Performing works by

LEROUX
MITCHELL
ABRAHAMSEN

October 21, 2017
Taube Atrium Theater

on STAGE Series
San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

San Francisco Contemporary Music Players (SFCMP), a 24-member, unionized ensemble of highly skilled musicians, performs innovative, large-ensemble, contemporary classical music with a spotlight on California composers.

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Tonight’s event is part of SFCMP’s *On Stage* Series, which brings to the stage some of the most influential national and international contemporary classical composers of the 20th and 21st centuries.

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Performing works by

Zorn, Fung, Byron, Brown, Monk, and Rzewski

Caroline H. Hume Hall
SF Conservatory of Music
Jan. 19, 2018
7:30 pm

TICKETS: SFCMP.org
Meredith Monk returns to San Francisco!

Meredith Monk joins SFCMP on Jan 19, 2018 for a special performance and on-stage discussion with incoming artistic director Eric Dudley.

Tickets on sale in the lobby, or online at SFCMP.org

Special Guest Meredith Monk
January 19, 2018
Percussionist, conductor, and author Steven Schick was born in Iowa and raised in a farming family. For forty years he has championed contemporary music by commissioning or premiering more than one hundred-fifty new works. He was the founding percussionist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars (1992-2002) and served as Artistic Director of the Centre International de Percussion de Genève (2000-2005). Schick is founder and Artistic Director of the percussion group, “red fish blue fish.” Currently he is Music Director of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus and Artistic Director of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players.

In 2012 he became the first Artist-in-Residence with the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). Schick founded and is currently Artistic Director of “Roots and Rhizomes,” a summer course on contemporary percussion music held at the Banff Centre for the Arts. He maintains a lively schedule of guest conducting including appearances with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Nova Chamber Ensemble and the Asko/Schönberg Ensemble. Among his acclaimed publications are a book, “The Percussionist’s Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams,” and numerous recordings of contemporary percussion music. Steven Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego.
“Where would we be without our symbols?” the poet Rainer Maria Rilke was reported to have asked. The answer in the world of music would be “nowhere,” since outside of the realm of vocal music, straightforward discursive descriptions do not exist. Instead, musical meaning is conveyed by symbols: complex, often obscure, occasionally obtuse constructions of sound that help us parse the musical action. In my view a “musical symbol,” in essence the means by which music speaks to us, is produced by the tension between emotions expressed on the surface of the sound and deep, stable structures below. In the hands of an excellent composer, the rapport between structural security and emotional fluidity is the unseen motor that drives a work forward and makes a piece of music meaningful to us.

Each in its own way, the three pieces on tonight’s program feature a tightly constructed architecture—utterly evident on the page—that produces a spontaneous, nearly improvised feeling in performance. Hans Abrahamsen’s *Schnee* consists of ten complex canons. (Canons are imitative structures where one instrument repeats another’s music after a short delay. The singing of a round on “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” is a simple example of a canon.) The process of constructing canons like the ones that Abrahamsen makes is extremely sophisticated. In fact, Edgard Varèse, one of the greatest...
figures of the American 20th century, was reportedly prouder of his high score on an assignment to write a fugue, the most complex of the canonic forms, than he was of his masterpieces of the 1920s and 30s. The canonic structures in *Schnee* are immediately visible to anyone studying the score. But we hope they will not be quite so audible in performance. Or at least, that’s my hope. For me, the ideal listening experience for *Schnee* is not to hear the compositional process, but to have the constant sense of structural honesty, the sure feeling that the vessel containing the passions of the piece has been put together well. *Schnee* illustrates the axiom that the more securely a work of music is constructed, the more its capacity for poetic evocation. Many listeners refer to the iciness of this music, the pervasive sense that these are the sounds of a snow-covered landscape. But Abrahamsen does not accomplish this through fluffy musical structures that imitate the sound of snow falling. Rather it is the purity, perhaps the austerity of his canons that produces this feeling. It is the same principal on which the Beethoven Ninth Symphony and much other classical repertory rest. Beethoven delivered his ecstatic message of joy (Freude!) not by abandoning himself to the passions of the moment, but by controlling them through rigorous structures.

I hope this does not make you feel like I am trying to rob music of its magic. That would be sad. No, my point is not that deep human emotion is simply the result of perfected structural engineering. I am suggesting that in order to lean out of an open window as far as Beethoven did in the daring “Ode to Joy,” somebody strong should be holding your feet.

