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Nina Shekhar, composer

Nina Shekhar is a composer who explores the intersection of identity, vulnerability, love, and laughter to create bold and intensely personal works.

Described as “tart and compelling” (New York Times), “vivid” (Washington Post), and “surprises and delights aplenty” (LA Times), her music has been commissioned and performed by leading artists including the LA Philharmonic, Albany Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, New World Symphony, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Eighth Blackbird, International Contemporary Ensemble, JACK Quartet, New York Youth Symphony, Alarm Will Sound, The Crossing, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, ETHEL, violinist Jennifer Koh, saxophonist Timothy McAllister, Ensemble Échappé, Music from Copland House, soprano Tony Arnold, Third Angle New Music, The New York Virtuoso Singers, Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Lyris Quartet, Ray-Kallay Duo, New Music Detroit, and Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra. Her work has been featured by Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Walt Disney Concert Hall (LA Phil’s Noon to Midnight), Library of Congress, National Gallery of Art, National Sawdust, National Flute Association, North American Saxophone Alliance, I Care If You Listen, ScoreFollower, and WNYC/New Sounds (New York), WFMT (Chicago), and KUSC and KPFK (Los Angeles) radio.

Recent and upcoming events include performances by the New York Philharmonic, LA Philharmonic (joined by soloists Nathalie Joachim and Pamela Z), Minnesota Orchestra, New World Symphony, and her Hollywood Bowl debut with the LA Philharmonic. Current projects include commissions for the Grand Rapids Symphony, Albany Symphony, 45th Parallel Universe Chamber Orchestra (sponsored by GLFCAM), and Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA, sponsored by LA Phil and New Music USA). Shekhar is the recipient of the 2021 Rudolf Nissim Prize, two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards (2015 and 2019), and the 2018 ASCAP Foundation Leonard Bernstein Award, funded by the Bernstein family.

Aside from composing, Shekhar is a versatile performing artist as a flutist, pianist, and saxophonist. She has performed in the Detroit International Jazz Festival and as a soloist with the USC Thornton Symphony and the Lublin Philharmonic in the Poland International Piano Festival. She has been featured by the National Flute Association and was previously a flute student of Amy Porter.

Shekhar is currently pursuing her PhD in Music Composition at Princeton University. She 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 was recently appointed as the 2021-2023 Composer-in-Residence for Young Concert Artists. She is a 2022-2023 Civitella Ranieri Foundation Music Fellow. An active educator, Shekhar is currently a Composer Teaching Artist Fellow for the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and is on faculty at the Idyllwild Arts Academy and Brightwork newmusic’s Project Beacon initiative. She has also held guest composition residencies at University of Colorado-Boulder, Western Michigan University and Portland State University. She recently served as an inaugural Debut Fellow of the Young Musicians Foundation, mentored by violinist and social activist Vijay Gupta. She is grateful to all of her mentors, including Ted Hearne, Andrew Norman, Donnacha Dennehy, Barbara White, Nina C. Young, Kristin Kuster, Evan Chambers, Bright Sheng, Michael Daugherty, Erik Santos, Gabriela Lena Frank, Derek Bermel, and James Hartway. 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.

08/2022