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INSIDER.

Sonic Youth

Sounds of US celebrates America's upcoming 250th anniversary with the daylong music fest at The Reach.

by MICHAEL MCCARTHY



Jennifer Koh is the director of Fortas Chamber Music Concerts at the Kennedy Center.

When measuring America's age relative to the rest of the world, we are so damn young. When measuring our influence musically, we are ageless. *Sounds of US* is an ambitious program at The Reach at the Kennedy Center this month. The festival, created and curated by violinist and artistic director of Fortas Chamber Music Jennifer Koh (@jenniferkohmusic), showcases 40 new works by established and emerging composers.

"*Sounds of US* envisions a future shaped by the diversity of voices representing our nation," says Koh. "By mentoring young composers and performers, particularly women and people of color, we are opening doors and advocating for a future where one generation uplifts the next, ensuring the Kennedy Center stages reflect the true

diversity of America's sound, now and into the future."

The festival will showcase new compositions from Kennedy Center Composer-in-Residence Carlos Simon, along with works by Vijay Iyer (@vijayiyer), Nina C. Young (@composernina), David Ludwig (@davidludwigmusic) and DC native Inti Figgis-Vizueta (@millennial_perennial).

Current Juilliard student Yiqi Xue, a composer whose musical language includes soundscapes and dialogue concepts, is also featured in the festival. Her compositions often explore exchanges between instruments and other media.

The event will emphasize the significance of mentorship and education and include commissions by students from The Juilliard School and the Juilliard

Pre-College program.

Mainstage concerts showcase the steps of a musician's journey: To begin the pursuit, to believe in the dream, to become what one envisions and ultimately, to be in the life of a working musician.

The evening's crescendo is "Hear Here," the culmination of collecting sounds from all 50 states, American territories and tribal nations beginning last spring. The crowd-sourced composition, built from these recordings, explores the question: "What does home sound like?" The "Hear Here" premiere begins at 7 p.m. in the Peace Corps Gallery, followed by a live performance by composer and performer Eunike Tanzil (@eunike.tanzil). Nov. 16, 1-9 p.m., 2700 F St. NW, kennedy-center.org

"Sounds of US envisions a future shaped by the diversity of voices representing our nation."

– JENNIFER KOH



From left: Composer Yiqi Xue; Jennifer Koh