



AROOJ AFTAB, VIJAY IYER, AND SHAHZAD ISMAILY

Love in Exile

Saturday, October 7, 2023, 7:30 PM

Street and Davis Performance Hall, Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre



JAVON JACKSON WITH NIKKI GIOVANNI AND NNENNA FREELON
The Gospel According to Nikki Giovanni
 Fri., Nov. 3, 7:30 PM



The Nutcracker

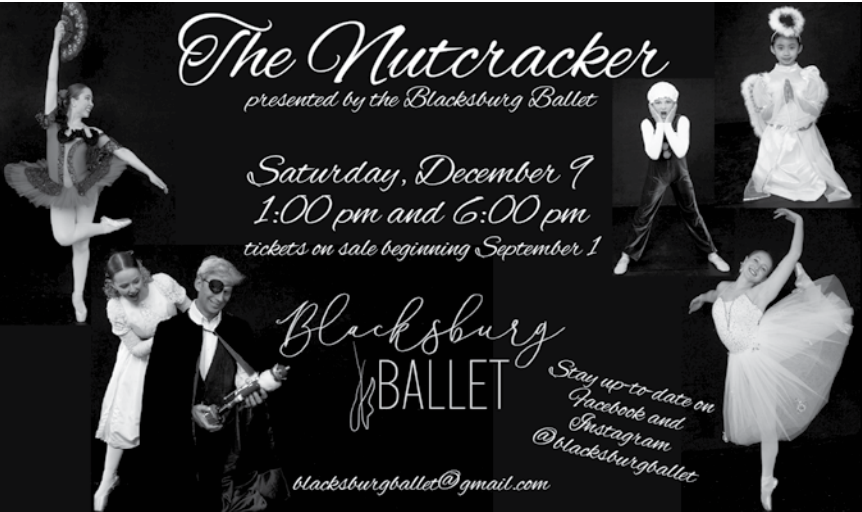
presented by the Blacksburg Ballet

Saturday, December 9
 1:00 pm and 6:00 pm
 tickets on sale beginning September 1

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GARAGE DANCE ENSEMBLE

*Krummelpap,
 Scandals Wrapped in Prayer*



Wed., Oct. 11, 9 PM
 (sold out) Thurs., Oct. 12, 7:30 PM



**AROOJ AFTAB, VIJAY IYER,
AND SHAHZAD ISMAILY**

Love in Exile

Program to be announced from the stage.



BIOGRAPHIES

LOVE IN EXILE TRIO

Backstage after their 2018 debut show in their adopted hometown of New York City, Shahzad Ismaily asked Arooj Aftab and Vijay Iyer to huddle together and reflect on what had just occurred. “We felt it from the first moment,” remembers Iyer. “We were mystified and almost silent and said: I don’t know what just happened. But we should do that again.” They hadn’t prepared material in advance; the potent chemistry surprised even these seasoned collaborators. A shared focus on collective real-time creation allowed them to weave the bass, piano, and vocals into a breathtakingly unified sound. This was music in the moment. Words couldn’t define it, but the audience felt it and joined the emotional journey. Staying open to spontaneous co-creation became the band’s defining approach in the half dozen shows they played before recording their debut album.

Individually, their accolades are substantial — vocalist Arooj Aftab, the first Pakistani to win a Grammy, wows audiences worldwide with her mesmerizing live shows; MacArthur “genius” and Grammy nominee Vijay Iyer is one of today’s most influential pianists; and

multi-instrumentalist Shahzad Ismaily's sensitivity and technical acumen has made him a legend among musicians like the late Lou Reed, for whom he was a session player. Yet the marvel here is how ego disappears as the three players merge to create a singular, gorgeous sound.

One key factor is how Aftab employs her otherworldly voice as another instrument in the ensemble. "I'm mostly using the words to get the sound out," she says. "I'm not thinking about telling a story." The voice-as-wind-instrument gels with the synth/keys combination of Iyer and Ismaily that flow together like sunlight and shadow.

More broadly, by trusting in real-time creation — and each other — the band is able to cross-pollinate spontaneity with the accumulated wisdom of a lifetime in music. As Ismaily puts it, "I feel like we're subtly cueing listeners to say, 'Live like this.'"

Love in Exile. Three world-class musicians meet in New York City to forge a singular voice that takes their distinct backgrounds and vast histories of collaboration as a starting point. From there they explore one-of-a-kind performances defined by a sense of timeless beauty and sudden surprise, alike.

