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presents

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new short operas and other delights

Winnie Nieh, soprano

Nikola Printz, mezzo-soprano

Sidney Chen, bass-baritone

Doug Machiz, cello

Monica Chew, piano

Chesley Mok, piano

Friday, October 7, 2022 at 8 PM

Old First Church

1751 Sacramento St. at Van Ness Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94109

(415) 474-1608 www.oldfirstconcerts.org

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.

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.
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Enjoy free concerts, make new friends, and help support your favorite non-profit organization! Volunteering with Old First Concerts is a wonderful opportunity for students, seniors, or anyone with a passion for music—and we'll work with your availability!

contact: curtishuth@oldfirstconcerts for more information.

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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/

You can also find us on **Instagram @oldfirstconcerts** with information about upcoming events plus photos and videos from our concerts.

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COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Sunday, October 23 at 4 pm

Stephen Porter, piano—*Beethoven and Buddhism*

A program that interweaves Beethoven's mystical final piano sonatas with little-known entries from the composer's diary (the Tagebuch) which show his fascination with Indian religion and philosophy.

Tuesday, October 25 at 8 pm

Jerome Kuderna & Jed Distler, piano duo

Acclaimed virtuoso Jerome Kuderna and New York-based composer, pianist, critic and radio host Jed Distler join forces to perform a rarely heard piano duet arrangement of Gustav Mahler's *Symphony No. 9*.

Friday, November 4 at 8 pm

Conspiracy of Venus—Joyce Todd McBride, Director

The "intoxicating" San Francisco-based women's vocal ensemble premiere new work created during the pandemic, including arrangements of music by PJ Harvey and Iris DeMent alongside works by Björk, Joni Mitchell, Roger Miller, Leonard Cohen, David Bowie, Chris Cornell, and Joyce Todd McBride.

For tickets & more information visit www.oldfirstconcerts.org

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PROGRAM

S. A. Workman

Vocalises – premiere

I. Winnie Nieh and Doug Machiz

II. Nikola Printz and Doug Machiz

III. Sidney Chen and Doug Machiz

Monica Chew

The COVID Bake-Off – premiere

Libretto by Sandra Flores-Strand

The Vendetta

I'm Bobby V.

Suck it up, buttercup!

Interlude

What's that smell?

Rosé Glasses

Ready, set, BAKE!

Winnie Nieh, Nikola Printz, Sidney Chen,
Doug Machiz, and Monica Chew

INTERMISSION

Davide Verotta

Earth Journeys – premiere

In a Universe

Carbon Explosion

Portrait of an Interior

From Fiery Dust to Fiery Dust

Winnie Nieh, Nikola Printz, Sidney Chen,
Doug Machiz, and Chesley Mok

S. A. Workman

Simpler Things for 3 Voices – premiere

Winnie Nieh, Nikola Printz, Sidney Chen, and
Chesley Mok

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Shawne Workman

Vocalises I–III

These three short pieces were inspired by the beauty and skill of the voices you'll hear, and of all the artists performing tonight. The central hope is to provide a few uncomplicated moments to relax and enjoy the flow, the feel, and just a tiny sampling of the sound these people can create.

A longtime resident of the San Francisco Bay Area, concert and media composer **Shawne (S. A.) Workman** enjoys creating new music with a sense of story and place, through varied combinations of notated material, original text, virtual instruments, and audio manipulation. She studied composition and media composing with Elinor Armer and Lennie Moore at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she currently teaches courses in music production and hybrid acoustic/electronic orchestral composition. saworkman.com.

The COVID Bake-Off—Synopsis

music by **Monica Chew**, libretto by **Sandra Flores-Strand**

Act 1 Scene 1 (Lilly's Bedroom)

Lilly wakes up and she still has no taste or smell. She sings about wanting to regain her senses before the big competition. She reads an article that makes her feel encouraged that she might get her taste back by tomorrow. She decides to call Eve, her sous chef, to help her come up with a plan to get her taste back. As she goes to call Eve, Bobby, her nemesis, calls to antagonize her.

