

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

presents

OLD FIRST CONCERTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thomas Culp, *President*

Randal P. Wong, *Secretary*

Darren Presher, *Treasurer*

Christopher Burt

Krisanthi Desby

Walter Kennedy

Donna Kline

Barbara Marré

C. James Riggs

Bill Rudiak

Stephen Taber

Mike Tekulsky

Brett Waxdeck

STAFF

Matthew Wolka, *Director*

Rick Bahto, *Program Associate*

Curtis Huth, *House Manager*

Transformations
ENSEMBLE FOR THESE TIMES

Nanette McGuinness, *soprano*

Jennifer Redondas, *violin*

Megan Chartier, *cello*

Margaret Halbig, *piano*

Friday, September 22, 2023 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.
Thank you!

VOLUNTEERING WITH OLD FIRST CONCERTS

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.

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** with information about upcoming events plus photos and videos from our concerts.

OLD FIRST CONCERTS DONORS

Standing Ovation

(\$250 - \$499)
Anonymous (2)
Jean Ahn
George Becker
Roland & Lois Feller
Jim Clavin
Edward & Patricia Hymson
Robert S. & Marion Koerper
Blumberg
Betty Meissner
Aaron & Eva Paul
James P. Robinson
Abby Rumsey
Pamela Sebastian
Elizabeth Varnhagen
Enthusiastic Applause
(\$100 - \$249)
B. Amaroso
Barbara Bagot-Lopez
Sarah Bailis
Kathy Barr
Christine Beckstrom
Miriam Blatt
Katherine & Michael
Boeninghausen – in honor
of Joyce Frankenburg
Barbara & Howard Bomze
Bill & Marilyn Campbell
Herrick Carver
Joseph Charpentier
Donald Cohon
Stanley Corfman
Homer Dalbey
Joanne DePhillips
Julia Erickson
Judith Ets-Hokin
David Featherstone
William Feister &
Judith Ross
Patricia Ferrari
Rachel Fisher
Thomas Flaherty
Doris Flamm
Thomas Foutch
Yuko Franklin
and Club Glee
RT Freebairn-Smith

Robert Friedman Presents
Shoko Furuya &
Christopher Kitting
Dr. & Mrs. E. C. Gaenslen
David Garlock
Rochelle Gatlin
William Grant
Elizabeth Greening
Helen & Michael Gross
David Hammer
Eleanor Hammer
Barbara Imbrie
Ron Jin & the
Jin-Allen Family
Sally Ketchum
Hee Shik Kim
Howard & Wendy Kleckner
Michael Korbholz
Laurence Kornfield
Marshall Krause
Pam Zipkin &
Robert Lampkin
Will Leben
Yunnie Lee
Mack & Meikui McCray
Henry Mahncke &
Kimberly Tanner
Robert Maldonado
Jordan Monchamont
Milton Mosk
Karen Mottola
Barbara Mow
Randall Murley
Regina Myers
Hitomi Onizuka
Helen Pellegrin
Phil Rettger
Linda Reyder
Joan Rost
Art Rothstein
Sue Rupp
Bob & Terri Ryan
Donald Ryan
Jack Shoemaker
Leslie & Bob Stafford
Margaret Studier
Ted Teipel
Robert & Martha Warnock
George Wiepert
Jessica Bodo Wise
Danielle & Gary Wohl
Margaret Wrensch
Keith Yamamoto
Jie Yang
Norman Young
Friends of Old First Concerts
Anonymous
Susan Baker-Lehne
Ralph Beren
Edward Bergh
Barbara Bernhart
Sherman Chan
Hal Christiansen
Helen Cohen
Fred Cummins
John Diamante
Chauncy DiLaura
James Dooley
Janet Elliott
Karen Fox
Maggi Henderson
Alice Glasner
John Gosselin
Joan Intrator
John Kasper
Julie Kierstine
Bonnie Knight
Barbara Koening
Allison Levy
Xiao Liu
Julia Dorsey Loomis
Hadley McCarroll
Sarah J. McCuskey
Alan & Hitomi Onizuka
Stephani Phipps
Charles Quesenberg
Becky A. Reed
Terry Rillera
Mary Russell
Ralph Samuel
Kathleen Smith
Katie Struble
Stephanie Winters

COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Friday, October 6 at 8 pm

Utsav Lal—Raga Pianist

with guests **Nilan Chaudhuri**, *tabla* & **George Brooks**, *saxophone*

Indian Pianist/composer Utsav Lal presents a genre colliding concert of Indian Classical Ragas and beyond through his distinctive voice on the piano. His concert features both traditional presentations, as well as new avenues of exploration drawing from raga music.