— Jace Clayton

AROJ AFTAB

Arooj Aftab is a Grammy Award-winning singer, composer, and producer who works in various musical styles and idioms, including jazz, minimalism, and Urdu poetry. Aftab has been named one of NPR's Top 100 composers and has been featured on several best concerts lists, including the *New York Times*. Her *Vulture Prince* album was met with critical acclaim from *The Guardian*, *Time Magazine*, *Pitchfork*, *Rolling Stone*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and

BIOGRAPHIES, cont.

the *New York Times*. Aftab has performed at major international music festivals, including Coachella, Glastonbury, Primavera Sound Barcelona, Roskilde Festival, and Montreal Jazz Festival. She has also performed at performance art centers such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Lincoln Center for Performing Arts, and The Broad. Aftab is a 2023 United States Artists Fellow and a recipient of the Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise in Music.

VIJAY IYER

A longtime New Yorker, Vijay Iyer lives in central Harlem with his wife and daughter. Iyer teaches at Harvard University in the Department of Music and the Department of African and African American Studies. He is a Steinway artist. Described by the *New York Times* as a “social conscience, multimedia collaborator, system builder, rhapsodist, historical thinker and multicultural gateway,” Iyer has carved out a unique path as an influential, prolific, shape-shifting presence in 21st-century music. A composer and pianist active across multiple musical communities, Iyer has created a consistently innovative, emotionally resonant body of work over the last 25 years, earning him a place as one of the leading music-makers of his generation.

Iyer received a MacArthur Fellowship, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a United States Artist Fellowship, a Grammy nomination, the Alpert Award in the Arts, and two German “Echo” awards, and was voted *DownBeat Magazine’s* Jazz Artist of the Year four times in the last decade. He has been praised by *Pitchfork* as “one of the best in the world at what he does,” by the *Los Angeles Weekly* as “a boundless and deeply important young star,” and by Minnesota Public Radio as “an American treasure.”

Iyer’s musical language is grounded in the rhythmic traditions of South Asia and West Africa, the African American creative music

movement of the '60s and '70s, and the lineage of composer-pianists from Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk to Alice Coltrane and Geri Allen. He has released 25 albums of his music, most recently *Love in Exile* (Verve Records, 2023), a collaborative trio record with Grammy-winning vocalist Arooj Aftab and multi-instrumentalist Shahzad Ismaily; *Uneasy* (ECM Records, 2021), an acclaimed trio session with drummer Tyshawn Sorey and bassist Linda May Han Oh; *The Transitory Poems* (ECM, 2019), a live duo recording with pianist Craig Taborn; *Far From Over* (ECM, 2017) with the award-winning Vijay Iyer Sextet; and *A Cosmic Rhythm with Each Stroke* (ECM, 2016) a suite of duets with visionary composer-trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith.

Iyer is an active composer for classical ensembles and soloists. His works have been premiered by Brentano String Quartet, Imani Winds, Parker Quartet, Bang on a Can All-Stars, the Silkroad Ensemble, Sō Percussion, International Contemporary Ensemble, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, LA Philharmonic, American Composers Orchestra, and virtuosos Matt Haimowitz, Mishka Rushdie Momen, Claire Chase, Inbal Segev, Shai Wosner, and Jennifer Koh, among others. He recently served as composer-in-residence at London's Wigmore Hall, music director of the Ojai Music Festival, and artist-in-residence at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

A tireless collaborator, Iyer has written big-band music for Arturo O'Farrill and Darcy James Argue, remixed classic recordings of Talvin Singh and Meredith Monk, joined forces with legendary musicians Henry Threadgill, Reggie Workman, Zakir Hussain, and L. Subramanian, and developed interdisciplinary work with Teju Cole, Carrie Mae Weems, Mike Ladd, Prashant Bhargava, and Karole Armitage.

BIOGRAPHIES, cont.

SHAHZAD ISMAILY

Shahzad Ismaily is one of the premiere creative musicians of our time. Born in Pennsylvania to Pakistani immigrant parents, Ismaily is a largely self-taught composer and musician, having mastered the electric and double bass, guitar, banjo, and drums, as well as various percussion instruments, analog synthesizers, and drum machines.

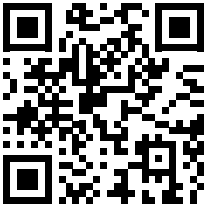
Ismaily has been a driving force in creative music for 20 years as a multi-instrumentalist, producer, composer, and recording artist, often working out of his own Figure8 Studios in Brooklyn. His career has included work as a producer or co-producer for Bonnie Prince Billy, Sam Amidon, and Laura Veirs; as a sideman with Damien Rice, Feist, Moses Sumney, Arooj Aftab, Yoko Ono, Laurie Anderson, Ben Frost, and Bob Dylan; and as a co-leader of the renowned avant-music trio Ceramic Dog alongside Marc Ribot and Ches Smith.

