



Old First Concerts

*presents*

# Ragazzi Boys Chorus

## *Mysteries and Miracles*

**Kent Jue**, *Artistic & Executive Director*

**Yongyu Gao**, *collaborative pianist*

**Travis Rogers**, *Director — Young Men's Ensemble*

**Nancy Whitecar**, *Assistant Director — Young Men's Ensemble & collaborative pianist*

**Sunday, December 12, 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 all 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**

**Concert Group and Choral Scholars**

Richard Oswin (b. 1957)

**Sanctus**

from *Melody: Pie cantiones* (1582), arranged by J. Edmund Hughes (b. 1947) and Brian Edward Galante (b. 1974)

**Hodie**

Soloist: Amit Krishnan

Craig Courtney (b. 1948) words by Nahum Tate

**While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night**

Anton Bruckner (1824–1896)

**Locus Iste**

Traditional, arranged by Philip Lawson (b. 1957)

**Down to the River**

Soloist: Nicholas Hu

Trio: Andrew Altorfer, Nick Damon, Ethan Leonard

**Concert Group**

English traditional carol arranged by John Rutter (b. 1945)

**Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day** from *Dancing Day*

Septet: Andrew Altorfer, Ian Bass, Nick Damon,  
Ethan Leonard, Liam Lowitz, Smaran Narayanan,  
Finn Reese

Evan Ramos (b. 1983)

**O Magnum Mysterium**

Alessandro Grandi (c. 1590–1630), edited by William Tortolano

**Hodie, nobis de caelo**

### Choral Scholars

Traditional Catalan Carol, arr. Howard Helvey (b. 1968)

**Fum, Fum, Fum**

### Young Men's Ensemble

Traditional Kenyan, arr. Shawn Kirchner (b. 1970)

**Wana Baraka**

18th Century Latin Hymn, arr. Michael John Trotta (b. 1978)

**Veni, Veni Emmanuel**

Ben Carlson, *triangle*; Nick McKee, *tambourine*; James Thomas, *djembe*; Sextet: Misha Aganin, Todd Crandell, Gabriel Hawkins, Lincoln Mendenhall, Paul Sapilewski, Daniel Wu

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)

**O Magnum Mysterium**

Kim André Arnesen (b. 1980)

**Cradle Hymn**

Traditional Burgundian Carol, arr. David Conte (b. 1955)

**Pat-a-pan**

Melchior Franck (c. 1579–1639), arranged by Stephen

Caracciolo (b. 1962)

**O Tannenbaum**

Soloists: Amit Krishnan, Adrian Vahamaki

Traditional German Carol, arr. Carl J. Nygard, Jr. (b. 1947)

**Oh! Christmas Tree???**

James L. Pierpont (1822–1893), arr. Philip Lawson (b. 1957)

**Jingle bells**

Ben Carlson, *bells*

## TRANSLATIONS

### **Sanctus (sung in Latin)**

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.  
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.  
Hosana in the highest.

### **Hodie (sung in Latin)**

Today is Christ born,  
Glory to God in the highest.  
Today the Savior has appeared,  
today the angels sing on earth  
Today the righteous rejoice, saying  
Glory to God in the highest.

### **Locus Iste (sung in Latin)**

Consecrated in worship be this place,  
consecrated to the Lord our God.  
In worship consecrate this place  
as an inestimable sacrament.  
Blameless without fault forever.

### **O Magnum Mysterium (sung in Latin)**

O great mystery, and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should see the new-born Lord  
lying in a manger.  
Blessed Virgin, whose womb was worthy  
to bear our Lord Christ.  
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.

### **Hodie, nobis de caelo (sung in Latin)**

#### **Peace Today Descends from Heaven**

Today for us true peace  
from Heaven came down.  
Today throughout the whole world,  
the Heavens distilled honey.  
Today there shone for us  
a day of new redemption,  
a long-expected restoration  
of eternal happiness.  
Alleluia!

**Wana Baraka** (sung in Swahili)

They have blessings, those who pray;  
Jesus himself said so. Alleluia!  
They have peace; they have joy;  
they have well-being.

