

niccolo seligmann



Photo: Margot Schulman

early music
improvisation

electronics
composition

“Elegance and characteristic precision...followed by an enthusiastic response on the part of the listeners...simultaneously ancient and relevant, primal and refined, gutsy and gallant.”

David Hursb, Classical Voice of North Carolina

“...didn't so much take one's breath away as hyper-oxygenate the Colburn School's Zipper Concert Hall”

Mark Swed, LA Times

“Niccolo Seligmann...added just the right touches...Seligmann's dancy and trancy vielle...made for another kind of early magic.”

The Boston Musical Intelligencer

“Enchanting...indicating the future health of the early music movement”

Jay Harvey, JayHarveyUpstage, Indianapolis, IN

bio

Niccolo Seligmann brings together old instruments and new practices, uniting gut strings with lines of code. He performs on over twenty historical and traditional instruments from around the world, and designs his own software instruments. Niccolo's debut solo album, *Kinship*, will be released in February 2020. *Kinship* uses viola da gamba improvisations to express a multispecies resistance to the forces that harm our planet and its inhabitants. His improvisational style brings together his experience with early music; experimental & noise music; and traditions from Kazakhstan, Turkey, Bulgaria, Ireland, and more.

You can hear him perform on viola da gamba, medieval fiddle, and more on the soundtrack of the 2017 feature film *Papillon*. The string sounds throughout the PC game *Civilization VI*'s "Medieval" section are overdubbed consorts of these instruments, all played by Niccolo. Recordings of Niccolo's improvisations on the Icelandic langspil are featured in Marianna Filippi's *The Magic of Christmas*, a work for the Portland Symphony Orchestra with electronics.

Niccolo juggles many professional ensembles, performing early, contemporary, improvised, and traditional musics with Alkemie, The Broken Consort, Eya, Hesperus, Jefferson Baroque, Sacred Monsters, Vivi Cantando, and more. In 2017 Niccolo married into the family band Wherligig, performing traditional music of Ireland, Wales, Sweden, and more. He has toured across North America and Europe, including performances at the Kennedy Center, in a bustling plaza in Nogales, Mexico, and inside a 2000-year-old Northern Californian redwood tree, and recently in Reykjavik with renowned Icelandic folk duo Funí.

Minerva: Times Change, a community opera Niccolo co-wrote with George Frideric Handel, premiered in 2019. According to a spellbound patron, "the world needs this opera." *Minerva* unites Handel arias with Niccolo's new recitatives to tell a story spanning centuries, from ancient Etruria, to Handel's 18th-century social circle, to a café in present-day Richmond.

Niccolo's commitment to build a future for early music is evident in his teaching and outreach. Niccolo coached the UCLA Early Music Ensemble from 2016-2018, and continues a bicoastal private teaching studio. He has led workshops at UCLA, Grinnell College, and Thomas Dale High School for the Arts, and participated in Alkemie's medieval music workshops at Fordham University, Fairmont State University, and Capitol Early Music.

He holds a degree in viola da gamba performance from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University. He is currently apprentice to master luthier Ken Koons and a Strathmore Artist-in-Residence.



Photo: Margot Schulman

program offerings



Photo: Niccolo Seligmann

Echoes of the Medieval World

Experience the breadth of possibilities of medieval stringed instruments, from the rebec's lightning to the sighing vielle. Virtuoso dance music and soulful chant conjure a world of drunken priests, swooning lovers, and ecstatic devotion. This program features the *viola a chiavi*, a recently-rediscovered medieval keyed fiddle, of which there are fewer than a dozen in the world. *Trio version of this program also available with vocalist and vielle player, or percussion and vielle player*

Improvisation

New sounds and old instruments come together to tell a unique story with each performance, inspired by the connection with that night's audience. All options are on the table, from modal harmonies and overtones to heavy distortion accomplished totally unplugged. This program features both the versatile viola da gamba and the lirone, which may be the ultimate contemporary improviser's instrument. With 13 strings, one for each chromatic pitch, and a nearly flat bridge, the lirone sounds like a full viol consort as a solo instrument. *Trio version of this program with electronics and percussion also available*



Photo: Ken Koons



Photo: Helena Grueinsteidl, Grinnell College

Workshops

Niccolo enjoys working with presenters to match workshops with the communities in which they work. Suggested topics include: Early Music Performance Practice, Storytelling Through Musical Improvisation, Composing For Early Instruments, Viola da Gamba Technique, Viol Consort Skills, and more. All are welcome, regardless of age or experience with early music.

selected discography

Kinship – Niccolo Seligmann (to be released 2020)
bbbaby – Hutchins & Seligmann (to be released 2020)
Opus I & II: Radical Softness & The Glorious Cuntata – Emily Lau, The Broken Consort
(to be released 2020)
Alkemie Live 2 – Alkemie (2019)
Medieval Section: Civilization VI Expansion Pack OST – Geoff Knorr, Roland Rizzo (2018)
Papillon OST – David Buckley (2017)
Medieval Section: Civilization VI Expansion Pack OST – Geoff Knorr, Roland Rizzo (2017)
wiimote live set – Ladyprodukt (2017)
The Three Marys – Eya (2017)
Alkemie Live – Alkemie (2017)
triggers – Ladyprodukt (2016)
Medieval Section: Civilization VI OST – Geoff Knorr, Roland Rizzo (2016)
Music of Three Faiths – Peabody Consort (2015)
C L O U D S – Niccolo Seligmann
Ocean – Brian Kay (2013)

selected past appearances

Amherst Early Music Festival Concert Series • Music Before 1800 • Indianapolis Early Music Festival • Avaloch Farm Music Institute • Pinewoods Early Music Week • Viola da Gamba Society of America Conclave • Texas Renaissance Festival • Gotham Early Music Scene • Holocene (Portland, OR) • Kimball Theatre (Williamsburg, VA) • Odyssey Theatre (LA) • Zipper Hall, Colburn School (LA) • John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts • Common Ground on the Hill Festival (MD) • Mengi (Reykjavik, Iceland) • The Blackfriars (Staunton, VA) • Tucson Desert Song Festival • Grinnell College • Eastern Mennonite University (VA) • Fordham University • Peabody Institute • UCLA

awards, media appearances, special notices

WRIR Richmond Independent Radio
Thursdays @ Three, AllClassical Portland
Drive Time Live, WYPR Baltimore

New Generation Initiative Scholarship – Country Dance & Song Society
Grant-in-Aid – Viola da Gamba Society of America
Summer Workshop Scholarship – Early Music America

Reviews: LA Times, Classical Voice of North Carolina, Boston Musical Intelligencer,
JayHarveyUpstage