

Community Music Center Piano Department presents the 21st annual
Juliet McComas Keyboard Marathon

NATURAL CONNECTIONS



SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 2025
COMMUNITY MUSIC CENTER - 544 CAPP STREET, SF



COMMUNITY MUSIC CENTER
MUSIC FOR EVERYONE SINCE 1921

Community Music Center presents
The 21st Annual Juliet McComas Keyboard Marathon

NATURAL CONNECTIONS

Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 3:00pm
CMC Concert Hall
544 Capp Street, San Francisco

PROGRAM

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Pièces de Clavecin
<i>La Poule (The Hen), RCT 1</i>
<i>Le Rappel des Oiseaux (The Recall of the Birds), RCT 2</i> | Jean-Philippe Rameau |
| Shirley Wong-Frentzel | |
| Miscellanea, Op. 16
<i>IV. Nocturne in B-flat Major</i> | Ignacy Jan Paderewski |
| Estampes
<i>III. Jardins sous la pluie</i> | Claude Debussy |
| Matylda Rotkiewicz | |
| Water Dance
<i>III. Very lightly, like a harp</i> | Karen Tanaka |
| Lauren Cony | |
| Recitative and Aria, <i>Sheep May Safely Graze</i> | Johann Sebastian Bach, arr. Mary Howe |
| Grace Huenemann | |
| Wave | Antônio Carlos Jobim |
| El Manicero | Moisés Simons |
| Tony Martinez | |
| The Seasons, Op. 37a
<i>IV. April: Snowdrop</i> | Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky |
| From Grandmother's Garden, Op. 97
<i>V. Honeysuckle</i> | Amy Beach |
| Lilia Zheltova | |
| On an Overgrown Path
<i>Lístek odvanutý (A Blown-Away Leaf)</i>
<i>Štěbetaly jak laštovičky (They Chattered Like Swallows)</i>
<i>Sýček neodletěl! (The Little Barn owl has not flown away!)</i> | Leoš Janáček |
| Hadley McCarroll | |

Goyescas <i>Quejas, o la Maja y el Ruiseñor</i>		Enrique Granados
Waldenszenen, Op. 82 <i>Abschied</i>		Robert Schumann

Christian Bonvin

Saint Louis en l'Ile		Astor Piazzolla
	Betty Wong	

INTERMISSION

Water's Edge <i>I. Dawn Light</i> <i>II. From the Riverbed</i> <i>III. Toward Dusk</i>		Hilary Tann
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Lauren Cony, *primo* and Jennifer Peringer, *secondo*

Sonatina in E Major, Op. 67, No. 2		Jean Sibelius
	Bruce Loeb	

Trois Morceaux caractéristiques, Op. 28 <i>III. Danse des Fleurs</i>		Amy Beach
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Automne		Cécile Chaminade
	Esther Chan	

Sonata Adina <i>III. Adagio Illariy</i>		Gabriela Lena Frank
	Jennifer Peringer	

Our Planet Earth <i>X. Water of Life</i> <i>XIII. Light</i> <i>XV. Our Planet Earth</i>		Karen Tanaka
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Jacqueline Chew

L'Isle Joyeuse		Claude Debussy
	Allison Lovejoy	

PROGRAM NOTES & PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

All program notes are written by the performer, unless otherwise noted

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683–1764)

La Poule from *Premier Livre de Pièces de Clavecin*

Le Rappel des Oiseaux from *Deuxième Livre de Pièces de Clavecin*

Jean-Philippe Rameau was a French composer and music theorist, renowned for his contributions to Baroque music. Born in Dijon, Rameau initially pursued a career as an organist and later gained prominence in Paris for his operas and theoretical writings. His theoretical work, *Traité de l'harmonie réduite à ses principes naturels* (1722), laid the foundation for modern music theory. Rameau's operas, such as *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733), and his harpsichord pieces, including *La Poule* and *Le Rappel des Oiseaux*, showcase his innovative approach to composition.

La Poule (The Hen) is a harpsichord piece from Rameau's *Pièces de Clavecin* (1724), specifically the *Premier Livre de Pièces de Clavecin*. The composition is characterized by lively rhythms and playful motifs, effectively mimicking the clucking and movements of a hen. This piece exemplifies Rameau's talent for musical storytelling and his ability to depict natural scenes through keyboard music.

Le Rappel des Oiseaux (The Recall of the Birds) is another harpsichord piece from Rameau's *Pièces de Clavecin avec une méthode pour la mécanique des doigts* (1724), also known as the *Deuxième Livre de Pièces de Clavecin*. This composition is notable for its depiction of birdsong, employing rapid note repetitions and ornamentations to evoke the sounds of various birds. The piece is part of the first suite in E minor, which includes movements like *Allemande*, *Courante*, and *Gigue*.

Both *La Poule* and *Le Rappel des Oiseaux* highlight Rameau's mastery in programmatic music, where the music imitates natural sounds and scenes, providing listeners with vivid auditory imagery.

Shirley Wong-Frentzel began her career at Community Music Center in 1972. She is CMC's harpsichord curator and an instructor in Middle Eastern scales, percussion, and Chinese Guangdong folk music on all instruments. She is the director of CMC student baroque and early music studies and coaches winds, strings and keyboard in this repertoire, and also coaches classical chamber music. She received her undergraduate degree from Mills College, where she studied with Darius Milhaud, Leon Kirchner, and Morton Subotnick. Excelling in her compositional studies, she was awarded the Elizabeth Mills Crothers Composition Prize at Mills College in 1960. She received her Master of Music degree in harpsichord with the highest honors from New England Conservatory in Boston. In 1975 she formed the Darius Milhaud Ensemble locally with Philharmonia Baroque soloists and is a former faculty member of Mills College, University of California, San Diego and San Francisco State University. At present she is a member of the board of directors of the Junior Bach Festival Association. In 2022 Shirley was awarded the Gertrude Field Community Impact Award from the Community Music Center.



Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860–1941)

Nocturne in B-flat Major, Op. 16, No. 4

Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860–1941) was a celebrated Polish pianist, composer, and statesman whose charismatic performances and deep patriotism earned him international fame. A virtuoso pianist with a flair for drama and poetry, he captivated audiences across Europe and the Americas. His compositions often drew on national themes and Polish folk traditions.

Beyond the concert stage, Paderewski played a vital role in Poland's return to independence after World War I, serving as Prime Minister and signing the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. He was also a generous philanthropist and cultural ambassador, supporting young artists and championing Polish identity abroad. His legacy endures as a symbol of artistic brilliance and national pride.

Nocturne in B-flat Major, Op. 16 No. 4, reflects the lyrical and refined side of his musical personality, channeling the spirit of Chopin while adding his own romantic voice. Published in 1890 as part of a set of six piano pieces, the Nocturne opens with a serene, song-like melody that floats over a gently rippling left-hand accompaniment. The harmonic language is lush and warm, with moments of chromaticism that lend the piece an air of quiet introspection. A contrasting middle section brings greater emotional intensity through harmonic tension and dramatic shaping, before the opening theme returns in a more embellished and tender form. Though less well known than the nocturnes of Chopin or Fauré, Paderewski's contribution to the genre is both elegant and heartfelt. This short work invites the listener into a world of intimacy and nuance, where expressive phrasing, rich sonorities, and poetic timing are key to its charm.

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Jardins sous la Pluie from *Estantpes*

Claude Debussy was a French composer and one of the most influential figures of early 20th-century music. Renowned for his innovative harmonies and tonal colors, he broke away from traditional forms to create a unique, impressionistic style. His piano works, such as *Clair de Lune* and *Préludes*, evoke vivid imagery and atmosphere, redefining the expressive potential of the instrument.

The final movement of Debussy's *Estantpes*, *Jardins sous la pluie* ("*Gardens in the Rain*"), vividly portrays a rainstorm in a French garden, likely inspired by the composer's visit to Orbec, Normandy, in 1894. The piece opens with rapid, cascading figures mimicking raindrops, transitioning to a central section that incorporates two French nursery songs: "Dodo, l'enfant do" and "Nous n'irons plus au bois," evoking the melancholy of a child confined indoors. The music concludes with a burst of sunlight, capturing the garden's renewal after the storm.

Matylda Rotkiewicz holds degrees from the Conservatoire National de Musique de Versailles, Conservatoire Niedermeyer de Paris, and The Boston Conservatory, where she was a recipient of a full scholarship award. Ms. Rotkiewicz received a Second Prize and the Special Prize for the best performance of contemporary music at the "Milesz Magin International Piano Competition" in Paris, Third Prize at the "Annual Music and Dance International Competition" in Toronto, Canada, and was a winner of "The Boston Conservatory Honors Competition." Her repertoire list covers a wide range of musical styles and tastes, with a special interest in the music of Chopin, Szymanowski, Debussy, and Magin, with whom she studied for ten years while living in France. Matylda has served on the faculty of numerous music schools in the Boston and Houston area, and has been on the CMC faculty since 2008. She combines her two equally rewarding passions: mentoring students and performing.



Karen Tanaka (b. 1961)

Third Movement from *Water Dance*

Internationally recognized composer Karen Tanaka was born in 1961 in Tokyo, Japan. After early studies in piano and composition in Tokyo, in the mid 1980s she studied abroad in Paris and Florence with the help of scholarships and prestigious international composer awards, including funds from the Nadia Boulanger foundation.

In 2012, Tanaka was mentored by Hollywood's leading composers as a fellow of the Sundance Institute composers lab for feature film. In addition to writing music for numerous animations, documentaries and short films, in 2016 she served as the orchestrator for the BBC TV series Planet Earth II. Many top orchestras have performed her works, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Orchestra of Tokyo, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and other top tier European ensembles. She has also received numerous commissions from institutions such as The Juilliard School, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Royal Academy of Music in London, the BBC, and Radio France, among others.

As an ardent lover of nature, her concern for the natural world has influenced many of her works, including *Water Dance* (2008), for solo piano in three movements. Tanaka includes program notes in the score: "The title, *Water Dance*, suggests cool, transparent water flowing freely. The work is a joyful dance....where the water occasionally whispers to us through its shimmering play with light. The music presents a rich, flickering and changing texture: just as the water flows constantly and never the same phase."

The third movement, in ABA form, is marked "Very lightly, like a harp." In the A section, ascending rippling arpeggios and gently descending right hand eighth-notes create watery waves that establish the 3/4 meter, while the left hand plays in syncopated, irregular patterns. The various iterations in abrupt key changes combine with unpredictable extended phrase lengths, further enhancing the luminous, shimmering and spontaneous sound. In the B section, the right hand stays on the interval of a repeated open fifth, alternating between groupings of three and two, while the left-hand joins at random and often dissonant downbeats for a plaintive, melancholic effect. The A section returns, gradually becoming thinner and sparser, until the music fades away, with the final instruction "al niente" - until nothing.

Currently, Tanaka resides in Los Angeles, where she teaches composition at the California Institute of the Arts.

