Walker Art Center presents

Nels Cline & Yuka Honda
River Mouth, Unseen Green

Thursday & Friday Sep 24–25, 2026	McGuire Theater 7:30 pm

Nels Cline: All-Star Gathering
Thursday, September 24, 2026
7:30 pm, McGuire Theater

Program

Solo

Alex Cline	singing bowls & bells

“Every Moment” by CUP

Yuka Honda	drone, keys & electronics
Nels Cline	electric guitar, vocals & bamboo flute

Solo

Yuka Honda	Tenori-on

“Self-Referenced” by The Minutemen
Alex Cline, Glenn Kotche, John Dieterich,
Anthony Cox, Shara Nova & Nels Cline

Solo

Glenn Kotche	percussion

Solo

Julian Lage	guitar

Improvisation
Alex Cline, Glenn Kotche, John Dieterich
& Nels Cline

Solo

Theo Bleckmann	voice

“Comedy Tonight”
Julian Lage, Nels Cline, Theo Bleckmann,
Glenn Kotche & Alex Cline

Improvisation
Julian Lage & Nels Cline

“Transition” by John Coltrane
Julian Lage, Alex Cline, Anthony Cox, Nels Cline
& Yuka Honda

“Hold That Line” by Tedeschi Trucks Band

Yuka Honda	electric piano
Theo Bleckmann & Shara Nova	voice
Anthony Cox	acoustic bass
Alex Cline & Glenn Kotche	percussion
Nels Cline & Julian Lage	guitar

“I’ve Never Loved Someone”

Shara Nova	voice & guitar

“River Mouth (Parts One & Two)”

Yuka Honda	electric piano
Anthony Cox, Julian Lage, John Dieterich, Alex Cline, Glenn Kotche, Theo Bleckmann & Shara Nova	voices

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A Note from Nels Cline

This evening provides me with a rare opportunity to present and interact with some of my favorite musicians and, concomitantly, entertain the listener in what could be described as an almost traditional "variety show" manner. As an artist coming up/playing out in the last 4 decades, my polymath tendencies often seemed to be at odds with standard aesthetic/stylistic boundaries. I am someone who embraces and explores songs and improvisations, subtlety and boldness, intimate ballads and torrents of pure sound in equal measure. Tonight I can present all of the above in what I hope will be a coherent concert experience. I feel that I have always been rather traditional in the way I structure my concerts, striving for balance in terms of dynamics and form (dare I say genres?) that I—and others perhaps?—find potentially entertaining. I mean this in an almost vaudevillian sense (though tonight there will be no comedians or dancers!). We laugh, we cry, we get frightened, we feel warmth, we feel connected...

I have selected artists for this show based on my deep love of their work. In some cases there songs will be sung that have inspired and nourished me in the last few years, and I was actually able to have those artists perform them as part of my "variety show" - a dream come true. And I get to mix them together with improvisation/improvisors, and even play a couple of my own songs along the way.

From this event one may get a window into my sensibilities, into what inspires me, while also offering you, the listener, an enjoyable musical/sonic journey of sorts. I offer it humbly and with gratitude to everyone involved with tonight's concert.

Thursday's program runs approximately 2 hours with no intermission.

Enjoying the show? Come back tomorrow!

Save 30% on tickets to Yuka Honda's performance, featuring work from her forthcoming I AM YOKO opera and other selections. Use code HONDA30 online or visit the box office to purchase.

Yuka Honda: *I AM YOKO*
Friday, September 25, 2026
7:30 pm, McGuire Theater

Program

Yuka Honda & Glenn Kaino:
I AM YOKO

Short Break

Yoko Ono & John Lennon:
Fly (1970, 25 minutes)

I AM YOKO Credits

Conceived, written, and directed by Yuka Honda
All music composed and arranged by Yuka Honda
Video by Glenn Kaino
Costumes by Corey Lynn Carter

Cast, in Order of Appearance

Video Prologue	
Rila Fukushima	Oracle
Theo Bleckmann	Father, First Husband, Business Manager
Macie Stewart	Mother, School Teacher
Glenn Kaino	Second Husband
Emi Helfrich	Daughter
Tōth	Third Husband

Musicians	
Alex Cline	Drums
Devra Hoff	Bass
Jason Lindner	Piano, keyboards
Macie Stewart	Violin
Maggie Parkins	Cello
Nels Cline	Guitar

Tōth	Trumpet
Yuka Honda	Electronics

A Note from Yuka Honda

Yoko Ono is a world-famous, iconic artist, known for her uncompromising voice as both an artist and an activist. Yet there is another side of her that remains remarkably private, and much of her extraordinary story is still not widely known. I have been fortunate to know her personally, and for a long time, I have wanted to tell that story.

