



COMMUNITY MUSIC CENTER
MUSIC FOR EVERYONE SINCE 1921

Juliet McComas Keyboard Marathon

Gather Together

Music of Connection and Collaboration



Sunday, April 26 , 2026

Community Music Center presents
The 22nd Annual Juliet McComas Keyboard Marathon

Gather Together:
Music of Connection and Collaboration

Sunday, April 26, 2026 at 3:00pm
CMC E. A. Michelson Concert Hall
544 Capp Street, San Francisco

PROGRAM

IN REMEMBRANCE AND REFLECTION

Music offered in tribute and quiet reflection

Prelude No. 6

Shirley Wong-Frentzel

in loving tribute to Betty Wong

Federico Mompou

Nocturne in C Minor, Op. 48, No. 1

Christian Bonvin

Frédéric Chopin

8 Memories in Watercolor

I. Missing Moon

III. Herdboy's Song

VII. Red Wilderness

VI. Floating Clouds

Hadley McCarroll

Tan Dun

Au gré des ondes (Along the Waves)

V. Hommage à Bach

Lilia Zheltova

Henri Dutilleux

DANCES AND DREAMSCAPES

Music rooted in dance and rhythm, and poetic collaboration

Waltz in C-sharp Minor, Op. 64, No. 2

Matylda Rotkiewicz

Frédéric Chopin

Nica's Dream

Tony Martinez

Horace Silver

Suite Bergamasque
III. Clair de lune
Claude Debussy, arr. Greg Anderson
Christian Bonvin, *primo*; Matylda Rotkiewicz, *secondo*; Lilia Zheltova, *terzo*

Sonata for Piano Four Hands
I. Prélude
II. Rustique
III. Final
Francis Poulenc
Hadley McCarroll, *primo* and Esther Chan, *secondo*

FAREWELL, ABSENCE, AND REUNION
Reflection on parting, journeys apart, and return

Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux")
I. Das Lebewohl
Ludwig van Beethoven
Lauren Cony

Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux")
II. Abwesenheit
III. Das Wiedersehen
Ludwig van Beethoven
Esther Chan

INTERMISSION

NIGHT, DREAMS, AND IMAGINATION
Shared stillness, fairy tales, and poetic sound worlds

Petite Suite
I. En bateau
IV. Ballet
Claude Debussy
Lilia Zheltova, *primo* and Grace Huenemann, *secondo*

Night, Op. 68 for Piano Four Hands
Fazil Say
Jennifer Peringer, *primo* and Lauren Cony, *secondo*

Ma Mère l'oye
I. Pavane de la belle au bois dormant
III. Laideronnette, impératrice des pagodes
V. Le Jardin féerique
Maurice Ravel
Allison Lovejoy, *primo* and Christian Bonvin, *secondo*

ECHOES ACROSS TIME

Voices meeting across generations, traditions, and shared artistry

That Old Lucky Sun

Beasley Smith, arr. Little & Walker

This Old Blues in F Major

Ken Little and Erik Ian Walker

Kenneth Little, *organ* and Erik Ian Walker, *piano*

KARMA

Eduardo Corzo

Danzón Vedado

Eduardo Corzo

Nereidas

Amador Pérez Torres (“Dimas”)
arr. Jennifer Peringer

Jennifer Peringer and Marco Diaz

The Lark

Mikhail Glinka, arr. Mily Balakirev

Allison Lovejoy

Variations on a Theme by Paganini

Witold Lutosławski

Leo Guan and Christopher Basso

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW



PROGRAM NOTES & PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

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

Federico Mompou (1893–1987)

Prelude No. 6

Today’s program includes the Sixth Prelude for piano by Federico Mompou, written for the left hand alone. Mompou, a Catalan composer known for his deeply introspective and understated style, often explored a musical language of extreme simplicity and emotional restraint. His works are frequently described as “minimal” in the most refined sense—stripped of excess, yet rich in atmosphere and nuance.

Prelude No. 6 exemplifies this aesthetic in its purest form. In this brief but profound piece, every note carries weight and intention, achieving what Mompou himself described as “that perfect balance where every note is essential and nothing can be added or taken away.” The music unfolds with quiet intimacy, inviting the listener into a reflective, almost meditative sound world.

Shirley Wong dedicates this Prelude to Betty Wong, her sister, who lost the use of her left hand following a stroke.