Lauren Cony received her B.A. in Piano from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, and her M.M. from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Her principal teachers include Sharon Mann, Paul Hersh, Pola Baytelman, and Laurette Goldberg on harpsichord. She teaches at the San Francisco Conservatory and the Community Music Center, and maintains a busy private studio. As a soloist and chamber musician, Lauren has appeared in recitals at numerous Bay Area venues, including the SF Conservatory and SF JCC, the Noontime Series at Old St. Mary's and St. Patrick's Church in SF, Flower Piano in Golden Gate Park, the Throckmorton Theater in Mill Valley, Berkeley's Hillside Concerts, as well as on the CMC's Keyboard Marathons and Shenson Faculty Concert series. She and longtime four-hand partner Jennifer Peringer, founding members of the Magnolia Piano Duo, have delighted audiences for over two decades with their innovative programming. Lauren has also performed with distinguished artists such as soprano Lucine Amara and clarinetist Richard Stoltzman. She is trained in the Taubman piano technique.

laurencony.com



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), arranged by Mary Howe (1882–1964)

Recitative and Aria, *Sheep May Safely Graze* from Cantata BWV 208

In 1713, while employed as court organist at Weimar, Johann Sebastian Bach composed Cantata BWV 208 "*Was mir behagt ist nur die muntre Jagd*" (*The lively hunt is all my heart's desire*) for the birthday celebration of Duke Christian of Saxe-Weissenfels. The cantata is often known as the Hunting Cantata or the Birthday Cantata. The duke was an avid hunter, and the libretto, by Weimar court poet Salomon Franck, features Diana (goddess of the hunt), Endymion (Diana's lover), Pan (a pastoral deity associated with the pan flute, or panpipe), and Pales (a deity of flocks, herds, and pastures). They praise the hunt and the duke in a series of solos and ensembles.

Pales, in his turn, sings a recitative declaring the wish to "create joy and delight" to honor "our Saxon hero", as "the whole land resounds with 'vivat!' His aria, "*Schafe können sicher weiden*" (*Sheep May Safely Graze*), then follows, flowing with gentle elegance. The idyllic text describes the safety enjoyed by sheep when watched over by a good shepherd, and compares it to the peace and happiness of lands where rulers rule well.

Originally a soprano solo accompanied by two flutes and continuo, this serene and pastoral piece has been adapted for various instruments and is widely performed as a piano solo or duet. It exemplifies Bach's ability to convey deep emotions through music.

The arrangement played today was set by American composer and pianist Mary Howe, a graduate of the Peabody Institute and a student of Nadia Boulanger. She was a co-founder and the first director of the National Symphony Orchestra, and helped to found the Chamber Music Society of Washington (later known as Friends of Music of the Library of Congress) and the Society of American Women Composers.

<i>Schafe können sicher weiden,</i>	<i>Sheep may safely graze</i>
<i>Wo ein guter Hirte wacht.</i>	<i>where a good shepherd keeps watch.</i>
<i>Wo Regenten wohl regieren,</i>	<i>Where rulers rule well,</i>
<i>Kann man Ruh und Friede spüren</i>	<i>one can feel rest and peace</i>
<i>Und was Länder glücklich macht.</i>	<i>and what makes countries happy.</i>
<i>(da capo)</i>	<i>Sheep may safely graze...</i>

Grace Huenemann gained recognition as a young performer in local piano competitions in the Midwest and began sharing her love of music as a teacher during her undergraduate years at Carleton College. She has appeared in CMC's Faculty Concert Series (now the Shenson Series) and in recitals with flutist Mimi Carlson, violinist Mark Volkert, and her duo-piano partner, Jane Rogers. She has participated in the Community Music Center Keyboard Marathons from their inception in 2004 and has produced or co-produced many of them since 2009. At CMC from 1970 to 1988, she managed registration, programs, finances, and development, meanwhile earning her M.M. in Piano Performance at San Francisco State University, studying with William Corbett-Jones. She continued in arts administration as Executive Director of Community School of Music and Art (CSMA) in Mountain View. After further piano studies with Ansgar Janke of the Musikhochschule in Munich, she returned to teaching at CMC and at CSMA, New School for Piano, and the Convent and Stuart Hall Music Conservatory. Her approach incorporates principles from the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development and from the Performance Psychology work of Noa Kagayama. Her formative teachers were Carol Nott, Adelaide Banaszynski, Gudrun Hanson, David Porter, and Adolph Baller.



Antônio Carlos Jobim (1927–1994)

Wave

Antônio Carlos Jobim was a Brazilian composer, pianist, and guitarist, widely regarded as a founding figure of bossa nova. Blending samba rhythms with jazz harmonies, he created timeless classics like *The Girl from Ipanema* and *Corcovado*. Jobim's elegant, understated style brought Brazilian music to the world stage and influenced generations of artists across genres.

Wave is one of Antônio Carlos Jobim's most iconic compositions, released in 1967 as part of the album of the same name. It is a key piece of bossa nova, a Brazilian genre that blends samba with jazz elements. The instrumental version of *Wave* was recorded in New York with orchestral arrangements, reflecting the growing internationalization of Brazilian music. Later, Jobim recorded a version with English lyrics, which has been performed by many artists, including Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald.

Musically, *Wave* is characterized by its sophisticated harmony, with rich chord progressions and modal changes that create a sense of fluidity and relaxation. Its smooth, enveloping bossa nova rhythm and melodic main theme make it an emblematic piece in Jobim's repertoire and a Latin jazz standard.

Moisés Simons (1889–1945)

El Manicero

Moisés Simons was a Cuban composer, pianist, and conductor best known for his internationally acclaimed song *El Manicero* (*The Peanut Vendor*). A prominent figure in Havana's vibrant music scene, he composed operettas, zarzuelas, and popular songs that blended Afro-Cuban rhythms with classical and popular styles. His work helped bring Cuban music to global audiences in the early 20th century.

