



TUESDAYS @ MONK SPACE

2025-26 Season

Voices Rooted in Southeast Asia:

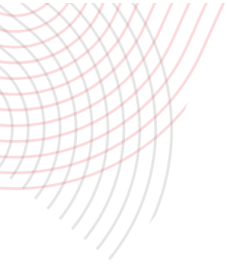
The Music of Chinary Ung, Vivian Fung and Ania Vu

June 9, 2026
8:00 PM

presented by

Brightwork
newmusic





The 2025-26 Season of Tuesdays @ Monk Space is curated by
Shalini Vijayan.

Brightwork newmusic is generously supported in part by:



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STEINWAY & SONS



PROGRAM

Cinnabar Heart (2009)

Chinary UNG

Nick Terry, marimba

After Rising Light (2009)

Chinary UNG

Stacey Fraser, soprano
Genevieve Feiwen Lee, piano

Corona Morphs (2020)

Vivian FUNG

Sara Andon, flute
Brian Walsh, clarinet
Shalini Vijayan, violin
Maggie Parkins, cello
Brendan White, piano
Nick Terry, percussion
Ashley Walters, conductor

- Intermission -

Strange Birds (2022, rev,2025)

Ania VU

Scene 3 from *Through the Doors*

Stacey Fraser, soprano / Odessa
Sara Andon, flute / Lark
Brian Walsh, clarinet / Peacock
Shalini Vijayan, violin / Magpie
Maggie Parkins, cello / Caged Bird
Aron Kallay, piano / Ostrich
Nick Terry, percussion / Parrot
Ashley Walters, conductor / Owl

Spiral VI (1992)

Chinary UNG

Shalini Vijayan, violin
Maggie Parkins, cello
Brian Walsh, clarinet
Aron Kallay, piano





PROGRAM NOTES

Cinnabar Heart (2009) by Chinary Ung

The color cinnabar (also known as vermillion and China red) has some interesting connotations. In China, it is the color of long life. In the Buddhist tradition, it is associated with passion. The title *Cinnabar Heart*, then, is intended as an expressive frame for the piece; however, I invite considerable interpretive flexibility from the performer. In Southeast Asia, a performer and composer are one and the same.

In one section of my brief *Cinnabar Heart*, the performer is asked to sing on syllables primarily for their sounds as opposed to their meaning (so it would be beside the point to mention many details regarding the text).

The piece is designed as a single line extending in a continuous, flowing manner. Its progression is highly flexible, and the performer is often asked to use her discretion with regard to musical time. The expansion and contraction of time should be palpable as rhythmic patterns are revealed and concealed.

After Rising Light (2009) by Chinary Ung

After Rising Light for soprano and piano is a bravura piece of musical storytelling. It sets a sacred text from the Bhagavad Gita, guiding the listener through shifting emotional landscapes and ancient Eastern idioms using the composer's signature lyrical style and vocal techniques.

Corona Morphs (2020) by Vivian Fung

Corona Morphs is a work for chamber ensemble that was commissioned by Vancouver's Standing Wave ensemble. I was in the middle of writing a very different piece when the pandemic shutdown began in March 2020, and I decided to change course with its composition- it became an encapsulation of the various emotions I had at the time of the shutdown, sometimes conflicting, from trepidation to raucous confusion, anger, and frustration. The product is a fast-paced work that constantly evolves or "morphs" from one scene to another without feeling of resolution or peace until the end. This piece was intended to be accompanied by visuals that reflected the process of constant transition. It is a highly charged and virtuosic piece for all the players.

"Strange Birds" from (2022, rev. 2025) by Ania Vu

This excerpt is Scene 3 from *Through the Doors*

"Strange Birds" is Scene 3 from the chamber opera *Through the Doors*. The story is about Odessa, a young girl, who lives in isolation with her father, a metronome maker. When he is drafted to war, he promises to return and urges her to wait until he comes back. Years go by, Odessa remains confined, clinging to his words. But as she grows older, she begins to question the meaning of her existence and the work beyond her walls. Eventually, driven by mysterious circumstances, she steps outside for the first time and sets off in search of him. Her journey leads her into a series of surreal realms, the first inhabited by Strange Birds--creatures that speak and behave like humans.