**Veni, Veni Emmanuel** (sung in Latin)

O come, o come, the "I AM" that is with us.  
Break the bond of the captive people  
who mourn in exile  
derived of the incarnation of the father.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The great "I AM"  
will be born for you.

O come, gatherer of all nations,  
come to make us whole,  
to save your servants  
from their separateness.

O come, thou light of life (Morningstar)  
to shine on us by your coming,  
dispel the clouds of night,  
drive away the shadows of death.

**O Tannenbaum** (sung in German)

O fir tree, o fir tree,  
how faithful are your branches!  
You're green not only in the summertime,  
but, also, in winter when it snows.

O fir tree, o fir tree,  
you can very much please me!  
How often has at Christmastime  
a tree like you delighted me!

O fir tree, o fir tree, your dress  
has something to teach me!  
Hope and durability,  
give trust and strength always.

#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Ragazzi Boys Chorus** is one of the San Francisco Bay Area's premier music and performance organizations for boys. Currently serving more than 175 boys from over 100 schools in more than 30 communities, Ragazzi is the largest boys chorus in the Bay Area. Ragazzi means "boys" in Italian, and is the term used in opera to refer to children's voices.

Ragazzi has performed with the San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Symphony, Opera San Jose, Symphony Silicon Valley, and the Stanford University Symphonic Chorus, among others. Ragazzi was honored for its contribution to the San Francisco Symphony's triple Grammy Award-winning recording of Stravinsky's *Perséphone* and produces its own discography. Under the leadership of Artistic and Executive Director Kent Jue, the group tours throughout the United States and internationally to widen chorus members' cultural and musical horizons and deepen Ragazzi's reputation for performance excellence.

**Kent Jue**, *Artistic and Executive Director; Director of Concert Group/Choral Scholars*, is an experienced choral conductor, music educator, and facilitator for lifelong learning in music. An energetic teacher, adjudicator, guest clinician, workshop presenter, and mentor, he is known for building high-level musicianship skills through his engaging style and rapport with students. He has a passion for uncovering the full artistic and expressive potential of individual choristers in an ensemble setting. Kent conducts Ragazzi's most accomplished treble singers, Concert Group, and the select tenor and bass Choral Scholars. He has toured extensively with the Ragazzi program and has led Ragazzi choirs to numerous festivals. An avid collaborator, Kent has prepared ensembles for performances with organizations including San Francisco Symphony, Symphony Silicon Valley, Opera San Jose, and

West Bay Opera. Kent has also conducted youth choruses at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and performed and recorded with the Golden Gate Men's Chorus and the Gay Men's Choruses of San Francisco and Boston. He has a Masters of Music Education, with a Kodaly Emphasis from Holy Names University, a Bachelor of Music, Music Education from the University of the Pacific, a certificate in the Orff-Schulwerk method of music education, and holds a CA teaching credential. As Ragazzi's second Artistic Director, Kent is honored to continue Ragazzi's legacy of musical excellence, and its tradition of developing choral artists of character and distinction.

**Travis Rogers**, *Young Men's Ensemble Director*, has been a professional choral conductor for 45 years. He retired from Napa High School after 37 years as the choral music director, where his ensembles won the most awards of any high school in California at Golden State Invitational Choral Festivals, also earning top honors at several national and international competitions. Mr. Rogers began the school's first Men's Choir with 20 students, growing the program to include 220 men in three separate male ensembles. Most young men enrolled with no previous choral training yet earned "Unanimous Superior" ratings at area choral festivals, a story told in the film *Top Row* which chronicled the school's Beginning Men's Choir's preparation and performance at their first choral competition. Mr. Rogers has served the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) California Chapter in many capacities including repertoire and standards chair for high school and male choirs, summer conference chair and President. He is now President of the western division of ACDA. Mr. Rogers has conducted over thirty honor and district choirs in northern and central California. He has been a choral competition/festival adjudicator and clinician for over thirty years as well as a frequent presenter at



professional conferences for ACDA and CMEA.

