

**Hopkins Center  
for the Arts**  
at Dartmouth

presents

**Silkroad Ensemble  
with Rhiannon Giddens**

***Phoenix Rising***

**Tuesday, July 19, 7:30 pm**

Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College • 2022

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*Generously supported by the Class of 1961 Legacy: The American Tradition in Performance Fund and the Marion and Frederick B. Whittemore '53, T'54 Distinguished Artist Series Fund.*

# Credits

Jeffrey Beecher, Bass  
Sandeep Das, Tabla  
Haruka Fujii, Percussion  
Rhiannon Giddens, Banjo and Voice  
Maeve Gilchrist, Celtic Harp  
Mario Gotoh, Viola  
Joseph Gramley, Percussion  
Wu Man, Pipa  
Karen Ouzounian, Cello  
Mazz Swift, Violin and Voice  
Francesco Turrisi, Accordion, Frame Drums  
Kojiro Umezaki, Shakuhachi  
Kaoru Watanabe, Japanese flute and percussion  
Reylon Yount, Yangqin

Noelle Panepento, Producer and Tour Manager  
Ashley Martin, Asst. Producer and Stage Manager  
Francesca Cecala, Front of House  
Justin Tamplin, Monitors  
Nick Houfek, Lighting Designer  
Aneesh Kumar, Production Assistant  
Alysha Addetia, Merch & Artist Assistant

# Program

Approximate duration: 90 minutes

<i>The Call</i>	Maeve Gilchrist*
<i>O, Death</i>	Traditional, arr. by Rhiannon Giddens**
<i>Ascending Bird</i>	Traditional, arr. by Colin Jacobsen and Siamak Aghaei**
<i>Sacred Cloud Music</i>	Zhao Jiping
<i>Goin' Home</i>	Antonín Dvořák, arr. by Rhiannon Giddens and Mazz Swift**
<i>Ho-oh</i>	Kaoru Watanabe*
<i>Ekla Cholo Re</i>	Sandeep Das, lyrics by Rabindranath Tagore***
<i>St. James Infirmary Blues</i>	Traditional, arr. Michael Ward-Bergeman
<i>New Ritual</i>	Traditional, arranged by member of Silkroad**
<i>Cut the Rug: IV. Wake the Dead</i>	David Bruce, arr. by Edward Pérez**

\*World Premiere, Commissioned by Silkroad for Phoenix Rising

\*\*New Arrangement, Commissioned by Silkroad for Phoenix Rising

\*\*\*Commissioned by Silkroad for Phoenix Rising

## From the Artistic Director

From its ancient Greek origins to its indigenous roots in America, the phoenix is a global symbol for rebirth and renewal. Known for its fiery purple, orange and gold feathers and crimson red breast, this mythical bird perishes in flames after setting itself on fire and then rises from the ashes after being born anew. We, as Silkroad, have been undergoing a transformation in our own right that will propel us to new heights of leveraging our music to create a more hopeful and inclusive world.

As we prepare to emerge from multiple pandemics that have caused devastating loss, we vision a peaceful and just future while still

honoring the central tenets of our past; we offer to you *Phoenix Rising*: a collective grieving song and clarion call, uniting audiences through varied cultural experiences and challenging each of us to reflect on, celebrate and activate our unique talents to effect change.

This is the first of many new and exciting projects from Silkroad, and I cannot wait to share it with you. Together we rise and fall, speaking our truths, honoring our forgotten histories, and looking to our collective future as we investigate this new chapter and uncover the world within American music.

*Rhiannon Giddens*

# Program Notes

## ***The Call***

### **Maeve Gilchrist\***

They say, “look back from the last of the land to the last of sky and sea and know, This is all there is of it

This is all we have in hand.” From *Ocean*, by David Harsent

A lone voice, a harp and the guttural sounds of Oceanic rumblings. In this new piece for Kamancheh, voices, Celtic harp, Taiko drums, strings and soprano saxophone; a simple melody is echoed back in different tongues as a wash of texture and sounds reflect the transience of water, erosion and ever-moving life. Drawing on melodic material from the North of Scotland and inspired, in part, by the monophonic singing textures of the Gaelic Free Kirk on the Outer Hebrides; this new commission is a peaceful ‘call to arms’ as we gather our global family, our respective musical languages and come together to create beauty and change.