Philippe Leroux engages a similar tension between structure and effect in his evocative work *Postlude à L’épais*. In this music, however, the composer’s symbolic language emanates from color and texture rather than the polyphonic nesting of canons. With a little distance, the typical Leroux quicksilver of rapid exchange among the instruments sounds like a tapestry whose weave and patterning changes
before your eyes. The implicit drama of the music derives from the destabilizing velocity at which alliances among the instruments form and dissolve. But I have witnessed Philippe in rehearsal. He does not talk about weave and texture; he talks about notes and rhythms; pitches and intonation. Here again the affective poetry of the musical surface is anchored to the mechanical rigor of the construction.

The same is true in Nicole Mitchell’s *Procession Time*, a San Francisco Contemporary Music Players commission receiving its first performance tonight. *Procession Time* is an extraordinary set of musical rituals composed in response to a work by Norman Lewis, a leading figure of the Harlem renaissance. The composer describes a kaleidoscopic spectrum of ritual from the celebratory to the horrific. There is the carnival, dance party, and birth ceremony, but also witch-hunt, riot, and lynch mob. The power of Norman Lewis’s images and Nicole Mitchell’s sonic representations rely on precision and purity of structure. If anyone doubts the precision required in a ritual, try bringing a strobe light to a Thanksgiving dinner or a roast turkey to a rave. You mix up just one little thing and no one lets you forget it! Clearly I really respond to the dichotomy that spontaneity and passion on the musical surface are tied to painstakingly realized, often inaudible, internal structures. But why make such a big deal about such a small—and probably obvious—element of musical mechanics? It’s because when this dichotomy is missing we run into real trouble. Emotional affect not tied to (and therefore not limited by) a carefully constructed architecture is chaotic at best and dangerously insane at worst. Just look around us!

Forget the political crisis of the day—even big issues like health care and climate change. The most frightening aspect of our recent history is the explosion of superficial and impulsive actions, on levels both large and small, that are untethered to any underlying architecture of rationality. We saw
it in the tragedy at Charlottesville and the shameful reactions it prompted, and we see it in the practically daily instances of incivility on the roadways and sidewalks of our neighborhoods. I would not say that these regrettable transgressions in the public sphere were “overly emotional.” If anything they are under-emotional. A lot of passion may be evoked, but it’s anemic and unsophisticated, devoid of complexity, nuance, or sense of scale. For emotional complexity you need firm underlying structures of rationality and civility. Alas, the very qualities that are in such short supply. It may not be such a bad idea for everyone to listen to a little bit more music.

~ Steven Schick

The SFCMP Players

Hannah Addario-Berry, cello
Hrabba Altadottir, violin
Jeff Anderle, clarinet
Tod Brody, flute
Kyle Bruckmann, oboe
Kate Campbell, piano
Susan Freier, violin
Chris Froh, percussion
Karen Gottlieb, harp
Stephen Harrison, cello
Graeme Jennings, violin
Peter Josheff, clarinet
Adam Luftman, trumpet
Loren Mach, percussion
Roy Malan, violin
Sarah Rathke, oboe
Nanci Severance, viola
David Tanenbaum, guitar
Peter Wahrhaftig, tuba
William Winant, percussion
Nick Woodbury, percussion
Richard Worn, contrabass
Tonight’s Program
October 21, 2017

Philippe LEROUX
Postlude à l’Épais (2016) 9’
(West Coast Premiere)

Tod Brody, piccolo, flute, alto flute; Peter Josheff, clarinet, bass clarinet; Kate Campbell piano; Hrabba Atladottir, violin; Stephen Harrison, cello

Nicole MITCHELL
Procession Time (2017) 15’
(World Premiere)

Tod Brody, alto flute; Bill Kalinkos, clarinet, bass clarinet; Kate Campbell, piano; Stephen Harrison, cello. Video by Nicole Mitchell.

~ INTERMISSION ~

Hans ABRAHAMSEN
Schnee (2008) 57’

Tod Brody, piccolo, flute, alto flute; Kyle Bruckmann, oboe, English horn; Jeff Anderle, clarinets in Eb, Bb, A, & bass clarinet; Christopher Froh, percussion; Kate Campbell, piano; Allegra Chapman, piano; Hrabba Atladottir, violin; Meena Bhasin, viola; Helen Newby, cello
Program Notes by Robert Wood

In Philippe Leroux’s work *Postlude à l’Épais* (“Postlude to the Thickness,” 2016), composed for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano, the instant contains eternity. And birds:

“I was on a train. I was probably 17 years old. I had not slept at all the night before and I was tired. I remember having dozed off, my head against the window of the train, and before my eyes there was a flock of ravens in the sky. When I woke up, a few minutes or a few hours later, I was at the same place, in the same train, but the train was moving in the opposite direction and, by an amazing coincidence, [...] my eyes fell on an identical flock of ravens that was following the trajectory of the first one, from the exact place where it stopped before I dozed off. [It was] as if both [moments] were in fact one [moment], uninterrupted, despite the passage of time and the fact that the train had changed direction. My falling asleep had been like a breach, an opening in the thickness of the temporal unfolding, which let me foresee another reality.”