As I embarked on this journey, I decided to tell her story truthfully, but also metaphorically. Because as astounding as the events of her life are, when you look at them closely, the elements of her story are profoundly human—filled with experiences and emotions that anyone can relate to.

Finding the right balance between the extraordinary and the deeply human has been a challenge.

I now have 12 songs to tell Yoko's story with this incredible band. I wanted this experience to be as sensory as possible. I'm humbled and proud to present this first iteration of the show, which should feel like a full concert.

I hope you enjoy it.

Friday's program runs approximately 2 hours with a short break.

Nels Cline is a genre-defying guitarist widely celebrated as a longtime member of seminal rock band Wilco, and for his expansive solo career spanning jazz, rock, and experimental music. As a band leader he's released three critically acclaimed albums on Blue Note Records, from the lush orchestration of Lovers to the electrified improvisations of Share the Wealth. His latest project, Consentrik Quartet, showcases his deep roots in the avant-garde improvised-music scene, further cementing his reputation as one of today's most adventurous and versatile guitarists.

Yuka Honda (eucademix) is a composer, producer, and sonic innovator whose work defies genre and convention. Co-founder of the trailblazing duo Cibo Matto, she has since forged a solo path that blends electronic experimentation, improvisational depth, infectious rhythm, and abstract storytelling. She describes her music as quantum, continuum, and sensory—a fluid exploration of sound as both narrative and experience. Like a book or a film, her compositions invite the listener into a story: shifting through contrasting emotions, spaces, and textures to create an unfolding journey. Her work was shaped by the sound of hip hop—where sampling, layering, and cross-genre collage redefined music—as well as by experimental production, microtonal detail, and the interplay between digital and live instrumentation. Honda has collaborated with artists including Yoko Ono, Sean Lennon, Nels Cline, Photay, Jason Lindner (Black Star), Dave Harrington (Darkside), L'Rain, and Martha Wainwright, and her recent projects span multimedia opera, museum performance, and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Theo Bleckmann is a Grammy nominated singer and new music composer whose approach blurs boundaries and surprises expectations. Bleckmann re-imagines songs by Henry Purcell, Charles Ives, George Gershwin, Kurt Weil, Kate Bush, Massive Attack and the Bee Gees. He's appeared on NPR's Fresh Air with Terry Gross, is the recipient of the Jazz Echo award, and has toured Europe with Oulu Symphony Orchestra and UMO Jazz Big Band and Japan with Century Symphony Orchestra. Bleckmann is also recognized for his original work and has collaborated with Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass, John Hollenbeck, Ulysses Owens, John Zorn, Bang on a Can All-Stars, and more.

A native of Los Angeles, drummer-percussionist-composer Alex Cline has been a mainstay on the creative music scene in that city for fifty years while his reputation as a musician has been international in magnitude. Known for his contributions to the music of countless important and influential artists in the creative jazz and new music worlds, including his twin brother Nels Cline, he has also worked for many years as a bandleader-composer, having released eight albums under his own name as well as many more from collaborative improvisational projects. In the dance world, Cline's music has been heard with Oguri/Roxanne Steinberg/Lightning Shadow, Margaret Schuette, the Momentum Company, and Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, among others. He was a member of Will Salmon's multimedia performance company Open Gate Theatre for forty years and curated its monthly series of adventurous music for twenty-two years. Outside of his music-related pursuits, Alex worked at the UCLA Library's Center for Oral History Research before retiring after thirty-two years there, and, as a student of the late Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, he is a lay dharma teacher in the Plum Village Community of Engaged Buddhism.

Anthony Cox is internationally renowned arranger, composer, performer, recording artist and educator with extensive experience working across musical genres in traditional and contemporary interdisciplinary musical collaborations and settings. Anthony Cox's career spanned over 30 years encompassing music education, composition, and performance that include an extensive list of collaborations, performances, and recordings with notable artists in the field of jazz. The list includes Sam Rivers, Joe Lovano, Geri Allen, Kenny Wheeler, Ed Blackwell, Billy Higgins, John Scofield, The NDR Big Band, Dino Saluzzi, and Henry Threadgill.

John Dieterich is a musician known largely for his work in the band Deerhoof, which he has been a member of since 1999. In that time, Deerhoof has released 13 critically acclaimed albums and toured extensively throughout North and South America, Europe, Australia and Asia. In addition, John has been a member of Gorge Trio, Endlings, Colossamite, Natural Dreamers, SWAPS, Powerdove, The Hand to Man Band, Dieterich & Barnes, Bad News from Houston and many other groups. He has also worked as a musician, producer, mixer, remixer and/or collaborator in any other number of other ways with artists including: Juana Molina, Phew, Mike Watt, Raven Chacon, Mary Halvorson, A Hawk and a Hacksaw, Tashi Dorji, Powerdove, Xiu Xiu, Sufjan Stevens, Chris Vatalaro, Heather Trost, Lucas Santtana, Claire Cronin, Jeremy Barnes, Booker Stardrum, Officer!, Lonna Kelley, Max Knause, Thor Harris, Half Japanese, Busdriver, James Jackson Toth and many others.