*Maeve Gilchrist*

## ***O, Death***

### **Traditional, arr. by Rhiannon Giddens\*\***

During the last year, I’ve found myself drawn to old folk music from around my parts (North Carolina and the American South) to help me deal with some of the massiveness of this last year. This song is a well-known traditional piece that came to popular notice when it was sung by Ralph Stanley in the wildly popular film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* But this version from noted folklorist Bessie Jones is where I found inspiration—her approach is rooted in African American traditions and really spoke to me. I recorded *O Death* on my newest album, *They’re Calling Me Home*, with Francesco Turrisi on frame drum. These traditional songs have a way

of getting to the bones of humanity, showing the stark contrast of life and death, and I thought it might do the same in a new setting with Silkroad.

*Rhiannon Giddens*

## ***Ascending Bird***

### **Traditional, arr. by Colin Jacobsen and Siamak Aghaei\*\***

In the summer of 2004, I had the opportunity to visit Iran, the home of Siamak Aghaei and Kayhan Kalhor, musicians and friends whom I met through the Silkroad Ensemble. The visit, made alongside my friend and colleague Nicholas Cords, was a cultural exchange made possible by Silkroad and would prove to be a life-changing experience. Besides learning more about traditional Persian architecture, calligraphy, arts and crafts, and their close link to Persian music, we spent many hours in the homes of both Kayhan and Siamak listening to them play and talk about the philosophy behind their music. Siamak is a bit of a modern-day Bartók in that he has traveled around Iran making field recordings of folk musicians from the many and varied traditions represented by the different regions of Iran. He dusted off one such recording and the sound that emerged from the speakers gave us a form of vertigo. Our ears were held to attention by the sound of an incredibly potent and piercing instrument, which Siamak told us was made out of the fused bones of a bird and measured little more than two inches in length. The music also encoded a popular mythical story of a bird attempting to fly to the sun. Failing on the first two attempts, on the third try the bird loses its physical body in the radiant embrace of the sun, a metaphor for spiritual transcendence. What emerged from this experience was *Ascending Bird*—comprised of Siamak’s reinterpretation

of the traditional tune to which I added further textural layers and combined with an original coda.

*Colin Jacobsen*

**Sacred Cloud Music**  
**Zhao Jiping**

**Goin' Home (from the Grammy Award-winning album, *Sing Me Home*)**  
**Antonín Dvořák, arr. by Rhiannon Giddens and Mazz Swift\*\***

**Ho-oh**  
**Kaoru Watanabe\***

*Ho-Oh* is the Japanese name of a mythological bird whose origins in China date back to 3000 BC. *Ho-Oh* has often been translated as simply Phoenix, although it is a different creature than that of Greek mythology. The Ho-Oh is often described as a combination of different birds and animals, i.e., the head of a golden pheasant, the long legs of a crane, and the luxurious tail of a peacock with a tortoise's shell on its back.

The presence of the Ho-Oh is ubiquitous in Japan, adorning the roofs of Shinto shrines, on Buddhist temples, on paper money, in fine art and in pop culture. The Ho-Oh is present in Gagaku, the Japanese court music that was initially imported from China and Korea in the 8th century, and one of the primary influences for this composition: The Ho-Oh is painted on the ornate giant *dadaiko* drum and is said to be represented in the shape of the wind instrument known as the *sho*, with its multiple reeds arrayed like unfurling wings.

Japan, at the eastern end of the Silk Road, is in a sense a repository of the music that started in Africa and traveled across the Middle East and Asia. However, Japan, being an archipelago and for other political reasons, spent many long periods being cut off from the rest of the world, allowing music and instruments to grow and develop in unique ways. One of the ideas behind this piece is to reunite Gagaku with its distant relatives and see what emerges.