Act 1 Scene 2 (The Competition)

On the day of the competition, Lilly and Eve try a variety of methods to help her regain her taste. Lilly worries that Bobby might sabotage her again and Eve confirms her suspicions about Bobby and his cheating family. Before the competition

COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Sunday, October 9 at 4 pm

Wooden Fish Ensemble—**Thomas Schultz**, *piano*; **Terrie Baune**, *violin*; **Ellen Ruth Rose**, *viola*; **Sarah Hong**, *cello*

Celebrating their 20th anniversary, Wooden Fish Ensemble performs the World Premiere of Hyo-shin Na's *Quadrangle of Light* plus Morton Feldman's last work *Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello*.

Sunday, October 16 at 4 pm

Strobe—*Double Fantasy*

Laura Griffiths, *oboe*; **Stephanie Bibbo**, *violin*; **Caroline Lee**, *viola*; **Krisanthy Desby**, *cello*

The only dedicated oboe quartet in the US presents *Double Fantasy*, featuring two fantasies by Britten and Moeran alongside two rags by Russo and Desby.

Monday, October 17 at 7:30 pm

Earplay—*Dream Sequence*

Mary Chun, *conductor*

Terrie Baune, *violin*; **Tod Brody**, *flutes*; **Peter Josheff**, *clarinets*; **Thalia Moore**, *cello*; **Ellen Ruth Rose**, *cello*

Pre-concert talk at 6:45

Celebrating the centennial of Andrew Imbrie's birth with a performance of his at turns playful, passionate, and perturbed *Dream Sequence*, along with works by Hyo-shin Na, Tyshawn Sorey, and Fred Lerdahl.

Friday, October 21 at 8 pm

Ensemble for These Times—*CelesTrios*

Nanette McGuinness, *soprano*; **Abigail Monroe**, *cello*; **Margaret Halbig**, *piano*; with guests **Mia Nardi-Huffman**, *violin*; **Otis Harriel**, *violin*; **Doug Machiz**, *cello*

Award-winning contemporary chamber music group E4TT opens its 15th anniversary celebrating works written for three instruments in *CelesTrios*, including a premiere by Elena Ruehr.

For tickets & more information visit www.oldfirstconcerts.org

Nelson's *Path of Miracles*, and creating the roles of Apollo in Anne Hege's laptop opera *The Furies* with Stanford Laptop Orchestra and Alex in Lisa Mezzacappa's serial podcast opera *The Electronic Lover*. As a member of Meredith Monk's Vocal Ensemble, he has performed internationally and recorded for ECM Records. At home in San Francisco, he performs regularly with the new-music chamber chorus Volti and the nine-voice ensemble Clerestory. His solo performances often include DIY music boxes, which have been featured in a *Chronicle Datebook* cover story. sidneychenarts.com.

Cellist **Doug Machiz** is in high demand as both a classical and contemporary musician. He co-founded the Friction Quartet, a nonprofit performing arts organization whose mission is to modernize the chamber music experience and expand the string quartet repertoire. The group has recorded two full-length albums and, through the Friction Commissioning Initiative, has funded the creation of 12 new works for string quartet. Doug is on faculty at The Crowden School, where he teaches private cello lessons and ensembles. With his quartet, Doug has also performed at every public elementary school in San Francisco.

Pianist **Chesley Mok** graduated from the University of California, Irvine with a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance and received a Master of Music at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying Collaborative Piano with Timothy Bach. A diverse pianist, Chesley works with both vocalists and instrumentalists across a wide range of genres, from standard classical repertory to new music. A Bay Area native, Chesley has performed with many local organizations including the Golden State Youth Symphony, California Youth Symphony, and Crystal Children's Choir. Currently, she is the pianist for the SF Girls Chorus Premier Ensemble. Aside from her collaborative work, Chesley also enjoys teaching piano and violin to youth across the Bay Area.

begins, Bobby unintentionally confesses that he sabotaged Lilly's ingredients in the first round. It's announced that Bobby's Sous chef, Vinny V., failed his covid test, so Bobby will have to compete on his own. Lilly and Eve rejoice and delight in making jabs at Bobby throughout the competition. Lilly wins the competition.

Monica Chew is an Oakland pianist and composer. Her 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*), she has been featured on radio stations worldwide. She started composing in 2017 and couldn't be happier about it. Prior to 2015, she worked nearly a decade as a principal software engineer on security and privacy at Mozilla and Google. She lives in Oakland with her husband, an 1899 Steinway B, a clavichord, and a disused violin.

