

Stephen Prina
To the People of (New York City)
Artist and performer bios

Stephen Prina is an artist, musician, and composer who was born in 1954 in Galesburg, Illinois, and is based in Los Angeles, California. His solo exhibitions include *English for Foreigners*, Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2020) and Museo Madre, Naples (2017); *galesburg, illinois+*, Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, St. Gallen (2015); *As He Remembered It*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2013) and Secession, Vienna (2011); *He was but a bad translation.*, Kölnischer Kunstverein (2011); *Stephen Prina: Modern Movie Pop*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2010); *The Second Sentence of Everything I Read Is You*, Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden and Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo (CAAC), Seville (both 2008); *To the People of Frankfurt am Main: At Least Three Types of Inaccessibility*, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt am Main (2000); and *It was the best he could do at the moment*, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam (1992). Group exhibitions include the 2008 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; *Departures: 11 Artists at the Getty*, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2000); *Allegories of Modernism: Contemporary Drawing*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1992); *documenta IX*, Kassel (1992); the 51st Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (1991); *Aperto*, Venice Biennale (1990); *A Forest of Signs: Art in the Crisis of Representation*, MOCA, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1989); and the 74th American Exhibition, The Art Institute of Chicago (1982).

Now in its 19th season, the **String Orchestra of Brooklyn** (SOB) seeks to make adventurous orchestral programming accessible to concertgoers in its home borough of Brooklyn and throughout New York City. The SOB is based at St. Ann's Church in Brooklyn Heights, and has also performed at MoMA, BAM, Roulette, Le Poisson Rouge, Issue Project Room, Riverside Church, Little Island, Greenwood Cemetery, and Wave Hill. In 2015 the orchestra performed the music of Tony Conrad alongside John Cale at the public opening of the new Whitney Museum of American Art. The SOB has commissioned important works for strings from a diverse collection of composers, including Chris Cerrone, Scott Wollschleger, Catherine Lamb, Nyokabi Kariuki, and Darian Thomas. In 2022 Leilehua Lanzilotti's SOB-commissioned work *with eyes the color of time* was chosen as a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. The orchestra has released two albums, *afterimage* (2020) and *enfolding* (2022), to critical acclaim.

Shawn Barnett, a freelance violinist and violist based in New York City, is celebrated for his dynamic performances and dedication to music education. With extensive experience performing orchestral, chamber, and solo concerts, he has captivated audiences across the United States and Europe. In addition to his passion for performance, Barnett maintains a thriving teaching studio, where he inspires and nurtures the next generation of musicians. His approach combines technical expertise with a deep appreciation for musical expression, engaging students of all ages. Through his performances and teaching, Barnett aspires to make a positive impact on the vibrant New York music scene whenever possible.

Violinist **Corinne Bennett** was born and raised in New York City. She performs regularly with the String Orchestra of Brooklyn and in chamber ensembles throughout the city. Bennett is also a passionate music educator with over 10 years of experience, and a dedicated arts administrator currently working with Bridgehampton Chamber Music. She plays on a violin named Ruth, affectionately named after her grandmother, that was made by Mary Jane Kwan in 2019. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and two cats.

Emily Bookwalter is a violist praised for her "elegantly rendered" (*The New York Times*) and "masterful" (*I Care if You Listen*) interpretations of contemporary repertoire. Her recent and upcoming projects as part of Ghost Train Orchestra include David Byrne's 2025 album *Who Is the Sky?*, Moondog at the 2026 Big Ears Festival, and the world premiere of *Cities* at Roulette. She was a soloist on the world premiere recording of Leilehua Lanzilotti's *with eyes the color of time*, a 2022 finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in music, which was featured on the String Orchestra of Brooklyn's album *enfolding*. Bookwalter is a cofounding member of the ALTA String Quartet. She has been a guest artist at Celebrate Brooklyn!, the Lake George Jazz Festival, the New Harmony Music Festival, and the Dumbo Arts Festival, and was an artist-in-residence at the Berkeley Repertory Theater. During the day, she is the director of development at Roulette.

Benjamin Bregman is a Brooklyn-based violin teacher at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music and the Brooklyn Music Studio. He has studied violin and viola since the age of four, first with Dorothy Roffman at the Thurnauer School of Music and later with Patinka Kopec at the Manhattan School of Music. Benjamin earned degrees in mathematics and physics from Stanford University and pursued a career across finance, technology, and entrepreneurship before becoming a full-time music teacher. In

addition to teaching, he develops mobile apps, including a music theory course and a daily poetry club, and plays folk music at traditional Irish music sessions around the city.

Morton Cahn started playing the piano at age eight and the bass at age 11. He studied at the New England Conservatory with Henry Portnoi, and freelanced in the New England area with such groups as Dinosaur Annex, Musica Viva, Banchetto Musicale, Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, New Hampshire Symphony, Vermeer Quartet, and Emmanuel Music. Cahn came to New York in 1982, where he received a master's degree in computer sciences at Polytechnic University and went on to work for Citibank and Bankers Trust. He is now retired. In New York he has played for Orchestra of the Bronx, the Chelsea Symphony, and Camerata Notturna.

