



Old First Concerts

*presents*

**San Francisco International  
Piano Festival**

**Nicholas Phillips**

*piano*

**Sunday, August 22, 2021 at 4 PM**

Old First Church

1751 Sacramento St. at Van Ness Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94109

(415) 474-1608 [www.oldfirstconcerts.org](http://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/](http://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 look forward to having audiences back in our space when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we are happy to be able to continue presenting artists of the highest caliber to our audience in the Bay Area—and beyond—via livestreamed events. We are following city guidelines and safety protocols to help ensure the safest possible environment for our performers and staff.

### **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**

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

**Rang De Basant** (2012)

Mary Kouyoumdjian (b. 1983)

**Aghavni** (2009)

Mark Olivieri (b. 1972)

**Mieux vaut être seul que mail accompagné** (2021)\*

**Hymn for Alaina** (2021)\*

from **Music for a New Apocalypse**

*III. Tyranny of Virtue* (2020)\*

Carter Pann (b. 1972)

*She Steals Me* from **The Piano's 12 Sides** (2011)

**BRIEF INTERMISSION**

Quinn Mason (b. 1996)

**Sonata '21** (2021)\*

*I. Moderate, with movement*

*II. Slowly with feeling*

*III. Finale (5 with 4 and 3 with 2)*

Mark Winges (b. 1951)

**Year End Nocturne** (2021)\*

Sahba Aminikia (b. 1981)

**Lullaby** (2015)

Gabriela Lena Frank (b. 1972)

**Karnavalito No. 1** (2013)

\* denotes World Premiere

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

### **Reena Esmail *Rang De Basant***

One of the most fascinating raags I have yet encountered in my study of Hindustani music is Raag Basant. Basant means 'spring' in Hindi, but it couldn't be further from the Western conception of the season. Against a canvas of chirping birds and pastel colors, Basant feels dark and exotic, rendered in bold colors, and winding through passages of sinewy chromaticism.

The piece starts with large dense chords that change one note at a time, until they find their way slowly into Basant. This is followed by an excerpt from a short Hindustani composition (called a bandish) in Basant, stylized and notated to accommodate the sonic possibilities of the piano. This bandish builds and eventually which vanishes back into the dense chords, only to have a little bit of Basant bleed through at the end. The title of the piece comes from an iconic Hindi film, *Rang De Basanti* (which literally translates to "Give it the color of Saffron"). Instead of giving this piece the color of saffron, I wanted to "color" it with the aesthetic of Raag Basant. – *Reena Esmail*

### **Mary Kouyoumdjian *Aghavni***

Based on the poem *Carpet Weaver* by Brenda Najimian Magarity, *Aghavni (Doves)* follows the lives of a group of women before and during the Armenian genocide, closing with a retrospective look at those women and what they lost from a "present day" perspective. – *Mary Kouyoumdjian*

## **Mark Olivieri**

*Mieux vaut être que mal accompagné* (*Better Alone than in Bad Company*) and *Hymn for Alaina* are the first two of a trio of new pieces I wrote for Phillips. *Mieux* explores an ostinato (a repeating musical figure that pervades the entire fabric of the composition) and how it might be repurposed by the context that surrounds it.

*Hymn for Alaina* was inspired by my wife, who is a professional modern dancer. Sitting at the piano improvising and writing this piece, I imagined her dancing and imagined myself playing and responding to her sometimes graceful, sometimes angular movements, as I have done on countless occasions. Much of the rhetoric for piece draws from my experience as a jazz and improvising musician.

*Tyranny of Virtue* - In April of 2020, feeling numb as the reality of a seemingly endless global pandemic set in, exhausted by nonstop media coverage and the politicization of a public health crisis, I sat down to improvise at the piano. I was not feeling particularly motivated to write music, but improvisation has often brought solace and inspiration in my life and has helped me think through difficulty to a place of greater clarity. I had my pencils and staff paper on hand, and at some point, the improvisation turned to writing. The five movements that resulted became *Music for a New Apocalypse* and reflect the dark and cynical times of their writing—the apparent inability of human beings to negotiate common ground in service of a greater good. –  
*Mark Olivieri*

### **Carter Pann *She Steals Me***

This song, subtitled *Intermezzo*, owes some of its concepts to Schubert and Stravinsky. The work is cast as a plaintive Appalachian waltz in A-flat major with occasional passionate chorale-like proclamations. There is a real introverted sadness about a few of the moments in this piece, while at other times there are descriptive words and phrases on the page such as "...a rocking chair on the porch," and "snowing..." Whenever I play through the piece I come terribly close to tears in all the same spots. The softy in me could not resist preserving these moments, even at the expense of obvious sentimentality. – *Carter Pann*

### **Quinn Mason *Sonata '21***

When it came time to write a piano sonata, I asked myself 'What would I want to say with a piano sonata in the 21st century?'. It's a tried and true form that boasts many masterworks by the great composers, including essential pieces by Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin and Rachmaninoff. It was a bit of a daunting project at first as I questioned what I had to add to the plethora of legendary compositions already.

