



Old First Concerts

and



**ROSS MCKEE
FOUNDATION**

present

Current: A Piano Festival

THE ILLUSTRATED SINOID

A Concert of Imaginative New Works for Piano and
Visual Installation, inspired by science fiction

Produced & curated by Nicole Brancato

Compositions & performances by
Nicole Brancato, Monica Chew, Jed Distler, Jerry Kuderna,
Keisuke Nakagoshi, Nicholas Pavkovic, & Dee Spencer

Visual & sound installation by Cory Todd

Saturday, September 11, 2021 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 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

Nicole Brancato

Tricks of Light — inspired by *The Veldt*

in honor of Carol Paster, dedicated to Rachel Paster

Nicholas Pavkovic

Moving Pictures — inspired by *Prologue: The Illustrated Man*

Jed Distler

Rocket Rockit Rockette — inspired by *The Rocket Man*

dedicated to Anthony S. and Georgine E. Brancato

Dee Spencer

Earthly Grace — inspired by *The Other Foot*

Monica Chew (performed by Jerry Kuderna)

Pitter Patter — inspired by *The Long Rain*

dedicated to Jerry Kuderna

Nicole Brancato

No Matter — inspired by *No Particular Night or Morning*

dedicated to Dr. Salvatore and Mrs. Annamaria Brancato

Keisuke Nakagoshi

Numb — inspired by *The Last Night of the World*

Jed Distler

Città desolata — inspired by *The City*

Nicole Brancato

for someone / for no one / for anyone at all — inspired by

Kaleidoscope

Visual & Sound Installation by Cory Todd

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Hailed as “ingenious,” “mysterious,” and “inspiring,” *The Illustrated Pianist* combines science-fiction and adaptive visual installation in an imaginative concert of piano music, inspired by the timeless book *The Illustrated Man*.

This unique multimedia event, assembled by the pianist and composer Nicole Brancato for the Old First Concerts, honors the centenary, in 2020, of the iconic American science-fiction author Ray Bradbury and the seventieth anniversary, this year, of his celebrated story collection. The program comprises distinct new works by seven accomplished composing pianists, including Nicholas Pavkovic, Jed Distler, Monica Chew, Dee Spencer, Jerry Kuderna, Keisuke Nakagoshi, and Brancato herself, paired with visual elements designed by Cory Todd.

The acclaimed New York City premiere of *The Illustrated Pianist* was featured in *The New Yorker* and boasted the commission of eighteen new works for piano. In this new edition at the historic Old First Church, five new piano commissions and new visual design are made possible by the Ross McKee Foundation. We invite you to reflect on the tales that inspired these new works of art, or to envision your own stories!

Through these unique sonic and visual collaborations, the project connects diverse perspectives to ponder our past, speak to us about our present, and wonder about the future. The themes presented transcend age and time — and perhaps, in some ways, speak to us even more loudly now than in previous decades...

A NOTE FROM THE MUSICIANS

We want to extend enormous, heartfelt gratitude to all of our generous commissioners, The Ross McKee Foundation, their director Nicholas Pavkovic, Old First Concerts, Matt Wolka, Rick Bahto, and the many supporters who made this event possible. These are extraordinary times, and without your support, none of this would have been possible. Thank you!

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

As a forward-looking force in today's music world, **Nicole Brancato** has crafted an imaginative career, merging curation, composition, performance, improvisation, education, and collaboration across the arts. The innovative endeavors of the award-winning "piano virtuoso" (*The Daily Gazette*) have taken her throughout the Americas and Europe. Her engagements include Lincoln Center, the Guggenheim, the Banff Centre for the Arts, and New York Public Radio, as well as the cutting-edge performance spaces in New York City, with features in *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Time Out New York*, and the international network Rai Italia. She is a champion of creative and conceptual performance, and in all of her endeavors, she creates a connective, intellectual, and inspiring experience for her audiences. To learn more about Nicole Brancato, visit nicolebrancato.com

