



The San Francisco Chapter of the National Association of Composers/USA presents a new music recital.

# Spring Mini-Festival of New Music

Sunday, April 26, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Center for New Music, San Francisco

## PROGRAM

*Sundown* Monica Chew  
Ariel Wang, violin and percussion; Monica Chew, piano and percussion

*Longing* Ariel Wang  
Monica Chew, piano

*Ursonate (reVisited) - Themes and Variations* Jean-Paul Perrotte  
electronics

*Rapid Promenade* James W. Cook  
James W. Cook, clarinet

*Parallel* Robert Fleisher  
electroacoustic - stereo fixed media

*Three Piano Ballads* Alden Jenks  
Tombeau de Gershwin  
Game Show  
Be That Way  
Margaret Halbig, piano

## ~intermission~

*Shadow Tree* John G. Bilotta  
Jessie Nucho, alto flute; Lyle Sheffler, guitar

*Heco Ster'Clus* Harrison Jones  
*Pearl'meeh Rigde*  
Max Glater-Chacon, piano

*You May Get a History Page* Davide Verotta  
electronics

*Five Poems for Soprano, Flute, and Piano* Kyle Hovatter  
Jane Spencer Mills, soprano; Diana Gomez, flute; Nicole Faghihi, piano

NACUSA is a non-profit organization 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. Each NACUSA chapter typically sponsors several concerts each year which feature music by its members. NACUSA has chapters in Cascadia, East Coast, Great Plains, Los Angeles, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-South, San Francisco Bay Area, the Southeast, Southern Oregon, and Texas. Started by Nancy Bloomer Deussen and John Webber more than twenty years ago, the San Francisco Bay Chapter has evolved into an active organization with a peak membership of seventy-five composers. It produces four to six concerts each year in the San Francisco Bay Area. Learn more at <http://nacusasf.org>

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**Benefactors**

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David Ach	Allan Crossman	Emily Ray
Adrienne Albert	L. Peter Deutsch	Roberta Robertson
Anne Baldwin	Brian Field	Andrew Robinson
Laura Barton	Mary Fineman	Karl and JoAnn Schmidt
John Beeman	Robert Fleisher	Allen Shearer
Brenda L. Bergsrud	Gary Friedman	Max Simoncic
John Bilotta	Jacob E. Goodman	Kent Smith
Miriam Blatt	Susan and Stephen Harrison	Artifex
Semyon Bokman	Carolyn Hawley	Greg Steinke
Joanne Carey	Corliss Kimmel	Robert Stine
Sondra Clark	Carleton Macy	Vanguard Charitable
I'lana Cotton	Sheli Nan	Davide Verotta

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>

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# Program notes

## **Sundown**

**Monica Chew**

I wrote this piece as part of a concert themed Dreams and Dances. Although sunsets are commonly associated with beauty, the word “sundown” has ominous connotations, such as in “sundowning,” a term for increased confusion during the evening that can lead to restlessness and—why not—dancing.

Monica Chew (she/her) is an Oakland composer and pianist who celebrates presenting rarely performed music and new works from around the world. A “gifted player with an affinity for deeply sensitive expression” (*Whole Note*), she has composed since 2017. Prior to 2015, she worked nearly a decade as a principal software engineer on security and privacy at Mozilla and Google.

## **Longing**

**Ariel Wang**

“Longing” was written during a tumultuous time, when the number of things desired felt overwhelming. The piece strives to capture the many ways it can feel—whether it’s a sweet longing for someone, a storm of longing for peace, or everything in between.

Ariel Wang is a violinist, singer-songwriter, and composer in Oakland who performs and writes music that aims to capture human experiences. Ariel began composing instrumental music during her time in graduate school, as a part of her studies. Since then, she has composed multiple string quartets, a suite of pieces about Oakland, pieces for the Composer Arranger Performer Orchestra (CAPO), which she also plays with, songs, and more. She has mentored with Ryan Shore through the Recording Academy’s composer/songwriter wing, and premiered her most ambitious work, an orchestra piece, with Echo Chamber Ensemble on February 9, 2025. Some other recent pieces include a string quartet, “Starvation,” a choir piece, “Resilience,” sung by the Free Key Choir, piano trio “Blossom” played by the Women Composers Collective, and quintet “Forrest Cave” played by Bridge Music Collective.