What I envision for this composition is the musicians of the ensemble, representing musical styles from across the globe, study the phrasing, nuances, and rhythms that give Gagaku its sense of ethereal and elegant timelessness and then try to apply them to their instruments and musical styles to unearth connections and throughlines and create new vocabularies that could bridge cultures.

Like the ancient bird of mythology, the strength and beauty of the piece come from the seemingly disparate parts coming together in a hybrid new form. The hope for the composition is to be, like the Ho-Oh, a harbinger of an era of peace, prosperity and equality.

*Kaoru Watanabe*

**Ekla Cholo Re**  
**Sandeep Das, Lyrics by Rabindranath Tagore\*\*\***

This past year, India suffered losses on a massive scale never seen before. Within a few weeks, I and many people I know were suddenly reeling from the unexpected losses of family, friends, loved ones, mentors and some of our country's most treasured musicians and artists. When I was

## Program Notes *continued*

asked to create a piece for *Phoenix Rising*, my mind immediately went to Rabindranath Tagore's iconic song, *Ekla Cholo Re*. The refrain states, "If no one heeds your call, then walk alone." Tagore, one of India's most celebrated poets, was the first person of color and the first non-European to win a Nobel Prize for literature, writing thousands of songs that have stayed relevant beyond the half century since his passing. Music, I believe, is an instrument of healing—a means to create awareness, a conversation unbounded by language, and a spark that can lead to change on a global level. As *Ekla Cholo Re* rang through the Independence movement of India, I believe its words still ring true and are inspirational in our current times.

*Sandeep Das*

### **St. James Infirmary Blues**

**Traditional; arr. Michael Ward-Bergeman**

### **New Ritual**

**Traditional, arranged by member of Silkroad\*\***

Prominently featuring a traditional matsuri (festival) rhythm from the town of Kamitsuki on Miyake Island, this piece features improvisations by the percussionists in the Silkroad Ensemble along with pipa and shakuhachi. Festivals in Japan, as in most parts of the world, are both sacred and secular celebrations of community, of heritage and of planting and harvest seasons. This piece captures the spirit of the matsuri through joyful individual expression and communal effort.

*Kaoru Watanabe*

### **Cut the Rug: IV. Wake the Dead**

**David Bruce, arr. by Edward Pérez\*\***

When composer David Bruce developed *Cut the Rug* for the Ensemble in 2012, he was inspired not only by the concept of the historical Silk Road but also by filmmaker Tony Gatlif's documentary *Latcho Drom*, which explores the broad, multicultural embrace of Roma music. "The idea of all these diverse but equally vibrant musics being part of one large family has always appealed to me," David says, "as has the ease and naturalness with which new styles have been integrated into a developing musical language as the Roma have moved from one area to another. In my piece I think there is a similarly wide spread of cultural influences, which I hope to integrate to create something new—there are a few drops of Kyrgyzstan; definite hints of Turkey; a pinch of flamenco; perhaps even a dash of American Cajun music; and many influences besides."

The title is a play on the rugs the Central Asian region so famously produces, but it also teases the Jazz Age lingo "cut the rug"—the deft skill of a dancer who can wow a crowd.

*Edward Pérez*

*\*World Premiere, Commissioned by Silkroad for Phoenix Rising*

*\*\*New Arrangement, Commissioned by Silkroad for Phoenix Rising*

*\*\*\*Commissioned by Silkroad for Phoenix Rising*

# About the Artists

Yo-Yo Ma conceived **Silkroad** in 1998, recognizing the historical Silk Road as a model for radical cultural collaboration—for the exchange of ideas, tradition and innovation across borders. In an innovative experiment, he brought together musicians from the lands of the Silk Road to co-create a musical language founded in difference, thus creating the foundation of Silkroad: both a touring ensemble comprised of world-class musicians from all over the globe and a social impact organization working to make a positive impact across borders through the arts. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Rhiannon Giddens, Silkroad leads social impact initiatives and educational programming alongside the creation of new music by the Grammy Award-winning Silkroad Ensemble. You are invited to get involved and join us in our work to transcend cultural division by using music and the arts to build a more equitable, hopeful and just world. For more information, please visit [Silkroad.org](http://Silkroad.org).