Emi Helfrich is a New York based multimedia artist whose work is rooted in international cultural identity and radical hope. She is excited to celebrate the legacy of Yoko Ono, an artist who has deeply influenced her as both an activist and an artist. Emi believes that hope is not in opposition to grief; they are part of the same truth. Even after the bombing of Hiroshima, flowers were growing in the rubble only a year later. These cycles of loss and rebirth are at the core of her creative vision. From 2019 to 2020, she lived in Tokyo, seeking to strengthen her connection with her Japanese family. Her experience continues to inform her work, which channels the fantastical to examine resilience and the transformative power of love.

Devra Hoff (she/her) is a bassist, composer, and arranger who has worked in a wide array of cultural contexts and musical settings. She has recorded and toured extensively over three decades, playing on over one hundred recordings and thousands of shows with artists such as Julia Holter, Yoko Ono, Sharon Van Etten/Attachment Theory, Sean Ono Lennon, Nels Cline/Singers, Vijay Iyer, Cibo Matto, Mike Watt, Faye Carol, and many more. She has performed legendary venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, The Hollywood Bowl, and Sydney Opera House, and at several major international festivals including Glastonbury (UK), Primavera (Spain/Portugal), Summer Sonic (Tokyo). Devra's own records include *Solo Bass*, Voices *From the Empty Moor: Song of Anne Briggs* (Kill Rock Stars) Mendoza/Hoff Revels' punk/jazz debut *Echolocation*, (Aum Fidelity) which was featured in top 10 jazz records of the year by both NPR and *The New York Times*) and most recently the electronic/ambient solo album Solve/Coagula (Switch Hit). Her compositions and arrangements have also served stage, dance, and film.

Glenn Kaino was born in 1972 in Los Angeles. Kaino's works, often functioning as poetic contradictions, aim to reconcile conflicting ideologies, opposing systems, and strict dichotomies in material and experiential ways. His studio practice includes sculpture, painting, filmmaking, performance, installation, and large-scale public work. He also operates outside the traditional purview of contemporary art, instigating collaborations with other modes of culture—ranging from tech to music to political organizing. Major solo exhibitions of Kaino's work have been presented at the High Museum of Art; the San Jose Museum of Art; Contemporary Art Center Cincinnati; the Studio Museum in Harlem; the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; the Andy Warhol Museum; the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; Artpace San Antonio, and REDCAT, Los Angeles. Kaino is also an Emmy and Webby Award-winning producer and documentarian, whose films have been featured at the Tribeca Film Festival and SXSW.

Glenn Kotche has been the drummer of Wilco since 2001 with whom he's recorded 10 studio albums – garnering a Grammy and seven nominations. As a composer, he's released 7 solo albums and has been commissioned by many artists including Kronos Quartet, The Silk Road Ensemble, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Eighth Blackbird, So Percussion, Third Coast Percussion, Carnegie Hall, the Chicago Youth Symphony and Roomful of Teeth. Kotche has done cross-disciplinary collaborations with the likes of choreographer Danielle Agami, actor Jon Hamm, chef Rick Bayless, WNYC's Radiolab, Notre Dame's Engineering Dept. and Delta Faucets. Kotche has played on over 180 recordings by artists such as Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran, KD Lang, Neko Case, First Aid Kit, Phil Selway, Ed O'Brien, Andrew Bird, Iron and Wine, On Fillmore, Neil Finn, Low and Beck. In 2013 he released his book, *A Beat A Week*. Kotche has appeared on the cover of Percussive Notes and 3 times on the cover of *Modern Drummer* Magazine.

Hailed as one of the most prodigious guitarists of his generation and "highest category of improvising musicians" (*New Yorker*), Julian Lage has spent more than a decade searching through the myriad strains of American musical history via impeccable technique, free association and a spirit of infinite possibility. The California-born New York-based musician boasts a prolific resume on his own accord in addition to collaborating with Gary Burton and John Zorn, as well as duo projects with Nels Cline, Chris Eldridge and Fred Hersch, among others.

