



# NACUSA CONCERT

## Moments in Spring

By NACUSA SF Composers

Broadcast from the Center for New Music

55 Taylor Street, San Francisco

Saturday, April 10, 2021, 8:00 pm

### P R O G R A M

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| MARY FINEMAN     | <b>Savlanut</b><br>Mary Fineman, piano  |
| DAVIDE VEROTTA   | <b>11 Short Pieces for Piano</b><br>Arthur Cimirro, piano   |
| JACOB E. GOODMAN | <b>15 Variations on Fragments of a Schubert Theme</b><br>Libby Kardontchik, piano   |
| JOHN BILOTTA     | <b>A Death in Wyoming</b><br>Electronic score. The Agnieszka Laska Dance Company.<br>Kelsey Adams, Merlin Benneth, Niqui Cavanaugh,<br>Sharon Lane, Lauren Michelle Sprague, Caitlin Wichlacz   |
| GREG A. STEINKE  | <b>Moments from White Blowing Daffodil Seeds</b><br>Casey Bozell, violin, Diane Chaplin, cello, Cary Lewis,<br>piano  |
| KARL SCHMIDT     | <b>Sonatina in Blue</b><br>Karl Schmidt, alto saxophone/clarinet, Benjamin Belew<br>piano   |
| SHELI NAN        | <b>The Golden Ratio</b><br>Texas Saxophone Quartet  |
| JOHN F. MCGREW   | <b>Three Haiku</b><br>Maria Mikheyenko, soprano, Mark Alburger, oboe, John<br>F. McGrew, bass, John Bilotta, piano  |
| JOHN BEEMAN      | <b>Ishi Act 2, Scene 1 (Excerpt)</b><br>Ellen Leslie, Soprano, Robert Vann, Tenor, Paul Murray,<br>Baritone. Chorus: Gabrielle Goozée-Nichols, Soprano,<br>Nicole Takesono, Alto, Adam Flowers, Tenor, John<br>Kendall Bailey, Bass. Keisuke Nakagoshi, piano |

**Mary Fineman** is a composer, performer, and teacher whose music crosses genres. Originally from Baltimore, she trained as a classical pianist, studied music theory with Grace Newsom Cushman, and moved to Montreal for piano studies with Philip Cohen and Laretta Altman. She taught at Concordia University, studied jazz at McGill, and later taught at Temple Jr. College in Texas. The Muse entered her life suddenly in 2003. With a commission from the James Irvine Foundation, Mary orchestrated her song cycle “*It’s about Love*”, performed by the Oakland Symphony in 2014. She’s performed at the Paramount Theater, Piedmont Piano Company, Chapel of the Chimes, the Marsh Berkeley, as well as fundraisers and house concerts. Mary is involved in the ongoing recording of more than seventy songs and piano works, having released four CD’s, with two new CD’s and a piano book planned for 2021. Learn more (and find lyrics) at [www.maryfineman.com](http://www.maryfineman.com)

Savlanut (pronounced savlanoot) is a word which translates as **patience** in modern Hebrew. (It could also be thought of as endurance). Having encountered this word while studying Mussar, a Jewish spiritual practice which addresses soul traits or virtues, I discovered a further definition of patience - the ability to tolerate or stay with the present moment. (*Many thanks to esteemed teacher Estelle Frankel*). I’d already been writing “*Savlanut*” and realized that the piece had its own internal discomfort. The music needed to reckon with its own capacity to just be. “*Savlanut*” embodies the struggle to stay with the present moment, whether uncomfortable or not.

**Davide Verotta** was born in an Italian town close to Milano and moved to San Francisco in his late twenties. He studied piano at the Milano and SF conservatories and San Francisco State University, and composition at SFSU (M.A.) and the University of California at Davis (Ph.D. program). Professor of Bioengineering and Biostatistics at UCSF for three decades, he has been concomitantly in the new music scene in SF as a pianist and a composer. He currently teaches piano and composition at the Community Music Center and privately. Recent (2020/2021) works include three string quartets, a piano quartet, a piano trio and a piano duo, a wind quintet, a cello solo sonata, and solo percussion. For more information, please visit his web site at [www.davideverotta.com](http://www.davideverotta.com).

Eleven Short Pieces for Piano is a set of solo pieces for pianoforte. Each piece was composed under the constraint of being about one minute long. Short and personal they reach for the more intimate quality inherent in solo playing and exploit the close relationship of the composer with the beloved pianoforte.

**Jacob E. Goodman**, founder of the New York Composers Circle in 2002, is Professor Emeritus of mathematics at City College (the City University of New York). He studied composition with, among others, Ezra Laderman and David Del Tredici. His music has been performed in California, New York, Nebraska, Delaware, Toronto, Buenos Aires, Croatia, and Japan. Recent compositions include three song cycles; a set of six intermezzi for piano; a quintet for flute, piano, and strings; a set of variations for flute, violin, cello, and piano; a prelude for saxophone and piano; a duo for cello and piano; a set of nocturnes for violin and piano; three bagatelles for piano; a string quartet; a set of variations for orchestra; and a piano fantasy; as well as the score for the documentary film *Meet Me at the Canoe*, produced for the American Museum of Natural History by his daughter Naomi Goodman-Broom.

