

SHUMAN ASSOCIATES INC

JENNIFER KOH Biography

Violinist Jennifer Koh is recognized for her intense, commanding performances, delivered with dazzling virtuosity and technical assurance. An adventurous musician, she collaborates with artists of multiple disciplines and curates projects that find connections between music of all eras from traditional to contemporary. She believes that all the arts and music of the past and present form a continuum and has premiered over 60 works written especially for her.

Ms. Koh is well known for curating projects that involve commissions from today's foremost composers, and among her many activities during the 2017-18 season, she premieres new works written for her *New American Concerto* commissioning project, a multi-season project that explores the form of the violin concerto and its potential for artistic engagement with contemporary societal concerns and issues through commissions from a diverse collective of composers. *New American Concerto* launched in the summer of 2017 with Vijay Iyer's *Trouble*—a co-commission of the Ojai Music Festival, Cal Performances in Berkeley, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, this season, Ms. Koh will premiere a new concerto by Christopher Cerrone, commissioned by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

In recital, Ms. Koh launches *Limitless: On Stage Together*, a commissioning project that engages composer-performers to write new duo compositions and premiere them with Ms. Koh. The project is designed to explore the symbiotic relationship and blurred boundaries between composer and performer. Participating composers include Lisa Bielawa (voice), Zosha di Castri (piano), Vijay Iyer (piano), Missy Mazzoli (synthesizer), Qasim Naqvi (electronics and keyboard), Tyshawn Sorey (percussion), Lu Wang (electronics), Nina Young (electronics), and Du Yun (voice), and the premiere performances take place over two concert programs at National Sawdust in March 2018.

Ms. Koh also continues critically acclaimed series from past seasons, including *Shared Madness*, comprising short works for solo violin that explore virtuosity in the 21st century, written for the project by more than 30 of today's most celebrated composers; and *Bach and Beyond*, a recital series that traces the history of the solo violin repertoire from Bach's Six Sonatas and Partitas to 20th- and 21st-century composers. In addition to experiencing *Shared Madness* in the concert hall, listeners are also able to hear recordings of the premiere performances and interviews between Ms. Koh and the composers via the *Shared Madness* radio show, which originally aired on WQXR's Q2 Music during the summer of 2017 and remains available on demand at q2music.org/sharedmadness. Ms. Koh and her frequent recital partner Shai Wosner continue *Bridge to Beethoven*, which pairs Beethoven's violin sonatas with new and recent works inspired by them to explore the composer's impact and significance on a diverse group of musicians; and she performs with the Variation String Trio—of which she is a founding member—and pianist Orion Weiss, in composer Nina C. Young's piano quartet *Spero Lucem* and works by Schubert, Beethoven, and Brahms presented by the People's Symphony in New York City.

She also performs a broad range of concertos that reflects the breadth of her musical interests, including Barber's Violin Concerto with the Marin Symphony Orchestra and Oklahoma City Philharmonic; Bernstein's Serenade with the Fresno Philharmonic; Unsuk Chin's Violin Concerto with the Melbourne Symphony; Anna Clyne's *Rest These Hands* with the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne; Lutoslawski's

Chain 2 with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; Kaija Saariaho's *Graal théâtre* with the Galicia Symphony Orchestra; Esa-Pekka Salonen's Violin Concerto with the Nashville and Tampere Symphony Orchestras; Sibelius' Violin Concerto with the Columbus and Williamsburg Symphony Orchestras; Szymanowski's Second Violin Concerto with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra; and Charles Wuorinen's *Spin5* with Ensemble Signal.

Ms. Koh has been heard with leading orchestras around the world including the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics; the Atlanta Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, BBC Symphony Chicago Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Houston Symphony, Mariinsky Theatre, Milwaukee Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Montreal Symphony, Nashville Symphony, National Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, New World Symphony, NHK Symphony (Tokyo) Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Philharmonia (London) Orchestras, Pittsburgh Symphony, RAI National Symphony Orchestra (Torino), St. Louis Symphony, Seattle Symphony and Singapore Symphony, among others. Conductors she has worked with include John Adams, Marin Alsop, James Conlon, Gustavo Dudamel, Christoph Eschenbach, Giancarlo Guerrero, Manfred Honek, Louis Langree, Carlos Kalmar, Lorin Maazel, Sakari Oramo, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Juraj Valčuha, Osmo Vänskä, Alexander Vedernikov, and Edo de Waart. She played the role of Einstein in the revival of Philip Glass's *Einstein on the Beach* from 2012–2014, and a particular highlight of her career was performing for former First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama and former First Lady of South Korea Kim Yoon-ok in 2011.

Ms. Koh brings the same sense of adventure and brilliant musicianship to her recordings as she does to her live performances. Her latest album, *Tchaikovsky: Complete Works for Violin and Orchestra* with the Odense Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Vedernikov, released in September 2016, is Ms. Koh's eleventh recording for the Cedille Records label. Ms. Koh first performed Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto conducted by Mr. Vedernikov in the final round of the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians in 1992 and went on to win the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow with the concerto in 1994. In addition to her *Bach & Beyond* and *Two x Four* albums, her discography on Cedille Records also includes *Signs, Games + Messages*, a recording of violin and piano works by Janáček, Bartók, and Kurtág with Mr. Wosner; *Rhapsodic Musings: 21st Century Works for Solo Violin*; the Grammy-nominated *String Poetic*, featuring the world premiere of Jennifer Higdon's eponymous work, performed with pianist Reiko Uchida; Schumann's complete violin sonatas, also with Ms. Uchida; *Portraits* with the Grant Park Orchestra under conductor Carlos Kalmar with concerti by Szymanowski, Martinů, and Bartók; *Violin Fantasies*: fantasies for violin and piano by Schubert, Schumann, Schoenberg, and saxophonist Ornette Coleman, again with Ms. Uchida; and Ms. Koh's first Cedille album, from 2002, *Solo Chaconnes*, an earlier reading of Bach's Second Partita coupled with chaconnes by Richard Barth and Max Reger. Ms. Koh is also the featured soloist on a recording of Ms. Higdon's *The Singing Rooms* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra led by Robert Spano for Telarc.

Ms. Koh is the Artistic Director of *arco collaborative*, an artist-driven nonprofit that fosters a better understanding of our world through a musical dialogue inspired by ideas and the communities around us. The organization supports artistic collaborations and commissions, transforming the creative process by engaging with specific ideas and perspectives, investing in the future by cultivating artist-citizens in partnership with educational organizations. A committed educator, she has won high praise for her performances in classrooms around the country under her innovative "Music Messenger" outreach

program. Ms. Koh is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Foundation for the Advancement for the Arts, a scholarship program for high school students in the arts.

Born in Chicago of Korean parents, Ms. Koh began playing the violin by chance, choosing the instrument in a Suzuki-method program only because spaces for cello and piano had been filled. She made her debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at age 11. Ms. Koh is *Musical America's* 2016 Instrumentalist of the Year, a winner of the Concert Artists Guild Competition, and a recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English literature from Oberlin College and studied at the Curtis Institute, where she worked extensively with Jaime Laredo and Felix Galimir. For further information visit jenniferkoh.com.

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