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.



Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

Nocturne in C Minor, Op. 48, No. 1

Composed in 1841, the *Nocturne in C Minor, Op. 48, No. 1* stands among Frédéric Chopin's most dramatic and emotionally expansive works. While Chopin's nocturnes are often associated with lyrical intimacy and delicate ornamentation, this piece ventures into a more powerful and almost orchestral expressive world.

The nocturne opens with a solemn, declamatory theme in C minor, marked by broad, chordal writing that evokes a sense of quiet grandeur and introspection. This opening unfolds like a deeply personal soliloquy, rich in harmonic tension and expressive rubato. As the music progresses, Chopin intensifies the emotional landscape through increasingly elaborate ornamentation and dynamic contrast.

A striking middle section shifts into C Major, introducing a chorale-like passage that suggests a moment of transcendence or spiritual reflection. The texture thickens, building to a passionate climax with dramatic, almost operatic intensity. This section reveals Chopin's gift for transforming a simple melodic idea into something monumental and deeply affecting.

The return of the opening material is no mere repetition; it is transformed by what has come before. The music grows more agitated and embellished, ultimately leading to a powerful and turbulent conclusion. The piece closes not in quiet resignation, but with a sense of tragic inevitability.

In this nocturne, Chopin expands the genre beyond its traditional boundaries, blending lyricism with grandeur and introspection with dramatic force. It remains one of his most compelling explorations of the piano's expressive potential.

For **Christian Bonvin**, the piano has always been less about display and more about storytelling. Drawn early to the expressive depth of composers like Frédéric Chopin and Claude Debussy, he developed a musical voice centered on color, nuance, and emotional honesty.

Raised and educated in Switzerland, Bonvin's path as a pianist has been shaped by a curiosity for the inner life of music—the subtle shifts of harmony, the quiet tension between phrases, and the sense of narrative that unfolds over time. His playing invites listeners into an intimate space, where each piece becomes a kind of conversation rather than a declaration.

Whether on stage or in the studio, Bonvin approaches the repertoire with a reflective sensibility, seeking not only to interpret the score, but to uncover its deeper resonance. This same spirit informs his work as a teacher, where he encourages young musicians to listen closely, think imaginatively, and develop their own artistic voice. For Bonvin, music is ultimately an act of connection—between composer and performer, performer and audience, and sound and silence.



Tan Dun (b. 1957)

Selections from 8 *Memories in Watercolor*

If *Eight Memories in Watercolor* happened to be the title of works in a gallery, what might we derive from it? “Memories” - therefore recollections or evocations, not works from life. And “Watercolors” - therefore rapid executions, like zen calligraphy, capturing essences with the minimum of gesture.

Tan Dun has written (translated by Alice Lu and Han Choi):

"I met Lang Lang two years ago at a New Year's celebration. The clock had just struck midnight and friends asked Lang Lang to play something to ring in the New Year. He agreed, and proceeded to play a small piece. We were all deeply captivated by his playing. I was moved beyond words, although those around me didn't understand why. I was so touched that I couldn't believe my ears. The piece Lang Lang had just performed was called 'Floating Clouds,' which was a piece I had composed over 20 years ago (four years before Lang Lang was born).

This was the first composition I had written for the piano. Lang Lang's performance was so pure, it made me feel as if the piece had been written with him in mind. Never mind that he was yet to be born at that time. His music evoked the voices of my heart and the scents of the soil in my hometown. It was most gratifying to be reminded of where I had been and how far I had come by a musician's performance.

At the time Tan Dun wrote this piece (as a student at the Central Music Conservatory in 1978) the Cultural Revolution had just ended, and China had just begun to open up. At the same time that he was learning Western classical and modern music, he was also very homesick, missing the folk songs of his youth – as a result, this composition became his journal of homesickness. The work contains both original compositions (Nos. 1, 5, and 7), and collages based on his favorite Hunan songs (No. 3)."

