

CLUB Kaya

AN
Interactive
Experience,
Performance,
and Archive

WEDNESDAY
Feb 12
2025

6:30 PM to 9:30 PM

ONE ARCHIVES AT THE
USC LIBRARIES

USC Visions & Voices

USC Dornsife

*Department of American
Studies and Ethnicity*

ONE Archives at
the USC Libraries

USC Student Life

Asian Pacific American Student Services



Presented by USC Visions and Voices. Organized by Edwin Hill (French, Italian, American Studies and Ethnicity), Sunyoung Lee (Kaya Press, American Studies and Ethnicity), and Ana Iwataki (Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture). Co-sponsored by the Creativity, Theory, and Politics Research Cluster (American Studies and Ethnicity); the ONE Archives at the USC Libraries; and Asian Pacific American Student Services.



Photos: Courtesy of the artists

WELCOME TO CLUB Kaya

In August 2024, Alan Nakagawa¹ became the first Kaya Press² Artist-in-Residence to commemorate the groundbreaking Asian diasporic publisher's 30th anniversary.

Having worked with several archives in recent years and exploring how his art practice can not only document history but expand its demographic, Nakagawa considers his works to be time capsules that are made in deep engagement with people and memories—capable of transformative effects in the present but meant for future generations.

Club Kaya was developed to answer the following ideas: What happens when we think of the archive as a place of refuge? How can we engage with the histories of cultural production beyond what is expected?

Tonight's unique performance is the result of Nakagawa's extraordinary, yearlong effort to create 68 Micro Operas—one for every book published since Kaya's founding in 1994. The Micro Operas are designed to help us remember through sound's effect on the body, analog technologies, and communal experiences.

Recalling the original interdisciplinary intention, collaborative ethos, and communal process behind the word "opera," these short works based in sound, visual arts, and performance are the results of a collaborative process that involves many of Los Angeles's most exciting Asian diasporic musicians.

There are four categories of Micro Operas:

- Recorded musical soundtracks
- Music videos
- Vibratory sound pieces, loosely inspired by the Cajon, consisting of aluminum, body-length boxes on which listeners lay to experience sound through their entire bodies
- Music boxes, sculptural works inspired by the work of artists such as Noah Purifoy, Harry Partch, and Yoko Ono that invite listener participation

Micro Opera contributors include:

- Cirilo Domine, viola
- Alison De La Cruz, vocals
- Elizabeth Ito, vocals
- Pattie Lin, vocals
- Jean Park, vocals
- Patrick Shiroishi, saxophone, percussion
- Robin Sukhadia, tabla, harmonium, percussion

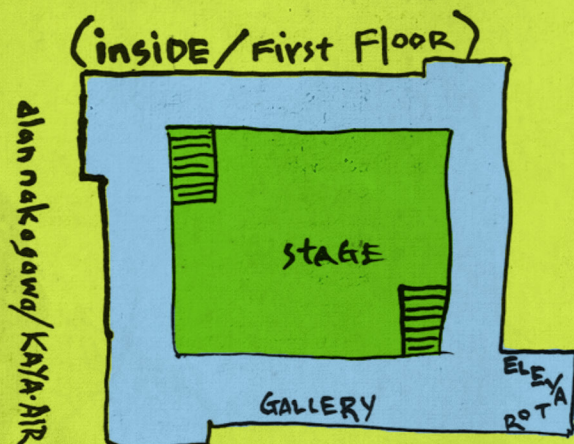
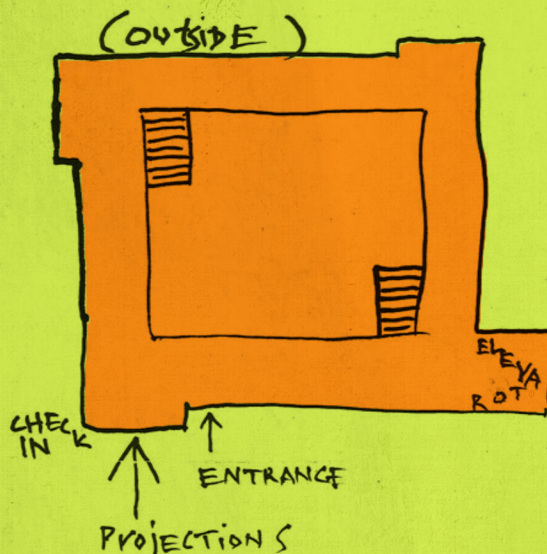
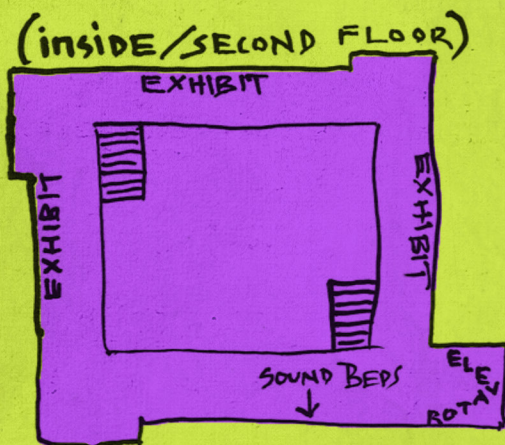
Club Kaya is a one-night opportunity to experience all 68 Micro Operas in a live demonstration of the collaborative, interactive, and participatory possibilities of publishing, art-making, and archiving itself.