Librettist **Sandra Flores-Strand** is based in the US and Canada. She writes on a variety of topics but feels compelled to tell stories with a focus on marginalized communities, particularly Latin American representation on stage. Sandra has an extensive background in classical singing and theatrical production and her works have been featured by Opera America, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, the Arizona Women's Collaborative, Really Spicy Opera, and more. Sandra is currently working on an opera commission for the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as projects with the Arizona Commission on the Arts, her opera *La Alcaldesa*, about Doña Fela, the first female Mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, and other projects.

Earth Journeys—music and text by **Davide Verotta**

Earth Journeys is a fast-paced tale that takes us through a few billion years. It is divided in four sections. The first, *In un Universo (In a Universe)*, narrates the forming of earth; the

second, *Carbon Explosion*, is about the bizarre explosion of carbon-based life on earth. The third, *Quadro d'interno* (*Portrait of an interior*), narrows down from the cosmic and planetary to the human, in a portrait of a woman ravaged by loss; it is inspired by *The Trojans*, the proto-feminist, pacifist tragedy written by Euripides in 415 B.C.E. The last section, *Of Fire*, takes us back to the cosmic—to the fiery end of the solar system and the beginning that emerges from the fire.

Davide Verotta was born in an Italian town close to Milano and moved to San Francisco as an eager twenty-six-year-old. A professor at UCSF in biomathematics and statistics (gasp) for thirty years, he has been actively involved in the San Francisco music scene for a good twenty five, and eventually left math behind to concentrate exclusively on composing. He studied piano at the Milano Conservatory ages ago. Composition is more recent, with studies at SFSU, where he earned an MA, and UC Davis. Davide teaches piano and composition privately and at the Community Music Center in San Francisco. He has received numerous local commissions, international competition prizes, and composition grants. For more information, please visit www.davideverotta.com.

Simpler Things for 3 Voices

text and music by **Shawne (S. A.) Workman**

This set of brief, simple tunes is meant as a reminder, in essence a note-to-self that in repudiation of conflict, cruelty and life's other nasties, small things we experience every day can provide points of focus – and that as we relax and look closer, these smallest events might reveal startling beauty and surprising moments of peace that are anything but simple.

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

Soprano **Winnie Nieh** graduated from Harvard and received Associate diplomas from Trinity College London in piano, violin and voice. Gifted with perfect pitch and a “well-

focused”, “impeccably pure and heart-breaking” voice, she has appeared as a soloist at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and the Austrian Embassy, and in Germany, Canada, South Korea and Hong Kong. She made her European solo debut with Maestro Helmuth Rilling in Bach's *Cantata BWV 147*. She won First Place in St. Andrews Arts Council's International Aria Competition, Third Place & Audience Favorite in Madison Early Music Festival's Handel Aria Competition, was a National Finalist in New York Lyric Opera's Competition, and a Runner-up in two consecutive *San Francisco Classical Voice* Best of the Bay polls. She serves on the Board of Trustees of Grammy-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer.

Nikola Printz, *mezzo-soprano*, is a multifaceted performer whose talents occupy many fora. Not only can they be seen on the operatic stage, but they are also an accomplished circus artist with a concentration being on static and dance trapeze. Nikola has performed many roles in the standard repertoire, including the titular roles of *Carmen*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, as well as Poulenc's *La voix humaine*, *Barber of Seville*, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Cherubino), *The Rape of Lucretia* (Lucretia) and much more. Nikola is honored to be a 2021 and 2022 Merola young artist with the San Francisco Opera, with whom they recently debuted their Schwabacher recital to rave reviews. Nikola was also a participant of the 2020/2021 BANFF Centre's Opera in the 21st Century program—focusing on diversity and inclusion in the opera world. Nikola will be returning as a resident artist for the Opera San Jose 2023 season. Nikola has studied under the tutelage of Patricia Craig and Sheri Greenawald.

Bass-baritone **Sidney Chen**, whose voice has been described by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “expressive and richly mellifluous,” is passionate about creating new work through collaboration with artists of all disciplines. Current projects include touring with ODC/Dance as a guest performer in KT