 1964 when he subverted the world of tightly organized atonal composition then in fashion. With the groundbreaking *In C*—a work built upon steady pulse throughout; short, simple repeated melodic motives; and static harmonies—Riley achieved an elegant and non-nostalgic return to tonality. In demonstrating the hypnotic allure of complex musical patterns made of basic means, he produced the seminal work of the so-called “minimal” school.

Riley’s facility for complex pattern-making is the product of his virtuosity as a keyboard improviser. He quit formal composition following *In C* in order to concentrate on improvisation, and in the late 1960s and early ’70s he became known for weaving dazzlingly intricate skeins of music from improvisations on organ and synthesizer. At this time, Riley also devoted himself to studying North Indian vocal techniques under the legendary Pandit Pran Nath, and a new element entered his music: long-limbed melody. From his work in Indian music, moreover, he became interested in the subtle distinctions of tuning that would be hard to achieve with a traditional classical ensemble.

Riley began notating music again in 1979 when both he and the Kronos Quartet were on the faculty at Mills College in Oakland. By collaborating with Kronos, he discovered that his various musical passions could be integrated, not as pastiche, but as different sides of similar musical impulses that still maintained something of the oral performing traditions of India and jazz. Riley’s first quartets were inspired by his keyboard improvisations, but his knowledge of string quartets became more sophisticated through his work with Kronos, combining rigorous compositional ideas with a more performance-oriented approach.

About *The Cusp of Magic*, the composer writes:

“*The Cusp of Magic* significantly fills the picture that my collaboration with Kronos has been portraying for nearly 25 years. My compositions for Kronos are the most important of my notated works, each one staking out a different mood and musical structure and setting up new challenges for both composer and performer. In this work, the different timbre and resonance of the Chinese *pipa* and the western string ensemble highlight the crossover regions of cultural reference, so that western musical themes might be projected with an eastern accent and vice-versa. My plan was to make these regions seamless so that the listener is carried between worlds without an awareness of how he/she ends up there.

“The work is in six movements: ‘The Cusp of Magic,’ ‘Buddha’s Bedroom,’ ‘The Nursery,’ ‘Royal Wedding,’ ‘Emily and Alice,’ and ‘Prayer Circle.’ [The first movement will be performed tonight.] ‘The Cusp of Magic’ movement is based on a cycle of 108 beats (considered in India to be a sacred number and one on which prayer beads called *malas* are based). It is subdivided 9–7–6–5–4–3–2–3–4–5–6–6–5–4–3–2–3–4–5–6–7–9 with contrasting sections based on a cycle of 2 x (12x4+6) that also results in 108 beat cycle organization. With this complex rhythm, the first violin assumes the role of percussionist/timekeeper, creating the rhythmic pulse with a peyote rattle or shaker and bass drum. This also gives the piece the ritualistic atmosphere that its title implies.

“*The Cusp of Magic* is dedicated to Gary Goldschneider, whose book *The Secret Language of Relationships* provided the title of this piece. Goldschneider has given the imaginative name ‘the Cusp of Magic’ to the Zodiac position 27 degrees Gemini and 4 degrees Cancer taking place in the period June 19–24, which happens to include the day I was born.”



Lenny Gonzalez

Electronic music compiled by David Dvorin.

Terry Riley's *The Cusp of Magic* was written and commissioned for the Kronos Quartet and Wu Man as part of a national series of works from Meet the Composer Commissioning Music/USA, made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Helen F. Whitaker Fund, and the Target Foundation. Major support was generously provided by the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, with additional funds from the Margaret E. Lyon Trust.

Wu Man

Traditional/Glimpses of Muqam Chebiyat (2015)

Two Chinese Paintings (2015)

Realized by Danny Clay (b. 1989)

With Wu Man, *pipa*

For a biography of Wu Man, please see page CP-9.

About *Glimpses of Muqam Chebiyat* and *Two Chinese Paintings*, Wu Man writes:

"After two decades of collaborating with the Kronos Quartet, I am finally beginning to understand Western string instruments. With the group's encouragement and support, I was able to create these—my first works for string quartet.

"*Glimpses of Muqam Chebiyat* and *Two Chinese Paintings* are each two-movement suites which, taken together, resemble a set of portraits of traditional cultures from around China. In Chinese traditional music, instrumental pieces often have poetic titles to express their content and style. I decided to continue this tradition with this collection. The inspiration for these suites came from styles of traditional music in China familiar to me, including Uyghur Maqam of Xinjiang province, a *pipa* scale from the 9th century, and the Silk-and-Bamboo music, or teahouse music, from my hometown of Hangzhou.

