

Fluting with The Stars

Meet Eric Lamb: Try a New Lane and Enjoy the Ride!

By Johanna Beth Sennett



Eric Lamb has done everything except “stay in his lane” when it comes to life as a young, international, classical musician. Constantly pushing boundaries, stretching skills and styles, and staying open to new possibilities, Eric has shaped a life and career that brings him immense satisfaction and happiness.

On Sunday, January 16, the Chicago Flute Club *Fluting with the Stars Series* will feature Vienna-based Eric Lamb in a masterclass focusing on contemporary repertoire. Eric’s exuberance for the flute and eclectic career as chamber musician, concerto soloist, recitalist, orchestral player, lecturer, recording artist, and teacher will most certainly shine through.

It has been a pleasure getting to know Eric as we prepare for his upcoming event. We discovered our common roots growing up in Detroit with its powerful cultural and educational foundations in classical music. It was heartening to hear him express that as an African-American boy growing up in the city, he always felt others took him seriously as a developing classical flutist. It never occurred to him that he would not become a flutist or that others might question this decision until later, when his studies took him to other parts of the country. Eric, in turn, is now offering his own support as a part of the Umoja Flute Institute. This dynamic group of visionary flutists offers other flutists of African-American descent a necessary

reflection of themselves and the tools needed to succeed.

Eric has often had the instinct to listen and react when life called him to new directions. His deep friendship with Claire Chase, esteemed flutist and champion of contemporary music, began during a summer music program after his freshman year in college. Eric sensed a new path was before him. He leapt at the invitation from Claire to visit her at Oberlin before the school year was to begin. In doing so, he met and played for Michel Debost, who immediately invited Eric to join his studio, sending him upstairs to fill out the application and necessary paperwork. Before the day was over, Eric had enrolled at Oberlin Conservatory and began his extraordinary years with Michel Debost and Kathleen Chastain. Eric relates, “Debost was like a shaman...being with him was life-changing. He was able to see into you and bring things out that you did not know were even possible.”

Following Oberlin and then time in Chicago preparing for competitions, both Debost and Walfrid Kujala separately, yet simultaneously, encouraged Eric to pursue opportunities in Germany. This led to studying at the Hochschule für Musik Frankfurt am Main with Thaddeus Watson, where he gained his diploma and Concert Soloist Diploma. Watson was a former student of Kujala who also happened to play in the same Frankfurt Radio Symphony as Eric’s aunt. It seemed to Eric that he was meant to be there, stay with family, and begin what was to become a flourishing and fascinating musical life in Europe. Eric later studied at the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole, Italy with Chiara Tonelli (another diploma). He also studied baroque flute with Sally Tibbles and was heavily influenced by Irena Grafenauer (Salzburg), Robert Langevin (New York), and Viçens Prats (Paris).

Eric’s work with Claire Chase led to his post as a core member of the International Contemporary Ensemble and intensive work in the world of contemporary music. Since leaving ICE, Eric has performed with an extensive list of important orchestras and soloist ensembles including the

Boulez Ensemble, Klangforum Wien, Ensemble Modern, the Cleveland Orchestra to name a few.

In the last decade, Eric has premiered more than two hundred works and has collaborated closely with many composers including most recently, Viera Janárčková. This past summer, Eric premiered her concerto, *Arkádia* for bass flute and strings. He describes how Viera completely rewrote this concerto after meeting him, sharing:

Creating a piece that works for bass flute and strings provided an unforgettable opportunity to have a real musical conversation with the composer. This is how contemporary music moves forward. Viera went out and bought a bass flute and figured out technical and sound elements that you might think are not possible but end up being doable and effective. It was a revelation to have her right in the room collaborating. It becomes quite a different experience from just having a piece handed to you.

As a recording artist, Eric has recorded over fifteen CDs and will record a new CD in mid-December featuring a collection of Six Sonatinas by Wilhelm Popp. Eric created a fun online weekly recital project during the pandemic entitled *The Red Sofa Solo Flute Series* to keep himself in shape and always growing as a flutist. “I am my own responsibility. The quality of my flute playing is totally up to me, and I need to create down periods where I focus and develop my own playing so that I can constantly present the best I have to offer.”

Eric Lamb is now in his second year as the Lecturer of Flute Performance and Head of Woodwind, Brass, and Percussion at the International Academy for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, Austria.

Please join us on Sunday, January 16, 2022 (2-3:30 pm CST) via Zoom for a stimulating and fun afternoon with Eric Lamb. To register, visit: <https://www.chicagofluteclub.org/page-18189>

Eric Lamb

Try a New Lane and Enjoy the Ride!

A masterclass exploring contemporary music and techniques

Sunday, January 16, 2022

2 - 3:30 PM CST

Chicago Flute Club's

Fluting with the Stars Virtual Series

Registration is OPEN!

Free to Chicago Flute Club Members

\$5 for Nonmembers

www.chicagofluteclub.org



The Chicago Flute Club would like to extend a special thank you to Anderson for their continuing instrumental insurance support.



Johanna Beth Sennett is a free-lance performer/teacher in the Chicago area who currently serves as the CFC Program & Publicity Chairs. She was the founder/director of Kaleidoscope Concerts, an innovative chamber music series in the Detroit area before moving to Chicago with her husband and three children.