

Concertnova ED + Artistic Director Bios

BRIANNA MATZKE, executive director

Dr. Brianna Matzke's dynamic pianism shows "a sense of refinement, flair, and technical prowess" (clevelandclassical.com). An avid performer and commissioner of new music, she has collaborated with many composers, including Tina Tallon, Marc Mellits, Michael Fiday, Elliot Cole, Molly Joyce, Alexandra du Bois, D. J. Sparr, Danny Clay, Jennifer Jolley, John Glover, and Evan Williams. She has appeared in concert across the globe; recent appearances include concerts in Italy, Beirut, São Paulo, and in series such as TriBeCa New Music, Vanguard New Music Series, ETHOS New Music, Re:Sound Festival, neif-norf New Music Marathon, and the Accidental Music Festival. She has given multiple concerts with the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center, and has performed with the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and the concert:nova chamber ensemble.

Often called upon for her vision and planning, Matzke is a widely-respected executive and artistic director. As the Executive Director for the Cincinnati-based concert:nova new music ensemble, she oversees the production of their mainstage productions each season, as well as other community outreach and educational events. She is also the founder and artistic director of an ongoing and acclaimed commissioning initiative, called The Response Project, which asks composers to write music for piano in response to a pre-existing artwork or idea. The project has premiered and recorded dozens of new works, and often invites artists from other disciplines (such as film, painting, and poetry) to also create and present responses in large-scale community events.

Additionally, in 2021 Matzke was named CEO and President of the International Foundation for Contemporary Music, and appointed as Executive Director of the Cortona Sessions for New Music. Through these positions she works as an advocate for new music across the globe, leading an annual two-week long contemporary chamber music institute and assisting in the production of many projects, concerts, and recordings.

In addition to performance and leadership, Brianna is a dedicated music educator and pedagogue. A Nationally Certified Teacher of Music (NCTM), she serves as Associate Professor of Music at Wilmington College. She has also served on the faculties of the Oberlin Conservatory, Interlochen Arts Camp, Thomas More College, and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Preparatory Department. She is founder and President of the World Piano Teachers Association Ohio Chapter and maintains an active presence as a member of the Music Teachers National Association. She holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) and the University of Kansas.

JOSEPH BRICKER

A "tour de force" performer ([Seen and Heard International](#)), percussionist **Joseph Bricker** is the Associate Principal Timpani/Percussion of the [Cincinnati Symphony](#) and Pops Orchestras. Prior to joining the CSO, Bricker was the percussion fellow with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago from 2019-2022. Joe maintains a deep commitment to community engagement and experimenting with educational models within music. In 2020, he co-founded [Chicago, From Scratch](#), a program for students of the Chicago

Musical Pathways Initiative in which students receive unique instruction in creative musical thinking through the lens of contemporary composition and performance. Since 2020, he has also worked with Notes for Peace, a Chicago-based project that works with families who have lost children to gun violence to create new songs in their memory. An advocate for new and contemporary music, Bricker has worked with composers such as Steve Reich, Tyshawn Sorey, Elizabeth A. Baker, Kevin Day, Silvia Borzelli, Vivian Fung, Fredrick Gifford, and numerous others on several premieres and recordings. He has performed as a guest artist on the North Shore Chamber Music Festival, the Literary Music Series, the Live Music Project, Juilliard's FOCUS! Festival, with the International Contemporary Ensemble, and has curated concerts for fellows of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, in addition to other projects.

IXI CHEN

Born in Taiwan and raised in California, Ixi Chen enjoys an active career as an orchestral player, chamber musician, artistic director, and educator. Following studies at the Manhattan School of Music and the University of Southern California, Ixi has been the Second Clarinet of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra since 2001. In 2004, she joined the clarinet faculty of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and in 2006, she founded the chamber ensemble concert:nova whose fusion of traditional and contemporary elements seeks to cultivate a new audience for art music.