“*Glimpses of Muqam Chebiyat* is adapted from the Uyghur Muqam Chebiyat. In 2010, thanks to the Aga Khan Music Initiative, I had the opportunity to learn these pieces directly from the Uyghur musicians Abdullah Majnun and Sanubar Tursun.

“Ancient Echo,’ the first movement of *Two Chinese Paintings*, is based on a scale found among the oldest tunes for *pipa*. The second movement, ‘Silk and Bamboo’ is a variation on the tune ‘Joyful Song’ (*Huanle*) from the collection of Silk-and-Bamboo.

“I feel quite grateful to be able to bring these old styles of traditional music—Uyghur Muqam, Jiangnan Silk-and-Bamboo music, and ancient *pipa* music—into the repertoire of Western string ensembles. The left-hand portamento, or sliding, technique called for here is quite distinct from the types of expression found in Western music. I hope that audiences will come to better understand the richness and diversity of music from China through these four stories.

“I’d like to thank Kronos for their trust and encouragement, for letting me be a part of their *Fifty for the Future* project, and for giving me this opportunity to share my musical experiences with young string quartets around the world.”

Wu Man’s *Two Chinese Paintings* and *Glimpses of Muqam Chebiyat* were commissioned as part of the Kronos Performing Arts Association’s *Fifty for the Future: The Kronos Learning Repertoire*, which is made possible by a group of adventurous partners, including Cal Performances, Carnegie Hall, and many others.

Launched in the 2015–16 season, Kronos’ *Fifty for the Future* is commissioning 50 new works—by 25 women and 25 men—devoted to contemporary approaches to the string quartet and designed expressly for the training of students and emerging professionals. Kronos will premiere each piece and create companion digital materials, including scores, recordings, and performance notes, which can be accessed online for free.

Steve Reich

Different Trains (1988)

“When I was one year old,” Steve Reich recalls, “my parents separated, with my mother going to Los Angeles and my father staying in New York. Since they arranged divided custody, I used to travel back and forth by train frequently between New York and Los Angeles, from 1939 to 1942, accompanied by my governess. While these trips were exciting and romantic at the time, I now look back and think that, as a Jew, if I had been in Europe during this period I would have had to ride very different trains.”

Such is the historical subtext for Reich’s *Different Trains*, a composition in three movements commissioned for the Kronos Quartet. But whatever the strength of its philosophical inquiry, the musical impact of this work will be greater, because it represents a turning point in Reich’s art.

To construct *Different Trains*, Reich first made a series of tape recordings: of his governess, Virginia, then in her 70s, remembering the cross-country train trips; of Lawrence Davis, a retired Pullman porter who regularly made the NY–LA run, reminiscing about his life; of Rachella, Paul, and Rachel, three Holocaust survivors (and Reich contemporaries) who now live in America; and of American and European train sounds of the 1930s and ’40s. Reich then selected small speech samples and notated the musical pitches of these fragments, using the resultant melodies as the basis of the composition.

These melodies were performed and then overdubbed on tape by Kronos, so that as many as three “Kronos Quartets” are heard at one time. Reich next used sampling keyboards and a computer to mix in the original speech samples and train sounds. Kronos appears on stage to perform with the prepared tape.

In its combination of pre-taped and live performances by the same artists, *Different Trains* exemplifies the series of “Counterpoint” pieces Reich has written over the

years for instrumental soloists. But in its use of recorded speech as a musical score, *Different Trains* has its roots in *It's Gonna Rain* and *Come Out*, Reich's first recorded works. *Different Trains* thus connects two stages of Reich's career, and served as the debut of what he predicted at the time would be "a direction that ... will lead to a new kind of documentary music video theater." Since *Different Trains*, Reich has indeed continued to utilize the musical material in speech patterns in his two theatrical collaborations with video artist Beryl Korot, *The Cave* (1999) and *Three Tales* (2002).

Born in New York, Reich graduated with honors in philosophy from Cornell University and studied at Juilliard with William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti. After receiving his MA in music from Mills College, Reich studied drumming at the Institute for African Studies at the University of Ghana and traditional forms of cantillation (chanting) of the Hebrew scriptures in New York and Jerusalem. Reich founded his own ensemble, Steve Reich and Musicians, which since 1971 has frequently toured the world, performing at venues as diverse as Carnegie Hall and the Bottom Line cabaret.