—Grant Hiroshima/Hadley McCarroll

Pianist **Hadley McCarroll** is a well-known Bay Area-based collaborative/solo pianist and master teacher. She has performed in the US and internationally with Symphony of the Redwoods, LINES Ballet, Oakland Ballet, the Santa Rosa Symphony, Composer's Inc, and sfSound. She has appeared at Flower Piano, Concerts in the Barn, SF Noontime Concerts, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Festival del Sole, and has worked on the staff of the Royal Danish Opera, San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera, and Utah Festival Opera. Hadley's repertoire ranges from Cage, Lachenmann, Carter and Ligeti to Beethoven, Schumann and Janáček. Hadley received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in piano performance from the University of Texas at Austin.



Henri Dutilleux (1916–2013)

Hommage à Bach from *Au gré des ondes* (*At the Mercy of the Waves*)

Henri Dutilleux was a prominent French composer of the late 20th century. His compositional style lays somewhere between the impressionism of Debussy and Ravel and modernism of Boulez and Messiaen, but in an idiosyncratic, individual manner. Among his best-known works are his 2 symphonies, cello and violin concertos, piano sonata, string quartet, some chamber and vocal music. Many pieces were commissioned from Dutilleux by such great musicians as G. Szell, M. Rostravovich, I. Stern, R. Fleming, the Julliard String Quartet, and others.

Hommage à Bach is a part of his piano suite *Au gré des ondes* composed in 1946. This piece is different from the other five movements of the suite. It's written in neo-Baroque style and represents appreciated view of 20th century composer on works of the greatest master.

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 New York, 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.



Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

Waltz in C-sharp Minor, Op. 64, No. 2

Frédéric Chopin's *Waltz in C-sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2* is one of his most intimate and reflective piano miniatures. Composed in 1847 and published shortly before his death, it belongs to a set of three waltzes that reveal Chopin at his most refined, combining lyrical elegance with emotional depth.

Born in 1810 in Żelazowa Wola, Frédéric Chopin spent much of his life in Paris, where he became one of the defining figures of the Romantic era. Though he lived in exile from his native Poland, his music remained deeply rooted in Polish musical traditions.

While titled a waltz, this piece goes beyond the graceful ballroom dance associated with Viennese tradition. Chopin transforms the waltz into a more introspective, poetic form, often tinged with nostalgia and subtle melancholy. In particular, the rhythmic sway and expressive phrasing can be heard as a distant echo of Polish dance idioms, especially the stylized folk rhythms that influenced his musical language. Rather than serving as functional dance music, it becomes a refined, almost storytelling reflection of dance, filtered through memory, longing, and the composer's deep connection to his homeland.

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 "Milosz 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 also produced numerous Keyboard Marathons.

A dedicated and nurturing teacher, she has years of experience working with students of all ages and levels. She believes in building a strong technical and musical foundation while fostering creativity, curiosity, and a lifelong love of music. Matylda combines her two equally rewarding passions: mentoring students and performing.



Horace Silver (1928–2014)

Nica's Dream

Horace Silver was a pioneering figure in the development of hard bop, a style that blended bebop with elements of blues, gospel, and rhythm and blues. As a co-founder of the Jazz Messengers, Silver helped shape a sound that was both sophisticated and deeply rooted in groove and melody. His compositions are known for their clarity, memorable themes, and infectious rhythmic drive.

Nica's Dream, one of Silver's most celebrated works, was written in honor of Pannonica de Koenigswarter, the influential jazz patron who supported artists such as Thelonious Monk and Charlie Parker. A devoted advocate for the jazz community, she provided both financial and personal support to many musicians during a crucial period in the 1950s.

The piece itself is notable for its distinctive structure, shifting between a Latin-inspired minor-key section and a swinging jazz feel. This contrast creates a sense of both elegance and rhythmic vitality, reflecting the vibrant and cosmopolitan atmosphere that Pannonica helped cultivate. *Nica's Dream* remains a jazz standard, admired for its lyrical beauty, harmonic sophistication, and enduring sense of freedom.

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, Ila Bela, 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.