Ixi's commitment to diverse experiences has taken her around the globe. She has participated in numerous music festivals, including those at Aspen, Tanglewood, Evian, Schleswig-Holstein, Rheingau, Jerusalem, Thessaloniki, and Saint Petersburg. In 1996, she moved to Germany, where she played Principal Clarinet and Assistant Principal/E-flat Clarinet with the Philharmonic of the Nations and later attended the Hochschule für Musik in Karlsruhe. In 1998, she settled in Los Angeles, where she pursued graduate work at USC and served as the Principal Clarinet of the American Symphony. In 2007, Ixi participated in the Munich ARD Festival, and she subsequently toured Europe with the Festival's chamber musicians.

Ixi's orchestral concerts have been featured on several media broadcasts: ZDF (German television), Norddeutsche Rundfunk (NDR; North German Radio), Süddeutsche Rundfunk (SDR; South German Radio), KUSC Los Angeles, KQED San Francisco, and WGUC Cincinnati. She has also collaborated on recording projects with the Cincinnati Symphony on the Telarc label and the Philharmonic of the Nations on Handel Classic Audio. In addition, she has been a frequent performer in the Linton Chamber Music series in Cincinnati, the Manhattan Chamber Music Group in New York, and the Philharmonic Winds in Germany. While in Los Angeles, Ixi founded and developed ensemble infinity, a precursor to her group concert:nova, and for the Old Town Conservatory of Music and the Performing Arts, she authored Adventures in Music, a 36-week script that formed the core of the school's music outreach program.

Ixi's teachers include Rosario Mazzeo; Gary Gray at UCLA; David Krakauer at MSM; Wolfgang Meyer at the Hochschule für Musik; and Yehuda Gilad at USC. She is proud to be a Buffet Crampon artist.

HIRO MATSUO

Acclaimed by The New York Times as "striking," cellist Hiro Matsuo has become one of the great talents of his generation. Matsuo is a member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. In Cincinnati, he also serves as a co-artistic director of concert:nova, which aims "to transform hearts, minds and communities through thought provoking musical exploration."

An avid chamber musician, Matsuo has collaborated with distinguished artists such as Joshua Bell, David Aaron Carpenter, Roberto Díaz, Christoph Eschenbach, Midori Goto, Ida Kavafian, Alex Kerr, Yo-Yo Ma, Anne-Marie McDermott, Gil Shaham, and Joseph Silverstein, among others. He has served as principal cellist of the Metropolis Ensemble, Salomé Chamber Orchestra, and Solisti Ensemble. He has also performed with A Far Cry and Sejong Soloists.

Matsuo also enjoys collaborating with musicians outside the classical music genre. He has recorded for The Roots eleventh studio album “Undun.” To celebrate the release of the album, he appeared with the legendary band on NBC’s Late Night with Jimmy Fallon. He has shared the stage with famed artists Natasha Bedingfield, John Legend, Rufus Wainwright, Florene Welch, and Michelle Williams.

He holds a Bachelor’s degree from Curtis Institute of Music and a Master’s degree from The Juilliard School. He has worked extensively with Gilda Barston, Carter Brey, Timothy Eddy, Hans Jørgen Jensen, David Soyer, and Peter Wiley.

JOSEPH MORRIS

Joseph Morris is the Associate Principal and Eb Clarinet of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra where he holds the Robert E. & Fay Boeh Chair. In addition, he is an Adjunct Professor of Clarinet at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Joseph was the Principal Clarinet of the Pacific Symphony from 2016 – 2020 and held the Principal Clarinet chair with the Sarasota Opera Orchestra. He has appeared as guest Principal Clarinet with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Grant Park Music Festival and at the Colorado Music Festival.

As the first prize winner of the 42nd Ima Hogg Competition, Joseph appeared as soloist with the Houston Symphony Orchestra in performances of the Nielsen Clarinet Concerto in 2017. He has appeared as soloist with the Burbank Philharmonic, Downey Symphony, Madison Symphony Orchestra (WI) and the National Repertory Orchestra. Joseph was the featured soloist in a performance of John Adams’ “Gnarly Buttons” conducted by the composer with the Colburn Orchestra in 2013. He has appeared as a guest artist at the La Jolla Chamber Music Society Summerfest, Token Creek Music Festival, and Bach Dancing Dynamite Society and as a clarinet fellow at the Music Academy of the West and the Aspen Music Festival.

Joseph studied at The Colburn Conservatory of Music and the USC Thornton School of Music with Professor Yehuda Gilad.