Reich's *Different Trains* (1988), written for Kronos, marked a new compositional method, rooted in *It's Gonna Rain* and *Come Out*, in which speech recordings generate the musical material for musical instruments. In 1990, he received a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Composition for *Different Trains* as recorded by Kronos on Nonesuch. In 1997, Nonesuch released a 10-disc retrospective box set, *Steve Reich Works: 1965–1995*. Reich won a second Grammy Award in 1999 for his piece *Music for 18 Musicians*, also on Nonesuch.

Steve Reich was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1994 and to the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts in 1995; in 1999, he was named Commandeur de l'ordre des Arts et Lettres. The year 2000

brought five additional honors: the Schuman Prize from Columbia University, the Montgomery Fellowship from Dartmouth College, the Regent's Lectureship at the University of California at Berkeley, an honorary doctorate from the California Institute of the Arts, and *Musical America's* Composer of the Year. In 2009, he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for Double Sextet.

The Kronos Quartet extends special thanks to performance tape producer Judith Sherman.

Information about *Different Trains* by Neil Tesser.

Steve Reich's *Different Trains* was commissioned by Betty Freeman for the Kronos Quartet and was recorded for Nonesuch Records.

Different Trains Texts

America— Before the War
Virginia:
"from Chicago to New York"
"one of the fastest trains"

Mr. Davis:
"the crack train from New York"
"from New York to Los Angeles"

Virginia:
"different trains every time"
"from Chicago to New York"
"in 1939"

Mr. Davis:
"1939"
"1940"
"1941"

Virginia
"1941 I guess it must've been"

Europe— During the War

Rachella:

“1940”
 “for my birthday”
 “The Germans walked in”
 “walked into Holland”

Paul:

“Germans invaded Hungary”
 “I was in second grade”
 “I had a teacher”
 “a very tall man, his hair was concretely
 plastered smooth”
 “He said, ‘Black Crows invaded our
 country many years ago’ “
 “and he pointed right at me”

Rachel:

“No more school”
 “You must go away”

Rachella:

“and she said, ‘Quick go’”
 “and he said, ‘ Don’t breathe’”
 “into those cattle wagons”
 “for 4 days and 4 nights”
 “and then we went through those strange
 sounding names”
 “Polish names”
 “Lots of cattle wagons there”
 “They were loaded with people”
 “They shaved us”
 “They tattooed a number on our arm”
 “Flames going up to the Sky—
 it was smoking”

After the War

Paul:

“and the war was over”

Rachella

“Are you sure?”
 “The war is over”
 “going to America”
 “to Los Angeles”
 “to New York”

Mr. Davis:

“from New York to Los Angeles”

Virginia:

“one of the fastest trains”

Mr. Davis:

“but today, they’re all gone”

Rachella:

“There was one girl, who had a beautiful
 voice”
 “and they loved to listen to the singing,
 the Germans”
 “and when she stopped singing they said,
 ‘More, more’ and they applauded”

Ghost Opera (1994)

for String Quartet and *Pipa*

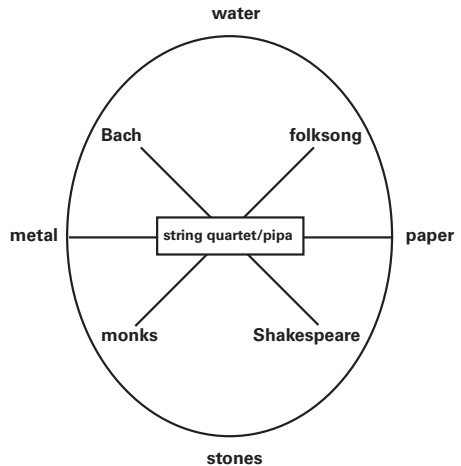
with water, stone, paper, and metal

Music, text and installation by Tan Dun

CAST

Now string quartet and *pipa*
 Past Bach, folksong, monks,
 Shakespeare
 Forever water, stones, metal, paper

SYNOPSIS



LIBRETTO

Bach	Prelude
Monks	Ya O Ya
Folksong	Xiao bai tsai ya (little cabbage ya) Di li huang ya (earth yellow ya) San liang suci ya (two or three years ya) Mei die niang ya (no papa, mama, ya) Ya
Shakespeare	We are such stuff As dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep.
Bach	Prelude
Monk	Ya O
Folksong	Tsai Di San Mei Ya
Shakespeare	Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rock behind.
Monk	Ya
Bach	Prelude

Ghost Opera is a five-movement work for string quartet and *pipa*, with water, metal, stone, and paper. Composer Tan Dun describes this work as a reflection on human spirituality, which is too-often buried in the bombardment of urban culture and the rapid advances of technology. It is a cross-temporal, cross-cultural and cross-media dialogue that touches on the past, present, future, and the eternal; employs elements from Chinese, Tibetan, English, and American cultures; and combines performance traditions of the European classical concert, Chinese shadow puppet theater, visual art installations, folk music, dramatic theater, and shamanistic ritual.