Sunday, October 8 at 4 pm

Zachary Donaldson, *lute*

A tour of the lute in renaissance Europe, from the by the free-flowing improvisatory style of 16th century Spanish composer Luís Milán to the fiery and stunning toccatas of early 17th century Italian composers such as Alessandro Piccinini and Giovanni Kapsberger, including hidden gems rarely performed and well-known favorites by John Dowland and Josquin des Pres.

Sunday, October 15 at 4 pm

Monica Chew, *piano*—*Best Friends*

Oakland composer and pianist presents a program of pairs of pieces she enjoys hearing side-by-side by Joshua Uzoigwe, Ali Osman, Stacy Fahrion, Emahoy Tsege Mariam Gebru, Dmitri Shostakovich, and Ulvi Cemal Erkin, which make delightfully simpatico companions.

For tickets & more information visit www.oldfirstconcerts.org

OLD FIRST CONCERTS DONORS

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

PROGRAM

inti figgis-vizueta (b. 1993)

a bridge between starshine and clay (2018)

Halbig

Franz Schreker (1878–1934)

from **Acht Lieder, Op. 7** (1898–1900)

Wiegenliedchen

Zu späte Reue

Rosentod

McGuinness, Halbig

Lisa Bielawa (b. 1968)

The Dragon and the Girl (2014)

Chartier

Darian Donovan Thomas (b. 1993)

from **Fluid** (2016)

I. Fluid

Redondas

INTERMISSION

Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951) arr. By Eduard Steuermann

Verklärte Nacht (1899)

Redondas, Chartier, Halbig

Transformations is supported, in part, by a grant from the Alice M. Ditson Foundation. E4TT's 2023/24 season is sponsored, in part, by a grant from The Ross McKee Foundation.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

What would today's music be like without the work of the towering artistic figure and American immigrant Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951)? Many argue that contemporary classical and film music would have followed a vastly different course without his powerful, liberating influence, his exploration of atonality and serialism, and his Expressionist compositions. With the 150th anniversary of Schoenberg's birth in 2024, E4TT's 16th season is aiming a spotlight on his music, and his influence, placed in a musical dialogue with works by composers of today.

We open our Schoenberg season with **Transformations**, a concert about various kinds of transformation—physical, biological, emotional, environmental, and musical. The centerpiece of tonight's concert is Schoenberg's early Expressionist masterpiece *Verklärte Nacht* (piano trio arrangement), which we've placed in a musical conversation with works by contemporary composers Lisa Bielawa, inti figgis-vizueta, and Darian Donovan Thomas, along with songs by Schoenberg's contemporary, Franz Schreker.

inti figgis-vizueta says, "At its core, *a bridge between starshine and clay* is just that: a piece that underlines the intersections between the binaries that create it. But in connecting interactions between left and right hands, low and high registers, or performer and instrument, those binaries are revealed to be false—a bridge that joins, but also dissolves." The work (and its title) was inspired by *summer, somewhere*, by Danez Smith, which itself quotes the title from *Won't You Celebrate with Me* by Lucille Clifton.

Known in his day primarily as an opera composer, **Franz Schreker's** music was a heady mélange of late Romanticism, Impressionism, chromaticism, polytonality and tonality. The three songs on today's program come from his Op. 7, and describe a miniature story arc, from a sweet lullaby to regrets about scorned love to loveless death.

Lisa Bielawa's *The Dragon and the Girl* is a study for an episode of Bielawa's opera *Vireo: The Spiritual Biography of a Witch's Accuser*.

In 2023, Halbig was appointed collaborative piano coordinator of Interlochen Arts Camp and has been the pianist for Young Women's Chorus of San Francisco since 2014. An advocate of new and contemporary music, she is the pianist and a board member of San Francisco-based new music collective Ninth Planet and has also. Halbig earned her DMA from the University of California Santa Barbara and performance degrees from the University of Missouri, Kansas City Conservatory and University of Evansville.