Commissioned by the Boston New Music Initiative.

Cast/Instrumentation:

ODESSA (Soprano)-young girl, searching for her father-a metronome maker who's now a soldier fighting in a war

LARK (Flute, doubling piccolo)

PEACOCK (Clarinet)

PARROT (Percussion: vibraphone, bass drum/kick drum, temple blocks, suspended cymbal, vibraslap, triangle)

OSTRICH (Piano)

MAGPIE (Violin)

CAGED BIRD (Violoncello)

OWL (Conductor)

Spiral VI (1992) by Chinary Ung

Spiral VI is the sixth work in a succession that follows a metaphorical spiral through a multiple series of manipulations. It was commissioned by Harold Newman for the Aeolian Players in 1992 and had its world premiere that same year in Strasbourg, Germany. Each of Ung's spiral pieces is similar in that they all have individual notes or phrases that are constantly being reworked, but each is unique and, according to where they fall in the color spectrum (blue-yellow) display different shades of "green.". Both Asian and western elements are readily discernible in *Spiral VI*, probably one of Ung's best examples of a true integration of these ideas. *Spiral VI* is constantly changing, expanding, or contracting and has been described as having a floating feeling despite its precise rhythmic notation.

COMPOSER BIOS

Chinary UNG

Born in Cambodia in 1942, Chinary Ung came to the US in 1964 and received a Bachelor's and Master's degree in clarinet and conducting from the Manhattan School of Music. He later studied with Chou Wen-chung and received a DMA in composition from Columbia University in 1974. Dr. Ung has been Professor of Composition at The University of California at San Diego since 1995, but he has previously taught at Northern Illinois University, Connecticut College, The University of Pennsylvania, and Arizona State University.



Dr. Ung's work has been honored by multiple institutions, including The Academy of Arts and Letters, Meet the Composer/Reader's Digest Commissioning Program, The National Endowment for the Arts, and the Guggenheim, Koussevitsky, Ford, Rockefeller and Barlow Foundations. In 1989, Ung was the first American to receive the international Grawemeyer Award for his orchestral tone poem *Inner Voices*. Many chamber ensembles have commissioned and performed Ung's works, and he has received performances by the Philadelphia, Louisville, Pittsburgh, and National Symphonies as well as the American Composers Orchestra and the symphonies of Tokyo, Sydney, and Basel, Switzerland. Ung is a scholar on the traditional music of Cambodia and Southeast Asia and lectures widely across the country and abroad on both his native music and his compositions. He is the founder and President of The Khmer Studies Institute which has sponsored publications, videotapes, as well as several recordings put out on the Folkways label. Ung has had compositions recorded on the CRI, New World, and Argo labels. His most recent works include *Rising Light*, a large work for double choruses, piano, soloists and orchestra and commissioned by the International Festival-Institute at Round Top, Texas; and *Radiant Samadhi*, a choral work for the Tokyo Philharmonic Chorus.

Vivian FUNG

JUNO Award-winning composer Vivian Fung has a unique talent for combining idiosyncratic textures and styles into large-scale works, reflecting her multicultural background. NPR calls her “one of today’s most eclectic composers,” and The Philadelphia Inquirer praises her “stunningly original compositional voice.” The 2025/2026 season includes many performances of Fung’s orchestral and chamber music across the U.S. and Canada - her calendar contains the latest updates. Some highlights include Earworms, which opens the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra season; Violin Concerto No. 1 with Kristin Lee, opening the Eugene Symphony season; Parade with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra; and Frenetic Memories with Seattle Symphony musicians. Fung’s String Quartet No. 5: “Spiraling,” part of Katarina String Quartet’s current season, will be recorded by the group in 2026.



Fung’s music can be heard on a number of professional albums, most recently “Glimpses” on Australian pianist Andrea Lam’s album Piano Diary; “Trumpet Concerto” on the Çedille Records album Storyteller: Contemporary Concertos for Trumpet, performed by Mary Elizabeth Bowden and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra; and Insects & Machines: Quartets of Vivian Fung, a portrait album featuring Fung’s first four string quartets performed by the Jasper String Quartet. The last album won the 2025 Chamber Music America award for Album of the Year.