As a pianist myself, my style of playing is focused on bringing the best sound out of the piano by placing emphasis on the resonance of the individual tones. Thus, the first movement is based around the key of A, specifically the middle A, which is the home base of the 440 tuning note with special emphasis and accents on specific tones in the A major scale. Of course, I pay

homage to the romantic sonatas with an expansive and expressive middle section in F-sharp minor.

The second movement is a sort of funeral march, but the music takes a minimalist turn in the second section and looks back the 2nd movements of Beethoven in the next (with special ornamentation in like manner).

The last movement is a homage to my time spent as a percussionist, in which my favorite musical technique to explore was hemiolas (multiple rhythms layered on top of one another). Thus, we get the name '5 with 4' and '3 with 2', which make for very interesting rhythmic combinations. Here, the player is at their most virtuosic, in an almost moto perpetuo style. – *Quinn Mason*

### **Mark Winges**

*Year End Nocturne* is one of a series of nocturnes I've been writing over the last few years. This one, written at the end of 2020, is a hopeful contemplation of the year's turning. Its quiet chords dissolve into an upward line at the end as the old year fades into the new. It also has a subtle musical conceit: the note "D" (natural) is completely absent in the piece. This is a nod to the absence of a certain someone whose name begins with "D". This afternoon is its first performance, and I'm grateful to Nick for including it on his program. – *Mark Winges*

### **Gabriela Lena Frank**

*Karnavalito No. 1* is inspired by the distinctly Andean concept of mestizaje, as championed by Peruvian folklorist José Maria Arguedas (1911–1969), whereby cultures can co-exist without one subjugating another. Allusions to the rhythms and harmonies of the mountain music of my mother's homeland of Perú abound in this boisterous work, albeit freely transformed in the blender of my personal imaginations. *Karnavalito No. 1* is dense in its virtuosity, with stylistic nods to the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók, a music hero of mine. – *Gabriela Lena Frank*

#### **ABOUT THE MUSICIAN**

Described by *The New York Times* as a "talented and entrepreneurial pianist" and an "able and persuasive advocate" of new music, **Nicholas Phillips'** playing has been praised for its "bejeweled accuracy" (*Fanfare*) and as "razor-sharp yet wonderfully spirited" (*American Record Guide*). He is active as a soloist and collaborative artist, having performed all across the United States, as well as Europe, South America, Asia, and Africa.

Phillips is an active recording artist and champion of living composers. In 2011, he released two CDs on Albany Records: *Portals and Passages* (TROY 1246), which features the works for solo piano by American composer Ethan Wickman, and *Boris Papandopulo: Piano Music* (TROY 1274), which features music by the famous Croatian composer. Recent releases include *American*



*Vernacular: New Music for Solo Piano* (New Focus Recordings, 2014), which features commissioned works written for him on that theme by ten American composers, and *Impressions* (Blue Griffin Records, 2016), a collection of 21st-century character pieces by living American composers. *Shift* (Panoramic Recordings) releases in March, 2019, and features world premiere recordings of works by eight living women composers.

A native of Indiana, Phillips began formal piano lessons at Indiana University at the age of ten. He holds degrees in piano performance from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music (Doctor of Musical Arts), Indiana University (Master of Music), and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Bachelor of Music, summa cum laude). His teachers include internationally-renowned pianists and pedagogues Karen Taylor, Paul Barnes, Karen Shaw, and Robert Weirich.

Phillips is currently Professor of Piano at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. He is a Yamaha Artist.

## COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

**Friday, August 27 at 8 pm**

**Terrie Baune**, *violin* & **John Chernoff**, *piano*

Grażyna Bacewicz's *Sonata No. 4* and Béla Bartók's *Sonata No. 1*

**Sunday, August 29 at 4 pm**

**San Francisco International Piano Festival—*Les Années Folles***

*featuring Jory Vinikour & Philippe LeRoy*, *harpsichords* &

**Gwendolyn Mok & Jeffrey LaDeur**, *piano*

Works by Boulanger, Poulenc, Couperin, Tailleferre, & Ravel.

**Sunday, September 5 at 4 pm**

**Mike Greensill**, *piano* & **Ruth Davies**, *bass*

From Erroll Garner to George Shearing, and of course many Duke Ellington swingers and ballads plus the odd Mike Greensill original.

**Current: A Piano Festival**

*presented by Old First Concerts and The Ross McKee Foundation*

**Saturday, September 11 at 8 pm—The Illustrated Pianist**

Distinctive new works by accomplished composing pianists combining science-fiction and adaptive visual installation, inspired by the timeless Ray Bradbury book *The Illustrated Man*.

**Friday, September 17 at 8pm—Cross Rhythms**

An eclectic program of music for piano performed by some of the Bay Area's favorite pianists.

**Saturday, September 25 at 8 pm—Stephen Prutsman**

Pairing music of J. S. Bach with Progressive Rock classics.