On the one hand, time like a train, moving ever toward a destination while leaving the past behind; on the other, a gapped time, elided and doubled back on itself, in which the past finds itself reunited with the present. We are unquestionably more familiar with the first conception, in which the present—much as in music itself—seems a parade of passing, and thus irretrievable, moments. Yet is it not possible, as Leroux’s experience suggests, to see the present as something more discontinuous? As something capable of leaping back into the past to annex old experiences? As something permeated with memory?

*Postlude à l’Épais* attempts to braid together these two temporalities, which compete for our attention to different degrees as the work progresses. As such, two different strands comprise the work: a string of 30 gradually morphing chords, based
on frequency modulations of A, which punctuate the texture like rivets; and the episodes that come in between—a series of banshee-like outbursts in which the instruments trace similar gestural contours.

At the beginning, a raspy whisper of granular sound keeps us fixated on the moment, with little to mark the passing of time. The sound is continuous, and yet we might think of it instead as a chord repeated so rapidly that it blurs into an unbroken stream, destined to slow down continuously until the work’s end. That slowdown begins soon enough: a rapidly repeated chord percolates out of the continuous texture, breaking time into discrete moments and decelerating before the second strand begins weaving itself into the interstices. From here, the pattern is largely set: chord, episode, chord, episode, with the chords decreasing in frequency as the episodes increase in length.

What to listen for here? We could certainly hear the alternating strands as one continuous temporal flow: a chord, followed by an episode, followed by a chord, and so on. Yet we cannot forget about Leroux’s birds: the chords, so similar in shape and attack, have a way of recalling one another, of reaching back past the episodic material that separates them to form a kind of alternate present of their own. They are both a part of the unfolding temporal “thickness” of the work’s title—time perceived as an unbroken chain of linear events—but also aloof to it.

Other interpretations are surely possible here, and the listener is invited to indulge their own. But in this reading, at least, the birds’ moments are limited. As the chords decrease in frequency, leaving more and more time for the episodes to cast their own peculiar spell, a gradual shifting of temporal perspective occurs. The sun sets on our window-seat view onto an alternate temporal reality, releasing us into the thickness itself, in which we’re left to float with nary a raven in sight.

From music about time, we move on to music about timelessness—or at
least about the human rites and rituals that have, for centuries, so persistently embodied it. Inspired by the painting Ritual by the Harlem-born artist Norman Lewis (1909-1979), Nicole Mitchell’s *Procession Time* (2017)—heard here in its world premiere—delves into the curious rhythms of these age-old communal customs—in her words, “carnival, parade, protest, funeral march, dance party, birth ceremony, riot, lynch mob and even witch-hunt”—which are as old as time itself.

She wastes no time making a sobering point: where there is ritual, there is often blindness and ideology sustaining it, and perhaps nowhere more than in our rites of consumption. The first movement, “Carnival at the Cliff,” was written as Hurricanes Harvey and Irene battered the US coast, fueled by waters warmed by human-caused climate change. It addresses the fact that even though we mourn these tragedies, we immediately return to the lifestyles that nourish and sustain them, forgetting that every purchase has a price. “Carnival at the Cliff” is thus “joyous, yet off the mark, as I feel our delusions are,” she writes, “while we continue to participate in our own destruction.”

But what colors the death drive wears! In the movement “Ritual Conception,” Mitchell turns back to the aesthetic dimension of our rites, inspired here by the flame-like shapes and vivid hues that dance across Lewis’s painting. Hovering just at the edge of representation, Lewis’ figurations evoke bodies in procession wearing brilliant celebratory garb, arcing in a line across a sea of cerulean blue. The riot of color finds its analog in Mitchell’s music—but not without a touch of irony: what, in many cases, are these rituals if not sublimated forms of our desire to control nature? The movement’s through-composed form gives voice to that ravenous drive.

Not everyone is always in on the game, though, and in the movement “Ancestral Rights,” Mitchell assumes the position of outsider, considering rituals as though from a distance in order to defamiliarize their byzantine
choreographies. Of particular interest, she notes, is the movement between formality and relaxation—between the enigmatic gestures of rituals themselves and the tension released once they have concluded—that characterize these forms. In the score, call and response patterns abound, evoking inscrutable circular geometries.

