

PUSHBACK COLLECTIVE

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Pushback is a modular contemporary music ensemble founded in 2018 by [Ben Roidl-Ward](#) (bassoon) and [Ally Smither](#) (soprano). Our objective is to commission and present a new body of work featuring bassoon and soprano that addresses, interacts with, and exposes social and political issues within our communities. This goal arose from a growing frustration with what we see as an unnecessary and harmful dislocation of our artistic practice from the realities of our lives. Pushback was formed from the impulse for a close collaboration between two unusually paired voices; this spirit of collaboration expands to a deep desire to form meaningful relationships with composers of our generation and to actively participate in the creation of new work that challenges performers and listeners alike.

Our first commissioning project featured the premieres of four new works: three duos for bassoon and soprano by [LJ White](#), [Karim Al-Zand](#), and [Binna Kim](#), and one sextet for bassoon, soprano, and string quartet by [Theo Chandler](#). We are grateful to the [Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events](#), the [Civic Orchestra of Chicago](#), and the [Luminarts Cultural Foundation](#), whose generous support made these commissions possible and our performances throughout 2018 and 2019 possible. Our programs in the 2019–2020 season will include new works by [Sepehr Pirasteh](#) and [Yi-Ting Lu](#).