

## Rising Classical Music Star Étienne Gara Named Artist in Residence As The Soraya embarks on an epic road trip with *MusiKaravan*

*The short film series follows Delirium Musicum founder Gara and fellow violinist YuEun Gemma Kim in their vintage VW bus during the pandemic as they safely spread music and joy throughout California*

**[MusiKaravan](#) hits the road Thursday, May 6 at [thesoraya.org](https://thesoraya.org)**

(Los Angeles, CA) April 30, 2021 — One of the most promising new stars of classical music, Étienne Gara, violinist, and founder and artistic director of Delirium Musicum, has been named Soraya's next Artist in Residence.

To commence the two-year residency, The Soraya embarks on an epic journey by presenting *MusiKaravan*, a series of short films beginning May 6 at [thesoraya.org](https://thesoraya.org), that follow Gara and fellow violinist YuEun Gemma Kim on a pandemic road trip as they safely spread music and joy, and celebrate the people who are “working hard to feed us physically and emotionally with quality products.”

Each film highlights a different part of California where Gara and Kim performed pop-up and outdoor performances. California itself will continue to be a point of exploration for Gara during his residency.

Music lovers and travel enthusiasts alike will take part in this unfolding journey by viewing episodes through The Soraya's and *MusiKaravan*'s social media channels. One new episode will be released each Thursdays through the summer. The trip will take special stops to be announced along the way including a celebratory visit to The Soraya.

"Étienne is the kind of boundary-breaking artist and risk taker with whom The Soraya wishes to collaborate," said Thor Steingraber, Executive and Artistic Director for The Soraya. "His creative energy permeates and elevates his projects and we can't wait to take off on this two-year journey with him. The *MusiKaravan* film series is a perfect vehicle for our audiences to acquaint themselves with Etienne's artistry, charm, and ebullient spirit."

“*MusiKaravan* brings the energy of a concert hall into the intimacy of a special musical bonding experience. It creates a musical safe-zone that offers a humanness that is crucial in our society, sharing a true and liberating moment of life,” said Gara. “This experience has proved itself to be a life-changing extension of my artistic values, and will continue to shine brighter than ever as I join Thor and the dream team of The Soraya.”

Gara continued, “Calling this state of the art venue home opens wide the gates to endless creative possibilities and leadership. It gives me a very special kind of excitement; one that makes me feel in my soul that these two years together will have a deep and lasting impact on all of us, as humans and as artists, on and off stage, as we pursue our dreams to save the world through the power of art and music.”

Like many musicians facing the global pandemic, Gara and Kim – for the first time in their professional lives – found themselves with unlimited time and no performances on their schedules. So, for six months during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gara and Kim lived out of their vintage 1971 Volkswagen bus and performed socially-distanced concerts for farm workers, winemakers, random passersby, and even the occasional ostrich.

Gara has recorded a solo album on a 1714 Stradivarius, performs internationally, and was featured on Leonard Cohen’s last album *You Want It Darker*. He founded the award-winning *Sunset Club Trio*, an ensemble joining the forces of the violin, the electric and the flamenco guitars in their own arrangements of the great classical repertoire; created *Sketches of Miles*, a production that brings together the classical and the jazz worlds for USC’s Brain and Creativity Institute; and has collaborated with Benjamin Millepied and L.A. Dance Project.

Gara will be in residence at The Soraya for two years spanning the 2021/22 and 2022/23 seasons. More details about additional projects during his residency will be announced when each Soraya season launches.

Violinist YuEun Gemma Kim is a founding member and Managing Director of Delirium Musicum. She is international competition winner, performs around the world and has a YouTube channel boasting over 6,000,000 views.

### **About Étienne Gara**

Praised for the warm tone and expressiveness of his playing, French born violinist Étienne Gara has performed extensively worldwide in some of the most renowned venues. Internationally broadcast on TV and radio and numerous awards winner, he recorded in 2014 on the Leonora Jackson, a 1714 Stradivarius, an album of French music titled *French Recital*.

Gara cultivates a boundary-breaking curiosity that brought him to be featured on Leonard Cohen's last album and to found the award-winning Sunset Club Trio, an ensemble joining the forces of the violin, the electric and the flamenco guitars in their own arrangements of the great classical repertoire. He also created *Sketches of Miles*, a production that brings together the classical and the jazz worlds.

In addition to his solo career, his creative musical productions, and his activities as guest principal violin with many ensembles brought him to perform in halls such as Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles. He has been the concertmaster and artistic director of the "Neo-Baroque" conductorless Kontrapunktus Chamber Orchestra between 2015 and 2018 and took part in the recording of the debut album of the ensemble. He also records for the movie and television industry.

In 2018, he founded the award-winning self-conducted chamber orchestra Delirium Musicum, an ensemble dedicated to providing impassioned and engaging musical performances influenced by the bustling artistic mosaic of Los Angeles. Winner of the 2018 Beverly Hills National Auditions, CA, and San Francisco Classical Voice 2019-2020 Audience Choice Award for Best Baroque/Early Music Performance, Delirium Musicum, is an emerging chamber ensemble that brings together fifteen of the most creative and refined musicians in Los Angeles.

Delirium Musicum defines itself artistically by taking a new stand on the daring and varied repertoire it tackles. Creative and unapologetic interpretation of the old masters as well as collaboration with contemporary composers brings a unique voice to the group. Delirium Musicum, whose members hail from twelve countries and four continents, has a cultural, social, and ethnic diversity that creates an enriched group identity representing the artistic excellence and leadership of the young generation of musicians in Los Angeles.

Delirium Musicum creates a dialogue about new ways to explore music as it pertains to life. The small size of this ensemble allows the musicians to bond and engage intimately with a broad audience through dedicated performances that inspire wild excitement and ecstasy.

Gara is a graduate of the New England Conservatory, with Donald Weilerstein. He also studied with Midori at the University of Southern California. Among many international festivals, he was invited to join star violinist Itzhak Perlman at his festival in NY, as well as residencies in Sarasota, Florida, and Israel. Concurrently with his residency at The Soraya, Gara serves as Artist in Residence 2019 at USC's Brain and Creativity Institute, led by Prof. Antonio Damasio.

**For more background on MusiKaravan please visit: [deliriummusicum.com](http://deliriummusicum.com)**

**Also VW Newsroom, February 9, 2021: [Violinists traveling in a Volkswagen Westfalia bring music to essential workers](#)**

### **About Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)**

The 2020-21 Season marks the tenth anniversary year for the award-winning Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts which has quickly become one of the cultural jewels of the greater Los Angeles region. Under the leadership of Executive Director Thor Steingraber, The Soraya continues to expand its programming and outstanding multidisciplinary performances. The Soraya presents a wide variety of performances that not only include new and original work from the Los Angeles region but also work from around the world appealing to all of LA's rich and diverse communities.

Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, The Soraya's season offers a vibrant performance program of nearly 50 classical and popular music, dance, theater, family, and international events that have served to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley, and further establish itself as one of the top arts companies in Southern California. The award-winning, 1,700-seat theatre was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and was recently cited by the Los Angeles Times as "a growing hub for live music, dance, drama and other cultural events."

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