

Artist Statement – Nadia Francavilla, violin

My performance practice is deeply centered in collaboration. From this foundation—of trust, communication, the interplay of ideas—I explore the boundaries of what the violin can do as an instrument, and how a violinist can be as a performer.

I hold an abiding interest in extended techniques; in visual scores and experimental approaches to notation; in the violin as an instrument for music-making, certainly, but also for making sounds, making noise; and in the body of the performer as not just a tool to manipulate the instrument but an instrument in its own right. I am drawn to works involving electronics, pre-recorded elements, improvisation and spontaneity, multimedia aspects, physically demanding works, and especially works requiring deep trust and complex interplay between performers.

This goes equally working with longtime collaborators—individuals with whom I have worked so intently for many years. On stage together they know I'm going to sneeze before I do. It also means engaging with new faces that will bring a fresh perspective. I immensely enjoy commissioning new works from emerging composers, and then working in performance to communicate that creator's unique vision to an audience.

When it comes to the classical canon, my approach is one of curiosity, looking to challenge the audience's expectation of the piece or step outside the constraints of what is expected of a classical performance. As a bilingual francophone artist often working in English dominant environments, the idea of translation—of moving from something as nebulous as a feeling or intention, to the concrete of language or sound—is never far from my mind.

For me, the roles of performer, curator, producer, and educator are all intertwined. In selecting repertoire for performance, I highlight overlooked or marginalized composers, present better-known works in a new way, or bring out the throughline in a composer's work over time. As an educator, the same spirit of collaboration applies: we are all in this together, and the most interesting results come from discovering, challenging, and supporting one another.

Success is often measured by how much something is either visible or well-liked. I don't see it that way, either in people or in terms of repertoire. A successful performance may not be one in which the audience liked everything, but rather one where both audience and performer were challenged, asked to find their way—whether intellectually, instinctively, emotionally, or all of the above. They find a connection with the work and to each other.