Grammy Award-winning musician and vocalist **Rhiannon Giddens** has pursued a lifelong quest to shine light on under-recognized voices, genres and musical traditions. A MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipient, Giddens co-founded the Grammy Award-winning Carolina Chocolate Drops, and she has been nominated for six additional Grammys for her work as a soloist and collaborator. As a performer, composer and cross-cultural connector, she has helped to change the understanding of both American and world music. Giddens has performed with the Silkroad Ensemble numerous times, but her appearances with them this season will be her first since succeeding Yo-Yo Ma as Artistic Director. Along with Silkroad’s artists, Giddens

has shaped a program that will serve to connect the ever-evolving organization and its Ensemble.

**Jeffrey Beecher** pursues a varied musical career as both an energetic performer and educator. He performs as Principal Double Bass with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and serves on the faculty of The Glenn Gould School at The Royal Conservatory. For nearly 20 years, Jeffrey has actively toured and held positions of leadership within Silkroad. He appears on several of the Ensemble’s recordings, serving as an Associate Producer for the Grammy Award-winning *Sing Me Home*. Jeffrey has also created numerous arrangements for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, including viral videos of *Appalachian Spring*, *I’ll Be Seeing You* and a wholly reimagined *Penelope and the Wolf*. As a composer, he has written and arranged for the Silkroad Ensemble, as well as composing and producing music for the internationally broadcast television show, *Travels to the Edge with Art Wolfe*. Jeffrey served as Co-Artistic Director of Silkroad from 2017-2019.

A Guggenheim Fellow, **Sandeep Das** is one of the leading Tabla virtuosos in the world today. Since his debut concert at the age of 17 with legendary Sitar player Ravi Shankar, Das has built a prolific international reputation spanning over three decades. He has collaborated with top musicians, ensembles and orchestras from all over the world, and his original compositions have been performed in 50+ countries. Das is the founder of Harmony and Universality through Music (HUM), a nonprofit organization in India that has promoted global understanding through music performance and provided learning

## About the Artists *continued*

opportunities and scholarships for visually-impaired children with artistic potential since 2009. His most recent project, *Transcending Borders One Note at a Time*, launched in 2020 to widespread international acclaim, and seeks to harness the power of music to create positive social change.

Multi-percussionist **Haruka Fujii** has won international acclaim for her interpretation of contemporary music and commissioned and performed numerous premiere works from luminary living composers. Ms. Fujii has appeared as a soloist with major orchestras including San Francisco Symphony, the Munich Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Nationale de Lyon and the NHK Symphony Orchestra. She also performs as a member of San Francisco Contemporary Players, the New York based Line C3 Percussion Group, and Utari Percussion Duo—a project with her sister Rika Fujii. Her recordings can be found on the SONY, Kosei, ALM Records and Deutsche Grammophon labels. In addition to her career as a performing artist, Ms. Fujii recently joined the percussion faculty of San Francisco Conservatory of Music and has been a frequent guest instructor at Juilliard Summer Percussion Seminar and several international percussion festivals.

Edinburgh-born harpist and composer **Maeve Gilchrist** has been credited as an innovator on her native instrument and taken the Celtic (lever) Harp to new levels of performance and visibility. Currently based in Kingston, New York, Maeve tours internationally as a solo artist and composer as well as being a member of the Grammy-nominated Silkroad ensemble, Arooj Aftab's Grammy-winning Vulture Prince Ensemble and as part of the multi-disciplinary

quartet Edges of Light. She has performed and recorded with such luminaries as Yo-Yo Ma, Frankie Gavin, Esperanza Spalding, Bruce Molsky, Ambrose Akinmusire and Solas. As a composer, Maeve straddles the worlds of folk and classical with pieces. She is a regular visiting artist at the Berklee College of Music and has had a number of instructional books published by Hal Leonard and 80 days publishing. Maeve has released a number of albums to her name on the Adventure Music Record Label as well as being a featured soloist on the Dreamworks blockbuster movie soundtrack, *How to tame your dragon: The hidden world*. Her most recent album, *The Harpweaver*, has garnered international acclaim including a five-star review from the *Irish Times* who described it as “buoyant, sprightly and utterly beguiling...a snapshot of a musician at the top of her game.” Maeve is the co-music director of the WGBH holiday show, a Christmas Celtic sojourn and the co-artistic director of the brand new Rockport Celtic Music festival; an innovative new festival focused on cross-curation and the outer-fringes of Celtic Music.