We end on an optimistic note in the final section, “Jubilation Resistance,” dedicated to the transformative power of joy. In Mitchell’s words, the movement was “informed by the buoyancy of the human spirit to elevate beyond our own ignorance, and to hopefully move towards a new approach of living where technology can embrace and not fight nature.” Joy resounds, but only by way of justice.

In Hans Abrahamsen’s Schnee (“Snow”), completed in 2008, we return to a universe not unlike that of Leroux’s Postlude à l’Épais in which time is content to circle back on itself, drawing the past back into the present. But winter has come here, and whereas Leroux’s work is a tightly wound, even schizophrenic, struggle between the vertical and the horizontal, Schnee is—for much of its length, at least—a desolate tundra in which the listener cannot help but dissolve into catatonic absorption. It is a breathtaking landscape—both fragile and fierce, crystalline and content to drift, seemingly without inertia. But, like snowflakes themselves, it is also not without structure. The model is an old one:

“At the beginning of the nineties, I arranged some canons by Johann Sebastian Bach. [...] I was completely immersed in this music, and arranged it with the idea that it should be repeated many, many times—as a sort of minimal music. [...] Looking at the canons in this way opened up a new, animated world of time in circulation. Depending on how one looks at these canons, the music stands still, or moves forwards or backwards. As for my own work, a further idea crystallised: to write a piece that consists of canonic motion, and explores the universe of time.”
Time in circulation, achieved through canonic motion—snow blowing in every dizzying direction. But the form of Schnee is, at least, straightforward: five pairs of canons, which (for the most part) grow progressively shorter in length, interspersed with occasional intermezzi during which the instruments microtonally detune. In the first group of each pair, various canonic statements and motives repeat with variation, only to be echoed in the second group with different instrumentation.

Yet “echo,” with its implications of a question and an answer or an original and a copy, is not quite right here. The intended relationship between the pairs, it turns out, is something more cumulative—or even spatial. Abrahamsen again:

[While writing these canons] I was very interested in the old stereoscopic technique from the late 19th century, where two almost identical pictures, photographed with just a small spatial displacement between them (like two stereo microphones), are placed next to one another. If one looks at them in an unfocused way, one sees a magical three-dimensional picture in the middle, as the sum of the other two.

We are encouraged, in other words, to hear the separate canon groups not so much as self-contained wholes but as incomplete, in a sense, as a musical part-objects that combine with their doubles to form some sort of illusive composite picture, or at least its equivalent in time. The work’s symmetrical instrumentation—two trios of winds and strings, two pianos, and a single percussionist in the middle—serves to amplify this “stereoscopic” effect. The same process often occurs on a smaller scale within the groups themselves, as canonic passages repeat with slight differences in their pitch content and in the closeness of their imitation, displacing and effacing one another in memory to congeal into various wholes.

That displacement effect is particularly apparent at the beginning, where a music of exquisite emptiness unfolds. Hushed repeated notes, high in the
piano stratosphere, slowly condense around icy harmonics in the violins, dripping down and around to form the first canonic subject. (Abrahamsen instructs the pianist to play this fragile melody with alternating hands, perhaps to assure that each note sounds with deliberate attentiveness.)

In Group 2, we abandon the pristine snowscape of the first group and set out into a more foreboding winter. A staccato barrage of three-note motives, driven by flute and muted piano, pelts the ears like sleet. (An invigorating sleet, perhaps; the words “Es ist Schnee, es ist Winternacht!” are written as unsung lyrics in the score). In Group 3, inspired by the ice palace from Hans Christian Andersen’s “The Snow Queen,” shelter is at hand as detuned strings throb like gradients of diffuse light in a glacial interior. Group 4 is a blizzard of chromatic shrieks and pungent minor seconds, undergirded by sleigh bells that pay homage to the “Sleigh Ride” from Mozart’s Three German Dances, K.605. Finally, in Group 5, a kind of hypnotic, eerily mechanized calm sets in. Turning in place like a music-box ballerina, the music forms circles within circles, spinning at different rates in a wintery daze before evaporating into the emptiness with which it all began.

~ Robert Jackson Wood

Robert Jackson Wood is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn. He holds a Ph.D in musicology from the CUNY Graduate Center.
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Composer Biography - Hans Abrahamsen

Born in 1952, Hans Abrahamsen is one of the younger representatives of the Danish movement toward “new simplicity” (*ny enkelhed*), which developed in the 1960s and 1970s. His pieces, mostly quite short, are marked by very light, finely orchestrated textures, a lack of harsh dissonance, and the use of collage and pastiche.

