



presents

The Future is Female
Sarah Cahill, *piano*

Friday, June 5, 2020 at 8 PM
Old First Church
1751 Sacramento St. at Van Ness Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 474-1608 www.oldfirstconcerts.org

ABOUT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

- Great venue for music with beautiful acoustics and amazing Steinway concert grand piano.
- Primarily local emerging and mid-career professional musicians presenting innovative programs.
- Every concert offers new insights and virtuosic performances.
- Complimentary refreshments served at intermission or after the concert.
- An independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization devoted to presenting music at affordable prices, especially for low-income seniors and students.
- Solo, chamber music, and world music concerts year-round since 1970.

DONATING TO OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Ticket sales provide about 38 percent of our operating revenue each year. In addition, we rely on support from private foundations and Grants for the Arts from the city of San Francisco. Our generous individual donors complete the picture. We invite you to join us in our mission to connect audiences and local musicians and build up the classical music and world music scene in San Francisco. Donations are tax-deductible and donating on our website is easy and secure: www.oldfirstconcerts.org/give/, or checks can be mailed to: Old First Concerts, 1751 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. Thank you!

COVID-19 RESPONSE: RETURNING TO THE MUSIC

Old First Concerts is committed to the health and safety of our audiences, performers and staff. We hope to resume concerts soon and have implemented a number of policies and procedures to help us reach that goal, which you can read about on our website.

In the meantime, know that all tickets are fully guaranteed—so if we have to cancel or postpone an event that you’ve purchased a ticket to, you can choose to use the ticket for any concert between now and June 1, 2021, or you can be fully refunded.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Following us on **Facebook** is a great way to keep informed about the latest concert information. While you are there, don’t forget to **share** events with your friends and hit the “Like” button liberally. [facebook.com/oldfirstconcerts/](https://www.facebook.com/oldfirstconcerts/)

You can also find us on **Instagram** [@oldfirstconcerts](https://www.instagram.com/oldfirstconcerts) with information about upcoming events plus photos and videos from our concerts.

PROGRAM

Gabriela Ortiz (b. 1964)

Prelude and Etude No. 3 (2011)

Margaret Bonds (1913–1972)

Troubled Water (1967)

Germaine Tailleferre (1892–1983)

Partita (1957)

Perpetuum Mobile

Notturmo

Allegramente

Elizabeth A. Baker

Four Planes (2015)

INTERMISSION

Betsy Jolas (b. 1926)

Tango Si (1984)

Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931)

Chaconne (1962)

Lois V Vierk (b. 1951)

Yeah Yeah Yeah (1991)

Grazyna Bacewicz (1909–1969)

Scherzo (1934)

Elena Kats-Chernin (b. 1957)

Peggy's Rag (1996)

NOTES

Gabriela Ortiz *Prelude and Etude No. 3*

This is the third *Preludio y Estudio* by Mexican composer Gabriela Ortiz. Composed for pianist Ana Cervantes, it is dedicated to Jesusa Palancares, the main character in the 1969 novel *Hasta no verte Jesu mio* by Elena Poniatowska. While the character is fictional, Poniatowska claimed she was based on a real woman who was born in poverty and fought in the Mexican Revolution.

Margaret Bonds *Troubled Water*

From an early age, Margaret Bonds was a talented pianist, and studied composition with Florence Price and William Dawson. Of her time at Northwestern University, Bonds recalled: "I was in this prejudiced university, this terribly prejudiced place—I was looking in the basement of the Evanston Public Library where they had the poetry. I came in contact with this wonderful poem, *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*, and I'm sure it helped my feelings of security. Because in that poem he [Langston Hughes] tells how great the black man is: And if I had any misgivings, which I would have to have— here you are in a setup where the restaurants won't serve you and you're going to college, you're sacrificing, trying to get through school— and I know that poem helped save me." She became close friends with Langston Hughes and set much of his poetry to music. *Troubled Water*, composed when Bonds was 54, is a rhapsodic adaptation of the Spiritual *Wade in the Water*. She seamlessly blends jazz harmonies and rhythms with more classical structures and techniques.

Germaine Tailleferre *Partita*

Despite her parents' objections (her father compared composition by a woman to prostitution), Germaine Tailleferre entered the Paris Conservatoire at the age of twelve, and it was there that she met fellow composers Georges Auric, Darius Milhaud, and Arthur Honneger, who would later join her in the composers' collective Les Six. From an early age, she composed chamber music, concertos, and works for piano. She had a long and distinguished career: her earliest published work for piano is dated 1909, her last is dated 1980. Her three-movement *Partita*, dedicated to her daughter Francois, evokes the neoclassicism of a bygone era. Its last movement is notable for sudden shifts of mood and a virtuosic cadenza.

Elizabeth A. Baker *Four Planes*

Four Planes (for solo piano) was inspired by British visual artist Christopher Watt's work *Four Planes* as well as an interest in the perception of time. Each person has a different experience of time... some moments seem slower or faster than others. Some people don't feel the manmade pulse of time as strongly as others. The incredible thing is that we all exist on the same plane even though our perception of how time progresses along the shared plane is unique to sentient individual. *Four planes*, uses four musical planes, each with four blocks to demonstrate the juxtaposition between individuals and the manmade concept of time. The first movement presents each individual plane giving the listener a frame of reference for the subsequent movements, which act as a flowing and jarring explorative journey in and out of the various consciousnesses these planes represent. (note by Elizabeth A. Baker)

Betsy Jolas *Tango Si*

Born in Paris, Betsy Jolas studied with Darius Milhaud and Olivier Messiaen, and has taught at a number of universities, including UC Berkeley and Mills College. The score of her *Tango Si* says that it should last for one minute and 25 seconds. It playfully subverts the traditional rhythm and pulse of the tango form, while still evoking recognizable elements of the true tango.