Born in Japan, based in New York City, Dr. **Mario Gotoh** is a Grammy Award-winner who has distinguished herself in multiple roles as an innovative, creative violinist, violist, passionate educator and composer with a remarkably unique style in all genres, performing worldwide. An avid interdisciplinary collaborator, Mario is a featured actor in William Kentridge's *The Head and The Load*. She regularly records and performs on soundtracks and with pop artists, including: Stevie Wonder, Brian Wilson, Roger Waters, Sting, Katy Perry, Doja Cat, broadcast on The Grammys, SNL, MTV VMAs, Colbert, Letterman. She was the original violinist-violist for Broadway's “Hamilton: An American Musical”.



She holds dual-degree Doctorates and Masters of both Violin and Viola Performance. Mario is inspired by her community activism, language, literature, cooking, writing, visual arts, film, swimming and exploring cultures worldwide.

Described as “...Brilliant...” by *The New York Times*: Grammy Award-winner **Joseph Gramley** performs around the world as a founding member of The Silkroad Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma and Rhiannon Giddens, performs with English organist Clive Driskill-Smith in the duo Organized Rhythm, is principal timpanist and percussionist with The Knights, and is widely heard and seen in his dynamic solo percussion concerts. He joined the faculty of the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in August of 2019 and serves now as Chair of the department. Gramley has performed with: the Metropolitan Opera (on stage with Placido Domingo), Pierre-Laurent Aimard (US tour), Orpheus Chamber Orchestra (US and international tours), Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Chicago Symphony Orchestra (soloist), Seattle Symphony, Orchestre de Lyon, Dawn Upshaw (US and international tours), David Robertson (Carnegie Hall), Spoleto Festival (soloist), Martha Graham Dance Company, Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Mark Morris Dance Group (US and international tours), New York City Ballet, Glen Velez (US tour), Keiko Abe (PASIC), Aretha Franklin, Elton John and numerous others.

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. 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. She 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*.

Described as “radiant” and “expressive” (*The New York Times*) and “nothing less than gorgeous” (*Memphis Commercial Appeal*), cellist and composer **Karen Ouzounian** approaches music-making with a deeply communicative and passionate spirit. Winner of the S&R Foundation’s Washington Award, she appears regularly with the Silkroad Ensemble and is a founding member of the Grammy-nominated Aizuri Quartet. Recent projects include the creation of an experimental theater work with director Joanna Settle; the world premiere of Lembit Beecher’s cello concerto *Tell Me Again* with the Orlando Philharmonic; the world premiere of Anna Clyne’s *Shorthand* for solo cello and string quintet with The Knights; and the release of Kayhan Kalhor’s *Blue as the Turquoise Night of Neyshabur* for solo cello, kamancheh and tabla. Her evening-length video work *In Motion*, an exploration of heritage, family history and migration through interviews, her own compositions, and collaborations with visual artists, was presented by BroadBand in 2021.

Critically acclaimed as one of America’s most talented and versatile performers today, Violin/

## About the Artists *continued*

Vox/Freestyle Composition artist **Mazz Swift** has engaged audiences all over the world with the signature weaving of song, melody and improvisation that they call MazzMuse. As a singer, composer and Juilliard-trained violinist who plays electronic and acoustic instruments, Mazz has performed and recorded with a diverse accumulation of artists including The Silkroad Ensemble, William Parker, Butch Morris, Jason Lindner, James “Blood” Ulmer, Vernon Reid, Valerie June, Whitney Houston, DJ Logic, Kanye West, D’Angelo. Mx. Swift is a 2021 United States Artist and 2019 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow, currently working on a series of compositions that involve conducted improvisation, and that are centered around protest, spirituals and the Ghanaian concept of ‘Sankofa’: looking back to learn how to move forward.