Claude Debussy (1862–1918), arranged for piano six-hands by Greg Anderson (b. 1981)

Clair de Lune from *Suite Bergamasque*

Claude Debussy was a French composer and one of the most influential figures in Western music at the turn of the 20th century. Often associated with Impressionism, his music is characterized by innovative harmonies, fluid forms, and a focus on color and atmosphere. *Clair de lune*, the best-known movement from *Suite Bergamasque*, is inspired by the poetry of Paul Verlaine and its evocative images of moonlight, longing, and quiet festivity. In its original form, the piece unfolds with remarkable transparency, its flowing lines and delicate harmonies creating an atmosphere of stillness and luminous beauty. Arranging such an intimate work for six hands at one piano presents a unique challenge. In his imaginative adaptation, Greg Anderson transforms Debussy's fragile textures into a richer, more expansive sound world. Drawing on the imagery of Verlaine's poem, he re-envisioned the piece as a kind of ballet of six hands, where the interplay of performers allows the music to bloom across the full range of the instrument. While preserving the poetic spirit of the original, the arrangement enhances its resonance and spatial depth, offering a fresh perspective on one of the most beloved works in the piano repertoire. It has also been a joy for Christian, Matylda, and Lilia to collaborate and learn this beautiful and captivating six-hand arrangement together.

See biographies for Christian Bonvin, Matylda Rotkiewicz, and Lilia Zheltova above.



Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)

Prélude, Rustique, and Final from *Sonata for Piano Four Hands*

After the onset of World War I and the death of his musical mother and guide, Poulenc found a mentor in the Catalan pianist Ricardo Viñes, who had premiered works by Debussy, Ravel, de Falla, and Satie, personally introducing them to Poulenc. Around the same time Stravinsky's scores for the ballets *The Firebird* and *The Rite of Spring* were greatly influencing Poulenc. The *Sonata for Four Hands* was one of Poulenc's first pieces to be published—largely due to Stravinsky. The unrelenting opening firmly thanks the modernism of Stravinsky, Bartók, and Prokofiev, while the gentle melodies of the middle movement are a prelude to Poulenc's astonishing later vocal works, so beloved in the repertoire.

See biographies for Hadley McCarroll above, and Esther Chan below.



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux")

Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas stand as a monumental achievement in the realm of the classical piano repertoire. Spanning 27 years from 1795–1822, they showcase the evolution of his style from the late classical to the early romantic era, with his originality and genius on full display. He dedicated the Sonata "Les Adieux," written in 1809–10, to his friend and patron the Archduke Rudolph, who temporarily fled Vienna during Napoleon's invasion in 1809. The only Beethoven sonata with a programmatic (extramusical story) association, each movement has a subtitle: *Lebewohl (farewell)*, *Abwesenheit (absence)*, and *Weidersehen (return)*.

In the Adagio introduction, Beethoven writes the words "Le-be-wohl" (farewell) over the opening notes. This three-note descending line, supported by muted, horn-like open intervals, evokes feelings of sadness and ambiguity. The music searches for resolution while moving through unexpected and distant harmonies, wavering between denial and acceptance, sadness and hope. The sudden Allegro brings us to the home key of E-flat Major with an ebullient, joyous first theme.

The *Lebewohl* opening becomes a motif, appearing in the espressivo second theme, the ominous development, and in the long, beautiful and gentle coda (ending). Near the end of the coda, we hear detached, lower register hoofbeats recede in the distance, perhaps representing the final farewell. I find this movement exhilarating and rewarding to play, as 216 years later, Beethoven perfectly captures the sadness of a farewell during uncertain times as he vacillates between denial and acceptance—and yet the overall effect is one of a tenacious, steadfast hope.

The slow movement of the sonata depicts a longing during the absence of the Archduke Rudolph. The *Lebewohl* motif has taken on a fragmented and hesitant character, rather than the assured nature of a horn call. While the key signature suggests c minor, there is nothing in the harmonic syntax throughout that establishes the key. Instead, along with the dotted 16th/32nd note rhythms and ambiguous harmonies, Beethoven paints a picture of loss and longing for his friend and patron. The third movement enters without a break, creating an outburst of joy in the introduction. The principal theme of this movement is simple sounding, first stated in the treble, then two more times in the bass. This movement is full of the joy of two friends seeing each other again after an uncertain time. The virtuosity required to play this is typical of Beethoven's music of this period.

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 in SF, 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.

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.



Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

En Bateau and Ballet from *Petite Suite*

Although he hated the term "Impressionism," Claude Debussy is often regarded as the first Impressionist composer, a label that reflects his ability to paint detailed and atmospheric sound pictures of the natural world. This gift is evident in the two movements from *Petite Suite* on today's program. The first movement, *En Bateau (In a Boat): Andantino*, may be imagined to evoke a gently rocking sea which is soon roiled by playful squalls, calling for a steady hand on the tiller, before gradually calming and resuming the lilting first theme. *Ballet: Allegro giusto* begins with a faster theme that suggests deft footwork, gives way to a supple waltz, returns to the lively steps of the first section, and transforms the waltz theme into a dramatic finish.

