

Wednesday, September 30, 2020
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**The VISION Collective
named
2020 recipient of the
Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Family Foundation's
*The Robert Sherman Award
for Music Education and Community Outreach***

**Award to be presented tonight at 9:00 PM ET
on WQXR's *Young Artists Showcase***



(The VISION Collective Co-Founders: violinist Timothy Chooi, violist Sarah Sung, and cellist Drake Driscoll)

New York City - Just two years after launching, **The VISION Collective**, which builds meaningful relationships with and among refugees and new Americans by sharing and exchanging music between diverse communities, is being acknowledged for its significant leadership in the areas of arts education and community outreach. Tonight at 9:00 PM, the collective's Co-Founders, violinist **Timothy Chooi**, violist **Sarah Sung**, and cellist **Drake Driscoll**, will receive ***The Robert Sherman Award for Music Education and Community Outreach*** from distinguished Radio Presenter **Robert Sherman** (for whom the award is named) and **Terry McGraw** of the **Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Family Foundation**.

The presentation takes place on the season opening program of the long-running ***Young Artists Showcase*** on New York City's classical radio station, **WQXR**. The award, given

annually to students / alumni of The Juilliard School's Music Division, normally includes a purse of \$10,000; this year it has been doubled to \$20,000.

In addition to the presentation, the program will feature performances and interviews by The VISION Collective (VISION / the collective).

Wednesday, September 30 at 9:00 PM ET

Young Artists Program, WQXR
Robert Sherman, host
with Terry McGraw, Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Family Foundation

2020 The Robert Sherman Award for Arts Education and Community Outreach

Guest Artists: The VISION Collective Co-Founders
(Timothy Chooi, violin, Sarah Sung, viola, Drake Driscoll, cello)

Reprise Saturday, October 3 at 11:00 PM ET

Click on <https://www.wqxr.org/shows/youngartists/> to listen live

"Thank you. Receiving this award feels surreal," states Vision Executive Director / cellist **Drake Driscoll**. "We hope that this news will be a small sliver of light in the darkness that is 2020. We have seen firsthand how music can heal and bring people together. These two things are central to the work that we do, and we believe that the world needs this now more than ever.

"The generous award from Robert Sherman and the McGraw Foundation will enable us to create and record our first album featuring new works written for the collective by refugee and immigrant composers, as well as help to fund two future trips. In 2021, pending COVID-19, the collective will return to German refugee camps for two weeks of rhythm and singing workshops. In partnership with El Sistema Greece and the International Organization for Migration, the collective will bring workshops to Athens refugee camps for the first time. These trips were scheduled to happen in August and September of 2020, but due to COVID-19 were rescheduled. We plan to continue these workshops over the next few years, eventually taking on a more permanent role in refugee camps and fulfilling our long-term goal of establishing sustainable music programs in refugee camps around the world."

"The three of us met through the Chamber Music Community Engagement class at The Juilliard School," explained Co-Founder / violinist **Timothy Chooi**. "The class was taught by two of our biggest mentors, my teacher Catherine Cho and Drake's teacher Natasha Brofsky. Almost immediately, we bonded over a mutual interest in working with refugee and immigrant communities. Though initially we called ourselves The VISION Trio, we quickly changed our name to The VISION Collective as we had more colleagues that wanted to get involved with the project. We are now a group of eight performers and eight composers from all over the world. Many of our members are alums and current students at The Juilliard School, but we also have members from the Manhattan School of Music and New York University." (*Read about all VISION composers and performers by visiting the website - link below*).

Chooi continued, "We all have a story of immigrating to the United States, whether it be a hundred years ago or a few years ago. Music has been the most meaningful way for me to share my own personal story of coming to the States, and it has given me purpose in my

life. In VISION concerts and workshops, we bring migrant stories to life through music while forming relationships with people from all over the world. This project holds a very special place in my heart. Our work is important, now more than ever."



The VISION Collective

Founded in 2018 at The Juilliard School, for the past two seasons The VISION Collective (VISION / the collective) has performed nationally and abroad.

The collective has performed concerts at each of three refugee camps in central Germany, interacting with 120 children and adults from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, and Turkey; for the New York Chapter of *Music for Food* concert series (a series devoted to relieving food insecurity across the United States); and in Musical / Cultural Exchange Workshops for the YMCA Flushing *New Americans Initiative* (New York) and for *Building One Community* (an immigrant organization based in Stamford, Connecticut). The VISION Collective has also performed a mini chamber residency for Mountain Lake, Florida residents; has raised funds for Mtree's educational programs for children and youth from marginalized communities in Kenya; and given an Online Benefit Concert for the International Network of Aid, Relief, and Assistance (INARA).

Program Coordinator / violist **Sarah Sung** explains, "As a collective we strive to make refugees and immigrants feel recognized, valued, and celebrated as individuals beyond the identity of their circumstance. Our work is centered around two main goals. The first is to use music to highlight refugee and immigrant voices and stories, raising awareness for the global refugee crisis. The second is to bring individuals from all walks of life together to create diverse and meaningful art. Personally, I believe that music should be accessible to all, and it is our job as musicians to bring music outside the concert halls to communities that may not have the privilege of enjoying and

pursuing music. Music has the ability to unite and VISION uses this power to foster a sense of community and improve the emotional well-being of refugees in camps."