Monica Chew (monicachew.com) is an Oakland pianist and composer. In 2017 she released her first solo album, *Tender and Strange*, featuring works by Bartók, Janáček, Messiaen, Takemitsu, and Scriabin. A "gifted player with an affinity for deeply sensitive expression" (*Whole Note*), her playing is "wonderfully delicate, like tissue" (*International Pianist*). She has been a featured artist on radio stations worldwide. She started composing in 2017 and couldn't be happier about it. Her work has been featured by Gabriela Lena Frank's Creative Academy for Music, Hot Air Music Festival, and Left Coast Chamber Ensemble's Intersection. Her first string quartet, *Delayed Send*, was premiered by Friction Quartet and reviewed as "monumental" and "stunning" by *San Francisco Classical Voice*. Prior to 2015, she neglected piano for nearly a

decade to work as a principal software engineer on security and privacy at Mozilla and Google after receiving her Master of Music from San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a PhD in computer science from UC Berkeley. She lives in Oakland with her husband, an 1899 Steinway B, a clavichord, and a disused violin. In spring and summer of 2020 she gave free twice-weekly live concerts on her Facebook and YouTube channels.

Composer/pianist and Steinway Artist **Jed Distler** taught for more than 20 years at Sarah Lawrence College. Early in his career Distler gained acclaim for his transcriptions of jazz piano solos by Art Tatum and Bill Evans, while his new music piano recitals have offered premiers of works by Virgil Thomson, Richard Rodney Bennett, Frederic Rzewski, Alvin Curran, Lois V Vierk, William Schimmel and many more. Distler's presenting organization ComposersCollaborative, Inc earned a Guinness Record for world's largest keyboard ensemble, featuring an original work for 175 electronic keyboards. Distler records prolifically for the high resolution Spirio player piano, while TNC Music released Distler's most recent solo piano CD *Fearless Monk*. (available from Bandcamp).

As Artist-in-Residence for WWFM.Org The Classical Network, Distler is the creator, host and producer of the 2017 ASCAP Deems Taylor Virgil Thomson Award radio program *Between the Keys*. Distler contributes reviews and articles to *Gramophone* and *Classicstoday.com*, and has written numerous CD booklet notes for Sony/BMG and Universal Classics. Most importantly, Distler turned down the position of Music Department Chair at Trump University.

Jerry Kuderna received his initial training in piano and conducting in Denver with Antonia Brico. While studying the music of Webern and Schoenberg with Rudolf Kolisch he performed works by the 2nd Viennese school with soprano Bethany Beardslee. He studied piano with Adele Marcus at Juilliard and Robert Helps at the New England Conservatory. He has taught at the University of Louisville and at Princeton University where he met Roger Sessions

and Milton Babbitt. His doctoral studies at NYU included a Ph.D dissertation on the piano works of Babbitt. He also taught music literature at Diablo Valley College.

As a solo recitalist and founding member of the Maybeck Trio, California-based pianist Jerry Kuderna embraces traditional repertoire and new music with boundless virtuosity and fierce commitment. He has been presented by Group for Contemporary Music, The American Society of University Composers, The New Jersey Composer's Guild, The Los Angeles SCREAM Festival, Earplay and Cal Performances. Kuderna has premiered works by composers such as Milton Babbitt, Claudio Spies, John Selleck, Robert Helps, Ross Bauer, Daniel Brewbaker, Richard Swift, Edwin Dugger, Phillippe Manoury, Herb Bielwa, Ann Callaway and Kurt Erickson, many of whom have written especially for the pianist. Kuderna recorded Babbitt's *Phonemena for Soprano and Piano* (with Lynne Webber) for the New World Records historic anthology of American Music series. In January 2006 he gave the West Coast premiere of Elliott Carter's *Piano Concerto* with the Berkeley Symphony under the baton of George Thompson. He has premiered works by American composers including Milton Babbitt, Richard Swift, Alden Jenks, Robert Helps, Ann Callaway, Judith Shatin, and Herb Bielawa.

He recently celebrated twenty years of regular lecture- recitals given under the auspices of The Berkeley Arts festival.