Abrahamsen studied music history, theory, and French horn at the Royal Danish Conservatory in Copenhagen, while studying composition privately with Per Nørgård and Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, two of the founders of the “new simplicity” movement. In the 1970s, Abrahamsen’s music was known for a simple, almost naïve, use of contrasting blocks of material, often built of three-note cells, as in *Skum* (1970) for chamber orchestra, or the *Ten Preludes* for string quartet (1973). Abrahamsen subsequently developed a more complex and dramatic style, as exemplified by the *Second String Quartet* (1981) and *Nacht und Trompeten* for orchestra (1981), probably his most popular orchestral work to that point.

In all his music, Abrahamsen has striven to make the instrumentation clear and delicate (he is an influential teacher of orchestration at the Royal Danish Conservatory). In 1990, Abrahamsen created, with Søren Hansen among others, the Århus Sinfonietta, which has been an important outlet for new music in Denmark.

~ Source: AllMusic.com
Nicole Mitchell is an award-winning creative flutist, composer, bandleader, educator, and transdisciplinary conceptualist. Having emerged from Chicago’s innovative music scene in the late 90s, Mitchell’s music celebrates contemporary African American culture and endless possibility by “creating visionary worlds through music that bridge the familiar with the unknown.” The former first woman president of Chicago’s Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), Mitchell is a recipient of the Herb Alpert Award (2011), the Chicago 3Arts Award (2011) and the Doris Duke Artist Award (2012). She composes for contemporary ensembles of varied instrumentation and size, while incorporating improvisation and a wide aesthetic expression.

Nicole Mitchell has been commissioned by the French Ministry of Culture, the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Stone, the French American Jazz Exchange, Chamber Music America, the Chicago Jazz Festival and ICE.

Her newest work with Black Earth Ensemble explores intercultural collaborations. Bamako*Chicago, featuring Malian kora master, Ballake Sissoko, was premiered at Chicago’s Hyde Park Jazz Festival in September 2017. Mandorla Awakening with Kojiro Umezaki (shakuhachi) and Tatsu Aoki (taiko, bass, shamisen), was just released on FPE records last spring. She is a Professor of Music at University of California, Irvine.

www.nicolemitchell.com
Composer Biography - Philippe Leroux

Philippe Leroux was born in Boulogne Billancourt (France) in 1959. In 1978 he entered the Paris Conservatory (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique), studied with Ivo Malec, Claude Ballif, Pierre Schaeffer and Guy Reibel and obtained three first prizes. Meanwhile, he studied with Olivier Messiaen, Franco Donatoni, Betsy Jolas, Jean-Claude Eloy and Iannis Xenakis. In 1993 he was selected to enter the Villa Medicis in Rome for two years, where he remained until 1995.

His compositional output (about seventy works to date) includes symphonic, vocal, electronic, acousmatic and chamber music. His works are the result of various commissionners, among them the French Ministry of Culture, Radio-France Philharmonic Orchestra, Südwestfunk Baden Baden, IRCAM, Percussions de Strasbourg, and many other institutions of international repute.

His music is widely performed in various European festivals and International orchestras such as Donaueschingen, Radio-France Présences (Paris), Agora (Paris), Venice Biennale, Bath Festival, Festival Musica (Strasbourg), Stockholm ISCM, and the Barcelona Festival, among many others.

Since September 2011 he has been Associate Professor in composition at the Schulich School of Music at McGill University. He is currently composer-in-residence at Ensemble MEITAR in Tel-Aviv.

www.lerouxcomposition.com
Tonight’s SFCMP Players

Jeff Anderle (clarinet) is a pioneer in the world of low reeds, helping to popularize the role of the modern clarinet and bass clarinet through his innovative and diverse performances, ensembles, and commissions. He is a founding member of both Splinter Reeds, the Bay Area’s first reed quintet, and REDSHIFT contemporary music ensemble, as well as a member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and the Paul Dresher Electro/Acoustic Band. He is half of the bass clarinet duo Sqwonk, which has commissioned and premiered a significant body of work that infuses aspects of classical, folk and popular music into its own distinct style. As a member of the virtuoso, heavy metal bass clarinet quartet Edmund Welles, he has been featured nationally at festivals and masterclasses.

Jeff is a founding co-director of Switchboard Music, a presenting organization which has featured hundreds of innovative musicians through its annual marathon and concert series. Jeff teaches clarinet, bass clarinet, chamber music, and entrepreneurship at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and has given masterclasses across the country on these topics. He has been on the faculty at U.C. Berkeley and as a member of REDSHIFT holds a guest artist residency at California State University East Bay.

Icelandic violinist Hrabba Atladottir studied in Berlin, Germany with professor Axel Gerhardt and professor Tomasz Tomaszewski. After finishing her studies, Hrabba worked as a freelance violinist in Berlin for five years, regularly playing with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Deutsche Oper, and Deutsche Symphonieorchester. In 2004, Hrabba moved to New York, playing on a regular basis with the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Orchestra of St. Luke’s and New Jersey Symphony Orchestra among other orchestras. She also played with the Either/Or
ensemble in NY in close collaboration with Helmut Lachenmann.