Petite Suite was written from 1886 to 1889 and was first performed by Debussy and pianist-publisher Jacques Durand in 1889. Its simplicity, compared to the more modernistic works that Debussy was writing at the time, suggests that it may have been written due to a request (possibly from Durand) for a piece accessible to skilled amateurs. This appealingly melodic Suite was orchestrated in 1907 by Debussy's colleague, Henri Büsser, and has become well known through transcriptions for clarinet, for harp, for brass band and for a chamber wind ensemble.

Grace Huenemann has performed in each of the Juliet McComas Keyboard Marathons, from their inception in 2004, and has produced or co-produced many of them. 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 gained recognition during her teens in piano competitions in Milwaukee and Minneapolis, guided by formative teachers Carol Nott, Adelaide Banaszynski, and Gudrun Hanson. She first began sharing her love of music with students while earning her B.A. at Carleton College, where she studied piano with David Porter.

Grace joined CMC's administrative team in 1970 while studying with Adolph Baller at the San Francisco Conservatory and then pursuing her M.M. in Performance with William Corbett-Jones at San Francisco State University. At CMC, she successively managed registration, programs, finances, and development. From 1988, she continued in arts administration as Executive Director of the Community School of Music and Arts in Mountain View, before moving to Munich and studying with Ansgar Janke of the Musikhochschule.

Upon her return to San Francisco in 1993, she made piano teaching her full-time focus, teaching at CMC, CSMA, New School for Piano, and the Convent and Stuart Hall Music Conservatory, where she taught and served as Coordinator for many years. Her goal has always been to give students the skills that undergird an enduring love of music and confidence and joy in learning and performance, drawing on principles from the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development and from the Performance Psychology courses of Noa Kagayama of the Julliard School. She is now retired from teaching but continues to perform.

See biography for Lilia Zheltova above



Fazil Say (b. 1970)

Night, Op. 68 for Piano Four Hands

Concert pianist and composer Fazil Say was born in 1970 in Ankara, Turkey. As a child prodigy, he was proficient in math with four-digit numbers at the age of two, started piano lessons at three, and began to compose at 14. A virtuoso pianist, he won his first international competition in New York in 1994, launching his international performing career. Say's vibrant and energetic music often incorporates melodies from his native Turkey, in combination with syncopated, driving and jazzy rhythms.

Night, composed for the Dutch piano duo Arthur and Lucas Jussen and premiered in 2016, evokes a dark mood, with a dissonant, dotted rhythm baseline permeating the A section. A brooding melody trades off between the players, with staccato, accented chords adding to the unease. Say creates a magical, haunting atmosphere in the B section. While the damper pedal is down, both pianists reach inside the piano, using one hand to dampen the strings while simultaneously playing the corresponding keys below for a ghostly, lute-like effect; glissandi on the strings and arpeggiated figures further enhance the disquiet. The B section eventually builds to a crescendo that returns to a transformed and intensified A section. The dynamics are now forte, the leaps in the baseline widen while the meter shifts and contracts in syncopated groups, and dissonant percussive fragments in the upper register add to the ominous instability, building tension to the exciting,

Jennifer Peringer is a pianist with broad tastes, ranging from classical to contemporary to jazz and Latin American music of various types. She is a founding member of both the Bernal Hill Players and the Magnolia Piano Duo. Important teachers in her life include Susan Bradshaw and John Tilbury while studying for her Bachelor of Music at the University of London, then William Corbett Jones and the Alexander String Quartet while earning her Master of Music at San Francisco State University. She has taught at the Community Music Center since the year 2000, where she regularly performs in the Shenson Faculty Concert Series and annual Keyboard Marathon, as well as accompanying for various choirs and vocal concerts. When she's not playing or teaching piano she can be found teaching accordion, or the Japanese martial art Shintaido.

See biography for Lauren Cony above.



Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Selections from *Ma Mère l'oye*

Maurice Ravel composed *Ma Mère l'oye (Mother Goose)* as a suite for piano four hands between 1908 and 1910, originally intended for children. Despite its simplicity of texture, the work reveals Ravel's extraordinary gift for color, refinement, and storytelling, drawing inspiration from beloved French fairy tales.