The Micro Operas are available for streaming on Bandcamp [HERE](#).

¹Alan Nakagawa is an interdisciplinary artist with archiving tendencies who works primarily with sound, often incorporating various media and working with communities and their histories.

²Founded in 1994, Kaya Press has established itself as the premiere publisher of cutting-edge Asian and Pacific Islander diasporic writers in the United States. Its diverse list of titles includes experimental poetry, noir fiction, film memoir, avant-garde art, performance pieces, "lost" novels, and everything in between. Originally based in New York, Kaya Press is currently housed in the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity at USC.

Map & Schedule



SECOND FLOOR EXHIBIT

Portrait of a Publisher as a Political Project: 30 Years of Kaya Press

Featuring archival editorial notes, promotional posters, and original artwork, this exhibition demystifies the publishing process and explores the steps between manuscript and bound book, inviting visitors to participate in a publishing project of their own.

FIRST FLOOR GALLERY

Kaya Micro Operas: Alternatives to Archiving

Music boxes and other objects created by Alan Nakagawa during his residency.

STAGE SCHEDULE

- 6:30 p.m.** Alan Nakagawa & Umi Hsu
- 6:45 p.m.** Alan Nakagawa & Umi Hsu
- 7 p.m.** Welcome
- 7:15 p.m.** Literaoke
- 7:30 p.m.** Creative Critical Intervention
- 7:45 p.m.** Alan Nakagawa & Umi Hsu
- 8 p.m.** Alan Nakagawa & Umi Hsu
- 8:15 p.m.** Creative Critical Intervention
- 8:30 p.m.** Literaoke
- 8:45 p.m.** Alan Nakagawa & Umi Hsu
- 9 p.m.** Alan Nakagawa & Umi Hsu
- 9:15 p.m.** Closing Remarks

Alan & Umi Alan and Umi will play selected Micro Operas.

Literaoke is a literary event format that Kaya Press helped create in collaboration with other Asian American literary community members in 2016. Kaya Press authors Jenny Liou, Tran Truong, and Erin O'Brien will sing one minute of karaoke (the best part of the song!) before reading a short excerpt from their own works.

Creative Critical Interventions will feature short performances by USC students and faculty Adrienne Adams, Nam Do, Leah King, and Jonathan Leal, who will interweave their scholarship and creative practices with Club Kaya.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

ALAN NAKAGAWA is an interdisciplinary artist with archiving tendencies. Primarily working with sound and often incorporating various media and working with communities and their histories, Nakagawa has been working on a series of semi-autobiographic sound-architecture/tactile sound experiences utilizing multi-point audio field recordings of historic interiors: *Peace Resonance: Hiroshima/Wendover* combines recordings of the interiors of the Hiroshima Atomic Dome (Hiroshima, Japan) and Wendover Hangar (Utah); *Conical Sound: Antoni Gaudi/Simon Rodia* combines recordings of the interiors of the Watts Towers (Los Angeles) and the Sagrada Familia (Barcelona, Spain). Premiered in 2023, *Point of Turn* was his first vibratory sound work, involving the human voice and the seminal 1970s British rock band 10cc's hit "I'm Not in Love." Nakagawa was the first artist-in-residence for the Los Angeles Department of Transportation and the Los Angeles County Library and is currently the artist-in-residence at the CSU Dominguez Hills Gerth Archives & Special Collections.

ABOUT KAYA PRESS

Founded in 1994 and originally based in New York, Kaya Press is a group of dedicated writers, artists, readers, and lovers of books working together to publish the most challenging, thoughtful, and provocative literature being produced throughout the Asian and Pacific Island diasporas. Its diverse list of titles includes experimental poetry, noir fiction, film memoir, avant-garde art, performance pieces, "lost" novels, and everything in between. Kaya and its authors have been the recipients of numerous awards, including the Gregory Kolovakas Prize for Outstanding New Literary Press, the American Book Award, the Association for Asian American Studies Book Award, the PEN Beyond Margins Open Book Prize, the Asian American Writers' Workshop Award, and the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Prize. Our books have become cornerstone texts in American Studies and Asian American Studies curricula at major universities throughout the country. Kaya Press is currently housed in the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity at USC.

CONTRIBUTORS

ADRIENNE ADAMS (they/them) is a PhD candidate in American Studies and Ethnicity. Their scholarship and event programming operates at the nexus of Black aesthetics, elemental and environmental media studies, and science/technology studies.

