



SAN FRANCISCO  
**CONTEMPORARY**  
MUSIC PLAYERS

# *Temporal Excursions*

April 13, 2023

Taube Atrium Theater, San Francisco

## A Message from Artistic Director Eric Dudley



Dear adventurers in new music,

It is our absolute pleasure to welcome you to another season of the SF Contemporary Music Players, our 52nd year in the running, and one that's filled with fascinating sonic journeys that we're thrilled to be able to embark on with you. As we continue our return to the city's concert stages, we're overjoyed to present programs that engage with some of the fundamental aspects of musical creation that have captivated composers across the ages - from the physical and acoustic, to the temporal and spatial, and also the interpersonal.

With today's concert, 'Temporal Excursions,' we place the focus on rhythm and time, and we offer the world premiere performance of a concert extract from Polytempo Music, a newly commissioned work by Bay Area composer Brian Baumbusch. This special event marks a culminating point in a project that has unfolded over the course of the season, with all the musicians involved actively engaged in recording sessions of individual contrapuntal strands that are being captured and mixed into the work's final form as an audio-scape within a Virtual Reality environment. A live-in-concert snapshot of this unique project exists today alongside pieces that both take temporal ideas in different directions; an arrangement by Evan Ziporyn of one of the original studies for player piano by Conlon Nancarrow, and a rhythmically buoyant and intricate chamber sinfonietta by SF Symphony music director Esa-Pekka Salonen. Coming up later this April, we have the rescheduled presentation of 'Fire and Water, Shadows and Dust,' a duo concert with harpist Meredith Clark and flutist Tod Brody. And in May, 'Power Duos & Power Dynamics' closes the season with a focus on human relationships and the drama of performance, with pieces by husband-and-wife and father-and-son duos each exploring the interactions of art, artist and audience.

As always, please keep checking in with our website for up-to-date information about our season events, and THANK YOU for your enthusiastic support of contemporary music and all that we do. We're honored by your continued engagement with the Contemporary Players and our programs, and if you're joining us for the first time, we hope that you're intrigued by what you hear and keep coming back! Please enjoy all that we have to offer on our 2022-2023 season, and help us to spread the excitement for the music of 'right now!'

Warmest regards,  
Eric Dudley

## ***Temporal Excursions***

April 13, 2023

7:00 PM: How Music is Made with composer Brian Baumbusch

8:00 PM: Concert

Taube Atrium Theater

**Eric Dudley, Artistic Director**

### **PROGRAM**

*Study No. 3a (1949), arranged for ensemble (2013)* Conlon Nancarrow (1912-97)  
arr. Evan Ziporyn (b. 1959)

Jeff Anderle, clarinet  
David Tanenbaum, electric guitar  
Haruka Fujii, percussion  
Keisuke Nakagoshi, piano  
Douglas Machiz, cello  
Richard Worn, double bass  
Eric Dudley, conductor

*Polytempo Music (2022)* Brian Baumbusch (b. 1987)  
*world premiere - commissioned by SF Contemporary Music Players*

*Pas de deux*

*Heliks 45*

*Counterclockwise*

*Hourglass*

Kyle Bruckmann, oboe  
Matthew Boyles, clarinet  
Jeff Anderle, bass clarinet  
Haruka Fujii, percussion  
David Tanenbaum, guitar  
Kristin Lloyd, harp  
Keisuke Nakagoshi, piano  
Hrabba Atladottir, violin 1  
Kevin Rogers, violin 2  
Christina Simpson, viola  
Douglas Machiz, cello  
Richard Worn, double bass  
Eric Dudley, conductor

*continued*

# Temporal Excursions

## INTERMISSION

*Catch & Release* (2006)  
1958)

Esa-Pekka Salonen (b.

*Bay Area premiere*

*Tema*

*Aria*

*Games*

Jeff Anderle, clarinet  
Jamael Smith, bassoon  
William Harvey, trumpet  
Brendan Lai-Tong, trombone  
Haruka Fujii, percussion  
Hrabba Atladottir, violin  
Richard Worn, double bass  
Eric Dudley, conductor

The commission/performance of *Polytempo Music*  
are supported in part by grants from:  
National Endowment for the Arts,  
Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation,  
Creative Work Fund, and  
Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation.