## Ursonate (reVisited) - Themes and Variations

Jean-Paul Perrotte

*Ursonate (reVisited) - Themes and Variations*, pays homage to the long history and influences of contemporary experimental sound art. This sound poem “Ursonate”, which translated means “Primal Sonata” by German Dada artist Kurt Schwitters (1922), contains five themes that I have performed, recorded, digitally processed and mixed to be presented in stereo. These five themes are made up of nonsensical vocal utterances. True to the nature of Dada!

Jean-Paul Perrotte is an American composer of French and Ecuadorian descent whose work includes compositions for electronics, acoustic instruments, voice, video, dancers, and improvisation using Max/MSP. His works have been performed internationally and presented in prestigious art galleries like the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, Nebraska. Dr. Perrotte has also co-written a chapter titled *Sound Art—New Only in Name: A Selected History of German Sound Works from the Last Century* from the edited volume *Germany in the Loud Twentieth Century*. Dr. Perrotte received his Ph.D. in Composition from the University of Iowa in 2013. He is currently Associate Professor of Composition and is the Director of the ElectroAcoustic Composition Laboratory at the University of Nevada, Reno. His scores are available for purchase at <https://www.babelscores.com/JeanPaulPerrotte> and his latest release on Ravello Records, “Jean-Paul Perrotte: a Collection of Works,” is available on all major streaming services.

## Rapid Promenade

James W. Cook

## Parallel

Robert Fleisher

*Parallel* (1968/2021) started out as a brief composing session at the piano in my teens, preserved on an open-reel tape recorder. Sometime thereafter, I found I was hearing that same recording backwards, on its 7-inch reel’s reverse side. Judicious editing decades later reduced the original segment by roughly one third, prior to its premiere in IUPUI’s 2022 Earth Day Art Model international telematic festival. Its title reflects the composer’s evident fondness for archaic voice leading in his youth. In 2023, *Parallel* was heard during the VU3 Symposium (Park City, UT) and in more than a dozen NACUSA/Sounds New installations in AL, GA, and NC. In 2024, it was heard during the 40th annual SEAMUS conference in NYC, and released on the NACUSA/Sounds New CD, *JUN (SkyDeck)*. Earlier this month, *Parallel* was heard during the inaugural TagTEAMS Festival of Electroacoustic Music and Digital Arts in Bangkok, Thailand, and will soon be re-released on *Electronic Masters Vol. 11 (Ablaze)*.

Robert Fleisher’s music has been heard throughout the U.S. and in more than a dozen other countries, released on as many record labels, and appreciatively received in *Fanfare*, *The Journal of Singing*, *Musicworks* (Canada), *The New York Times*, *Percussive Notes*, *Perspectives of New Music*, and *The Strad* (U.K.). His electroacoustic works have been heard at Roulette, National Sawdust, Symphony Space/Thalia (NYC), the Minneapolis Institute of Art, and in EMM, ICMC, NWEAMO, NYCEMF, SCI, SEAMUS, and VU conferences and festivals. International venues include the Contemporanea Festival (Italy), Toronto Electroacoustic Symposium, Électrolune festival, Neue Musik Zirkus, Ars Acusmatica and Forum Wallis Ars Electronica (Switzerland), and the Audiograft, BEAST FEaST, and Noise Floor festivals (U.K.). A native New Yorker, Fleisher earned a B.Mus. degree with honors at the University of Colorado, his M.M. and D.M.A. Composition degrees at the University of Illinois studying with Ben Johnston, Salvatore Martirano, and Paul Zonn. He is Professor Emeritus at Northern Illinois University.

## Three Piano Ballads

Alden Jenks

I have been composing piano pieces off and on for a long time. Here are three of them. The “Tombeau,” obviously, is a kind of *hommage* to a composer whose works I have loved all my life; “Game Show” is a playful set of variations; “Be That Way” is a kind of emotional breakdown.