In composing *Ghost Opera*, Tan was inspired by childhood memories of the shamanistic “ghost operas” of the Chinese peasant culture. In this tradition, which is over 4,000 years old, humans and spirits of the future, the past, and nature communicate with each other. Tan’s *Ghost Opera* embraces this tradition, calling on the spirits of Bach (in the form of counterpoint quotation from the Prelude in C-sharp minor of *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II*), Shakespeare (setting brief excerpts from *The Tempest*), ancient folk tradition, and earth/nature (represented by the Chinese folk song “Little Cabbage”). The Bach excerpt acts as “a seed from which grows a new counterpoint of different ages, different sound worlds, and different cultures.” In the final movement the gradual transformation of the counterpoint brings the spirits of Bach and Shakespeare, the civilized world, and rational mind—“this insubstantial pageant”—into the eternal Earth.

The installation employs paper, shadow, and watergong basins placed around the theater. The performers’ movements among the seven positions reflect the back and forth movement between different time frames and spiritual realms that is characteristic of the “ghost opera” tradition.

The world-renowned artist and UNESCO Global Goodwill Ambassador Tan Dun has made an indelible mark on the world’s music scene with a creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical music, multimedia performance, and Eastern and Western traditions. A winner of today’s most prestigious honors including the Grammy Award, Academy Award, Grawemeyer Award, Bach Prize, Shostakovich Award, and, most recently, Italy’s Golden Lion Award for Lifetime Achievement, Tan Dun’s music has been played throughout the world by leading orchestras, opera houses, international festivals, and on radio and television. This past year, Tan Dun conducted the grand opening celebration of

Disneyland Shanghai which was broadcast to a record-breaking audience worldwide.

As a conductor of innovative programs around the world, Tan Dun has led the China tours of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra and Japan's NHK Symphony Orchestra. His current season includes leading the NDR Radiophilharmonie in a five-city tour in Germany, as well as engagements with the London Symphony Orchestra and at the Venice Biennale. Tan Dun currently serves as the Honorary Artistic Director of the China National Symphony Orchestra. Next season, he will also conduct Orchestre National de Lyon in their tour to China. Tan Dun has led the world's most esteemed orchestras, including the Royal Concert-

gebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Münchner Philharmoniker, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Ghost Opera was commissioned for the Kronos Quartet and Wu Man by the Brooklyn Academy of Music, National Endowment for the Arts and Hancher Auditorium/University of Iowa. Kronos and Wu Man's recording of *Ghost Opera* is available on Nonesuch.

—Program note by Peggy Monastra

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

For nearly 50 years, San Francisco's **Kronos Quartet**—David Harrington (violin), John Sherba (violin), Hank Dutt (viola), and Paul Wiancko (cello)—has reimagined what the string quartet experience can be. One of the most celebrated and influential groups of our era, Kronos has given thousands of concerts worldwide, released more than 70 recordings, and collaborated with many of the world's most accomplished composers and performers across many genres. Through its nonprofit organization, Kronos Performing Arts Association (KPAA), Kronos has commissioned more than 1,000 works and arrangements for quartet. Kronos has received more than 40 awards, including the Polar Music, Avery Fisher, and Edison Klassiek Oeuvre Prizes.

Integral to Kronos' work is a series of long-running commissioning collaborations with hundreds of composers worldwide, including Terry Riley, Aleksandra Vrebalov, Tanya Tagaq, Philip Glass, inti figgisvizueta, Fodé Lassana Diabaté, and Steve Reich. In its most ambitious commissioning effort to date, KPAA has recently completed

50 for the Future: The Kronos Learning Repertoire. Through this initiative, Kronos has commissioned—and distributed online for free—50 new string quartet works written by composers from around the world.

In recordings, Kronos has collaborated with artists including Wu Man, Zakir Hussain, Asha Bhosle, Mahsa Vahdat, and Nine Inch Nails. Kronos has performed live with the likes of Paul McCartney, Allen Ginsberg, Rokia Traoré, David Bowie, Rhiannon Giddens, Caetano Veloso, and The National, among many others.