**Yongyu Gao**, *Collaborative Pianist* began playing the accordion at age four, establishing a strong musical foundation for piano studies she began at the age of 10. In 2005, Yongyu won first place in the Beijing National Accordion Competition, and third place in the Beijing National Piano Competition. This experience helped her focus on piano, and in 2009, she graduated with a BA from South China University in Music Education with an emphasis in piano performance. After moving to the United States, she played for the Inna Opera Group at the Community Music Center in San Francisco. Yongyu continued her study in piano performance as a Walker Scholar at San Jose State University, earning her Master's degree in 2013. She accompanies for the Burlingame School District and Junipero Serra High School in San Mateo, and is an active performer throughout the Bay Area. She also serves as a pianist and organist at Burlingame United Methodist Church. She is a member of the Music Teachers Association of California, and her piano students regularly participate in the Certificate of Merit and Royal School of Music programs and exams.

**Nancy Whitecar**, *Assistant Young Men's Ensemble Director; Collaborative Pianist*, is a professional musician and music educator with over 30 years of experience. She teaches general music classes at The Music School at the Sunnyvale Presbyterian church and accompanies instrumentalists and choirs throughout the Bay Area. Nancy has directed children's and youth choirs, and taught piano to students of all ages. She served as accompanist and assistant director of the BeckRidge Chorale in Southeast Michigan for over 20 years, and as Associate Director of Music at the First United Methodist Church in Plymouth, Michigan. Nancy is a member of the Music Teachers National Association, and the

California Association of Professional Music Teachers. She graduated from the University of Illinois, and holds a Piano Teacher Certificate from Schoolcraft College in Michigan.

### YOUNG MEN'S ENSEMBLE

Misha Aganin	Paolo Marasco
Spencer Bergland	Nick McKee
Simon Braun	Lincoln Mendenhall
Ben Carlson	Krishna Nagarajan
Yanni Cheng	Matteo Navarro
Brandon Cho †	Charlie Pellegrin
Armani Choy †	John Phillips
Danny Cox	Leon Qin
Manny Cox	Diego Ramirez
Todd Crandell	Peter Reeves
Christopher Culwell	Paul Sapilewski
Jack Day	Yash Saxena
Sam Dickey	Zachary Sayyah
Ronin Fanelli	Armaan Sharma
Quinn Goldberg	James Thomas
David Gu	Charlie Trainor
Aryan Gupta	Javier Tulabing
Gabriel Hawkins	Declan Twomey
Finley Heinzen	Adrian Vahamaki †
Carter Hendrix	Marvin Valdez
Brij Howard-Sarin	Tom Vosganian
Nicholas Hu †	Theo Waltuch
Miles Kaludzinski	Thomas Williams
Jackson Kay	Brian Wu
William Keller	Daniel Wu †
Olivier Kondo	Ethan Zettler-Bray
Amit Krishnan †	
Luca Lit †	†Section Leader
Henry Liu	

### CHORAL SCHOLARS

Misha Aganin	Luca Lit †
Spencer Bergland	Henry Liu
Simon Braun	Paolo Marasco
Yanni Cheng	Lincoln Mendenhall
Todd Crandell	Leon Qin
Quinn Goldberg	Yash Saxena
Aryan Gupta	Adrian Vahamaki †
Finley Heinzen	Marvin Valdez
Brij Howard-Sarin	Tom Vosgianian
Nicholas Hu †	Brian Wu
Miles Kaludzinski	
Amit Krishnan †	†Section Leader

### CONCERT GROUP

Andrew Altorfer**	Liam Lowitz**
Ian Bass*	Albert Luo
Calvin Blanford	Kyan Mayenkar
Logan Crawford	Smaran Narayanan^^
Nick Damon	Finn Reese
Alex Dujmovic	Hersh Saxena
Kui Fine	Arthur Scholom
Ollie Gullick	Johan Sijp
Eli Hart	Nikhil Srinivasan
Talinn Hatti&	Connor Statton
Kash Hodges^	Luke Suffoletto
Jonah Hsu	Adrian Twomey
Elliot Lee	Iker Vahamaki
Ethan Leonard	Abraham Villeda
Ming Lim	Justin Vives
Brandon Liu	Brenden Yu
Isaac Liu	Joshua Zheng
Michael Long	
Concert Group leadership designations:	^Team Captain
*Head Chorister	^^ Student Conductor
**Assistant Head Chorister	& Head Chorister Emeritus

## COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

**Friday, December 17 at 8 pm**

**Golden Bough—*Christmas in a Celtic Land***

**Margie Butler, Paul Espinoza & Kathy Sierra**

This joyful Celtic Christmas Concert is a wonderful opportunity for the whole family to gather together to celebrate and drive the cold winter away with Golden Bough's unique Yuletide presentation.

