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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.

Sunday, May 5, 2024 at 4 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.

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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!

OLD FIRST CONCERTS FONDLY REMEMBERS

Stephanie Lincoln

May 10, 1949 - May 8, 2023

A treasured friend and longtime O1C volunteer

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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, July 7 at 4 pm

AnnaLotte Smith, piano—Songs My Mother Taught Me

A program that blends classical and contemporary works embodying the enduring spirit of female strength and creativity while touching on themes of generational and cultural exchange, climate change, and our collective aspiration for a brighter future, with works by Sofia Gubaidulina, Johannes Brahms, Reena Esmail, Claude Debussy, Monica Chew, and Sergei Rachmaninoff.

Sunday, July 28 at 4 pm

Le Due Muse—NEOCLASSICAL!

Sarah Hong, cello & Makiko Ooka, piano

Le Due Muse is a cello and piano duo team formed by the Bay Area cellist Sarah Hong and her long time duo partner, Japanese pianist Makiko Ooka in the year 2000. They return to Old First Concerts to share works by Ravel and Bridge, neoclassical pioneer composers who influenced Britten, as well as works by Britten himself.

For tickets & more information visit www.oldfirstconcerts.org

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PROGRAM

Germaine Tailleferre (1892–1983)

Quatuor (1919)

Modéré

Intermède

Final. Vif—un peu lent

Emilie Mayer (1812–1883)

Piano Quartet No. 1 in G major (1857)

Andante—Allegro

Adagio

Scherzo

Allegro

Intermission

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

String Quintet in C major, K. 515 (1787)

Allegro

Menuetto (Allegretto)—Trio

Andante

Allegro

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Germaine Tailleferre (1892–1983) *Quatuor* (1917-19)

Like the first version of Germaine Tailleferre's *Piano Trio*, which the Ives Collective presented last season, her *String Quartet* is a very early work. Tailleferre's student years were both brilliant and colorful. She began her studies at the Conservatoire at the age of 12, although initial opposition from her father caused her to attend her lessons in secret, sometimes taken there by the very nuns who were supposed to be instructing at a Catholic boarding school. Her many prizes at the Conservatoire mollified her father to the extent

that she could openly attend, but he refused to financially support her, and she had to give music lessons from an early age. In addition to her musical triumphs, she was interested in aviation, and earned her pilot's license at 21. There is also a story in her memoirs in which she, her younger brother (an aviator in the French Air Force), his commanding officer and (most improbably) her counterpoint teacher ascended in a hot air balloon on a stormy night in 1913, landing in a cow pasture in the middle of the night in the midst of a driving rainstorm. Tailleferre's studies were functionally ended by the Great War, as her composition class first shrank to four students and then was cancelled altogether.

The *String Quartet* began life as a two-movement *Sonatina for Strings*, composed in 1917. This version was premiered by an all-female string quartet in January 1918, and was one of her very first works to be played in public. Tailleferre added a third movement in 1919. Although the third movement was not composed all that much later than the rest of the quartet, it is both about as long as the previous two movements combined, and in a rather different style. The first movement is in a three-part form, with the outer sections constructed by a simple, folk song-like melody passed from instrument to instrument and accompanied by pungent harmonies. The middle section is more expressive. The second movement, a fleet scherzo played with mutes, has a similar structure. Here, the outer sections find the quartet playing the dance-like rhythms together, while the middle section is again more flowing and expressive, with legato melodies over murmuring accompaniments. The vigorous final movement is initially based on an obsessively repeated rhythmic figure. Subsequent sections include both hints of ragtime rhythms and flowing melodies against shimmering arpeggios played with bouncing bows.

COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Sunday, May 19 at 4 pm

Kaitlin Miller, harp

Kaitlin Miller finds boundless joy in playing the harp, and her heart resonates most with romantic French music and the innovative compositions of contemporary artists.

Monday, May 20 at 7:30 pm

Earplay—*New Conversations*

Challenging the audience to broaden its concept of music with new emotional and auditory experiences, Earplay performs the World Premieres of a new work for voice and sextet by composer/singer Erin Gee and an ensemble work by Byron Au Yong, as well as works by Sami Seif and George Walker.