El Manicero, composed in 1928, is one of the most influential songs in Cuban music. It gained international popularity in the 1930s and is considered the first recording to spark the Latin music boom in the United States and Europe. Its success marked the beginning of the commercial rumba phenomenon, influencing popular music worldwide. The song is inspired by Cuban street vendors, specifically a peanut seller. Its musical structure blends elements of son-rumba, with a catchy rhythm and melody that evoke Cuban folklore. Its popularity led to multiple versions performed by artists such as Rita Montaner and Louis Armstrong, solidifying its place in Latin music history.

Tony Martinez belongs to that generation of Cuban musicians formed at the end of the 20th century, under the rigorous school of Cuban classical music. Although classically trained, he was soon inclined to learn the rhythms of jazz, to which he has dedicated the last decade, combining these styles with traditional Cuban rhythms.

He began his piano studies at the Ignacio Cervantes Conservatory in Havana (Cuba). At the end of his studies, he traveled to Spain as a pianist in the Cuban music company, Adolfo Guzmán, to present Cuban classical music in different European stages; Germany, Belgium, Spain, Holland and Italy. After that, he combined the stage with his teaching work, giving piano lessons at all levels in different conservatories and music schools in Madrid.

In 2010, he toured the east coast of Brazil: Recife, Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Santos, Busio, Ilha de Itaipava, with the quartet Tony Martinez, on the cruise ship *Gran Mistral*, of the company Ibero Crucero, based in Madrid, Spain. He was the coordinator of the music groups of the cruise ship. Since 2011, he has been immersed in a tour of concerts and recitals around the world: Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Denmark, Germany, France, Holland, England, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the USA. Since 2020 he has lived in San Francisco, where he has specialized as a pianist for piano bar, hotels and events, where he creates an exquisite atmosphere for an evening full of harmony through classical and traditional rhythms and melodies of jazz, blues, bossa, bolero, and more.



Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1881–1945)

April: Snowdrop from *The Seasons*, Op. 37a, No. 4

In January 1875, Tchaikovsky began a monthly assignment to provide a piano piece appropriate for each month of the year. The pieces were to appear in a St. Petersburg musical theatrical periodical called *Nuvellist*. The resulting twelve short pieces went through several editions after their initial publication and were to become the composer's best-known solo piano music. Magazine editor Nikolai Bernard selected subtitles for each piece and appropriate accompanying verse by a Russian poet.

For "Snowdrop, month of April" he chose a verse by Apollon Maykov:

*The blue, pure snowdrop-flower,
And near it the last snowdrops.
The last tears over past griefs,
And first dreams of another happiness.*

The music of the piece captures the essence of the month with a simple and beautiful melody with a touch of melancholy, reflecting the transition from winter to spring and the bittersweet emotions associated with it.

Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Honeysuckle from *From Grandmother's Garden*, Op. 97, No. 5

Amy Marcy Cheney Beach was the first successful American female composer of large-scale art music. She was one of the first American composers to succeed without the benefit of European training, and one of the most respected and acclaimed composers of her era. Amy Beach was also a concert pianist performing in the USA and Europe.

Everything in nature had Beach's passionate attention, be it a bird song, brilliant colors of autumn, or a summer garden. *Honeysuckle* is the last, fifth piece from the suite *From Grandmother's Garden*. It describes a twisting vine with flowers that exude an intensely sweet scent. Its musical analog is a fast waltz with cross rhythms, twisting melody lines, and abrupt modulations. The contrasting section is a bittersweet waltz melody accompanied by chromatic descending figures and colorful dissonances.

Lilia Zheltova was born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (former Soviet Union) where she attended special music school, then she received her B.A. and M.A. in musicology at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia. She taught at the Petrozavodsk Music College, and then worked as lead musicologist at the Tashkent Opera House and Philharmonic. Ms. Zheltova has also appeared as an Arts Commentator on TV and Radio Programs.

In 1990, Lilia immigrated to the United States. Currently, Ms. Zheltova teaches piano at the Community Music Center and at her private studio. She also appears as an accompanist for several Bay Area companies, including SFSU, Marin Ballet Company, and ACT. Ms. Zheltova works as an accompanist for eurhythmy and choir classes at the San Francisco Waldorf School. She has performed as a pianist in India, France, New Zealand, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Philippines, South Korea, Australia, Switzerland, Austria, and Italy with the San Francisco Youth Eurhythmy Troupe



Leoš Janáček (1854–1928)

Selections from *On an Overgrown Path*

The first five pieces were composed around 1900 for the harmonium (a small, foot-pumped reed organ that was a very fashionable instrument at the turn of the 20th century.) Janáček called these early pieces “Our Nights,” intending the book to be a musical memory of his time spent as a child in his native Hukvaldy. The overall title, *On an Overgrown Path*, references a Moravian wedding song in which the bride, who feels she has perhaps made a poor choice, laments that “the path to my mother’s has become overgrown with clover.”

Janáček wrote that the pieces “... contain distant reminiscences ... so dear to me that I do not think they will ever vanish.” In the final piece of Book I, The barn owl has not flown away, the screech-owl’s cry is ominously woven through the music. (In Czech folklore Sýček, the screech-owl, is a bird of ill omen—the owl’s relentless cry alternates with a chordal motif that Janáček calls “an intimate song of life.” The owl—fate—has the last word. As Janáček wrote: “All in all, there is suffering beyond words contained here.”

