

Suite Talk: An Interactive Concert Experience Goes Digital

SUITE TALK



Zach and Nick originally founded *Suite Talk* back in 2018 as a series of interactive lecture recitals designed to destigmatize new music, reveal its appeal, and tell the human stories animating contemporary classical music. Zach and Nick have used the *Suite Talk* platform to explore the deeply human elements that go into music – illuminating the cultural touchstones inspiring each composer, the physical efforts of the performer, and most of all, the personal connections between musicians' lives and their work. *Suite Talk* has invited listeners to hear from the artists directly through interviews and performance demonstrations, allowing inside access to deeply personal details about the conception, creation, and execution of the music. The goal is to deepen the listening experience, enhance a sense of connection between artist and listener, and to shine a light on the many ties between the music and its creators with the biggest issues facing the world at large.

WIDENING THE CIRCLE, CONNECTING WITH THE WORLD

Zach and Nick's latest recording project, produced in partnership with Guarneri Hall, embodies the *Suite Talk* approach. It will introduce a wider audience to two engaging new works: *Oracle* by Nick, and *Suite for Solo Cello*, by Ira Mowitz, Zach's dad. The new *Suite Talk* project centers around the creation of art videos for Nick's *Oracle* and Ira's *Suite*. These videos will tell meaningful stories derived from the messages of each work.



Each of the videos will be produced in collaboration with the composer to adhere to their vision of the music. Videographer Mike Grittani will serve as Director of Photography, working closely with Nick and Ira. The finished videos will be released alongside artist interviews, video program notes, and short videos featuring related pieces of classical music, all tied together into an immersive and informative digital concert experience.

Ira's *Suite* and Nick's *Oracle* are representative of two different ways composers are merging the classical tradition with contemporary culture. Listeners will be drawn into a personal dialogue with the composers and the performer, providing a clearer appreciation for the human elements that make the living classical tradition so enduringly compelling. The result will be an online representation of the very best of Zach and Nick's *Suite Talk*, reconnecting new music to broader culture by exploring the composers' deep connections to contemporary society, to classical music, and to one another.

ORIGIN STORY



Alongside the new works, Zach will record the Prelude from Bach's Sixth Cello Suite, the original inspiration for Ira's *Suite*. The project will also include videos of the first movements of Kaija Saariaho's *Sept Papillons* and Benjamin Britten's First Suite for Solo Cello, both of which directly served as direct inspirations for *Oracle*. Finally, a Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson *Lamentation* will be included to connect Ira's work with Nick's.

Conversations between Zach and both composers will illuminate and draw out these connections, offering a fun and informative historical context for listeners while further personalizing the connections between artists and audience.

THE FUTURE OF SUITE TALK: MUSIC AND *OUR* ENVIRONMENT

Zach and Nick believe that art can be a powerful tool for change, especially when it comes to environmental justice. The upcoming video for Nick's *Oracle* will deliver messages about the timeless interdependence of human existence and how losing sight of our relationship to others has led us to the existential perils of climate change. With this video, not only will Zach and Nick send a message to the world about environmental sustainability, but they will also lay the groundwork for their next project: a series of environmental commissions. In the upcoming months and years, Zach and Nick will commission a diverse range of composers to write pieces that help reconnect listeners to the natural world and underscore the peril it is in. Their goal: to bridge the gap between the clear data around climate change – which on its own is often not persuasive enough to truly influence behavior – and stories that will bring that data and its message home emotionally. These commissions will include a new piece written by Nick himself, as well as a host of composers throughout the world.



THE COLLABORATORS

Zach Mowitz is a cellist who made his solo debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra in July 2018. **Nick DiBerardino** serves on the composition faculty and as Director of Composition Studies and Ensemble 20/21 at the Curtis Institute of Music. They met in 2015 while they were both students at Curtis, and their passion for music and social change has powered their partnership ever since.



Guarneri Hall NFP (GH) is a not-for-profit classical music incubator in Chicago, IL. GH is founded on the principles that access to classical music improves people's lives, that digital adaptation is essential to sustaining relevance for classical music, and that chamber music is a uniquely powerful way to reach people with music. GH acts as a facilitator and catalyst for classical music through live music events and videos, advocacy for emerging performers and music educators, and innovative music education initiatives.