Soprano and E4TT co-founder and Artistic Executive Director **Nanette McGuinness** has performed in 13 languages on two continents in over 25 roles with the Silesian State (Czech Republic), Opera San Jose (Opera in the Schools), and West Bay Opera, Pacific Repertory Opera, Trinity Lyric Opera, and Livermore Valley Opera, among others. Solo concert engagements include Mahler's Fourth Symphony, as well as *Shéhérazade* (Ravel), *Nuits d'étés* (Berlioz), *Stabat Mater* (Rossini), *Requiem* (Fauré), *Gloria* (Vivaldi), *Lord Nelson Mass* (Haydn), *Vesperae Solennes* (Mozart), and Handel's *Messiah* and *Solomon*. McGuinness has been featured on seven albums with Centaur and Yuggoth Records, and her CD of music by 19th and 20th century women composers, *Fabulous Femmes* (Centaur)—was called "perfect for the song recital lover" by *Chamber Music Magazine*. She earned her PhD in Music (specializing in Musicology) at UC Berkeley, MM in Vocal Performance from Holy Names College, and BA in Music from Cornell University.

Originally from Cuba, violinist/violist **Jennifer Redondas** has performed as a soloist in the U.S., Netherlands, Italy, Austria, France and Cuba in venues that include the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Mozarteum in Austria. As a historical violinist and violist, she has participated in the Oregon Bach Festival and Berwick Academy under the direction of Jos van Veldhoven. Her passion for Cuban music and jazz has led her to perform at SF Jazz with renowned artists such as Chris Potter, Anat Cohen and Chucho Valdés. An active member of the "Adventures in Music" program at the San Francisco Symphony, Redondas was a Fellow for the Classical Tahoe Orchestra 2023 season. She holds a Master's Degree in Violin Performance from the SF Conservatory of Music.

by the U.S. Embassy in Budapest for a four-city tour of Hungary in 2014; and performed at the Krakow Culture Festival in 2016 and 2022, and at the Conservatorio Teresa Berganza in Madrid in 2017. E4TT has performed locally at the German Consulate General, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Old First Concerts, JCC Peninsula, Trinity Chamber Concerts, and Noontime Concerts, among other venues. E4TT has released four albums, all of which have medaled in the Global Music Awards: *The Guernica Project* (2022), commemorating the 85th anniversary of the horrific carpet bombing of civilians and Picasso's masterwork in response; *Oncel/ Memory/ Night: Paul Celan*, honoring the centennial of the seminal 20th century poet; *The Hungarians: From Rózsa to Justus*, with works by Hungarian émigré Miklós Rózsa, and three of his compatriots who perished in the Holocaust; and *Surviving: Women's Words*, new music to poetry by women Holocaust survivors.

Cellist **Megan Chartier** is "unafraid to display gutsy abandon," as described by the *South Florida Classical Review*. She has performed throughout North America and Europe as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral cellist. Her current positions include core cellist of the Astralis Chamber Ensemble and principal cellist of Opera San Luis Obispo in California. In recent seasons, she has served as principal cellist of the Miami Symphony Orchestra and principal cellist of the Pacific Region International Summer Music Academy in Vancouver, and also recently performed with orchestras including the San Antonio Symphony, One Found Sound in San Francisco, Nu Deco Ensemble, and the Moscow Symphony Orchestra. A Semi-Finalist in the 2017 PRISMA Concerto Competition, she won 1st prize in the Ann Arbor Society of Musical Arts' 2015 Young Artist Competition and the 2015 Miami Music Festival Concerto Competition, conducted by Grzegorz Nowak of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Margaret Halbig is in high demand as a collaborative artist in both the instrumental and vocal fields. She is currently associate chair of the Voice Department and principal vocal coach at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she also frequently collaborates with faculty and student singers and instrumentalists.

Writes Bielawa, "Using motivic musical material associated with the young protagonist Vireo, who lives in three centuries at once and has fantastical visions that complicate her own life and pique the interest (and darker motivations) of those around her, the piece takes its mood (and its title) from a scene in which Vireo describes a terrifying (but totally friendly) fire-breathing dragon teaching his friend—a trusting young girl—to read ... The plot of Vireo deals with female hysteria and the ways it has been perceived and used by witch-hunters, psychiatrists, and artists over several centuries."

Darian Donovan Thomas writes, "I composed *Fluid* while meditating on the idea of a body of water interacting with vastly different civilizations over millennia. The piece is explicitly about the Yanaguana river in San Antonio, Texas. The Payaya people gave the river its name, meaning 'refreshing waters.' Later, Spanish and French missionaries would use the river, and build a university around its origin (the 'blue hole'). The river itself would become the hub of tourism and commerce in the city – no longer regarded as 'refreshing,' but still beautiful and adorned by the best jewelry of markets and restaurants capitalism has to offer."