Hadley McCarroll, hailed for her “... lively and exhilarating ...” pianism (*SF Classical Voice*) is a well-known solo & collaborative pianist. She has performed with *Alonzo King’s LINES Ballet* (Paris, New York), *Festival del Sole* (Napa Valley), *Concerts in the Barn* (formerly Olympic Music Festival) – Quilcene, WA, and in a rare solo recital with *KRONOS Quartet* violist *Hank Dutt* (San Francisco). Hadley has given wide-ranging solo performances, including with the *Santa Rosa Symphony* (Carnival of the Animals, Beethoven Lives Upstairs), *Old First Concerts*, and *Noontime Concerts*. Hadley enjoys performing intriguing, passionate repertoire, frequently pairing masterworks of the past with new work of the present. Programs might include newly composed music, or works by Carter, Lachenmann and Ligeti alongside favorites by Beethoven, Debussy or Janáček. She especially enjoys performing contemporary music, and has premiered compositions by John Harbison and Robert Greenberg, among many others. As pianist with the contemporary music ensemble sfSound, Hadley has performed works by Crumb, Cage, Berio, Glass, Grisey, and Spahlinger, among dozens of others. She has performed in unique venues and environments, including *ZBelow*, *Project Arthaud*, *The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art*, at Oakland’s historic *Paramount Theater*, with the Oakland Symphony (San Francisco Silent Film Festival’s production of Charlie Chaplin’s *City Lights*) and at the *San Francisco Botanical Gardens* (*Flower Piano – a multi-day festival of outdoor piano repertoire*). For the past nearly 20 years she has performed as the pianist of the cello/piano duo Martha & Monica, appearing around California, Hadley received her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in piano performance from the University of Texas at Austin.



Enrique Granados (1867–1916)

La Maja y el Ruiseñor from *Goyescas*

The Maiden and the Nightingale (originally *La Maja y el Ruiseñor*) composed in 1911 is a beautiful piano piece composed by Enrique Granados, a prominent Spanish composer and pianist of the late Romantic era. This work is part of Granados’s larger collection titled *Goyescas*, which is inspired by the paintings of Francisco Goya and reflects the rich cultural and musical heritage of Spain. The piece captures a tender and evocative moment in which a young woman interacts with a nightingale, symbolizing love, beauty, and the fleeting nature of life.

Characterized by its lyrical melodies and intricate harmonies, it showcases Granados’s ability to blend Spanish folk elements with classical forms. The piece opens with a gentle, flowing melody that reflects the maiden’s innocence and longing, employing rich chromaticism and lush harmonies to create a sense of depth and emotion. The nightingale’s song is represented through delicate, fluttering motifs that weave in and out of the main theme, illustrating the interplay between the two characters. As the piece progresses, the music builds in intensity, mirroring the emotional journey of the maiden as she experiences the healing beauty of nature. The contrasting sections highlight the duality of joy and sorrow, culminating in a poignant conclusion that leaves a lasting impression.

Performers are encouraged to explore the nuances of the piece, emphasizing the lyrical quality of the melodies while maintaining a sense of fluidity and grace. The interplay between the maiden and the nightingale can be interpreted through dynamic contrasts and expressive phrasing, allowing the audience to feel the emotional depth of the music. *The Maiden and the Nightingale* stands as a testament to Granados's mastery of piano composition and his ability to evoke profound emotions through music. It remains a cherished work in the piano repertoire, celebrated for its beauty and the rich imagery it conjures in the listener's mind.

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

Abschied from Waldszenen, Op.82, No. 9

Abschied (Farewell) is the final piece in Robert Schumann's *Waldszenen (Forest Scenes)*, Op. 82, a suite of piano pieces inspired by the beauty and tranquility of nature. Composed in 1849, this collection reflects Schumann's deep appreciation for the natural world and his ability to convey complex emotions through music. *Abschied* serves as a poignant conclusion to the suite, encapsulating themes of nostalgia, longing, and the bittersweet nature of parting from a beloved place.

The piece opens with a serene and lyrical melody that evokes a sense of reflection and tranquility. Schumann's use of rich harmonies and flowing lines creates an atmosphere of warmth and intimacy, inviting the listener to immerse themselves in the beauty of the forest setting. The music unfolds gently, with a sense of ebb and flow that mirrors the natural world.

Throughout *Abschied*, Schumann employs expressive dynamics and subtle shifts in tempo, allowing performers to explore a wide range of emotions—from peaceful contemplation to a sense of yearning. The thematic material evolves gracefully, reflecting the bittersweet nature of farewells and the deep connection one feels to nature. The piece culminates in a poignant conclusion, leaving the listener with a lingering sense of nostalgia and reflection.

Performers are encouraged to approach *Abschied* with sensitivity and emotional depth, paying close attention to the nuances of phrasing and dynamics. The piece invites personal interpretation, allowing pianists to infuse their own experiences of farewell and connection to nature into their performance. Balancing lyrical beauty with emotional intensity is essential to conveying the essence of Schumann's vision.

Abschied stands as a testament to Schumann's ability to evoke profound emotions through music. It remains a cherished work in the piano repertoire, celebrated for its lyrical beauty and the depth of feeling it evokes. Through this piece, Schumann invites listeners to reflect on the nature of parting and the bittersweet memories associated with the beauty of the natural world, making it a timeless exploration of the human experience and our connection to nature.

Christian Bonvin is a dedicated piano instructor and accomplished pianist with a rich background in music education and performance. He holds a Master of Music degree from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA) and a Diplome de Piano de la Société Suisse de pédagogie musicale (SSPM). Fluent in both French and English, Christian has been sharing his passion for music through teaching since 1992.

Currently, he serves as a full-time faculty member at the San Francisco Community Music Center (CMC), a position he has held since 2008. His past roles also include full-time faculty at The Levine School of Music in Washington, DC, and part-time faculty at the Third Street Music School Settlement in New York.

Christian's performance experience includes solo recitals, faculty concerts, and collaborations with various ensembles. Notable performances include a solo recital at the Bechstein Piano Center in New York and a collaboration with The Washington Ballet at the Kennedy Center. His repertoire spans classical works by composers such as Bach, Chopin, Ravel and Scriabin.