## OLD FIRST CONCERTS DONORS

<b>Bravissimo!</b> (\$1000 and up)	Barbara Marré	Erika Bodo
Anonymous (3)	Darren & Cathy Preshler	Linda Dembo
Doris Bebb	James Riggs	Patti Deuter in memory of Joel Deuter
Christopher and Cindy Burt	William Rudiak	Jean Hohman
Claudine Cheng	James T. Smith	Jeanne Kirkwood
Thomas Culp & Charles Wagner	John Stedman	Joan B. O'Connor
Philip & Elayne Dauber	Joanne Winetzki	Lynne Ogata
Paul Duffey	Mike Tekulsky & Ron Wong	Ann Stone
Daniel Joraanstad & Bob Hermann Faith in the Future Fund	Randal Wong & Jamila Champsi	Stephen & Sarah Taber
Walter Kennedy	<b>Encore Performance</b> (\$500 - \$999)	Paul Upham
Donna Kline	Anonymous (2)	Brett Waxdeck
	Ruth & Frank Belvin	Susan Worts
		George & Priscilla Yu

## OLD FIRST CONCERTS DONORS

<b>Standing Ovation</b> (\$250 - \$499)	Shoko Furuya & Christopher Kitting	Robert & Martha Warnock George Wiepert
Anonymous (2)	Dr. & Mrs. E. C. Gaenslen	Jessica Bodo Wise
Jean Ahn	David Garlock	Danielle & Gary Wohl
George Becker	Rochelle Gatlin	Margaret Wrench
Roland & Lois Feller	William Grant	Keith Yamamoto
Jim Clavin	Elizabeth Greening	Jie Yang
Edward & Patricia Hymson	Helen & Michael Gross	Norman Young
Robert S. & Marilyn Koerper	David Hammer	<b>Friends of Old First Concerts</b>
Blumberg	Eleanor Hammer	Anonymous
Betty Meissner	Barbara Imbrie	Susan Baker-Lehne
Aaron & Eva Paul	Ron Jin & the Jin-Allen Family	Ralph Beren
Abby Rumsey	Sally Ketchum	Edward Bergh
Pamela Sebastian	Hee Shik Kim	Barbara Bernhart
Elizabeth Varnhagen	Howard & Wendy Kleckner	Sherman Chan
<b>Enthusiastic Applause</b> (\$100 - \$249)	Michael Korbholz	Hal Christiansen
B. Amaroso	Laurence Kornfield	Helen Cohen
Barbara Bagot-Lopez	Marshall Krause	Fred Cummins
Sarah Bailis	Pam Zipkin & Robert Lampkin	John Diamante
Kathy Barr	Will Leben	Chauncy DiLaura
Christine Beckstrom	Yunnie Lee	James Dooley
Miriam Blatt	Mack & Meikui McCray	Janet Elliott
Katherine & Michael Boeninghausen – in honor of Joyce Frankenburg	Henry Mahncke & Kimberly Tanner	Karen Fox
Barbara & Howard Bomze	Robert Maldonado	Maggi Henderson
Bill & Marilyn Campbell	Jordan Monchamont	Alice Glasner
Herrick Carver	Milton Mosk	John Gosselin
Joseph Charpentier	Karen Mottola	Joan Intrator
Donald Cohon	Barbara Mow	John Kasper
Stanley Corfman	Randall Murley	Julie Kierstine
Homer Dalbey	Regina Myers	Bonnie Knight
Joanne DePhillips	Hitomi Onizuka	Barbara Koenig
Julia Erickson	Helen Pellegrin	Allison Levy
Judith Ets-Hokin	Phil Rettger	Xiao Liu
David Featherstone	Linda Reyder	Julia Dorsey Loomis
William Feister & Judith Ross	James Robinson	Hadley McCarroll
Patricia Ferrari	Joan Rost	Sarah McCuskey
Rachel Fisher	Art Rothstein	Alan & Hitomi Onizuka
Thomas Flaherty	Sue Rupp	Stephani Phipps
Doris Flamm	Bob & Terri Ryan	Charles Quesenberg
Thomas Foutch	Donald Ryan	Becky A. Reed
Yuko Franklin	Jack Shoemaker	Terry Rillera
and Club Glee	Leslie & Bob Stafford	Mary Russell
RT Freebairn-Smith	Margaret Studier	Ralph Samuel
Robert Friedman Presents	Ted Teipel	Kathleen Smith
		Katie Struble
		Stephanie Winters

**GOVERNMENT & FOUNDATION SUPPORT**  
Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation  
The Bernard Osher Foundation  
City of San Francisco Grants for the Arts  
Google for Non-profits  
H. B. and Lucille Horn Foundation  
IBM Matching Grants Program  
The Macy's Foundation  
William & Flora Hewlett Foundation

### **OLD FIRST CONCERTS**

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Thomas Culp, *President*  
Randal P. Wong, *Secretary*  
Darren Presher, *Treasurer*  
Christopher Burt  
Walter Kennedy  
Donna Kline  
Barbara Marré  
Bill Rudiak  
Stephen Taber  
Mike Tekulsky  
Brett Waxdeck  
Meina Xu

#### **STAFF**

Matthew Wolka, *Director*  
Rick Bahto, *Program Associate*  
Aimée Duddridge-Picard,  
*Administrative Assistant*  
Austin Adams, *House Manager*

---

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.