Sunday, June 2 at 4 pm

Blaise Bryski plays Mark Winges

East coast pianist Blaise Bryski plays music by west coast composer Mark Winges. This concert includes Mark's complete Nocturnes as well as the premieres of longer works *Red Sky Opening* and *More Hand Jive*. The latter is a nod to Blaise's and Mark's roots in rock / funk, and includes sections of music that are improvised.

Friday, June 14 at 8 pm

Arjun Verma, sitar & Eman Hashimi, tabla

A very special evening of thrilling rhythms and gorgeous melodies on sitar and tabla. Verma—whose music has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Times of India*, *Songlines Magazine*, *The Hindu*, and *Popmatters*—weaves together the ancient and modern aspects of Indian classical music in the style of the legendary Ustad Ali Akbar Khan.

For tickets & more information visit www.oldfirstconcerts.org

the SoCal Chamber Music Workshop and the Telluride Chamber Music Festival.

Born in New York City, **Gwendolyn Mok** has appeared in many of the world's leading concert halls, including the Barbican, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Davies Symphony Hall, and the Hong Kong Performing Arts Center. She is frequently invited to play and record with major international orchestras, such as the London Symphony, the Philharmonia, the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Beijing Philharmonic Orchestra and the Residency Orchestra of the Hague.

Ms. Mok began her studies at the Juilliard School of Music, completed her undergraduate work at Yale University, and earned her Masters and Doctorate at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. She is currently Coordinator of Keyboard Studies at San Jose State University and maintains a busy performing and recording schedule. Ms. Mok is a recording artist for Nonesuch/Elektra, Musical Heritage Society, Musician Showcase Recordings, Cala Records, and EMI.

As a chamber musician, Ms. Mok appears regularly in the San Francisco Symphony Chamber Music Series, as well as in the San Jose Chamber Society and the Sacramento Chamber Society series. A popular soloist with the Symphony Silicon Valley, Ms. Mok co-produced and appeared in four sold-out performances of *The Gershwin Radio Hour*. In 2016 Ms. Mok was named President's Scholar by San Jose State University, the highest honor given to an outstanding faculty member for their scholarship and research. She was also presented a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019 by the California Association of Professional Music Teachers Association.

Emilie Mayer (1812–1883)

Piano Quartet in G major (c.1857-60)

The Ives Collective Women's Work project has presented many wonderful and underappreciated pieces over the last two seasons, but perhaps none of the featured composers have needed to have been rescued from as deep and lengthy an obscurity as Emilie Mayer. Her name was largely unfamiliar even to professional musicians and scholars for most of the 20th century, until a modest revival beginning in the 1980s. The piano quartet on this program was not published in Mayer's lifetime, and existed only in a single manuscript copy in the archives of the Berlin State Library, where it lay unplayed and unheard until it was performed and published in 2012.

What little biographical writing there is about Mayer tells the story of a late-blooming and prolific composer, whose compositions met with public acclaim filtered through the heavily sexist attitudes of the day. Indeed, Mayer spent almost all of her first four decades in her birthplace of Friedland, a small agricultural town in central Germany. She seems to have stayed at home in her capacity as the unmarried eldest daughter, taking care of her widowed father, who had become wealthy thanks to a monopoly on the local pharmaceutical business. Her father's suicide in 1840 left Mayer an independent woman of means, and she moved, first to Stettin (then Prussia, now Szczecin, in Poland), where she studied with the important song composer Carl Loewe, and then to Berlin, where she continued her studies with a classmate of Loewe's, Adolf Bernhard Marx, a professor at the Berlin University who essentially invented music theory as we now know it. While in Berlin, she presented regular concerts of her compositions, including six symphonies premiered between 1850 and 1862, and at least sixteen chamber works for strings or strings and piano. Mayer's works were also performed (often in her presence) in Munich, Cologne, Vienna, Lyon and

Brussels. She did encounter significant resistance, not only as a female composer, but as one who specialized in instrumental music, and used contrapuntal techniques, both considered to be male prerogatives at the time. She also encountered great difficulties in finding publishers for her compositions. Mayer was also a distinguished sculptor, and received a large gold medal from Queen Elisabeth of Prussia for her artistic efforts.