This selection presents three contrasting movements, Nos. 1, 3, and 5, each offering a distinct miniature world:

No. 1: *Pavane de la Belle au bois dormant (Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty)*

The suite opens with an atmosphere of delicate stillness. With its gently unfolding melody and transparent texture, the music evokes a timeless, enchanted sleep. Ravel's restrained writing creates a sense of quiet wonder, as if the listener is stepping softly into a dream.

No. 3: *Laideronnette, Impératrice des pagodes (Little Ugly Girl, Empress of the Pagodas)*

In striking contrast, this movement introduces a playful and exotic soundscape. Inspired by a fairy tale of transformation, Ravel uses pentatonic melodies, percussive effects, and bright sonorities to suggest the imaginary world of pagodas and tiny porcelain figures. The music sparkles with humor, color, and rhythmic vitality.

No. 5: *Le jardin féerique (The Fairy Garden)*

The final movement unfolds as a gradual and radiant transformation. Beginning in a hushed, almost suspended atmosphere, the music slowly blossoms into a luminous climax. With its rich harmonies and expansive phrasing, this closing tableau suggests awakening, renewal, and a sense of gentle triumph. Across these three movements, Ravel demonstrates his ability to conjure entire worlds through the most economical means. In the four-hand setting, the collaboration between two pianists enhances the music's coloristic richness and allows its magical landscapes to unfold with remarkable clarity and depth.

Allison Lovejoy is a genre-defying pianist and composer known for her technical ease, versatility and passionate delivery. While specializing in Impressionist, Contemporary and late Romantic repertoire, she is also fluent in jazz, blues and cabaret. With seven albums to her credit, including *New Nocturnes* and a cast recording of her cabaret rock-opera *The 7 Deadly Pleasures*, Allison has also been a guest on projects with artists Ringo Starr and Homayoun Shajarian. Based in San Francisco, Allison teaches at the the Community Music Center and Foothill College. allisonlovejoy.com

See biography for Christian Bonvin above.



Beasley Smith (1901–1968), arranged by Ken Little and Erik Ian Walker

That Lucky Old Sun

That Lucky Old Sun was composed by Beasley Smith with lyrics by Haven Gillespie in 1949. The song quickly became a popular standard, and one of its most well-known interpretations is the 1949 recording by Ray Charles, whose soulful delivery helped define its enduring appeal.

Since Ken and Erik are not going to be singing, here are the lyrics:

*Up in the mornin'
Out on the job
Work like the devil for my pay
But that lucky old sun got nothin' to do
But roll around heaven all day.*

*Fuss with my woman, toil for my kids
Sweat till I'm wrinkled and gray
While that lucky old sun got nothin' to do
But roll around heaven all day*

*Dear Lord above, can't you know I'm pining, tears all in my eyes
Send down that cloud with a silver lining, lift me to Paradise*

*Show me that river, take me across
Wash all my troubles away
Like that lucky old sun, give me nothing to do
But roll around heaven all day*

Ken Little and Erik Ian Walker

This Old Blues in F Major

Just a little something Ken and Erik worked up!

Kenneth Little has been performing in the Bay Area for over 40 years. He trained privately at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in classical piano and theory. As a teenager, he began his musical development playing at New Providence Baptist Church, where he learned gospel music.

He was later introduced to musical theater at San Francisco State University under Dr. Rhonnie Washington. A major step in his career came through his connection with the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre and Stanley Williams, leading to his work as musical director for numerous productions, including Langston Hughes' *Black Nativity* and several runs of *A Soulful Christmas*. He has also appeared as featured keyboardist in the West Coast premiere of *HIT IT* and served as musical director and performer in the premiere of *Bessie* at the Leshner Center for the Arts, where he also made his acting debut.

In 2019, he presented his solo debut *An Evening With Kenneth Little* at Yoshi's in Oakland. He currently teaches piano at the San Francisco Community Music Center, and also works in music production from his own studio.