Since August 2008, Hrabba has been based in Berkeley, California, where she has been performing as a soloist and with various ensembles such as the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, The Empyrean Ensemble, the ECO ensemble, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and New Century Chamber Orchestra. Hrabba is currently a Violin Lecturer at UC Berkeley and at Mills College.

Tod Brody (flute) is principal flutist with SFCMP, as well as local new music groups Earplay, Eco Ensemble, and the Empyrean Ensemble, with an extensive career that has included performances of numerous world premieres and many recordings. He is also principal flutist of the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, the Sacramento Opera, and the California Musical Theater, and makes frequent appearances with the San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Ballet orchestras, and in other chamber and orchestral settings throughout the region. Active as an instructor, Tod teaches flute and chamber music at the University of California, Davis. In addition to performing and teaching, Tod is an active arts administrator, currently serving as Executive Director of the Marin Symphony. Tod joined SFCMP in 1997.

Oboist Kyle Bruckmann’s work as a composer and performer spans from the Western classical tradition into the frontiers of free jazz, electronic music and post-punk. With more than 60 recordings and a striking array of performance affiliations to his credit (Splinter Reeds, Quinteto Latino, the Stockton Symphony, sfSound, Eco Ensemble, Ensemble Parallèle, and others) he has been acclaimed as “a modern day renaissance musician,” and “a seasoned improviser with impressive extended technique and peculiar artistic flair.” Before relocating to the Bay Area in 2003, Kyle was a fixture in Chicago’s experimental music underground, collaborating regularly with electroacoustic duo EKG, the “noise-rock monstrosity” Lozenge, and the Creative Music quintet Wrack (recipient of a 2012 Chamber Music
America New Jazz Works grant). Bruckmann earned undergraduate degrees in music and psychology at Rice University, studying oboe with Robert Atherholt, serving as music director of campus radio station KTRU, and achieving academic distinction as a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He completed his M.M. at the University of Michigan, where he studied oboe performance with Harry Sargous and contemporary improvisation with Ed Sarath. He now teaches at UC Santa Cruz and UC Davis. Kyle joined SFCMP in 2012. kylebruckmann.com

Hailed as a “brilliant pianist” (Financial Times), Kate Campbell performs frequently as a soloist and chamber musician specializing in 20th and 21st century music, and is at home with styles ranging from thorny modernism, to “sleek and spirited” minimalism, to indie classical.

In addition to her work with SFCMP, Kate is the pianist for the Eco Ensemble in Berkeley, and co-founder and pianist of the interdisciplinary duo KATES, which intertwines new solo piano music and new dance. As the pianist in the contemporary ensemble REDSHIFT, this year she will continue a guest artist residency at California State University East Bay, premiering works by faculty and student composers. She is also proud to be one of the founding organizers of the Omaha Under the Radar Festival, featuring new music, dance, and theater in her hometown of Omaha, Nebraska.

Kate serves on the faculty of Mills College. She was recently honored as a distinguished fellow at Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts. She can be heard on New Amsterdam Records, Pinna Records, and New Focus Recordings. Kate joined SFCMP in 2013. katecampbellpiano.com

Percussionist Christopher Froh specializes in promoting and influencing the creation of new music through critically acclaimed performances and dynamic lectures. Also a member of Empyrean Ensemble, Rootstock Percussion, and San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Froh has premiered over 100 chamber
and solo works by composers from 15 countries. His rich and diverse career also includes performances with the San Francisco Symphony at Carnegie Hall, Gamelan Sekar Jaya at the Stern Grove Festival, and session recording at Skywalker Ranch for a video game about monkeys and pirates. Chris has recorded with the San Francisco Symphony on SFS Media; as a soloist on Albany, Innova, and Equilibrium labels; and as a chamber musician on Bridge Records and Music@Menlo LIVE. As a soloist, he has appeared at festivals and recitals across Japan, China, Turkey, Europe, and the United States including featured performances at the Beijing Modern Festival, Nuovi Spazi Musicali, and Music@Menlo. He studied at the University of Michigan, Eastman School of Music, and Toho Gakuen Conservatory, where he was a student of marimba pioneer Keiko Abe. He teaches percussion and chamber music at UC Davis and CSU Sacramento.