Mayer's professional difficulties also reflect a poor match between her artistic directions and the musical communities with which she interacted. Berlin, as capital of the Kingdom of Prussia, was dominated by royal institutions. The orchestra that would eventually become the Berlin Philharmonic was not founded until 1860. When she moved to Berlin, the main orchestral concerts were a handful given by the orchestra of the Royal Theater. There is no doubt that Mayer faced enormous obstacles as a female composer, but it is also true that there were no other successful composers of orchestral music in Berlin, and that publishing symphonies wasn't a viable economic proposition under any circumstances.

Mayer was able to hear her symphonic music because her orchestration teacher, Wilhelm Wieprecht, founded an independent orchestra in 1849 (two years after Mayer's arrival in Berlin), and because Mayer had the financial means to hire the orchestra and put on annual concerts of her own music in the Berlin Royal Theater from 1850 to 1853. Her turn to chamber music later in the 1850s seems to reflect a need to economize, as subsequent concerts were held in her own apartments and featured works for smaller ensembles. Mayer composed two piano quartets, of which the second (in E-flat major) was performed in Stettin 1860. The present piano quartet, in G major, is earlier, and was probably composed sometime between 1857 and 1860. Typically for Mayer, the piece is built from attractive and classically formed melodic

American Bach Soloists, as well as other regional orchestras. Sought-after as a chamber musician, Clio has performed with the Friction Quartet, Classical Revolution, Candlelight Concerts, and is a founding member of the Chamber Music Society of San Francisco. She has recorded for Time Warner with the Camerata de Lausanne, and has also been heard in recordings with Shajarian, Geographer, and Meklit.

Evan Buttemer studied viola under Jodi Levitz at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, as part of the Chamber Music Masters program. He has performed with many ensembles in the Bay Area and beyond, including the Ives Collective, San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Opera Parallèle, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the Magik*Magik Orchestra, One Found Sound, Ninth Planet, California Symphony, Sacramento Philharmonic, Reno Philharmonic, Thunder Bay Symphony, Santa Rosa Symphony, Stockton Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Monterey Symphony, and the San Francisco Symphony.

In addition to his active freelance career, Evan is the founder of a sustainability initiative developing innovative 3D printing hardware, and sustainable biopolymer manufacturing technology.

Stephen Harrison, *cellist*, has been on the Stanford University faculty since 1983. A graduate of Oberlin College and Boston University, he has been solo cellist of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players since 1985.

Stephen has been on the faculty of the Pacific Music Festival, the Orfeo and Schlern International Music Festivals (Italy) and the Rocky Ridge Music Center. He is currently principal cellist at the Mendocino Music Festival, and performs and teaches at

Gearhart spent much of his career teaching at the university level with positions at East Carolina University, Indiana University at South Bend, University of Oregon and University of Colorado Boulder. Recently he launched a music festival and nonprofit — the Redfish Music Festival on the southern Oregon coast.

Susan Freier, *violin/viola*, and co-Artistic Director of the Ives Collective, earned degrees in music and biology from Stanford University as a Ford Scholar and continued her studies at the Eastman School of Music where she co-founded the award-winning Chester String Quartet. The Chester went on to win the Munich, Portsmouth (UK) and Discovery Competitions and were the quartet-in-residence at Indiana University, South Bend.

In 1989 Susan returned to her native Bay Area and joined the Stanford faculty and the Stanford String Quartet. She performs with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and has been an artist/faculty member at the Newport Music Festival, Garth Newell, Music in the Mountains, Rocky Ridge Music Center, and the Schlern and Orfeo Music Festivals (Italy). Susan teaches and performs at the Mendocino Music Festival, the SoCal Music Workshop and the Telluride Chamber Music Festival.

Freelance violist **Clio Tilton** delights in the diversity and excitement in her career. Seeking to share her gifts through both teaching and performing, she can be heard around the Bay Area in a wide range of groups: early music ensembles, symphony orchestras, and chamber groups.