ALISON DE LA CRUZ (she/he/they/siya/DeLa) is a senior activist leader, facilitator, cultural organizer, multi-disciplinary theatre artist, educator, contemporary ritualist, and elder. DeLa is a collaborative leader with over twenty years of arts and cultural production, relationship and programmatic development, budgeting, staff, and project management experiences and skills.

NAM DO is a second-year PhD student in Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture at USC. Their research engages Black Feminist critiques of ontometaphysics and psychoanalysis to examine the soundscape of the Black Radical Tradition. They are a classical and jazz vocalist, pianist, and composer.

Philippine-born, American artist **CIRILO DOMINE** lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his BA from UCLA and his MFA from UC Irvine. An artist working in the genres of drawing, installation, and mixed media, he received a Getty undergraduate grant and interned at the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Venice, CA, where he was involved in all aspects of exhibition design. He is also curator, collaborator and activist and worked for the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center's Advocate Gallery.

UMI HSU (they/them) was born in Taipei and moved to Virginia at age twelve. Hsu is a trans nonbinary sound artist, musician, and writer whose practice is driven by inquiries about sound and migratory communities. Working to create social change through sound, Hsu leads LA Listens, a community engagement project on the city's changing sonic and social ecology, and mobile placemaking collective Movable Parts. They also perform and write songs about the melancholic postcolony in their L.A.-based ghost pop band Bitter Party.

ELIZABETH ITO has been working as a creator, writer, director, and storyboard artist in the animation industry since 2004. She has worked on TV, feature, and commercial projects. Elizabeth is also the creator of the award-winning short *Welcome to My Life*, the second-most-viewed short in Cartoon Network history, and received an Emmy for her directing work on *Adventure Time*. Her first series for Netflix, *City of Ghosts*, premiered in 2021 and won a Peabody Award, and two Emmys for directing and best animated children's show in 2022. She also directed a music video for The Linda Lindas.

NISA KARNSOMPORT is a Los Angeles-based video artist, interdisciplinary designer, and software developer. Her work explores real-time and interactive processes between audio and video, often overlapping experimental media practices with new technology.

LEAH KING is a multidisciplinary artist and educator based in Los Angeles. She creates art installations, audio immersions, and interactive works celebrating Black joy, queer stories, and family histories with a futurist lens. She is an MFA candidate at the USC Roski School of Art and design.

JONATHAN LEAL is a Latino scholar, educator, and multidisciplinary artist based in Los Angeles. Originally from the Rio Grande Valley, the South Texas region located at the border of the United States and Mexico, Leal creates literary, musical, and integrative arts projects focused on creative resistances to bordered life. Leal is the author of *Dreams in Double Time* and is an assistant professor of English at USC.

PATTIE LIN is a genre-less, non-conforming artist and healer from the suburbs of Maryland. A multi-instrumentalist, songwriter, athlete, and performer, Pattie uses both art and physical movement as pathways towards growth and rehabilitation.

JENNY LIOU is an English professor at Pierce College and a retired professional cage fighter. She lives and writes in Covington, WA.

GENEVIEVE ERIN O'BRIEN is a Queer, mixed-race Vietnamese/Irish/German/American woman. She is an artist, a filmmaker, an organizer, a cook/private chef, and an educator who lives and works in Los Angeles.

SHAN SHAIKH is a filmmaker and founder of Retrospective Cinema. He has written and directed several films, most recently the short *La Ida y Vuelta*, which has had a successful festival circuit. Under the alias *thebikewriter*, he has filmed a number of music videos and short documentary pieces with a focus on individuals and organizations dedicated to serving the community in his childhood neighborhood of Koreatown. Shan's creative practice includes graphic design, ambient sound compositions, and experimenting with tape and the digitization process.

ROBIN SUKHADIA is an MFA graduate from the World Music program at the California Institute of the Arts who studies tabla under the virtuoso tabla maestro Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri at CalArts and the Ali Akbar College of Music in San Rafael, CA. His special focus on the musical traditions and rhythms of south Asia informs his approach to musical arrangement and composition on a wide range of concert, film, and album productions. He has composed music for and toured internationally.

TRUONG TRAN was born in Saigon, Vietnam. He is the author of six previous collections of poetry: *The Book of Perceptions*, *Placing the Accents*, *Dust and Conscience*, *Within The Margins*, *Four Letter Words*, and *100 Words: Poems, Potter, Tran* (co-authored with Damon Potter). Truong is also a visual artist who believes that art, be it poetry, cooking, sculpting, and even gardening, are his ways of thinking through the conscious of the times we live in.



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ABOUT ONE ARCHIVES

ONE ARCHIVES at the USC Libraries is the largest repository of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) materials in the world. Founded in 1952, ONE Archives houses millions of archival items including periodicals, books, films, videos, audio recordings, photographs, artworks, organizational records, and personal papers. ONE Archives has been a part of the University of Southern California Libraries since 2010. It is the mission of ONE Archives at the USC Libraries to collect, preserve, and make accessible LGBTQ historical materials while promoting new scholarship on and public awareness of queer histories.



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