A very active cellist in the Bay Area and beyond, Stephen Harrison (cello) is a founding member (with his wife, Susan Freier) of the Ives Quartet (formerly known as Stanford String Quartet) and a member of the faculty at Stanford University. Formerly principal cellist of the Chamber Symphony of San Francisco, the Opera Company of Boston, and the New England Chamber Orchestra, Harrison has performed on National Public Radio, the BBC, and on both German State Radio and the Netherlands State Radio. Stephen has toured internationally and recorded on the Delos, CRI, New Albion and Newport Classics labels. Harrison has been on the faculty of the Pacific Music Festival and is currently an artist/faculty member of the Rocky Ridge Music Center. Most recently he has served as principal cellist of the Mendocino Music Festival, coached at the San Diego Chamber Music Workshop and performed at the Telluride Chamber Music Festival. He earned his degrees at Oberlin College and Boston University, where he received the Award for Distinction in Graduate Performance. Stephen joined SFCMP in 1984.
Peter Josheff, clarinetist and composer, is a founding member of Sonic Harvest and of Earplay. He is also a member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the Empyrean Ensemble and the Eco Ensemble. He performs frequently with Opera Parallele, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, and Melody of China, and has worked with many other groups including West Edge Opera, the Ives Collective, the Paul Dresher Ensemble, Composers Inc., and SF Sound. Peter has composed instrumental and vocal music, opera and pop songs, as well as music for dance and theater. Crazed Loner, his singer/songwriter project, had it’s public debut in October 2016. His latest work, The Dream Mechanic, Four Poems by Carol Vanderveer Hamilton, commissioned by the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, was premiered in February 2017. Other recent compositions include Big Brother (2014) for solo piccolo, premiered Earplay; Ground Hog Day (2014) for clarinet and string quartet, premiered by the Farallon Quintet; Europa and The Bull (2014), a chamber oratorio commissioned for and premiered at the Mary Holmes Festival at UC Santa Cruz; The Cauldron (2013), commissioned and premiered by tenor Brian Thorsett; Waiting (2012), commissioned and premiered by Earplay; Nautical Man Nautical Man (2011), an album of pop songs; Sutro Tower in the Fog (2011), commissioned, premiered and recorded by the Bernal Hill Players; Sextet (2010), premiered by Sonic Harvest; and Inferno (2008), a chamber opera produced by San Francisco Cabaret Opera in 2009. Peter joined SFCMP in 1999.
Tonight’s Guest Musicians

Please join us in applauding the following guest musicians on tonight’s performance:

**Allegra Chapman**, piano, performs regularly as both a soloist and chamber musician. She has coached chamber music ensembles at many institutions, including San Francisco State University. She recently joined the faculties of California Music Preparatory Academy and the Xi’an International Music Festival.

**Meena Bhasin**, viola, is a member of Lincoln Center’s Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, principal violist for Trinity Wall Street’s NOVUS NY, a frequent performer with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, and a teaching artist for the New York Philharmonic. She also relishes collaborations across genres and has toured the US as a soloist with legendary rock band Jethro Tull and performed Persian music as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic.

**Bill Kalinkos**, clarinet, enjoys a diverse musical career as a member of critically acclaimed groups such as Alarm Will Sound, Ensemble Signal, Deviant Septet, Eco Ensemble, and Splinter Reeds. Recognized by the Washington Post as a “notable contemporary music specialist,” he has been fortunate enough to work with and premiere pieces by many renowned composers.

**Helen Newby**, cello, is a founding member of string trio Chartreuse, string quartet Amaranth, jazz sextet deturtle, and experimental noise quartet HK&tCS. In addition to an active career as a performer, Helen is equally dedicated to teaching. She maintains a private studio in Berkeley and is on faculty at The Crowden School.
Honoring Susan Hartzell

SFCMP Advisory Council 2017 - Present
SFCMP President 2005-2009
SFCMP Board Member 2001 - 2017

Tonight, we are honoring Susan Hartzell a long-time friend and supporter of San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Please join us in the lobby after the concert for cake and celebration. To get the party started, available at the concessionaire is “The Susan Hartzell” a special cocktail made just for this occasion (available through intermission).

Get to Know Susan

“I have observed that there are people who are interested in what’s new and adventurous, and people who are more interested in deeply delving into what’s familiar,” says Susan Hartzell, a long-time member of the SFCMP board of directors. Susan attends San Francisco Contemporary Music Players’ concerts with her husband, Harry, and with friends whom they have introduced to the group over the years. “You can’t force people to like new music,” she observes, “but you can expose people to new things and let them decide for themselves. Even if it’s not for them, it’s important for the community, it’s important for the culture, to keep new music going, to encourage composers who are creating new art.”