Sofia Gubaidulina *Chaconne*

Gubaidulina composed this piece, one of the earliest in her catalogue, in 1962, when she was still a postgraduate student at the Moscow Conservatory. In keeping with Baroque tradition, the work is based on an eight-bar bass moving slowly and with gravity, though Gubaidulina makes this a bass in duple time rather than the orthodox triple. The chaconne is an homage to Bach—it becomes a toccata and, later, a fugue—while developing in a highly original manner. Early as the piece is, it makes a powerful effect and projects typical Gubaidulinian matters of determination and conflict, exhilaration and exhaustion.

Lois V Vierk *Yeah Yeah Yeah*

When pianist Aki Takahashi talked to me in 1990 about commissioning a short piece inspired by a Beatles tune, I enthusiastically began going through all my old favorites from teenage years. I chose *She Loves You* and got to work. The first phrase of this tune, an ascending scale, is stretched out with tremolos and arpeggiated embellishments over the beginning 43 measures of my piece. After that, my composition follows the harmonic structure of *She Loves You*, with melodic fragments woven in. At the very end of the

piece the musical phrase "yeah yeah yeah" is whispered briefly by the piano. (note by Lois V Vierk)

Grazyna Bacewicz's *Scherzo* is a youthful piece, composed before she developed the mature style of her piano sonatas. She was studying with Nadia Boulanger and writing neoclassical works when she composed this short Scherzo, which demonstrates her considerable skills as a pianist.

Elena Kats-Chernin *Peggy's Rag*

Elena Kats-Chernin was born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. She studied in Moscow from age fourteen, and migrated to Australia in 1975, continuing her studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She traveled to Germany to study composition and remained in Europe for thirteen years, composing for theater and ballet. Since returning to Australia in 1994, Kats-Chernin has written six operas and two piano concertos. She says that she "often writes brief rags as an antidote to the pressure of serious large-scale composition... Deeply personal objects, they are often written as a release in some time of personal difficulty; they are vessels that carry deep waters, small worlds that embrace bittersweet feelings. In them, one finds pain and joy intermingled." *Peggy's Rag* is named after Peggy Glanville-Hicks, an Australian composer who bestowed her house in Sydney to be used as an artists residency.

ARTIST

Sarah Cahill, recently called “a sterling pianist and an intrepid illuminator of the classical avant-garde” by *The New York Times* and “a brilliant and charismatic advocate for modern and contemporary composers” by *Time Out New York*, has commissioned and premiered over sixty compositions for solo piano. Composers who have dedicated works to Cahill include John Adams, Terry Riley, Frederic Rzewski, Pauline Oliveros, Julia Wolfe, Yoko Ono, Annea Lockwood, and Ingram Marshall. Recent and upcoming performances include the Barbican Centre in London, the National Gallery, the Detroit Institute of Arts, Interlochen Arts Festival, and the Huddersfield Festival (UK). *Keyboard Magazine* writes, “Through her inspired interpretation of works across the 20th and 21st centuries, Cahill has been instrumental in bringing to life the music of many of our greatest living composers.” She was named a 2018 Champion of New Music, awarded by the American Composers Forum (ACF).

COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Friday, June 12 at 8 pm

Love Letters from the Middle East

Ali Paris, *voice & qanun*

Virtuoso Ali Paris takes us on a musical journey from Al-Andalus to modern-day Palestine, exploring the rhythmic songs & dances of the region with the unique microtonal timbre of the qanun.

Friday, June 19 at 8 pm

Natalie Raney, *cello*

Cellist Natalie Raney will present a program of vibrant works for solo cello that evoke the spirit of springtime. Program includes works by Kaija Saariaho, Dorothy Chang, & J.S. Bach.

Friday, June 26 at 8 pm

Cornelius Boots, *solo shakuhachi and taimu*

A dynamic solo presentation from a master of jinashi Zen bamboo flutes ranging from virtuosic and energetic to meditative and subtle.

Friday, July 10 at 8 pm

Tod Dickow, *saxophone & Charged Particles*

Murray Low, *keyboards*; **Aaron Germain**, *acoustic & electric bass*;

Jon Krosnick, *drums*

Playing the music of Michael Brecker, an innovator on the tenor saxophone whose unique voice and approach to the instrument influenced every performing saxophonist.

Sunday, July 12 at 4 pm

Daniel Lewin, *violin & Dmitriy Cogan*, *piano*

World Premiere of *Chorales and Interludes No. 3* by Dan Flanagan, plus works by J. S. Bach, William Grant Still, Augusta Read Thomas, and Ludwig van Beethoven.

Friday, July 24 at 8 pm

L'Arc Trio—**Maria van der Sloot**, *violin*; **Christine Lee**, *cello*;

Jung-eun Kim, *piano*

Prize-winning young ensemble's debut on our series, featuring a World Premiere by the eclectic Canadian composer Vivian Fung and two trios by Beethoven.

Tickets and more information at oldfirstconcerts.org

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Old First Concerts' piano is a New York Steinway D model, circa 1980, with Hamburg action. It was donated by The Stanley Ibler Fund, and is maintained by David Love Piano Service and Restoration.