

The Bardin-Niskala Duo (cello and piano) is comprised of cellist An-Lin Bardin and pianist Naomi Niskala. An-Lin and Naomi met while living and teaching in New Haven, CT, shortly after they finished their studies at the Yale School of Music. An-Lin is of Chinese-American heritage, and Naomi is of Japanese-American heritage. They have been playing together in their piano trio (Trio Kisosen) since 2016, and formed the Bardin-Niskala Duo in early 2021 in response to the feelings of despair and anger that were continuing to increase in the United States, especially over racial differences. An-Lin and Naomi began approaching ALAANA composers to ask them to use their music to address their sense of identity – to celebrate their racial heritages, to tackle historical or current events in race conflict, or to start the journey towards discovering where and how they belong. The duo has since commissioned four composers, Taiwanese-American Yiheng Yvonne Wu, Navajo Juantio Becenti, Chinese Samoan/Hawaiian Michael-Thomas Foumai, Ugandan-American Niles Luther, and has plans to commission Taiwanese-American Chihchun Chisun Lee along with several other composers throughout 2022 and 2023.

An-Lin Bardin, cello

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, piano

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 in 2007 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 is currently 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.