Christian's musical journey has been shaped by influential teachers, including Mme Françoise Haenni, Dr. Betty Mallard, Pr. Clifton Matthews, and private instructors such as Madeline Bruser and Victor Recondo. His commitment to music education and performance continues to inspire students of all ages and levels.

Throughout his musical career, Christian has maintained a keen interest in the relationship between music and healing. As an active practitioner of the maker healing tradition, he explores how music can serve as a therapeutic tool for emotional and physical well-being. In the context of this year's marathon theme—music inspired by nature—it is clear that music has always provided a pathway back to nature, even when that connection has felt distant. Nature offers balance when we seek it, and through music, we can rekindle the dream of being in harmony with the natural world.



Astor Piazzolla (1921–1992)

Saint Louis en L'Ile

Astor Piazzolla was an Argentine composer and virtuoso bandoneon player who revolutionized traditional tango music by infusing it with elements of jazz and classical music, creating a style known as *nuevo tango*. He also started introducing new instruments such as the saxophone and electric guitar, and innovative forms of harmonic and melodic structure into the traditional tango ensemble.

Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, Piazzolla began playing the bandoneon at a young age and later studied composition under the guidance of Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Throughout his career, he led various ensembles, including his renowned Quinteto Tango Nuevo, and composed numerous works that blended complex harmonies and rhythms, expanding the expressive range of tango music.

Saint Louis en L'Ile is a composition crafted for piano. The piece is part of his collection titled *Parisien Suite*, which reflects his experiences and impressions during his time in Paris. The composition's title refers to the Île Saint-Louis, one of the two natural islands on the Seine in Paris, renowned for its historic architecture and vibrant atmosphere. Through this piece, Piazzolla captures the essence of the island's charm, intertwining the traditional rhythms of tango with the sophisticated ambiance of Parisian streets.

Betty Anne Wong is a piano teacher, composer, Chinese music instructor and director of Phoenix Spring Ensemble. Ms. Wong studied with pianist Lev Shorr (colleague of Sergei Prokofiev) and Alexander Liebermann. She holds a BA degree from Mills College and Master of Arts degree in composition with Pauline Oliveros. Betty has worked at the Community Music Center since 1972, where she and Shirley Wong-Frentzel created Chinese Music and chamber music classes. Betty served on the CMC Board of Directors as faculty representative from 1982–1984. She taught at Mills College and San Francisco State University and served on the California Arts Council Arts Panel from 1975–1981. She is also founder of the Flowing Stream and Phoenix Spring Ensembles, whose CD *In Xinjiang Time* was nominated for best World Music CD in 2004. Her original music for ACT received the Hollywood Dramalogue Critics Award in 1988 for ACT. She also composed the soundtrack for *Mitsuye and Nellie* for Irving Saraf and Allie Light (Oscar winning documentary producers).



Hilary Tann (1947–2023)

Water's Edge

Welsh composer Hilary Tann earned her undergraduate degree in music composition from the University of Wales, Cardiff, followed by a Masters and Ph.D from Princeton University. She eventually settled in the foothills of the Adirondack mountains in upstate New York in Schenectady, where from 1980 to 2019, she taught composition and music theory as the John Howard Payne Music Professor Emerita at Union College. Her works are greatly influenced by the natural world, from her native Welsh landscapes to the forests and mountains of upstate New York. A prolific, internationally recognized composer, she composed for solo instruments and ensembles both large and small. Her works have been performed by orchestras such as the European Women's ensemble, the Thai Philharmonic, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, to name a few.

As a published Haiku poet, Tann nurtured a deep interest in the music and culture of Japan. For over a decade, she studied the shakuhachi flute, a longitudinal flute made of bamboo. The first and third movements of *Water's Edge* evoke the sound of the shakuhachi, as repeated notes in the high register of the piano create a haunting, flute-like atmospheric sound. In the beginning of the first movement, Tann enhances this shimmering effect by instructing the secondo performer to silently depress a series of notes, creating echoing, ringing overtones that evoke the stillness and gradual luminescence of dawn.

Tann provides notes about *Water's Edge* in the score:

The work is in three interlinked movements... The "edge" of the title refers to the upper surface of the water as it reflects or refracts light. In the first movement the light is held at the surface (Dawn Light), while in the 2nd movement (From the Riverbed) the light dances through the upper surface of the water to the river bed below. During the final movement (Toward Dusk), which contains echoes of the previous two, the light fades from view.

See the biographies for Lauren Cony above and Jennifer Peringer below



Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Sonatina in E Major, Op. 67, No. 2

I can remember the first time I heard a Sibelius symphony on the radio. The expansive spirit of the music swept me up as if I had been transported into a vast natural landscape. The three *Sonatinas, Op. 67* that Sibelius composed in 1912 are 'matchbox' symphonies. Within their miniature size and compact form they have the feel of a big sky, open space, and free spirit!

Bruce Loeb is a lifelong musician, a graduate of the UC Berkeley Music Department who has studied as well at the Royal Dutch Conservatory and at the Rubin Academy in Jerusalem. Bruce teaches piano and voice. He is an accomplished accompanist for singers, chamber music and silent movies. His work in music is enriched by studies in modern dance, Dayan Qigong and movement education. He is a backpacker and member of Desert Survivors.



Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Danse des Fleurs from Trois Morceaux caractéristiques, Op. 28, No. 3

Born in 1867 and educated in New England, the musical prodigy Amy Marcy Cheney Beach was not only a virtuoso pianist, but a gifted composer from an early age. While she was not trained in any European conservatory, she was the first American composer whose music was performed in concerts in Europe. Her musical style is characterized by rich harmonies typical of late 19th century Europe.

