



The Visiting Artist Series presents

TOMEKA REID STRINGTET (USA)

Friday, April 5, 2019 . 7PM & 9PM

MilkBoy ArtHouse

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

ARTIST PARTNER PROGRAMS

VAS
VISITING ARTIST SERIES

*The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center's
Visiting Artist Series presents*

TOMEKA REID STRINGTET:
Musical Vignettes Inspired by the Artwork of Starr Page

Violin

Eddy Kwon
Sarah Bernstein

Viola

Melanie Dyer
Jason Hwang

Cello

Ben Davis
Tomeka Reid

Bass

Adam Hopkins

Drums

Tomas Fujiwara

Musical Vignettes Inspired by the Artwork of Starr Page

Legs

In My Solitude

Starr Dance

Stripey Stockings

Things Are Always.....

*We would like to acknowledge the **Holiday Inn-College Park** as a
season sponsor and preferred choice hotel for the Visiting Artist Series.*

As a young child growing up in the DC area, my mother brought us to the Smithsonian art museums as often as possible. Little did I know how deeply these frequent (and sometimes dreaded) visits to see the same paintings time and time again would impact me. She was especially drawn to modern art. She loved painters such as Robert Motherwell, Franz Klein, Willem de Kooning, Egon Schiele, amongst many others, and was ecstatic to discover the work of Jean-Michel Basquiat.

When I think about the styles of music that I am particularly drawn to today, I can't help but think that these images had some influence on me. Seeing these images time and time again definitely exposed me to visual art that was abstract and outside of the box.

My mother was not an avid jazz music listener, thus jazz was not often played in our home but she did have a penchant for listening to classical music radio programs that featured 20th Century classical music and often listened to this while she worked. She also enjoyed listening to what was then called progressive rock which led to my interest in rock, particularly of the punk variety, and other music styles where distortion and other noisy elements were frequently at play. Over the past few years, my mother has started to draw more frequently, even setting up an Instagram account (before me!) to share her work. Other than our epic walks we frequently took throughout the city, watching her draw or paint remains one of my fondest childhood memories as she seemed at peace and in some other space.

When my mother came to live with me in Chicago, I imagined that we might collaborate somehow but, challenges arose—as they sometimes do between mother and daughter—so a collaboration never came into fruition. But, I have always held in my mind of someday sharing her art along with my compositions.

The work composed for this evening uses a 7-piece string ensemble with drums. I have always loved the sound of strings and most often choose to compose for this setting. In her art work I see her elegance, grace, determination, loneliness, innocence, love of color, long legs and a fascination with shoes (a passion we both share). I am always inspired by her drive and perseverance, as she follows her own path ... no matter what. This work contains several musical vignettes, each accompanied by one of her drawings.

The **Tomeka Reid Stringtet** is a chamber ensemble founded by Chicago-based cellist, composer and bandleader Tomeka Reid. Often finding herself as the only string player in various jazz and improvised settings, Reid dreamed of an ensemble consisting of mostly improvising string players! Hence, the Tomeka Reid Stringtet was born, much in the “do-it-yourself” spirit of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) – an organization of which she is a member and had the opportunity to present an early iteration of the group for at Hyde Park Jazz Festival. Stringtet artists are avid improvisors and lead their own exciting projects nationally and internationally, pushing musical boundaries and developing their artistic voices. Hailing from Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, California, Virginia, Minnesota, Washington, DC and even the United Kingdom, members bring their unique talents and individual improvising styles to the wonderful world of string improvisation. The Stringtet seeks to showcase and provide a platform for alternative string playing styles. Members hope to encourage other string players to delve into the world of improvisation, a musical world that is not new but still often unexplored.

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Tomeka Reid and her ensemble performed for and chatted with College Park Scholars at a Concert in Close Quarters last night. This morning, they led improvisation workshops for students in the School of Music's chamber music program.

Artists lead complicated lives. They collect material for new work, they often teach and engage with community groups and they are always developing their craft.

In **SIDE NOTES**, we are providing good reads and fun facts to give you a sense of who our visiting artists are and what makes them do what they do. Contributing writers include students, faculty, staff and alumni from the extended Clarice family.



We are thrilled to welcome back School of Music alumna Tomeka Reid! We got a chance to catch up with her to learn how she approaches music, how she has grown as musician and how her time at University of Maryland (UMD) contributed to her career

What kind of training did you have at University of Maryland?