Grammy Award-winning multi-instrumentalist **Francesco Turrisi** has been described a “musical alchemist” and a “musical polyglot” by the press. He has released five critically acclaimed albums and his latest piano solo album *Northern Migrations* was described as “delicate, wistful and wholly engrossing” by the *Irish Times*. Francesco is also a member of the celebrated early music ensemble L’Arpeggiata with whom he has performed at the most important classical music festivals in Europe and around the world and has recorded for Warner, Virgin, Naive and Alpha.

Since 2018 he has been collaborating with American Grammy Award-winning singer and multi-instrumentalist Rhiannon Giddens on a project that seamlessly combines music from the Mediterranean with music from the African diaspora in the Americas. In 2019 Giddens and

Turrisi released their critically acclaimed duo album *there is no Other*. The album single *I’m on my way* was nominated for a 2020 Grammy. Their 2021 second duo album *They’re calling me home* was nominated for two Grammys and won the Best Folk Album at the 2022 Grammy awards. Francesco currently performs on piano, accordion, harpsichord, organ, various lutes, cello banjo, frame and goblet drums.

Noted by *The New York Times* as a “virtuosic, deeply expressive shakuhachi player and composer” and the LA Times as one of the “better kept secrets of Southern California music,” **Kojiro Umezaki** (梅崎康二郎) has performed regularly with the Silkroad Ensemble since 2001. He appears on the Grammy Award-winning album *Sing Me Home, A Playlist Without Borders*, *Off the Map* and the Grammy-nominated 2015 documentary film, *The Music of Strangers*, directed by Morgan Neville. In a Circle Records released (Cycles), an album of original work, in 2014, and **流芳** *Flow*, a duo album with Wu Man, in 2021. Other notable recordings as performer, composer and/or producer include Brooklyn Rider’s *Dominant Curve*, Nicole Mitchell’s *Mandorla Awakening II*, Kei Akagi’s *Aqua Puzzle* and Huun Huur Tu’s *Ancestors Call*. Born to a Japanese father and Danish mother, Umezaki grew up in Tokyo, and continues to explore global and hybrid practices in music.

Acclaimed composer and instrumentalist **Kaoru Watanabe**’s melodic, authentic and engaging music focuses on points of connection: the joints between Western jazz and Japanese theater and folk traditions and political action, the ancient and the all-too-contemporary.

Born into a musical family, Watanabe began his training at a young age, eventually graduating from the Manhattan School of Music, then devoting a decade overseas performing with and ultimately leading the world-renowned Taiko drum performance group Kodo. His ten years in Japan profoundly influenced Watanabe's practice. His signature skill of infusing Japanese culture to disparate styles has made him a much-in-demand collaborator, having worked with Wes Anderson, Yo-Yo Ma, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Laurie Anderson, Jason and Alicia Hall Moran, Bando Tamasaburo, Eva Yerbabuena and Zakir Hussain, among many others. Whether writing for solo performances, interdisciplinary ensembles, film or symphony orchestras, he regularly explores social justice, history and heritage issues.

**Reylon Yount** aka Mantawoman (they/them/Rey/M) is a genre-fluid performer, yangqin player and singer-songwriter based in London. As the

youngest member of the Silkroad Ensemble, Reylon has toured venues such as Lincoln Center, TED, Park Avenue Armory and Xinghai Concert Hall. A Harvard College graduate and Marshall Scholar, Reylon pairs their music-making with research around transcultural identity and fluidity as a healing response to fragmentation. Reylon is a 2020 City Music Foundation Artist and has received support from Arts Council England, Help Musicians UK and the Royal Philharmonic Society. Reylon has recorded on soundtracks for the Sundance Award-winning short *RENEEPOPTOSIS* and Marvel's blockbuster *SHANG CHI*. They co-direct Tangram, a London-based artist collective reimagining Chinese cultures through music. When flying solo, Reylon performs as **Mantawoman**, a psychedelic siren giving hypnopop surrealness, showcasing their "lovely baritone" (*I Care If You Listen*). Their playing has garnered over 2.5 million views on Instagram and TikTok.

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