Danse des Fleurs is the third of *Three Pieces for Solo Piano, Op. 28* published 1894. It is a fairy-like character piece that is essentially a stylized waltz. The dance rhythm ♪♪♪ in various parts of the texture is present throughout, even when the tone of the theme changes. Its lightness paints a picture of flowers dancing without a care to its surrounding, prompting the listener to feel the idyllic, carefree world of something so simple that bring so many joy.

Cécile Chaminade (1857–1944)

Automne

Born in 1857 to musical parents, Cécile Chaminade showed usual talent early in life. Her mother was her first piano teacher, but soon after, she was playing for prominent French musicians of the time. Composers such as Georges Bizet and Felix Le Couppey were extremely impressed by her talent, both as a pianist and a composer. Her music is characterized by lyricism as well as exuberance, typical of the salon pieces during late 19th century France.

Automne was the second of *Six Etudes de Concert, Op. 35*, dated around 1885. It is a large-scale song without words that begins and ends with a beautiful melody in the middle register of the piano that suggests the beauty as well as the changing color of the season. The stormy and dramatic middle section requires virtuosity from the pianist, painting a picture of perhaps an impending winter storm in the not-too-distant future. The peaceful opening section returns to remind the listener to enjoy the lovely autumn colors.

Pianist **Esther Chan** has performed in several San Francisco Bay Area series and venues including Noontime Concerts, First Congregational Church, Star Classics, and Sequoia Concerts. She has been a guest performer at the Community Music Center Keyboard Marathons since their inception. Ms. Chan is certified by the Music Teachers National Association as well as the Royal Conservatory of Music and is an active member of the Music Teachers Association of California as well as the Berkeley Piano Club. She is a dedicated teacher who is also an active adjudicator and has presented workshops on “Contemporary Piano Teaching Repertoire” and “Preparing Students for Certificate of Merit.” In recent years, she taught masterclasses sponsored by the MTAC and CAPMT. Her article “Discovering the Musical Image” appeared in the Keyboard Companion Magazine.



Gabriela Lena Frank (b.1972)

Adagio Illariy from Sonata Andina

Gabriela Lena Frank was born in Berkeley, California in 1972, to a mother of mixed Peruvian/Chinese ancestry and a father of Lithuanian/Jewish descent, Gabriela explores her multicultural heritage through her compositions. Her style is inspired by the works of Bela Bartók and Alberto Ginastera, as well as by her extensive travels throughout South America. Winner of a Latin Grammy and nominated for Grammys as both composer and pianist, Gabriela also holds a Guggenheim Fellowship and a USA Artist Fellowship, and her works are commissioned and performed by leading orchestras around the world.

Sonata Andina was written in 2000, and its four movements mix elements from both contemporary classical and traditional Andean musical traditions. The 2nd movement *Adagio Illariy* references an Andean flute called a ‘quena’, and the title refers to “the dawn light which outlines the edge of the planet as it curves out of sight just before the sun appears” (*from the composer’s program notes*).

Jennifer Peringer is a pianist who is passionate about playing chamber music from around the world, with specialties in Latin American repertoire and newly composed music. She is a founding member of both the Bernal Hill Players and the Magnolia piano duo. Jennifer earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of London and a Master of Music degree from San Francisco State University. She has taught piano and various other classes at the Community Music Center since the year 2000, and regularly performs in their Shenson Faculty Concert Series and annual Keyboard Marathon.



Karen Tanaka (b. 1961)

Water of Life, Light, and Our Planet Earth from *Our Planet Earth*

Karen Tanaka was born in Tokyo, where she received her early training in composition and piano. Following advanced studies in Paris (Tristan Murail at IRCAM) and Florence (Luciano Berio), she came to the United States to compose and teach. She is currently Professor of Composition and Experimental Sound Practice at California Institute of the Arts (Los Angeles). Tanaka's special interest in nature is reflected in many of her compositions, which have the intention of passing on her concern for endangered animals and stewardship of the natural world. Her piano collections include *Children of Light* (1998–1999), *Love in the Wind* (2017), *Our Planet Earth* (2010–11), *The Adventure of Anya* (2021–23) and *The Zoo in the Sky* (1994–95).

Jacqueline Chew holds degrees from SUNY – Binghamton and San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Her piano teachers include Leonard Shure, Walter Ponce and Paul Hersh. In Europe she coached with Yvonne Loriod-Messiaen and Roger Muraro on Olivier Messiaen's piano cycle, *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant – Jesus*.

For ten years, Jacqueline performed, recorded and toured with The Women's Philharmonic. Conducted by JoAnn Falletta, this unique orchestra based in San Francisco from 1981 to 2004, brought to life neglected works of women composers from the past and commissioned new works from contemporary women.

Among her recordings are *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jesus* (Olivier Messiaen) and *Sweet Irrational Worship: The Niles-Merton Songs* (poetry of Thomas Merton set to music by John Jacob Niles).

Solo and collaborative performances have taken her throughout North America and to Italy, Brazil and Poland. Future performances will be at New Camaldoli Hermitage (Big Sur, CA) and Holy Spirit Retreat Center (Los Angeles).

In 2025 Jacqueline Chew taught a piano performance class, "Exploring the Music of Karen Tanaka," at SF Conservatory of Music Continuing Education. She also teaches at SF Community Music Center and University of California, Berkeley.



Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

L'Isle Joyeuse

L'Isle Joyeuse was composed in 1904 and premiered by Ricardo Vines in 1905. The music reflects what the title, *Isle of Joy*, suggests: joy, anticipation and excitement. Debussy took inspiration for this piece from the 1717 Antoine Watteau painting entitled *L'embarquement pour Cythère*. This masterpiece depicts a group's journey to the island of Cythera, the mythical birthplace of Aphrodite.