My focus was on learning classical cello repertoire while I was a student at UMD. Evelyn Elsing, my cello professor, was gracious in accepting me as a student since I hadn't studied cello for long before entering the University. We had a great studio full of mostly graduate students who came from top music programs in the country such as Julliard, Curtis Institute of Music and the Manhattan School of Music – I was one of only two undergraduates at the time! It was a challenging, motivating and inspiring environment for me on many levels.

When/what made you start being interested in jazz?

I grew up listening to rock, classical music and alternative rock (I remember a clear decision by my mother to only listen to this at a certain point), and upon entering college I made a concerted effort to listen to more music by African-Americans. I worked a summer job at a record store my last few years of college and got reacquainted with music from artists like Earth Wind, Fire and Stevie Wonder—sounds I had heard when I was very young. So, as part of my own independence (perhaps rebellion), I went back to that music and spent a lot of time at the music library seeing out jazz, soul music and looking for recordings by African American classical musicians such as cellist Kermit Moore.

I also reconnected with a music theory teacher from my time at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts who happened to be a doctoral ethnomusicology candidate at UMD, Saïs Kamalidiin. He not only became a mentor but also has been a father to me. He was the first to suggest I explore different styles of music and suggested that I check out some of the posters that were on the walls looking for cellists to play in various rock bands or other kinds of music ensembles. I initially resisted because I felt that I had SO much to learn on the cello as it was, and worried that it would detract from the limited time I had to study and practice. But, during my last two years of college, he convinced me to play some gigs with him on flute and myself on cello, introducing me to performing jazz music.

Did you face any challenges as you began to explore different styles of music?

I faced many challenges. While at UMD, I had the worst stage fright, mostly because I had not been studying cello for very long and had to play in studio classes with very accomplished cellists. I loved the cello and was quite driven and determined but it was a hard environment. Fortunately, my teacher and the other students knew that I cared about what I was doing and were supportive.

When I moved to Chicago for graduate school, I began playing with the great composer and flutist Nicole Mitchell who invited me to participate in her ensembles. I was still new to jazz and what I was familiar with was the music from the 40s and 50s. I had no awareness of free improvisation or the music from the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM)—basically the music from the mid-1960s and beyond, which was the main style of jazz that influenced many of the Chicago musicians I encountered.

Finding my own voice, being free and exploring timbre and texture were very important features in that music, and many were new explorations for me. I was asked to make many of the sounds I was learning how to avoid in classical music in public! I was asked to improvise in public and as a shy person and someone with bad stage fright this was a HUGE hurdle to overcome.

What do you enjoy most about improvising?

I love the discoveries I make personally and musically. I like the musical exchanges that can happen between musicians who are frequent collaborators and those who are not. It's a wonderful and liberating gift that I wish more instrumentalists—and particularly string players—explored. I think participating in improvising and composing makes me feel closer to being a total musician in that I am not solely an interpreter of other people's ideas. I think we all have a musical voice worthy of sharing and I have found being a musician even more enjoyable since becoming an improviser.

How does improvising help you compose?

Every composition begins with improvising and I think the more comfortable you are with improvising, the more comfortable you will be in developing ideas for composition. As an improviser, you are an instantaneous composer—you may not just write it all down every time. I often record myself improvising and then listen back and hear ideas that I want to develop into longer compositions either played by myself or for other individuals.

How does collaboration with other artists inform your performance style, improvisations or compositions?

Because I play in situations where improvisation is at the core, I get to experience a lot of different approaches and processes to various musicians' composition styles. I definitely feel that this impacts me, especially in regard to form and how some musicians incorporate various kinds of improvisation into their compositions (i.e. improvisations using set chords or pitch centers, improvisations using set sounds or timbres, etc.). Basically, it makes you feel like all ideas are available and usable and encourages you to have fun putting the different elements together to create your own unique voice."

If there was one thing you could tell current UMD music students, what would it be?

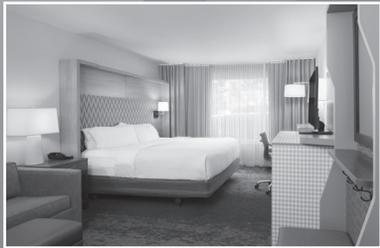
There are many paths to take in music and it is of our greatest benefit to be open. I think some of us go in to music thinking of one particular outcome or are made to feel that opportunities are limited unless you have x, y and z in place. But, the only real limits you have are the ones that you place on yourself. Do what you dream and work hard at it—I believe you will be pleasantly surprised by the journey."