The quartet tours for several months each year, appearing in celebrated venues, including Carnegie Hall (New York), Palacio de Bellas Artes (Mexico City), the Barbican (London), the Muziekgebouw (Amsterdam), Shanghai Concert Hall, Suntory Hall (Tokyo), and the Sydney Opera House.

Kronos' expansive discography on Nonesuch includes three Grammy-winning albums—Terry Riley's *Sun Rings* (2019), *Landfall* with Laurie Anderson (2018), and Alban Berg's *Lyric Suite* (2003)—along with dozens of other acclaimed releases. Kronos'



most recent recording is *Mǔ Lái* (2022), an opera by Jonathan Berger and Harriet Scott Chessman. Kronos' work has also featured prominently in many films, including the "live documentary" *A Thousand Thoughts*, written and directed by Sam Green and Joe Bini, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2018.

Based in San Francisco, the nonprofit KPAA staff manages all aspects of Kronos' work, including commissioning, concert tours and local performances, recordings, education programs, and an annual *Kronos Festival* in San Francisco.

Recognized as the world's premier *pipa* virtuoso, **Wu Man** is a soloist, educator, and composer who gives her lute-like instrument—which has a history of more than 2,000 years in China—a new role in both traditional and contemporary music. She has premiered hundreds of new works for the *pipa*, while spearheading multimedia projects to both preserve and create global awareness of China's ancient musical traditions. Projects she has initiated have resulted

in the *pipa* finding a place in new solo and quartet works, concertos, opera, chamber, electronic, and jazz music as well as in theater productions, film, dance, and collaborations with visual artists. She has performed in recital and with major orchestras around the world, is a frequent collaborator with ensembles such as the Kronos and Shanghai quartets and The Knights, and is a founding member of the Silkroad Ensemble. Wu Man has appeared in more than 40 recordings throughout her career, including the Silkroad Ensemble's Grammy Award-winning recording *Sing Me Home*, featuring her composition "Green (Vincent's Tune)." She is also a featured artist in the 2015 documentary *The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble*. During the 2021–22 season, she and the ensemble toured the eastern United States with a program titled "Phoenix Rising," marking the first tour under the group's new artistic director Rhiannon Giddens. In 2021 and 2022, Wu Man was a leading faculty member for Silkroad's Global Musician Workshop.

Born in Hangzhou, China, Wu Man studied at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where she became the first recipient of a master's degree in *pipa*. At age 13, she was hailed as a child prodigy and became a nationally recognized role model for young *pipa* players. She subsequently received first prize in the First National Music Performance Competition, among other awards, and participated in many premieres of works by Chinese composers. Wu Man moved to the United States in 1990 and was awarded the Bunting Fellowship at Harvard University in 1998. She was the first Chinese traditional musician to receive the United States Artist Fellowship (2008) and the first artist from China to perform at the White House. In 2013, she was named *Musical America's* Instrumentalist of the Year and in 2021, she received an honorary doctorate of music from the New England Conservatory of Music. Wu Man is a recipient of the 2023 National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts, one of the United States' most prestigious honors in folk and traditional arts. In 2023, she was also honored with the Asia Society's Asia Arts Game Changers Award, an annual award presented in New York City that recognizes and honors artists and arts professionals for their significant contributions to contemporary art. Wu Man is a Visiting Professor at her alma mater, the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and a Distinguished Professor at the Zhejiang and the Xi'an conservatories. She has also served as Artistic Director of the Xi'an Silk Road Music Festival at the Xi'an Conservatory.

**For the Kronos Quartet/
Kronos Performing Arts Association**
Katie Baird, *Development Associate*
Janet Cowperthwaite, *Executive Director*
Mason Dille, *Development Director*
Dana Dizon, *Business Manager*
Sarah Donahue, *Operations Director*
Deja Jenkins, *Production and Marketing Associate*
Reshena Liao, *Creative Producer*
Nikolás McConnie-Saad, *Artistic Administrator*

Contact
Kronos Quartet/Kronos Performing Arts Association
P. O. Box 225340
San Francisco, CA 94122-5340 USA
kronosquartet.org
facebook.com/kronosquartet
instagram.com/kronos_quartet
twitter.com/kronosquartet

The Kronos Quartet records for
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Kronos Quartet
P. O. Box 225340
San Francisco, CA 94122-5340
Tel: 415/731-3533
Fax: 415/664-7590
www.kronosquartet.org
www.facebook.com/kronosquartet