Keisuke Nakagoshi has received training from Emanuel Ax, Gilbert Kalish, Menahem Pressler and Paul Hersh and he has performed concert stages across the United States including the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall and Hollywood Bowl. In 2014, he made a solo debut with San Francisco Symphony on Ingvar Lidholm's *Poesis* with Herbert Blomstedt conducting. Keisuke and Swiss pianist Eva-Maria Zimmermann formed a piano duet, ZOFO and their first CD was nominated for Grammy award for best chamber music/small ensemble in 2013. Aside from ZOFO, Mr. Nakagoshi is a pianist in residence at the San Francisco

Conservatory of Music, and he also serves as pianist in the production team for Opera Parallèle.

Nicholas Pavkovic (www.pavkovic.com) is a composer, a pianist, and the Executive Director of the Ross McKee Foundation. His film scores have received accolades and he is a Sundance Composers Lab fellow. He studied and taught at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he was also honored with the Highsmith Award for orchestral composition.

Dee Spencer is a Professor of Jazz and Musical Theatre in the School of Theatre & Dance at San Francisco State University (SFSU). Dee founded the Jazz Studies degree program in the School of Music at SFSU and served as Director for five years. As an active contributor to the music community, she founded the SFJAZZ education program, and she served as East Bay Center for the Performing Arts program director.

Her performance credits encompass a star-studded roster including Jazz at Lincoln Center, Ledisi, Lenny Williams John Handy, Jimmy Scott, Louis Bellson, Clark Terry, Regina Carter, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Bernard Purdie and X-Factor star Jason Brock. Her latest recording *Tranquility* was released in 2018.

Cory Todd is a multimedia artist and engineer living in Berkeley. His work combines programming, audio and video production, real-time data, and other experimental practices to explore themes of emotionality, abstraction, and memory. Projects have included national and international tours with renowned artists of various disciplines, collaboration in a multitude of settings, and extensive studio work.

DEVILISH INSPIRATIONS

Summoning Witches, Demons,
& Black Magic at the Piano

Hosted by

EDWIN OUTWATER
PEACHES CHRIST

An online benefit for the Ross McKee
Foundation featuring Allegra Chapman, Brent
Smith, Christopher Basso, Daniel Glover, Dee
Spencer, Jeffrey LaDeur with Kindra Scharich,
Keisuke Nakagoshi, Ryan Sheng, Sarah Cahill,
& Solomon Ge October 28 @ 7 p.m. PDT

Tickets: DevilishInspirations.com

COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Friday, September 17 at 8pm—Current: A Piano Festival Cross Rhythms

When the lockdown started, pianist Sarah Cahill gathered pianists from across the United States via Zoom for a weekly sharing of ideas and work-in-progress. We'll hear results from their collaboration in this exuberant group concert that combines new music with works by women composers and composers of color.

Sunday, September 19 at 4 pm

Alisa Rose with the Americana String Quartet and Fog Holler

World Premiere of Alisa Rose's *Quartet with Solo Violin: Embracing Roots*, integrating American fiddle idioms into classical concert forms.

Saturday, September 25 at 8 pm—Current: A Piano Festival

Stephen Prutsman

Pairing music of J. S. Bach with Progressive Rock classics by Gentle Giant, Yes, and Genesis.

Friday, October 1 at 8 pm—Ninth Planet

A program exploring themes of realism and surrealism, featuring the world premiere of a work by Bay Area resident Assaf Shatil, plus works by Shelley Washington, Yaz Lancaster, and Amy Beth Kirsten.

Sunday, October 3 at 4 pm—Fusion Soul

A dialogue between Karlton Hester's expressive works engaging themes of creative freedom and Hwayoung Shon's work drawing from Korean traditions leads to a transcontinental collaboration of Miseon Jeong's *Fusion Soul*, dramatizing the fusion of jazz and Korean music into one.

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Bravissimo! (\$1000 and up)	Barbara Marré	Erika Bodo
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Enthusiastic Applause (\$100 - \$249)	Michael Korbholz	Hal Christiansen
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Barbara Bagot-Lopez	Marshall Krause	Fred Cummins
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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.