Debussy completed *L'Isle Joyeuse*, *La Mer*, and *Masques* while staying on the island of Jersey, where he and Emma Bardac escaped for the summer of 1904. The music suggests an enchanted landscape, both real and imaginary. *L'Isle Joyeuse* opens up with trill into a whole-tone piano cadenza, and is followed by a Spanish-inspired rhythmic theme in the left hand that suggests the procession of the characters in the painting. Lightly dancing right-hand passages float above until our dreamy second theme carries us into brilliant passages in varied registers, harmonies and tone colors. We finally arrive at the grand A Major finale with the second theme in rich, ecstatic harmony. The opening cadenza motif returns, then the opening theme, turned downwards, falls dramatically to the lowest note of the piano.

Pianist **Allison Lovejoy** resides in the San Francisco Bay Area, where she is active as soloist, chamber musician, composer and teaching artist. Her repertoire spans from the Classical to Contemporary composers, and she is known for her versatility, interpretative powers and tonal range. Miss Lovejoy has studied with many great pianists, including Gyorgy Sandor, Robert Helps, Daniell Revenaugh, Mack McCray and Christopher Elton. She received her Masters Degree from the SF Conservatory of Music, and completed her undergraduate work at the University of the Pacific and the Royal Academy of Music in London.

She was recipient of the San Jose Young Artist Award and the Shenson Concert Series Award, and has performed as soloist with the International Festival of Music Orchestra in Nicaragua, the SF Concerto Orchestra and the San Francisco Sinfionietta.

Lovejoy's debut recording, *Allison Lovejoy, Piano* features music of Chopin, Ravel, Debussy and Rachmaninov. The 2006 recording of *Nocturnes for Piano* explores a range of works by traditional composers of this genre from the 1800s–1950s. *New Nocturnes* (2014) includes contemporary compositions by George Rubissow and San Francisco Bay Area composers Kirke Mechem, Chus Alonso, Colin Farish, Rob Reich, and Marcus Shelby.

Miss Lovejoy is also known as a composer of cabaret and art song. Her recording *Cabaret Nouveau* was released in 2010, and features songs from the cabaret rock opera *The Seven Deadly Pleasures*, which has been performed at American Conservatory Theater's Costume Shop and the San Francisco International Art Festival. She was awarded 1st place in the SF Cabaret Competition in 2011. Her recordings can be heard in the films *12 Pianos* and *It'll be better tomorrow*. She has toured in the United States, Japan, Europe, Central America, Canada and Mexico, and was also a member of the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. Miss Lovejoy also performs as orchestral pianist with the Santa Rosa and Marin Symphonies.

She currently teaches at the Academy of Art University, Foothill College, Community Music Center, and at her private teaching studio. Her recordings can be found on iTunes, CDBaby and Amazon and she has been a guest artist on recordings of Ringo Starr, Stu Hamm and others. allisonlovejoy.com



COMMUNITY MUSIC CENTER'S JULIET MCCOMAS KEYBOARD MARATHON

In 2004, Juliet McComas created the first Keyboard Marathon in collaboration with the Community Music Center piano faculty. Her vision was to bring the faculty together each year and spotlight a different aspect of the rich keyboard repertoire for our students and the community. Juliet produced the first five Keyboard Marathons and remained the guiding spirit of the Marathon until the time of her death. Not only has the Keyboard Marathon become a cherished tradition, but it has served as a model for other departments to present their own collaborative projects.

Juliet McComas (1949–2020) was an elegant pianist, with a superb ability to project the style of any period in the classical repertoire. She had learned from some of the best, studying with Dr. Konrad Wolff at the Peabody Conservatory of Music, and counting Leon Fleischer, Karl Ulrich Schnable, Lilian Kallir, and Richard Goode as mentors. She made her professional debut performing Mozart with the Baltimore Symphony at the age of 13 and played with them again 10 years later. Her commitment to high standards, energized by her passion for music, carried an implicit expectation that others would do their best. Motivated students were drawn to her and flourished under her tutelage, not only at CMC, but also at the Schools of the Sacred Heart and the Nueva School in Hillsborough, as well as in her private studio.

We are proud to honor Juliet McComas's memory and carry on her vision.

- 2004 | Bach Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I
- 2005 | Bach Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II
- 2006 | Mendelssohn Songs without Words, Book I
- 2007 | Mendelssohn Songs without Words, Book II
- 2008 | Preludes
- 2009 | Dances
- 2010 | Chopin and Schumann
- 2011 | The Four B's: Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Bartók
- 2012 | French Masters
- 2013 | Eastern European Masters
- 2014 | Improvisations
- 2015 | Theme and Variations
- 2016 | Water Music
- 2017 | Night Music
- 2018 | Joy and Sorrow
- 2019 | Revolution! Music in Times of Turmoil, Trouble, and Triumph
- 2021 | Bold Spirits: Celebrating Women Composers
- 2022 | Music of the Americas
- 2023 | Masterpieces from Folk Traditions
- 2024 | Bouncing off Bach
- 2025 | Natural Connections



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About Community Music Center: Community Music Center (CMC), founded in 1921, is a nonprofit music school and performance space with branches in the Mission and Richmond Districts. Community Music Center makes high-quality music accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, regardless of financial means. CMC offers the largest tuition assistance program of its kind in the country, serving more than 3,400 students with music lessons, classes and other programs and awarded nearly \$3 million in tuition assistance. The school offers in-person and online music lessons and classes in jazz, blues, Latin, pop, folk, rock, and classical. CMC also presents free and low-cost events, workshops, and master classes for its students and for the public. Learn more at sfcmc.org.