Ismaily has composed regularly for dance and theatre, including work for Min Tanaka, the Frankfurt Ballet, and the East River Commedia; composing the score for films such as *Frozen River* and *William Kunstler: Disturbing the Universe*; and his work as a percussionist for the late Johan Johansson, including the score for *Sicario*. In 2022 Ismaily is appearing as one of 17 international featured artists at the Monheim Triennale festival in Germany.

This is the first performance by Aftab, Iyer, and Ismaily at the Moss Arts Center.



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!



We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Invoke on Thursday, November 16, 2023.

bit.ly/aftab-iyer-ismaily-feedback

GO DEEPER

In a recent interview with *The AMP*, Iyer explained that the *Love in Exile* musicians prefer to describe their performance process as “live composing” instead of the more common term “improvising,” because “[i]n the west, that word [improvising] gets used in a way that devalues what’s happening.” What do you think Iyer means by this? How does this alternative terminology reframe how you view and hear the musicians’ performance?

ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023

**LEARNING LUNCH WITH AROOJ AFTAB, VIJAY IYER,
AND SHAHZAD ISMAILY**

As part of the APIDA+ Center’s Learning Lunch series, the *Love in Exile* artists spoke with Virginia Tech students about their personal and professional journeys.

Special thanks to the APIDA+ Center, Kayley Carter, Nina Ha, and Lauren Oliver



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IN THE GALLERIES

THROUGH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17



william cordova

can't stop, won't stop: tenets of southern alchemy

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

william cordova examines the visual aspects of transition and displacement, studying the evolution and adaptation of objects and perception across time and space. Constructing artworks composed of reclaimed elements, paint, gold leaf, and collage, cordova presents encoded representations of social systems and the material histories of objects and images.

THROUGH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17



Laurie Steelink

Spirit Is Alive, Magic Is Afoot

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen '71
Reception Gallery

Multidisciplinary artist Laurie Steelink is a citizen of the Akimel O'otham Nation and a member of the Gila River Indian Community. Exploring connections to her Native American roots, Steelink creates assemblages of found objects and reassembled paintings to question authenticity and consider spirituality. Using her creativity to reconnect with and to reference her ancestors, culture, and community, Steelink defines her work as an expression of her personal identities.



K-12 PROGRAMS AT THE MOSS ARTS CENTER

Experiences with the arts cultivate the next generation of creative thinkers, engage learners of diverse backgrounds, and foster community dialogue. The Moss Arts Center has been dedicated to providing K-12 students in the region with free, high-quality, and exciting arts programming since opening our doors in 2013. Through school-day matinee programs, gallery tours, in-school performances, and workshops with artists, we are passionate about serving our youngest community members and schools.

Learn more at bit.ly/moss-K12.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Moss Arts Center has 4,200 square feet of total visual art gallery space designed with an emphasis on versatility. The Ruth C. Horton Gallery, Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, Sherwood Payne Quillen

'71 Reception Gallery, and Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor were created to support not only traditional two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, but also virtual, digital, live, and performance art. Moveable walls, a variety of lighting options, room darkening capabilities, and more helped make these spaces adaptive.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech's history by increasing Indigenous student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, and meeting the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

We must also recognize that enslaved Black people generated revenue and resources used to establish Virginia Tech and were prohibited from attending until 1953. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

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THRIFT SHOP at 1000 N Main St., Blacksburg



The Y Annual Book Fair

Oct 6: 12-6pm

Oct 7: 9am-6pm

Oct 8: 12-5pm

At the Y Center
1000 N. Main St.
Blacksburg



Y Alumni Spotlight!



L-R: Deputy Secretary Kathleen Marrigan, State Director Jack Tarburton and Senator Tom Carper

As a freshman in 1961, Jack attended freshman camp (orientation) run by the YMCA, had a good experience, and stayed with the Y for all four years. Jack appreciated the camaraderie and sense of belonging he got from participating in the Y.

The Y was a natural extension of his youth leadership development, from Eagle Scout, to Corps of Cadets Leadership Class, to YMCA President. Upon graduation, Jack worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency and continued to serve in leadership roles throughout his career - Secretary of Agriculture for Delaware, State Director for MD/Delaware.

Justin (he/they) is a two-time Hokie, graduating in Sociology (B.S.) in 2012 & Higher Education Administration (M.A. Ed.) in 2014. Justin has volunteered with the Y since 2008, first as a part of the Senior Connections program, then in the Classroom Aide program. Justin has proudly served on the Board of Directors for the Y since 2013 & currently serves as the Board's chairperson since spring 2023.

As board chair, Justin looks forward to continuing and cementing the amazing legacy of the Y in the New River Valley community and beyond.



Naya graduated in 2023 and was a Program Leader for Healthy Kids Day for two years. She loved the YMCA's sense of community and commitment towards others! Naya loved being apart of the Y, so much so that she now works as our Alumni Coordinator.

www.vtymca.org