Susan grew up with a sense that new music and art were important and rewarding. While her family was living in Southern California during the Second World War, her parents took her to a concert series, “Evenings on the Roof,” which featured many of the significant musicians of the émigré community. Later, when her family moved to the New York City area, modern art played a significant role in their outings, especially trips to the MOMA.

When Susan met her husband, Harry, they found that they shared a love of music and art, and Harry was receptive
to the new, as well as the classics he had grown up with. Thus, when they moved to the Bay Area, they pursued their interest in modern art by becoming members of SFMOMA. A brochure from the museum invited them to “Listen to Modern Art” by attending SF Contemporary Music Players’ concerts on Monday evenings in the Green Room at the War Memorial Veteran’s Building. They loved the idea of getting a babysitter for their children and enjoying a “twofer” by combining a concert with seeing art during the extended intermission.

The experience of hearing contemporary music in the intimate setting of the Green Room was memorable. When she first heard a Morton Feldman piece, Susan says, “At first, I couldn’t make heads nor tails of it!” Now Feldman’s work has become a favorite. SFCMP provided her first experiences of Schoenberg’s *Pierrot*
Lunaire and other seminal works, some of which were “totally puzzling” and others easily accessible. Susan especially remembers a performance of John Cage’s Music for Flowerpot, in which William Winant dropped the flower pot right on the beat. “When it shattered,” she says, “I realized how much fun there was to be had, as well as how much stimulation!”

One of the joys of subscribing to SFCMP was sharing the concerts with Susan’s parents, who had moved to the Bay Area. It brought their common interest in contemporary music full circle. When her mother passed away, Susan honored her by sponsoring a performance of Symphony #13 by Lou Harrison, a composer whose work they had both loved.

For Susan and Harry, a rewarding aspect of supporting the SF Contemporary Music Players is the connection they feel to a community that shares their interest in contemporary music—their fellow audience members as well as the Players, with whom they have become familiar over the years. During the ten years that Susan has served on the board, different artistic and executive directors have brought different styles to the organization. She is glad to see, however, that the organization has stayed true to its mission, and that the players of the ensemble have remained loyal, continuing to present challenging concerts at the highest level.

Join us for a post-concert party in the lobby to celebrate Susan and enjoy the company of your SFCMP community.
Tonight’s piano provided by

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Friends of SFCMP

San Francisco Contemporary Music Players gratefully acknowledges the following supporters who have made one or more donations between September 2015 to the present, resulting in gift totals within the following categories. These generous gifts help the ensemble to reach new heights in presenting outstanding, adventurous concerts at affordable prices; educating young musicians, commissioning new works, and breaking down the barriers to understanding new music through our How Music is Made program.

We apologize for any errors or omissions; for corrections please contact director@sfcmp.org.

**Artistic Director’s Circle ($10,000 +)**
- Erik Neuenschwander and Sonya Chang
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Legacy Circle

THE HAROLD WOLLACK LEGACY CIRCLE

A former subscriber, Harold Wollack, left the first bequest to help underwrite the ensemble’s concerts and programs. More recently, the ensemble has received a generous bequest from the estate of Jane LeRoux and Victor and Esta Wolfram.

Your bequest to the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players Legacy Circle will ensure the future of our music for lifetimes ahead. We thank the following individuals, who have arranged bequests to help support the ensemble’s future work:

Anne Baldwin
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Harold Wollack*

*deceased

To leave your own legacy gift to the ensemble, please contact Lisa Oman, Executive Director (415) 278-9566 or director@sfcmp.org
Upcoming Events

UNSILENT NIGHT
by Phil Kline
A free holiday event linked to "Unsilent Night" celebrations around the world.
Mission Dolores Park, SF
Sat., Dec 9, 2017, 5:00 - 6:00pm

SFCMP in Concert
Performing works by ZORN, FUNG, BYRON, BROWN, MONK, RZEWSKI
Don’t miss this exciting concert with our special guest, Meredith MONK
SF Conservatory of Music
Fri., Jan 19, 2018, 4:00 - 9:30 pm

(See p. 4-5 in this booklet for details)

SFCMP Contemporary Music
Master Class with William WINANT
SF Conservatory of Music Recital Hall
Thurs. Feb. 22, 2018, 7:30 - 9:00 pm

SFCMP in Concert
A 4-Concert Weekend
Celebrating the 85th anniversary of Pauline Oliveros’s birth and Steven Schick’s final season as SFCMP’s Artistic Director.
Z Space, 450 Florida St, SF
Fri., March 23, 2018, 5:30 pm - Sat., March 24, 2018, 11:00 pm

Season Celebration:
SOUND & WINE 2018
Saturday, April 21, 2018, 3:30- 5:30 pm
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- Join the Legacy Circle and support us through planned giving.
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