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Nina Shekhar, composer

Nina Shekhar, the Young Concert Artists 2021-2023 Composer-in-Residence, is a composer and multimedia artist who delves into the intersection of identity, vulnerability, love, and laughter, crafting bold and intensely personal works.

Described as “tart and compelling” (New York Times), “vivid” (Washington Post), an “orchestral supernova” (LA Times), and a “rare composer who opens our ears a little wider each time” (Chicago Tribune), Nina’s music has been commissioned and performed by leading artists including the New York Philharmonic, LA Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, Oregon Symphony, Albany Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, New World Symphony, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Eighth Blackbird, International Contemporary Ensemble, JACK Quartet, Alarm Will Sound, The Crossing, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, ETHEL, The New York Virtuoso Singers, and the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble. Her work has been featured by the Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Library of Congress, Walt Disney Concert Hall, National Gallery of Art, National Sawdust, I Care If You Listen, ScoreFollower, and WNYC/New Sounds (New York), WFMT (Chicago), and KUSC and KPFK (Los Angeles) radio.

As the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's 2023-2024 Sound Investment Artist, Nina premiered her commissioned work, "Glitter Monster," with the orchestra in May 2024, and she currently serves as Composer-in-Residence of The Crossing who has commissioned her to write a new concerto for piano and 24 voices to be premiered in October 2025. Recent and upcoming events include her Hollywood Bowl debut with the LA Philharmonic, and performances by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, commissions for the New York Philharmonic and Bravo!Vail, a multimedia work for the Grand Rapids Symphony, and a children's interactive piece co-commissioned by Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA), The People's Music School, Play on Philly, Sistema Ravinia (sponsored by LA Phil and New Music USA) and Carnegie Hall “Link Up”. Her accordion concerto which was written for accordionist Hanzhi Wang and was commissioned by Young Concert Artists and the St. Louis Symphony premiered in January of 2025.

Nina is the recipient of the 2021 Rudolf Nissim Prize, two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards (2015 and 2019), 2022 BMI Student Composer Award, and the 2018 ASCAP Foundation Leonard Bernstein Award, funded by the Bernstein family. Aside from composing, she is a versatile performing artist as a flutist, pianist, and saxophonist. She has been featured by the National Flute Association, and she has performed in the Detroit International Jazz Festival and as a soloist with the USC Thornton Symphony and the Lublin Philharmonic at the Poland International Piano Festival.

Nina is also on the Composition faculty of Mannes School of Music at The New School. An active educator, she is also a faculty mentor for Luna Composition Lab and co-founded Brightwork newmusic’s Project Beacon initiative. She has held guest composer residencies at New York University, Colburn School, University of Colorado-Boulder, Western Michigan University, and Portland State University and is a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Music Fellow.

As a PhD candidate in Music Composition at Princeton University, Nina previously completed composition graduate studies at University of Southern California and undergraduate studies at University of Michigan, earning dual degrees in music composition and chemical engineering. She is a first-generation Indian American and a native of Detroit, Michigan.

NOTE: When editing, please do not delete references to Young Concert Artists, nor special prizes. Please do not use previously dated biographies.