Jason Lindner, aka flymyspcshp, is a contemporary electronic musician and keyboardist from Brooklyn, NY, widely known for his post-jazz, IDM-influenced group, Now Vs Now, and for his unique keyboard and synth work on David Bowie's final Grammy-winning album '★' (blak-stär), for which producer Tony Visconti called Jason a "Godsend." With an artistic identity spanning genres, cultures, formats, and technologies, Jason is a frequent performer and collaborator in the underground experimental electronic and DJ communities, actively exploring cross-sections of live electronic music and spontaneous improvisation for immersive sonic journeys both on and off the dance floor, playing everything from raves to meditative wellness sessions, both as a solo artist and in collaboration with a growing list of luminaries. These included active collaborations including Currency Audio, Yuka Honda (Cibo Matto), Mulatu Astatke, Saha Gnawa, Nikki Nair, Toribio, JKriv, Greg Paulus (No Regular Play), Salami Rose Joe Louis, LNDFK, Tatyana, ExoTech (Kimbra, Sophia Brous), Nu Jazz, No Eyes, Hybrid Movement Company, Sidra Bell, Poncili Creacion, Lauryn Hill, Meshell Ndegeocello, Angelique Kidjo, Danny Elfman.

Shara Nova is a composer, vocalist, and producer currently creating from Detroit, Michigan. Shara has released six albums under the moniker My Brightest Diamond and has composed works for The Crossing, Conspirare, iSing Silicon Valley, yMusic, Brooklyn Rider, Nadia Sirota, Cantus Domus, Nordic Voices, Brooklyn Youth Chorus, Roomful of Teeth, Aarhus Symfoni, Oregon Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, the BBC Concert Orchestra, and the Detroit Opera Educational touring company, among others. In 2024 she starred in the Tony Award Winning musical Illinoise on Broadway, directed by Justin Peck, co-written by Jackie Sibblies Drury with music by Sufjan Stevens, with a live album released on Nonesuch Records.

Cellist Maggie Parkins is equally at home in chamber music, orchestral music, and the avant-garde. A robust advocate for new and experimental music, Parkins with the Eclipse String Quartet and Brightwork new music ensemble has commissioned or premiered numerous works by composers from all over the world. Parkins is also a member of Mojave Trio and The Smudges with Jeff Gauthier. She has performed with groups including Jazz Passengers, Billy Childs, and the Anthony Braxton Ensemble. Parkins' recordings can be heard on the Bridge, Albany, Tzadik, Avan, Cryptogramophone, and Victo labels. Parkins has performed Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, the Banff Centre, Festival Internacional de Musica de Cadaques (Spain), Heidelberg Castle Festival, Spoleto (USA and Italy), the Taktlos Festival (Switzerland), and the Bach Aria Festival in New York. Parkins taught cello and chamber music at UC Irvine for 19 years and currently teaches cello at Pomona College and Cal Arts.

Macie Stewart is a musician and multi-disciplinary artist based in Chicago, IL. A trained pianist and violinist, Stewart began to explore the world musically before she could talk. She utilizes this innate knowledge to inform her self-taught technique in guitar, voice, and composition, resulting in a uniquely rich and deeply humanist approach to her work. Stewart's experience as an improviser leads her to see composition and songwriting as a conversation between herself and the environment around her, searching for a deeper connection amongst all facets of life. She is known as half of the duo, Finom, as well as for her solo and trio work under her own name. Macie has been featured in *Pitchfork*, *The Wire*, *NPR*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Downbeat* Magazine. She has presented performances and sound work at Experimental Sound Studio, The Renaissance Society, The MCA, Stora Galleriet at SKF/Konstnärshuset, and The Mattress Factory. Stewart has also toured extensively as a multi-instrumentalist with Jeff Tweedy, Japanese Breakfast, Ken Vandermark, Kevin

Morby, and The Weather Station.

Brooklyn-based songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and composer Tōth (Alex Toth of Rubblebucket) creates performances that blur the line between concert, ritual, and communal gathering. Through emotionally resonant songwriting, soulful guitar, piano and trumpet playing, and an inviting stage presence, he cultivates spaces for connection, vulnerability, and play. His latest album, *And The Voice Said*, co-produced by Grammy-nominated artist Caroline Rose and featuring Kimbra, reflects an artist expanding the possibilities of song as a shared experience—an approach that resonates with the participatory spirit of Yoko Ono's work.

Special thanks to Claire Givens Violins for providing a cello for Yuka Honda: *I AM YOKO*.

Land Acknowledgment

The McGuire Theater and Walker Art Center are located on the contemporary, traditional, and ancestral homelands of the Dakota people. This site, which was once an expanse of marshland and meadow, holds meaning for Dakota, Ojibwe, and Indigenous people from other Native nations, who still live in the community today. We acknowledge the discrimination and violence inflicted on Indigenous peoples in the Americas, the colonial history of museums in the United States, and the Native displacement that allowed for the founding of the Walker. By remembering this dark past, we recognize its continuing harm in the present and resolve to work toward reconciliation, systemic change, and healing in support of Dakota people and the land itself.

Walker Art Center Acknowledgments

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Thank you, Walker members, for your generous support.

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