A recipient of numerous grants and awards, Fung received a 2025 JUNO Nomination for “Classical Composition of the Year” for String Quartet No. 4; the 2013 JUNO Award for “Classical Composition of the Year” for Violin Concerto No. 1; a Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship; and grants from NewMusicUSA, ASCAP, MAP Fund, American Composers Forum, and the Canada Council for

the Arts. She is an associate composer of the Canadian Music Centre and served on the board of the American Composers Forum.

Many distinguished artists and ensembles around the world have embraced Fung's music as part of their core repertoire, including the Chicago Sinfonietta, Philadelphia Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Philharmonie de Paris, National Arts Centre Orchestra (Canada), Vancouver Symphony, Zürcher Kammerorchester, San José Chamber Orchestra, American String Quartet, and Metropolis Ensemble, to name a few. Conductors with whom she has collaborated include Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Alexander Shelley, Rebecca Tong, Peter Oundjian, Cristian Măcelaru, Mei-Ann Chen, Gemma New, Andrew Cyr, Rei Hotoda, Barbara Day Turner, Marie Jacquot, Steven Schick, and Bramwell Tovey.

Passionate about fostering the talent of the next generation, Fung has mentored young composers in programs at the Juilliard School, Graham Sommer Competition, Alba Music Festival, San Francisco Contemporary Chamber Players, and Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. She has been a guest educator at many organizations, including the Mostly Modern Summer Music Festival, SUNY Fredonia, and Luna Composition Lab.

Born in Edmonton, Canada, Fung began her composition studies with composer Violet Archer and received her doctorate from The Juilliard School in New York. She currently lives in California with her husband Charles Boudreau, their son Julian, and their dog Coco. Learn more at www.vivianfung.ca.

Ania VU

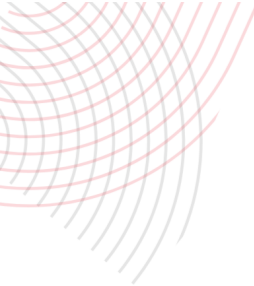
Ania Vu (née Vŭ Đŕng Minh Anh) is a Polish composer and pianist of Vietnamese descent whose music explores the intersections of language, time, and sounds of nature. Her method, which she calls “composing text to write music,” often involves crafting her own texts in Polish and English, which guide the sound, form, and character of her compositions.



Described by the Boston Globe as exhibiting “artful vocal writing [that] ranges from percussive whispers to glinting, pure-voiced lines,” Ania’s work has been heard across four continents, and she has received fellowships from the American Opera Project, the Tanglewood Music Center, and residencies from Yaddo, Copland House, and I-Park. In 2024, she was the Composer-in-Residence at the Chelsea Music Festival and her music has been presented at many other festivals and conferences, including PASIC, SEAMUS, CHIMEfest, Tanglewood, the Research on Contemporary Composition Conference, ISCM's Virtual Collaboration Series, Tage Neuer Musik in Regensburg, and the Red Note New Music Festival. Since 2022, she is a member of the Polish Composers Union. Ania's music has been performed by many leading ensembles and artists, including JACK Quartet, Chicago Composers Orchestra, the New Fromm players, the Grossman Ensemble, Dal Niente, ~Nois, Flannau Duo, the Mannes American Composers Ensemble (MACE), the Daedalus and Mivos string quartets, Sō Percussion, the TAK Ensemble, and the International Contemporary Emsemble, among others. Her music has been conducted by Tim Weiss, Ben Bolton, Ken-David Masur, Stefan Asbury, and David Fulmer.

Ania is an Assistant Professor of Music at Pomona College in Claremont, CA. Previously, she taught at the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the University of Texas at Austin. She served as the 2022-23 Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of

Chicago and was a 2021-23 fellow with the American Opera Project's "Composers and the Voice. Ania received her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and her B.M. in composition and theory from the Eastman School of Music.



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