Erik Ian Walker's primary work is as a recording artist, with occasional live performance. That might be changing. His studio, WackoWorld Music, is located in Bernal Heights in SF. His own productions on the Bottomfeeder record label include the blues/country rock social commentary group Hash Brown and the Red Eyed Rangers, and the progressive rock band Castle Canyon (both with new albums coming out). Erik also performs as Erika Von Völkyrie, who came over from East Berlin after the wall came down in 1988. Erika usually performs as guest vocalist with other artists.

Erik teaches about 20 students at his studio (but not all at once!), specializing in modern styles, improvisation, and, hopefully, fun. You'd have to ask the students. He has also scored for film, most notably the Oscar-nominated "When We Were Bullies" (2021). Past work in theater has gotten a bit dusty and faded and it's hard to read the titles, so we'll leave it at that.

You can find Erik's music, and the bands mentioned above, on Bandcamp as well as on Apple Music, Spotify and all streaming services.



Eduardo Corzo

KARMA and Danzón Vedado

The first piece, titled *KARMA*, is conceived as a type of psalm. It presents a theme with a modest, contemplative, and somewhat spiritual character, featuring a repetitive melodic discourse that unfolds through varying harmonic progressions. Beneath this, a continuous syncopated rhythm serves as an ostinato, providing a steady structural foundation throughout.

This second piece is a *Danzón*, a genre that emerged in late 19th-century Cuba. In this work, titled *Danzón Vedado*, Corzo draws on the stylistic characteristics of Cuban dance music as the primary source of inspiration for the piece.

Eduardo Corzo was born and raised in Havana, Cuba, where he began his musical studies with his father, a violinist in the Cuban National Symphony Orchestra. Eduardo studied guitar and piano, and graduated as a clarinetist from Conservatorio Ignacio Cervantes. He has composed and arranged music for Cuban and Mexican television, served as musical director of the Conjunto Nacional de Espectáculos, and toured throughout Latin America. Living in Mexico during the 90's, he played piano, clarinet and alto sax in a variety of contexts. Among them with singer/songwriters like Lila Downs, and Amaury Gutierrez, and also musicians such as Leoginaldo Pimentel, Hammadi Bayard, Oriente Lopez, Pedro Cartas, and Gil Gutierrez.

In the US, where he has resided since 1999, he's worked with many bands and styles of music from Chicago to Denver to LA. Today he resides in SF and performs as a soloist and with local and international bands. He is an artist with a broad vision, interested in genres and styles different from his own, and whose background includes a mix of everything from Bach's partitas to Afro Cuban sounds, as well as music from other parts of the world



Amador Pérez Torres "Dimas" (b. 1961)

Nereidas

Nereidas is one of the most famous Mexican Danzones, written in 1932 by Oaxacan composer Amador Pérez Torres, better known as 'Dimas.' *Danzón* is a dance style of both European and African origins, which evolved in Cuba in the late 19th century. It soon made its way over to Mexico, where its popularity has thrived far longer than in its country of origin, in iconic venues such as the Salón México in Mexico City, as well as in outdoor plazas in Veracruz, Oaxaca and Mexico City. Written in duple time, the *danzón* is a slow formal partner dance requiring set footwork over syncopated rhythms, and incorporating elegant pauses while the couples stand listening to virtuoso instrumental passages, characteristically played by small instrumental ensembles. In the early 20th century an improvisatory section was added over a repeating musical phrase, influenced by a contemporary style of rising popularity called mambo and later cha cha cha.

Marco Díaz is an accomplished recording musician who has shared the stage with Grammy Award winning artist Israel “Cachao” Lopez, Nelson Gonzales, Jimmy Bosch, Pete “El Conde” Rodriguez, Ska Cubano (Europe), Tito Rojas, Nino Segarra, Anthony Cruz, and John Santos. He currently produces records and performs music throughout the country while also co-leading El Tren, an Afro-Caribbean dance band, and directing the Marco Diaz Quartet. Marco was born and raised in San Francisco and studied both piano and trumpet at the Community Music Center throughout his childhood. He currently serves on the faculty at the Community Music Center in San Francisco. He was also part of the SFJAZZ teaching artist program 2017-2022. Marco is currently working with the San Francisco Symphony’s Adventures in Music Program.

See biography for Jennifer Peringer above.