**Saturday, December 18 at 8 pm**

**Robin Sutherland: celebrating a towering musical genius**  
**Christopher Basso, Elizabeth Dorman, Keisuke Nakagoshi,**  
**Marc Shapiro, *piano*; Jack Van Geem & Daniel Hallett,**  
*marimbas*

Celebrating the life of Robin Sutherland with performances of music by Bach, Debussy, Beethoven, Respighi, Bolcom, and Bernstein by several of his closest friends.

**Friday, January 7 at 8 pm**

**Solomon Ge, *piano***

A young rising star pianist and Bay Area native, Solomon Ge makes his San Francisco recital debut with a program of beloved works by Bach, Ravel, Beethoven, and Prokofiev, plus one of his own compositions.

**Saturday, January 8 at 8 pm**

**Slow Wave—Kyle Beard, *clarinet*; Justine Preston, *viola*;**  
**Naomi Stine, *piano***

Exploring the slower end of the sound wave spectrum, Slow Wave performs the World Premieres of works by Bay Area composers Joowan Kim, Emma Logan, and Kyle Hovatter, plus recent works by Brett Eastman and Kalevi Aho.

*For tickets & more information visit [www.olderfirstconcerts.org](http://www.olderfirstconcerts.org)*

## COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

**Sunday, January 23 at 4 pm**

**Basma Edrees, violin & Ava Nazar, piano**

*From Brahms to Piazzolla through Reza Vali*

Basma & Ava's program revolves around the music of the contemporary Iranian composer Reza Vali. Nicknamed the Persian Bartók, Vali is considered one of today's leading exponents of using folk songs as a basis for composing contemporary music.

**Friday, January 28 at 8 pm**

**Chelsea Hollow, soprano & Taylor Chan, piano**

*Cycles of Resistance*

A program chronologically exploring poetry and texts of resilience and rebellion throughout the 20th and 21st centuries featuring nine world premieres in eight languages.

**Sunday, January 30 at 4 pm**

**Ives Collective**

**Kay Stern, violin; Jeremy Preston, violin; Susan**

**Freier, viola; Stephen Harrison, cello; Elizabeth**

**Schumann, piano**

The Ives Collective presents powerful live music experiences through fresh and informed interpretations of established masterworks and underappreciated gems. This performance includes works by Mahler, Schubert, and Bruch.

**Friday, February 4 at 8 pm**

**Circadian String Quartet—*Fanny and Felix***

**Monika Gruber, violin; David Ryther, violin; Omid Assadi, viola; David Wishnia, cello**

Celebrate the enduring musicality and strong bond of the famous sister and brother composers—Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn—both prodigiously talented musicians but unequally supported and encouraged in their talents due to the prevalent sexism of the time.

## COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

**Sunday, February 6 at 4 pm**

**Sierra Ensemble**

**Matthew Vincent**, *violin*; **Janis Liberman**, *horn*; **Marc Steiner**, *piano*

Sierra Ensemble performs the premieres of two genre-expanding new works for horn, violin and piano: the World Premiere of Richard Aldag's *Trio for Violin, French horn, and Piano* and the US Premiere of Tolga Özdemir's *Chaopolis*.

**Friday, February 11 at 8 pm**

**Passionflower Duo—Schubert's Winterreise**

**Gabrielle Lochard**, *soprano* & **Jonathan Liu**, *piano*

A new reading of Franz Schubert's *Winterreise* by the dynamic recital partnership Passionflower Duo, specializing in classical song. "In preparing the piece, we've tried to approach it with an eye towards life, sincerity, and sometimes even a sense of humor, to find some of these colors and textures in the meditation on grief and heartbreak that *Winterreise* presents.

*For tickets & more information visit [www.oldfirstconcerts.org](http://www.oldfirstconcerts.org)*

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<b>Bravissimo!</b> (\$1000 and up)	Barbara Marré	Erika Bodo
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<b>Enthusiastic Applause</b> (\$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.