15 Variations on Fragments of a Schubert Theme is not a “theme and variations” work in the classical sense, in which the underlying harmonies of the theme are elaborated on in different ways. Rather, as the title indicates, mere fragments of the Schubert theme (the opening section of his Piano Sonata in A major, Op. 120) are elaborated in a variety of ways – melodically, harmonically, rhythmically, often without reference to the underlying harmonies. The theme is stated at the outset, most of the variations are tonal, and, as in Beethoven's Six Variations, Op. 34, they are all in different, but related, keys.

**John G. Bilotta** was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, but has spent most of his life in the San Francisco Bay Area where he studied composition with Frederick Saunders. His works have been performed by soloists and ensembles around the world including rarescale, Earplay, the Talea Ensemble, the Washington Square Contemporary Music Society, Chamber Mix, North/South Consonance, Musica Nova, the Avenue Winds, the Presidio Ensemble, the Boston String Quartet, the San Francisco Composers Chamber Orchestra, the Kiev

Philharmonic, the Oakland Civic Orchestra, San Francisco Cabaret Opera, Bluegrass Opera, Boston Metro Opera, Thompson Street Opera, New Fangled Opera, Opera Espresso, Floating Opera, and VocalWorks. He serves on the Board of Directors for Goat Hall Productions and on the Executive Committee of the Society of Composers, Inc. He currently serves as President of the San Francisco Chapter of NACUSA.

*A Death in Wyoming* is an electronic score that was composed directly into a Cubase sequencer controlling a bank of thirteen synthesizers in the electronic music lab at Diablo Valley College. It runs three minutes in length. In 2015, it was choreographed by Caitlin Wichlaz and performed by the modern dance company the Agnieszka Laska Dancers as part of a program of works by members of the Cascadia Composers group. The resulting performance video is being presented in this streaming concert.

Dr. **Greg A Steinke** is retired, former Joseph Naumes Endowed Chair of Music/Art and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, Oregon; Associate Director, Ernest Bloch Music Festival ('93–97) and Director, Composers Symposium ('90–97) (Newport, OR); served as the National Chairman of the Society of Composers, Inc. (1988–97). Composer of chamber and symphonic music and author with published/recorded works and performances across the U. S. and internationally; speaker on interdisciplinary arts, and oboist specializing in contemporary music. Dr. Steinke is a past national president of NACUSA (1012-19) and also currently serves on the NACUSA Cascadia Chapter Board.

*Moments from WHITE BLOWING DAFFODIL SEEDS* was written after a perusal of *Riverbend*, a literary journal published at Ball State University wherein I found the poem used as a metaphor for this composition. The poem and the composition also serve as way of honoring the memory of a very dear family friend, Virgil Adams, who passed away in November of 1992.

**Karl Schmidt** attended Lawrence University (Appleton, Wisconsin), graduating in 1959 with a BA in English with minors in Theatre and Music. During these years he studied clarinet with Clark Brody, principal clarinetist of the Chicago Symphony, wrote and recorded incidental music for “The Red Shoes”, and recorded an album of jazz entitled “Windy City Profile”. Since becoming active in NACUSAsf and the Monterey Composer’s Forum in 2006 he has composed and arranged many classical and pop pieces, mostly for small ensembles and symphonic wind ensembles. He is principal clarinetist with the South Bay Philharmonic Orchestra, regularly plays clarinet and saxophone with woodwind quartets, quintets and two 20-piece jazz Big Bands. A member of ASCAP, his works and performances are available on his website: [www.karlschmidtmusic.com](http://www.karlschmidtmusic.com)

Most players of reed instruments, especially in swing or big bands, play more than one instrument and often are required to switch between instruments in the course of playing one piece. “Sonatina in Blue” was composed with this requirement in mind. It begins with a “blueszy” theme played on alto saxophone, transitions to a light-hearted tune performed on soprano clarinet, then a scherzo on alto sax and finally a recapitulation of the blues. The piece was first performed at Hidden Valley Music Institute, Carmel Valley, CA in 2014.

**Sheli Nan** composes music that defies boundaries. She is a composer, teacher, pianist, harpsichordist, percussionist and author. Her Baroque and Classical training coupled with having lived all over the world produce a unique sound; a 21st century harmony. Giving credit to earlier musical iterations what she composes is fresh, invigorating, accessible and moving. Her music is performed locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. She composes from solo harpsichord and piano up to string quartets, chamber music and orchestra. Her choral music encompasses opera, (and librettos) Oratorios and Requiems. Sheli has over 100 pieces in the ASCAP library that have been published by PRB Productions, Screaming Mary Music, and Tech-Clazz Publishing Co. In addition to her classical performances 12 of her CDs, representing a third of her output and can be listened to on Spotify.