Clio performs with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, the San Francisco Contemporary Players, Oakland Symphony, Berkeley Symphony, the

material that is elaborated and decorated in ways more characteristic of the mid-19th century, and displays many examples of her fondness for sudden plunges into unexpected keys. Of especial interest is the dramatic and operatic slow introduction to the first movement, and the deeply-felt *Adagio* movement, with a stormy middle section. Throughout, the piece displays the balance and formal clarity that could be expected from a student of Marx, who codified those very forms.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) *String Quintet in C major, K. 515* (1787)

The string quartet has long been held up as a special genre, especially in the context of the Viennese Classical repertoire. Carl Czerny's *The School of Practical Composition*, published in 1830 (three years after Beethoven's death), described the string quartet as "the most refined, as well as the most difficult of all kinds of composition; as it presents all means for the creation of noble and original ideas," and went on to assert that "the three greatest instrumental composers, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven have alike exerted all the powers of their genius in *this* form, and the numerous quartets of these masters, which alone would secure their immortality, remain imperishable models for all time." Czerny felt that the addition of a second viola to the ensemble led to a piece identical in structure and tone to the quartet, but with additional possibilities of tone color and compositional inventions.

At a time when chamber music was more the province of domestic amateurs than of professional performers, the quintet also offered social possibilities, as home ensembles could add a sibling or a friend. The string quintet's place in amateur musical life is attested to both by the large (if now neglected) repertoire of quintets suited for domestic use by composers like Michael Haydn and Josef Mysliveček and by the many

transcriptions for quintet of music for other ensembles. Beethoven, for instance, published versions for viola quintet both of a piano trio and a wind octet, and even large choral works like Haydn's oratorio *The Creation* were transcribed for quintet.

As is frequently the case with Mozart's chamber music, his viola quintets seem to reflect either a significant misunderstanding of the abilities and desires of the Viennese amateurs that would have been his market, or (much more likely) a complete disregard for his potential consumers. The quintet in C major, K. 515, is from a group of three that was offered for purchase in Vienna in 1788 (the other two works were the G minor quintet, K. 516, and a transcription for string quintet of the C minor *Serenade for wind octet*, K. 388). Mozart published the pieces himself, and offered them by subscription, with the sales handled by Mozart's friend and Masonic Brother Johann Michael Puchberg. Mozart owed Puchberg money, so the financial incentives behind the setup were clear, but, not surprisingly, the Viennese amateur players who had already struggled with Mozart's recent quartets did not rush out to purchase the quintets. Mozart made a second attempt to sell subscriptions before eventually selling the works to the local publisher Artaria.

Commercial failure aside, Mozart's viola quintets are amongst his most glorious works, and demonstrate exactly the possibilities suggested by Czerny. To cite only a few examples, the opening of the first movement takes advantage of the extra inner voice to create a texture of repeated notes in the second violin and the violas, around which the first violin and the cello dance above and below, alternating arpeggios of short notes with brief lyrical figures. The long middle section of the movement uses the extra voice to create a complex five-voice contrapuntal texture in which all of the players share equally in

the motivic work. The movement also provides opportunities for the pair of violins to be answered by a pair of violas. There is considerable scholarly debate about the order of the middle movements, but the *Andante* is a sort of operatic duet for the first violin and the first viola, with the remaining three players constituting the accompaniment group. The violin and viola are in constant dialogue, sometimes singing, sometimes passionately sighing, in a manner strongly reminiscent of Mozart's *Sinfonie Concertante* for violin, viola and orchestra. The *Menuetto* returns to grouping the instruments in pairs, and the last movement is a lively rondo, dominated by the first violin, but not without frequent egging-on from the two violas.

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

Violinist **Fritz Gearhart** has performed for audiences from coast to coast. He has appeared in major halls in the United States including Alice Tully Hall, the 92nd Street Y and the Kennedy Center as well as several concerts in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie. Internationally, Gearhart has performed in South Korea, Austria, Croatia, Spain and Germany.

His recordings are heard frequently on National Public Radio, including live broadcasts on WFMT Chicago, WQXR in New York and KQAC in Portland. Gearhart has also been featured on NPR's nationally syndicated program *Performance Today*. A sampling from the press: "...a sizzling performance..."(*The Wall Street Journal*), "...supple and imaginative..."(*The New York Times*), "...a superlative evening of musicmaking..."(*New York Concert Review*), and "Gearhart is a bold assertive player..."(*Strad*).

Gearhart has recorded numerous compact discs for Albany, Koch Entertainment, Centaur Records and Bridge Records, as well as several live discs available on Spotify. Up until 2022,