## UPCOMING CONCERTS

### ***Fire & Water, Shadows & Dust***

Monday April 24, 2023

7:30 PM Concert

Venue: Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco

Music by Sciarrino, Farrin, Berio, Higdon, Sierra, Norris, and Takemitsu

### ***Power Duos, Power Dynamics***

Thursday MAY 11, 2023

7:00pm How Music is Made | 8:00pm Concert |

Venue: Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

Music by Masaoka, Lewis, Braun, and Braxton (Anthony & Tyondai)

## NOTES ON THE MUSIC

Nancarrow/Ziporyn - Study 3a: Conlon Nancarrow's ideas - politically and musically - put him at odds with American conventional practice. In both cases, he chose isolation rather than compromising his principles. In self-imposed exile in Mexico City, he corresponded with Elliott Carter and mail-ordered a Harry Partch LP. For decades, Nancarrow composed only for player pianos, working alone and by hand, spending months punching holes in rolls to produce 40-plus compact, revolutionary Studies, which collectively have redefined our notions of time and meter in music.

These arrangements are attempts to retain the visceral intensity of the music, to retain the juxtaposition of a happy, human lyricism with a machine-made, maniacal energy. The idea of extreme abutment, of pushing familiar elements to unexpected but inevitable extremes, is something I hear in and love about Nancarrow's music. In my reworkings I have tried to keep this essence in mind above all else.

- Evan Ziporyn

Baumbusch - Polytempo Music (2022): *Polytempo Music* is a groundbreaking work that pioneers a new direction in ensemble music in order to stretch our perception of musical time. Inspired by the music of Conlon Nancarrow, which relied on the use of a mechanical player piano in order to concoct rhythmic structures that cannot be properly realized by unassisted human performers, *Polytempo Music* elicits the help of a complex digital clock vis-a-vis a 12-channel web of click-tracks, which provides each performer with their own individualized fluctuating pulse stream to follow. Also drawing inspiration from Balinese gamelan music, which Baumbusch has taught at UC Santa Cruz for nine years, *Polytempo Music* often uses a contrapuntal architecture similar to a style of counterpoint developed by Balinese composers, a colorful heterophonic stratification of melodies, which Baumbusch uses to create modal "murmurations" evoking the movement of flying starlings or the shoaling of fish. A large portion of *Polytempo Music* was composed by Baumbusch while in quarantine in Jakarta in 2022.

Conceived in the summer of 2020 at the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and on the wings of completing the symphonic-length *Isotropes* (a polytemporal work for adaptable orchestra which was recorded by roughly 200 performers from their own homes along to individualized click track fragments), *Polytempo Music* was devised to “premiere” in virtual reality. Premiering tonight is a partial adaptation (the final four movements) of that full 48-minute work, offering a live rendition of the spatial audio world that is being designed in VR. The complete VR *Polytempo Music* app presents an immersive environment where listeners can freely navigate a virtual 3D stage with the music swirling around the listeners via 12 moving speakers. It is currently under development by Baumbusch in collaboration with Scott Looney and SFCMP, and is slated to be released on the Oculus platform at the end of 2023.

Esa-Pekka Salonen - *Catch & Release* (2006): *Catch & Release* was premiered on July 26, 2006, at the Crusell Music Festival in Finland by the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra conducted by John Storgards. The 22-minute, three-movement work, scored for clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, percussion, violin and double bass, was composed in 2006. With an identical scoring to *L'Histoire du Soldat* by Igor Stravinsky (with the cornet replaced by a trumpet), the Finnish premiere was played in a concert with the suite from Stravinsky's masterpiece.

## **BRIEF COMPOSER BIOS**

**Conlon Nancarrow (1912–1997)** was an American-born composer who lived most of his life in Mexico. Nancarrow is remembered almost exclusively for the pieces he wrote for the player piano. He was one of the first composers to use musical instruments as mechanical machines, making them play far beyond human performance ability. He lived most of his life in complete isolation, not becoming widely known until the 1980s. Today, he is remembered as one of the most original and unusual composers of the 20th century. His music has a mathematical beauty and elegance that happily coexists with musical expressiveness and a puckish sense of humor. Nancarrow did not see a clear

delineation between the two approaches and he never worried about it. This natural, organic 'double-esthetic' is one of his most relevant contributions to music history.

Nancarrow was born in Texarkana, AR. He played trumpet in a jazz band in his youth, before studying music first in Cincinnati, OH and later in Boston, MA with Roger Sessions, Walter Piston and Nicolas Slonimsky. He met Arnold Schoenberg during that composer's brief stay in Boston in 1933. Temporarily buoyed by an inheritance, Nancarrow moved to Mexico City in 1940, bought a player piano, and had a machine custom built to enable him to punch the piano rolls by hand. The machine was an adaptation of one used in the commercial production of rolls, and using it was very hard work, and very slow. He also adapted the player pianos, increasing their dynamic range by tinkering with their mechanism, and covering the hammers with leather or metal so as to produce a more percussive sound.