How were the great medieval Cathedrals built? In medieval times the masons were responsible for designing and guiding the building of the cathedrals. They were designed using the Golden Ratio, a mathematical formula that was originally discovered by Pythagoras in Ancient Greece. Once the Cathedral was built, the horn choir

would sing echoing throughout the church reaching every last person in the Cathedral. The Golden Ratio is a tribute to this masterful undertaking, to those that gave their lives building the Cathedrals; the master masons, the monks for their visionary foresight and for the musicians that anointed the Cathedral.

**John F. McGrew** studied piano, harmony, and composition as a teenager with Alexander Sckaventa (a student of Rimsky-Korsakov). After receiving his Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology, he worked as a human factors engineer for 30 years. He returned to music studying with Aaron Blumenfeld. John has played the contrabass in community orchestras in Bay Area, Washington D.C., and Pasadena CA. and is an amateur guitarist. He wrote the libretto for *Quantum Mechanic* which won the 2007 Opera-in-a-Month Competition and the 2010 Americana Festival Award, and for *Trifles*, *Mozart Where Are You*, and *The Rosetta Stone*. He composed the music for *Three Haiku* for string quartet. He has written short stories, screen plays, children's stories, a novel, and acted in the independent reality film *Xtraterrestrials Xposed*.

The *Three Haiku* was written in response to an assignment given by an instructor while taking a course in improvisation. The instructor in response to my comments that “I didn’t particularly care for Art Songs”, like many a misguided instructors, immediately decide that since I didn’t like Art Songs that I must be immediately assigned an exercise in writing Art Songs. I was given a list containing many haikus from which I selected three of the less odious ones. I also followed a long personal tradition of not doing what I was supposed to do when presented with an arbitrary and unwanted direction to proceed by not using any of the methods being presented in the course. The *Three Haiku* presented here is the result. I, of course, am fond of the result.

**John Beeman** is a composer living in the San Francisco Bay Area. He studied with Peter Fricker and William Bergsma at the University of Washington where he received his Master’s degree. Mr. Beeman is the composer of three operas, symphonic and chamber works and numerous choral compositions. Works have been performed by the Santa Rosa Symphony, Boston Metro Opera, the Ives Quartet, Paul Drescher, and the Oregon Repertory Singers. He has received awards through Meet the Composer, the American Composers Forum and ASCAP. Currently he is working on an opera about Ishi, the last Native American of his tribe to come out of the wilderness.

In this scene, Ishi is accompanied by the anthropologists, Kroeber, Waterman and the translator, Batwi, as they visit the Orpheum Theater where the famous Lily Lena is singing. The vaudeville performers announce that Ishi is in the audience. He becomes anxious from all the attention he receives. In this excerpt Dr. Waterman attempts to calm down Ishi. Shortly, Lily Lena sings, “Let me call you sweetheart.” Ishi, enchanted, walks towards Lily and they sing a duet. Ishi sings about his Mother and how he never had a mate. Later, the Chorus joins in and Lily hands Ishi a piece of gum that he puts in his shirt pocket by his heart.

NACUSA is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-exempt, and are gratefully accepted by the San Francisco chapter. Please visit <http://nacusasf.org/Donate.html> or make out donation checks to NACUSA SF, and mail to: NACUSA SF Treasurer, 903 El Cajon Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303. NACUSA also accepts donations of appreciated stock. For information please contact Karl Schmidt, Treasurer, at 650-823-4326.

---

BENEFACTORS

---

David Ach  
Adrienne Albert  
Anne Baldwin  
Laura Barton  
John Beeman  
John Bilotta  
Semyon Bokman  
Joanne Carey  
Sondta Clark

Allan Crossman  
L Peter Deutch  
Brian Field  
Gary Friedman  
Jacob E. Goodman  
Susan and Stephen Harrison  
Carolyn Hawley  
Lisa Largent  
Sheli Nan

Emily Ray  
Roberta Robertson  
Karl and JoAnn Schmidt  
Kent Smith  
Artifex Software  
Greg Steinke  
Vanguard Charitable  
Davide Verotta

**The National Association of Composers, U.S.A.** (NACUSA), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in 1933 by Henry Hadley originally as the National Association of Composers and Conductors. It is one of the oldest organizations devoted to the promotion and performance of music by Americans. Many of the most distinguished composers of the 20th and 21st Centuries have been NACUSA members. NACUSA has chapters in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco (NACUSA SF), Baton Rouge, Virginia, Texas, and Tennessee. The NACUSA SF chapter produces four concerts each season featuring music by its members. Please visit the NACUSA SF chapter website at <http://www.nacusasf.org>.