Mikhail Glinka (1804–1857), arranged by Mily Balakirev (1837–1910)

The Lark

The Lark is part of Glinka and Kukolnik's joint collection of songs *A Farewell to St. Petersburg* (1840). The poet Nestor Kukolnik (1809–1868) and composer Mikhail Glinka were close friends. To create the songs for this cycle, they worked on the lyrics and music simultaneously. Often regarded as the founder of Russian classical music, Glinka played a crucial role in shaping a national style that drew on folk melodies and Russian themes. “The Skylark,” also known as “The Lark,” was completed in July 1840. The poem expresses a lark singing and trilling beautifully in hopes that his true love will hear him.

Glinka’s student, Mily Balakirev (1836–1910), later transformed this simple, melancholy song into a highly virtuosic piano transcription in the style of Liszt. A central figure in the circle of composers known as “The Mighty Handful,” Balakirev championed a distinctly Russian musical voice, and in this transcription he preserves the song’s lyrical core while surrounding it with shimmering, birdlike figuration that evokes the lark in flight.

See biography for Allison Lovejoy above.



Witold Lutosławski (1913–1994)

Variations on a Theme by Paganini

Witold Lutosławski was one of the most important Polish composers of the 20th century. His early works were influenced by neoclassicism and folk music, while his later style developed a highly personal language characterized by controlled aleatoricism and rich sonorities. He is regarded as a leading figure in post-war European music.

Composed in 1941 during the German occupation of Warsaw, *Variations on a Theme by Paganini* for two pianos is based on Niccolò Paganini’s famous *Caprice No. 24*. Written for Lutosławski and his colleague Andrzej Panufnik to perform in Warsaw cafés, the work transforms the original violin virtuosity into brilliant pianistic textures. The piece follows Paganini’s structure of theme and variations, while introducing striking harmonic colors and rhythmic vitality, making it both virtuosic and highly inventive.

Leo Guan is a student of Christopher Basso and is excited to be performing today!

Christopher Basso's piano performances have been heralded as “riveting, with a multi-dimensional array of colors and shapes” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*) and “undeniably extraordinary” (*Wilmington News Journal*). The Boston Globe writes of his Prokofiev Eighth Piano Sonata ... “Basso used his coruscating virtuosity,

his flexible rhythmic spine, and his chameleon colors to communicate the sorrow, the irony, the rage and the compassion of this great score.” His playing has also been described as thoughtful, expressive and above all, deeply moving and engaging.

Basso was named First Place Prizewinner in the Second International Van Cliburn Competition for Outstanding Amateurs in Ft. Worth, Texas. National performance venues include recitals at The Flagler Museum in Palm Beach, Florida, the Smithsonian in Washington, DC, the Rockport Chamber Music Festival in Rockport, Massachusetts, the Shandalee Music Festival in Livingston, New York and The Nicolai Hall Series in Mill Valley, California.

Basso has performed in the Bay Area with local artists, including violinists Ian Swensen and Krista Bennion Feeney, violist Jodi Levitz, cellists Jennifer Culp and Jean-Michel Fonteneau, pianists Robin Sutherland and Keisuke Nakagoshi, and the Ives Quartet.

As an educator, Basso imparts in his students a lifelong appreciation for music, helping nurture creative examination and practice, and guiding students in finding a standard for self-expression while striving for personal fulfillment of the highest artistic caliber.

Basso received B.M. and M.M. degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Paul Hersh and Mack McCray. He studied for many years with famed pedagogue Nina Svetlanova in New York City.



REMEMBERING BETTY WONG

Betty Wong (1938–2025) was a devoted teacher and the very definition of a collaborative musician in both classical and folk based styles of music from the West and the East. She composed, coached chamber music and Chinese music, taught piano and Asian instruments and with her sister, Shirley Wong-Frentzel, she founded the Flowing Stream Ensemble to perform Chinese music. Betty was a close friend and the duo piano

partner of Juliet McComas, our Keyboard Marathon founder. She played a key role in brainstorming ideas for themes, encouraging performers, and garnering support for every one of these concerts, until just last year. Besides contributing beautiful, sensitive solos, she and Juliet delighted our audiences with magnificently serious or seriously playful four-hand works. Today’s focus on collaboration was right up her alley, and she was sad that she wouldn’t be able to perform with us again this year. Her 54-year legacy at CMC simply cannot be replaced. We miss her, and we honor her memory as an inspiring musician, colleague and friend.

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
- 2026 | Gather Together: Music of Connection and Collaboration



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