Arnold Schoenberg based his lush tone poem *Verklärte Nacht* (*Transfigured Night*) on the eponymous poem written in 1896 by Richard Dehmel, in which a couple is walking through a forest in the moonlight when the woman tells her lover she is pregnant with another man's child from before they had met. A late Romantic/early Expressionist fin-de-siecle work, *Verklärte Nacht* unfolds in a single movement that can be divided loosely into sections that correspond to the stanzas of the poem; these explore the couple's feelings as they evolve from foreboding and sadness to acceptance and transformative forgiveness. Originally written for string sextet, *Verklärte Nacht* has been performed in numerous arrangements, including the Eduard Steuermann trio arrangement we will perform tonight.

Composer, producer, and vocalist **Lisa Bielawa** (b. 1968) is a Rome Prize winner in Musical Composition and takes inspiration for her work from literary sources and close artistic collaborations. Her

music has been described as “ruminative, pointillistic and harmonically slightly tart,” by *The New York Times*. She is the recipient of the 2017 Music Award from the American Academy of Arts & Letters and a 2020 Discovery Grant from OPERA America’s Opera Grants for Female Composers. She was named a William Randolph Hearst Visiting Artist Fellow at the American Antiquarian Society for 2018 and is Artist-in-Residence at Kaufman Music Center in New York for the 2020–2021 season. Bielawa consistently executes work that incorporates community-making as part of her artistic vision. She created music for public spaces in Lower Manhattan, and on the banks of the Tiber River.

NYC-based composer **inti figgis-vizueta** (b. 1993) writes magically real music through the lens of personal identities, braiding a childhood of overlapping immigrant communities and Black-founded Freedom schools—in Chocolate City (DC)—with direct Andean & Irish heritage and a deep connection to the land. Her musical practice is physical and visceral, attempting to reconcile historical aesthetics and experimental practices with trans & indigenous futures. *The New York Times* speaks of inti's music as “alternatively smooth & serrated” and “slyly warp[ing] time,” *The Washington Post* as “raw, scraping yet soaring,” and *The Strad* as “between the material and immaterial.” Upcoming projects include new works for the Kronos Quartet, American Composers Orchestra with the Attacca Quartet, and Roomful of Teeth in collaboration with visual artist Rose Bond.

Seminal 20th century Austrian-American composer, writer, theorist, teacher, and painter **Arnold Schoenberg** (1874–1951) began his musical journey on the violin as a child, writing his first compositions soon after. Schoenberg studied with Alexander Zemlinsky—going on to marry his sister, Mathilde—and was a major member of the Second Viennese School of composition, along with Alban Berg and Anton Webern. Schoenberg's early music was late romantic and highly expressionistic, followed by early explorations of atonality (although he preferred the term, “pantonal”), which led to his invention of the twelve-tone composition. He taught theory and composition in Berlin, but

with the rise of the Third Reich in Germany, emigrated to the US in 1933. Schoenberg went on to teach at both the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Southern California. Suffering greatly from triskaidekaphobia, he died on Friday the 13th in his 76th (7+6=13) year.

Violinist, conductor, and composer **Franz Schreker** (1878–1934) was a contemporary of Schoenberg, Zemlinsky, Berg, and Korngold in Vienna. Schreker rose to fame with the production of his opera *Der ferne Klang* in Frankfurt in 1912, reaching the height of his career by the early 1920s. Schreker was appointed to the Berlin Hochschule für Musik in 1920, where he taught until he was forced out of his position by rising antisemitism (although his father had married a Catholic wife and converted, the family's heritage was Jewish). Increasingly stressed by financial difficulties and unable to find new work, Schreker died in 1934 after a stroke at the end of 1933. Banned as “degenerate art” by the Nazis and subsequently almost forgotten, his music has been increasingly performed over the past decades.

Darian Donovan Thomas (b. 1993) is a Brooklyn-based, multi-instrumentalist, and interdisciplinary artist interested in combining genres into a single vocabulary that can express intersectionality (of medium and identity). Necessarily, he is interested in redacting all barriers to entry that have existed at the gates of any genre: this vocabulary of multiplicity will be intersectional and therefore all-inclusive. He has received a Bachelors in Music Composition from The University of the Incarnate Word, and was a 2018 New Amsterdam Composer Lab Fellow, 2018 SoSI Composer Fellow, and 2019 Banglewood Composition Fellow.

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

Winner of The American Prize in 2021 for Chamber Music Performance, **Ensemble for These Times** (E4TT) consists of award-winning soprano/ Artistic Executive Director **Nanette McGuinness**, cellist **Abigail Monroe**, pianist **Margaret Halbig**, and co-founder/ Senior Artistic Advisor composer **David Garner**. E4TT made its international debut in Berlin in 2012; was sponsored