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ABOUT THE VISITING ARTIST SERIES

The Clarice's **VISITING ARTIST SERIES** curates a season of regional, national and international artists in dance, music, theater and performance. Beyond the stunning work these artists bring to the stage, the Visiting Artist Series is also committed to providing extensive campus and community engagement opportunities that extend the academic learning and cultural opportunities for UMD students as well as the community that surrounds the university. Through creative partnerships, we believe that artists can be catalysts for community change, leadership and empowerment. The Visiting Artist Series is part of the Artist Partner Programs that include the NextNOW Fest, the National Orchestral Institute + Festival, NextLOOK at Joe's Movement Emporium and MilkBoy ArtHouse.

UPCOMING ARTIST PARTNER PROGRAMS EVENTS

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: GLOBAL MUSIC

DAKHABRAKHA (Ukraine)

FRI, APR 12 . 8PM

MILKBOY ARTHOUSE

\$30 RES / \$25 GEN ADM / UMD STUDENTS FREE

Their name means "give/take" in old Ukrainian. Presenting fundamental elements of Ukrainian folklor this quartet from Kiev bends genres with new music influenced by traditions from across the globe. DakhaBrakha's dramatic show is filled with explosive harmonies and thrilling vocal effects. While deeply rooted in Ukrainian culture, the band's compositions are influenced by sounds from Arabic, African, Russian and Australian traditions.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: SPEED OF SOUND SESSIONS

KID KOALA'S SATELLITE TURNTABLE ORCHESTRA (Canada)

FRI, APR 26 . 8PM

MILKBOY ARTHOUSE

\$30 RES / \$25 GEN ADM / UMD STUDENTS FREE

DJ Kid Koala shares a collection of atmospheric tracks and invites audience members to contribute through mini turntable stations with color-coded custom vinyl and effects processors provided at each table. The Speed of Sound Sessions are a celebration of musicians who support and promote composers whose work was created in the 21st century and who respond to the contemporary world in which we live.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: SPEED OF SOUND SESSIONS

YMusic (USA)

THU, APR 18 . 8PM

MILKBOY ARTHOUSE

\$30 RES / \$25 GEN ADM / UMD STUDENTS FREE

yMusic is "at the forefront of a rapidly changing performance culture" (The New York Times) through innovative work in the overlap between classical and popular music. Recent accomplishments include their Carnegie Hall debut and collaborations with Ben Folds, Caroline Shaw and John Legend. The Speed of Sound Sessions are a celebration of musicians who support 21st-century composers and who respond to the contemporary world.

ARTIST PARTNER PROGRAMS

MARYLAND DAY

SAT, APR 27 . 10AM - 4PM

FREE, NO TICKETS REQUIRED

Explore the creativity of Terps and the local community on Maryland Day! This annual campuswide open house features artistic and creative performances, experiences and activities at The Clarice and across the University of Maryland campus.

NURTURE THE FUTURE OF THE ARTS

We believe artists can be catalysts for community change, leadership and empowerment.

This season, our Visiting Artists will:

- **CREATE** opportunities for young audiences to experience live performances and creative conversations through the K-12 School Partner Program
- **ENHANCE** our understanding of the world through Do Good Dialogues, exploring social justice and the ways the human spirit informs art
- **SUPPORT** creation and development of new work by UMD students through master classes, coaching and performances of their work by visiting artists
- **ENGAGE** students through intimate, unplugged performances in residence halls throughout the year, creating connections through art, food, and shared experiences

Immerse yourself in a world of artistic discovery with our 2018-2019 visiting artists and strengthen the future of the arts by making your gift today.

To support the Visiting Artist Series visit theclarice.umd.edu/make-gift. Or call 301.405.4517.

YEAR OF IMMIGRATION

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference.

In this Year of Immigration at UMD, which seeks to transform dialogue into impact on urgent issues related to immigration, global migration and refugees, the Artist Partner Program at The Clarice, which believes that artists can be catalysts for community change, leadership and empowerment, has chosen to begin the effort of building bridges across cultures by acknowledging what has been buried by honoring the truth.

We are standing on the ancestral lands of the Piscataway People, who were among the first in the Western Hemisphere to encounter European colonists. We pay respects to their elders and ancestors.

Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today.

Immigrants Make the University of Maryland Stronger.

Join us for a #YearofImmigration as we create community and conversations around immigration, global migration and refugees.

yearofimmigration.umd.edu

THE CLARICE

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