Mark Chung is a versatile violinist and improviser who has performed and recorded classical and new music, jazz, hip-hop, creative music, salsa, and more with a wide variety of groups in New York and the San Francisco Bay Area. He has played with the String Orchestra of Brooklyn since 2007. He has an MFA in music performance from California Institute of the Arts. He has made many forays into non-Western music, studying Hindustani violin for two years, learning the Bulgarian gadulka, performing on the hichiriki in a contemporary gagaku ensemble, and playing percussion in a samba group in San Francisco Carnaval. He currently lives in Brooklyn and plays on a 1995 violin by Jean Bauer.

Diana Gatschet's arts experience bridges performance and leadership, reflecting her commitment to creative expression and cultural stewardship. A cellist and arts administrator, she holds degrees in music performance from the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music and in arts administration from New York University. She has worked with many organizations such as Carnegie Hall, Young Concert Artists, Chamber Music America, Curious Theatre Company, and the Colorado Symphony. As a performer, Gatschet explores classical, contemporary, and cross-genre collaborations, producing her own recitals and performing with ensembles such as the String Orchestra of Brooklyn and the Brooklyn Chamber Players. She also taught graduate courses in arts fundraising and program design.

Ken Hashimoto began playing cello when he was very small. He spent time as a cello performance major at Peabody Conservatory and the College Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati, but after a detour

through the physics department, he eventually graduated with degrees in history and international relations. After college he moved to Los Angeles, where, while working as a teacher and in education nonprofits, he freelanced as a bassist and cellist with pop/rock bands and singer-songwriters. Hashimoto took a three-year break from playing music while working in Bosnia-Herzegovina on an international development project. He moved to New York City and earned a law degree, and also resumed playing with bands at venues such as Symphony Space, Carnegie Hall, Bowery Ballroom, Joe's Pub, and Mass MOCA. Inspired by his older daughter's cello studies, Hashimoto returned to playing classical music in chamber groups and orchestras such as the Greenwich Village Orchestra, the New York Repertory Orchestra, the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, and the Park Avenue Chamber Symphony.

Louise Lau is a classically trained violinist and music business professional whose passion for the arts shapes both her creative and professional endeavors. Trained in performance and music business, she combines her creative and strategic experience to bridge the worlds of music and marketing. Lau performs regularly with the String Orchestra of Brooklyn and collaborates with independent musicians and brands on music-driven marketing and content initiatives. Through her dual roles on stage and behind the scenes, she continues to explore the many ways music connects and inspires audiences.

Ryan Sawyer is a musician, composer, academic, and visual artist. He has performed, recorded, and toured with countless bands and musicians. Sawyer's unique approach to improvisation and composition includes free-form shepherding of sound through drums and voice. After years of improvisation and sideman employment, Sawyer has dedicated his focus and practice to healing through sound, and he brings this mindset to every opportunity he has to make music. He is currently concentrating on a new piece for a small orchestra and maracas called Ryan Sawyer's Shaker Ensemble, and a live recording is forthcoming.

Eric Shieh is a New York City-based violinist and violist who performs and records with the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, including their albums *enfold* and *afterimage*. He previously held positions as lead violin with the former SPIRIT Jazz Ensemble at Columbia University and assistant concertmaster with the St. Louis Philharmonic. A committed educator, Shieh founded music workshops in prisons with the Prison Creative Arts Project and St. Louis Prison Performing Arts, cofounded the Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning School in Queens, and currently works as a school designer and coach for New York City Outward Bound Schools.

Gabryel Smith is director of archives and exhibitions for the New York Philharmonic. He has curated over 50 public programs and exhibitions for the orchestra in New York and around the world. He is also a member of the Alta Quartet and the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, and is an active freelance violinist. He studied at New York University and serves on the extension faculty at the Juilliard School.

Eli Spindel is a violinist and conductor and the founder of the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, which is now in its 19th season. He teaches conducting and violin privately and formerly taught in New York City public schools as a teaching artist for the Brooklyn Conservatory and the Brooklyn Philharmonic. An alumnus of Vassar College, he also studied at the Bard Conducting Institute, the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute, and the preparatory divisions of the Longy School and the New England Conservatory. In his former life as an editor and writer he was the managing editor of publications at the International Center of Photography and also worked at *PEN America* journal, Umbrage Books, and MSN News. He lives in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn.

Adam Tandler was born in Barre, Vermont. He was praised for his "adventurousness and muscular skill" by the *New York Times* and was called a "remarkable and insightful musician" by the *Los Angeles Times*. A pioneer of DIY culture in classical music, at age 23 he performed solo recitals in all 50 states, going on to receive the Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists and appearing as soloist with the London Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony, and LA Phil, among others. His appearance on Wild Up's Julius Eastman anthology earned a Grammy nomination, and his latest project, *Inheritances*, was a *New York Times* Critic Pick. He is the author of two books and teaches at New York University.

Victoria Yam started her classical music journey on piano at age eight with Faina Kofman at New England Conservatory, before adding violin at age 11. She studied violin with George Maxman, Dr. Maxim Korn, and Dr. Sahran Kim. During her undergraduate studies, Yam served as concertmaster of the University of Rochester Chamber Orchestra from 2009 to 2010. She has played with String Orchestra of Brooklyn since 2017. She is also a Leadership Committee member, strings coordinator, and rotating principal in the Jackson Heights Orchestra, and performs regularly in other classical ensembles across New York City. Apart from her music adventures, Yam is a curious linguist, fluent in German. She holds an MA in German studies from UMass Amherst and a BA in French and German with a minor in music from the University of Rochester.