**Evan Ziporyn** (b. 1959) is an American composer of post-minimalist music with a cross-cultural orientation, drawing equally from classical music, avant-garde, various world music traditions, and jazz. Ziporyn has composed for a wide range of ensembles, including symphony orchestras, wind ensembles, many types of chamber groups, and solo works, sometimes involving electronics. Balinese gamelan, for which he has composed numerous works.

**Brian Baumbusch** (b. 1987) is a composer based in Alameda, CA, whose "harmonically vivid... intense... simmering" (NY Times) compositions push the boundaries of new music. He has spearheaded projects of both western and non-western music, which are considered a "cultural treat" (Maryland Gazette). His 2015 composition, "Hydrogen(2)Oxygen" for the JACK Quartet and Lightbulb Ensemble is described by the Washington Post as being "exuberantly complex, maddeningly beautiful, and as intoxicating as a drug." He has headlined performances at the Bali Arts Festival in Denpasar, The

Smithsonian Institution in Washington, The Clarice Smith Center of Maryland, and The Yerba Buena Center of San Francisco, among others. He has collaborated with musicians such as The JACK Quartet, I Made Subandi, Pauline Oliveros, David Behrman, Paul Dresher, and Larry Polansky.

Baumbusch received his undergraduate degree from Bard College, where he studied microtonal composition with Kyle Gann, and received his M.A. in composition from Mills College, where he studied under various composers including Chris Brown, Fred Frith, Roscoe Mitchell, and Zeena Parkins, among others. Baumbusch received his DMA from U.C. Santa Cruz, studying primarily under Larry Polansky. Since 2014, Baumbusch has directed the U.C. Santa Cruz Balinese Gamelan ensemble.

**Esa-Pekka Salonen** (b. 1958) is known as both a composer and conductor. He is currently the Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, where he works alongside eight Collaborative Partners from a variety of disciplines, ranging from composers to roboticists. He is the Conductor Laureate for the Philharmonia Orchestra (London), where he was Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor from 2008 until 2021, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he was Music Director from 1992 until 2009, and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. He is currently in the midst of Multiverse Esa-Pekka Salonen, a two-season residency as both composer and conductor, at Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, and is Composer in Residence with the Berliner Philharmoniker.

Since Salonen joined the San Francisco Symphony in 2020, his tenure has been defined by an impulse to expand and embrace the possibilities of the orchestra. In addition to an unprecedented leadership model in which he is joined by eight Collaborative Partners—whose diversity of expertise reflects the scope of experience he envisions as the future of classical music and its audience—Salonen has led a series of collaborations across disciplines and practices which unite the Symphony's musicians, administrative staff, and hands-on facility workers into a singular engine dedicated to engaging classical music in novel ways.



## FRIENDS OF SF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

The continued innovation and professionalism of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players has been driven and sustained by an entire community of individuals making contributions in countless and vital ways. Thank you for being part of this community. We gratefully acknowledge the following financial supporters who have made one or more donations between September 2021 and September 2022. We apologize for any errors or omissions; for corrections please contact us at [info@sfcmp.org](mailto:info@sfcmp.org)

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A former subscriber, Harold Wollack, left the first bequest to help underwrite the ensemble's concerts and programs. Recently, the ensemble received generous bequests from the estates of Jane Roos, and Victor and Esta Wolfram. All bequests help to ensure that our organization will remain vibrant and that future generations will enjoy the music of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. We thank the following individuals who have arranged a legacy gift in support of our future:

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\*realized

**For questions about these and other giving opportunities,  
please don't hesitate to contact us:**

**Richard Aldag  
Executive Director  
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ARTZcenter Institute, in partnership with San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, is pleased to announce the winners of the first round of **Emerging Composer Completion Grants**, a major initiative designed to nurture the creation of new works for chamber orchestra that is awarded for works-in-progress. ARTZcenter Institute was established in 2022 to encourage the creation of new music by young/emerging composers that explores the power and grace of the traditional chamber orchestra. The fund was created by Tony Magee, the founder of The Lagunitas Brewing Company of Petaluma, CA, and is committed to creating performance opportunities for our next generation of composers.

We congratulate the six composers whose pieces were chosen from 22 high quality submissions. Don't miss the open rehearsal of their music at Herbst Theatre on June 23, 2023 at 7:30 PM.

Bobby Ge (age 28) – *The Floating World*  
Princeton University

Ula Goldstein (age 23) – *From the Forest*  
McGill University

Patrick Holcomb (age 27) – *This City was Once an Ocean*  
Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester

Tommaso Saturnia (age 28) – *The Impossible Planets*  
San Francisco Conservatory of Music

Ethan Soledad (age 24) - *Intrusive Thoughts*  
Shepherd School of Music, Rice University

Julie Zhu (age 33) - *unanimous opinion*  
Stanford University

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