



The Bardin-Niskala Duo (cello and piano) uses music to explore notions of identity, belonging, and community to fight racism, promote cultural awareness, and celebrate humanity. The Duo commissions ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American) composers to write pieces that incorporate folksongs and children's songs of their particular cultures and countries.

Through these commissions and the performances of these works the Duo promotes these composers and opens dialogue with and amongst audience members on the notions of homeland, community, and belonging, on the complexity and uniqueness of various cultures, and on the challenges of navigating life in this country as a bi-

cultural, multi-cultural, or minority person. Each commissioned work is preceded by a short video message from the composer, where they discuss their own journey towards identity and a sense of belonging, how they constructed their piece, and the historical or personal significance of the folk or children's song they chose for their work.

Formed in early 2021, the Duo has performed across the United States from New York and Pennsylvania, to Florida and Mississippi, Minnesota and Indiana, and California. They have presented at regional and national conferences, and have been awarded three residencies at the Avaloch Farm Music Institute. Their performances are offered in concert halls, high schools, universities, and community centers, and range from traditional concerts to more informal performances mingled with open dialogue between the Duo and audience members. The Bardin-Niskala Duo also co-directs the Winterhaven Chamber Music Retreat, an adult amateur chamber music festival held in January in New Hampshire.

www.Bardin-Niskala-Duo.com

An-Lin Bardin (cellist)

Described as “stunning,” by the New York Times, cellist An-Lin Bardin currently freelances and teaches both music and math in the greater NYC area. As the cellist of the Vinca Quartet, she performed extensively throughout Europe and the US, including Carnegie’s Weill Hall, Aspen, and Vilar Performing Arts Center. Bardin’s performances have been broadcast on Deutschlandradio and WNYC. She is a laureate of several international quartet competitions, including the Paolo Borciani Quartet Competitions in Reggio Emilia, Italy, and the Fischhoff, the Plowman, the Yellow Springs, Chesapeake, and the International Chamber Music Ensemble Competitions in the United States. A recipient of a DAAD fellowship which enabled her to work with the Vogler String Quartet in Stuttgart, Germany, Bardin also studied extensively with Gunter Pichler and Valentin Erben of the Alban Berg Quartet, Walter Levine, Heime Mueller, and the Artemis String Quartet under the auspices of the ProQuartet program in Paris, France, and with the Emerson String Quartet through the Carnegie Hall Chamber Music Workshops. She was a graduate assistant to the Takacs Quartet at the University of Colorado at Boulder for two years as part of the graduate quartet residency program. A strong proponent of music education, Bardin was a founding member of Music Haven, an intensive mentorship program serving youth from low-income neighborhoods in New Haven, Connecticut. She also founded two ongoing music educational programs in rural Washington State through the Gorgeous Sounds Residency Program. Raised in California by two nuclear physicists, Bardin began her cello studies at the age of eight with Irene Sharp. She holds a B.S. from Yale University in Geology and Geophysics, and an M.M. from the Yale School of Music, where she studied with Aldo Parisot and was a member of the Grammy-Award-winning Yale Cellos.

Naomi Niskala (pianist)

A soloist and chamber musician who has appeared in Europe, North America, Russia, Israel, Thailand, and Japan, pianist Naomi Niskala's performances have been broadcast on BBC Radio, Deutschlandradio, RTV Germany, and NPR’s *Performance Today*. Niskala performs regularly with *Spectrum Concerts Berlin*, one of Germany’s leading chamber organizations, and has also recorded two discs with them. Recent performance highlights include the San Francisco Symphony Chamber Series at Davies Symphony Hall, soloist with the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic of Russia, and solo and chamber performances with *Spectrum Concerts Berlin* in the Philharmonie Kammermusiksaal of Berlin, Carnegie’s Weill Hall, in Thailand, and in Kosovo. Her release of the only complete recordings of American composer Robert Helps’s solo piano works on two discs with Albany Records was met with high acclaim, and she has also recorded piano chamber works of Robert Helps and Ursula Mamlok with *Spectrum Concerts Berlin* for two discs on Naxos, as well as the world premiere of Mamlok’s 2015 quintet “Breezes” for Bridge Records. Niskala is featured in the 2013 German rbb television documentary entitled “Sehnsucht Musik” (Searching for Music), documenting the work of four members of *Spectrum Concerts Berlin* towards improving the harsh conditions for young musicians at a music school located in Prizren, Kosovo. Born to Japanese/Finnish-American parents, she began studying piano at the age of three, raised in Rochester, New York and then later in Tokyo, Japan. Niskala holds degrees from the Yale School of Music, Stony Brook University, and the New England Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Claude Frank, Gilbert Kalish, and Patricia Zander. She also worked with pianists Leon Fleisher, Menahem Pressler, Peter Serkin, and Maria Louisa Faini, and violinists Louis Krasner and Eugene Lehner. Niskala teaches at the Interlochen Center for the Arts Art Camp in the summers, and is Associate Professor of Music at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania, where she teaches piano and theory, and leads a summer chamber music exchange program to Japan.