In addition to ***The Robert Sherman Award for Music Education and Community Outreach***, The VISION Collective has been the recipient of the George J. Jakab Global Enrichment Grant and the Juilliard Entrepreneurship Grant.

Harnessing the positive power of social media, The VISION Collective also creates feature videos, each highlighting one immigrant, their story, and the music that VISION arranged for them. These videos are shared on VISION's YouTube channel and social media pages. The collective's feature videos are also paired with live music at concerts for the general public.

Learn more at <https://1visioncollective.org/>

About The VISION Collective Co-Founders

Internationally acclaimed violinist Timothy Chooi's growing solo career has seen him perform with every major orchestra in his home country of Canada, throughout the United States, Europe, New Zealand, and Malaysia. Co-Founder of The VISION Collective, he is passionate about using music as a tool for healing.



Upcoming recitals see him perform worldwide including Seoul, Brussels, Hannover, Antwerp, Philadelphia, Vancouver, and at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival.

Mr. Chooi's talent has been recognized on the competition stage as well. His most recent honors include winning Second Prize, 2019 Queen Elisabeth Competition in Belgium, First Prize, 2018 Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition in Germany, First Prize, 2018 Schadt Violin Competition in the USA, and the 2018 'Prix Yves Paternot' of Switzerland's Verbier Festival, among others.

Born in 1993 in Victoria BC, Canada, Timothy Chooi made his orchestral debut at the age of seven performing with his brother Nikki and the Victoria Symphony Orchestra. When he was fourteen years old, he won a full scholarship to attend the Academy Program at the Mount Royal Conservatory in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and two years later was accepted to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he studied with Ida Kavafian. Mr. Chooi went on to complete his Master's at The Juilliard School under the tutelage of Catherine Cho and is currently enrolled in the prestigious Artist Diploma program. His mentors include Pinchas Zukerman, Pamela Frank and Patinka Kopec.

Timothy Chooi performs on the 1717 Windsor-Weinstein Stradivarius on generous loan from the Canada Council for the Arts. He gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, CBC Radio, the Sylva Gelber Foundation, and the Victoria Foundation.

Co-Founder and Program Coordinator of The VISION Collective, Australian-Korean violist Sarah Sung takes music beyond the stages of Carnegie Hall and the Sydney Opera House, traveling globally to diverse and marginalized communities, an endeavor she has done since the age of eight.



Her passion for chamber music has led her to play with the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players and Delirium Musicum. Ms. Sung's festival credits include Yellow Barn, Perlman Chamber Music Workshop, Kneisel Hall, Prussia Cove Open Chamber Music, and Aspen Music Festival. Among the distinguished artists with whom she has performed are Itzhak Perlman, Catherine Cho, Roger Tapping, Natasha Brofsky, and Vivian Weilerstein.

Under the tutelage of Paul Neubauer and Cynthia Phelps, Sarah Sung received her Bachelor of Music degree from The Juilliard School. While a Bachelor candidate, she served as a Gluck Community Service fellow and as a Principal Violist of the Juilliard Orchestra in venues such as David Geffen Hall and Alice Tully Hall. Ms. Sung currently is enrolled in The Juilliard School's Master of Music program.

A versatile performer and advocate for social change through music, American cellist Drake Driscoll's commitment to the arts includes a significant component of administrative and community work in addition to her work as a performer and educator. Executive Director and Co-Founder of The VISION Collective, Drake is also a member of the United Nations Chamber Music Society. A passionate teacher, Ms. Driscoll serves as a mentor and substitute coach for Juilliard Pre-College chamber music and has her own private teaching studio in NYC.



Ms. Driscoll's recent solo performances include the Triangle Youth Philharmonic and the Lowell Philharmonic Orchestra. While participating in the Holland International Music Sessions, she was heard on National Public Radio in the Netherlands, performing Debussy's Cello Sonata and Paganini's Moses Variations. As part of the 2019 Juilliard / Royal Academy of Music orchestral collaboration, she appeared at the legendary BBC Proms Royal Albert Hall.

A member of the 2020-2021 Global Leaders Program cohort pursuing an Executive Graduate Certificate in Social Entrepreneurship, Cultural Agency, Teaching Artistry, and Civic Leadership, Drake Driscoll recently earned a Master of Music degree from The Juilliard School, where she was the recipient of the Norman Benzaquen Career Advancement Grant and also served as a Gluck Community Service fellow. She received a Bachelor of Music degree from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music, and previously attended the New England Conservatory Preparatory School

and Walnut Hill School for the Arts, where she graduated with the Music Department Award. Her previous teachers include Elizabeth Beilman, Natasha Brofsky, Hans Jorgen Jensen, and Nicole Johnson.

Young Artists Showcase

Young Artists Showcase is a WQXR weekly radio show that since 1978 has sought out and displayed the talents of young emerging artists. Supported by The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Family Foundation, and produced by WQXR, the twice-weekly program is hosted by renowned American radio broadcaster, author, music critic, writer, and educator Robert Sherman.



Download high resolution JPEGs and other materials for The VISION Collective from dropbox [here](#).

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