Alden Jenks attended Yale University and the University of California, Berkeley. He worked at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he did everything from act as Chair of the Composition Department to repair their turntables, and a great deal in between. His work includes music for live performers as well as electronic music with live performers, and electronic music for recorded media alone. His most recent work includes “Poems of Yosano Akiko” for soprano and four instruments; a post-apocalypse opera, “Afterworld” (libretto by AJ); six songs for soprano and string quartet, and a theatre piece called “Josie Baby”. His music has been performed in the San Francisco Bay Area and around the world. He is privileged to be married to pianist/composer/teacher/artist Mikako Endo, and to have a son, mathematician/cellist Jesse Endo Jenks. [www.aldenjenks.com](http://www.aldenjenks.com)

## Shadow Tree

John G. Bilotta

*Shadow Tree* is an impromptu for alto flute and guitar. A lyrical work, it evokes the atmosphere of a painting of the same name by California artist Denis Minamora. In the painting, we see the brilliant white stucco wall of a Mediterranean home, a lavender door and window, and across these floats the shadow of a tree we cannot see, the shadow tree. The music begins tentatively, an improvisation, the instruments coming together, then diverging, then rejoining as they build upon the musical ideas in an almost off-handed manner. As the work unfolds, the instruments share in the evolution of the musical material before returning to an abbreviated exposition, a slow cadenza, and a coda of sweet stillness.

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 Rarescale, Earplay, Talea Ensemble, Washington Square Contemporary Music Society, North/South Consonance, Avenue Winds, Boston String Quartet, Kiev Philharmonic, San Francisco Cabaret Opera, Bluegrass Opera, Boston Metro Opera, Thompson Street Opera, New Fangled Opera, and Floating Opera. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Society of Composers, Inc., and is currently the treasurer of NACUSAsf.

## Heco Ster'Clus

Harrison Jones

### Pearl'meeh Rigde

*Heco Ster'Clus* is a piece comprised of a series of statements followed by echoes. The entire composition is generated by two banks of note clusters. One bank is the original set of clusters, while the other bank consists of the inverse of the original clusters.

*Pearl'meeh Rigde* is a piece that came to fruition through an experiment of making a lot with a limited amount of material. In this case, the piece was generated by one phrase that has been stretched excessively.

Harrison Jones is a California-based composer who has a keen interest in experimenting with his music. Harrison obtained his B.A. in Composition from UC Davis and his M.A. in Composition from Fresno State. He approaches his compositions with the goal of pushing himself as a composer, but also strives to ensure his compositions are fun for the performer and engaging for the audience, too. Generating music that questions what can be music and how it can be organized, or generating music that is quiet and subtle in its approach.

## You May Get a History Page

Davide Verotta

Monstrous to behold, and frequently working themselves up into fits of rage, the Furies are ancient, bloodthirsty gods, enforcing the right of vengeance. *You May Get a History Page*, for voice and electronics, imagines a powerful figure visited by the Furies. They sing the following words:

*Chorus* Hear the chant that knows no lyre!  
We are the Goddesses of vengeance  
hunting the sacrilegious vile  
with bristly serpent hair  
casting a fettering spell on you

*Solo* You might get a history page  
thanks to your acrid twisted lies  
You might thread multitudes in dirt  
thanks to your sordid glory lust  
but still, you'll soon be dust  
We'll nurse your terror  
disrupt your brain  
disperse the soul

*Chorus* You might get a history page  
but you'll be only frightened dust

Davide Verotta was born in an Italian town close to Milano and moved to San Francisco as an eager twenty-seven-year-old. A professor at UCSF in biomathematics (gasp) for thirty years, he has been actively involved in the SF new music scene for a good twenty, and eventually left math behind to concentrate exclusively on composing. He studied piano at the Milano conservatory ages ago. Composition is more recent, with studies at SFSU, where he earned an MA, and UC Davis. Davide teaches piano and composition privately and at the Community Music Center in SF. He is the current President of NACUSAsf. For more information, please visit his website at [www.davideverotta.com](http://www.davideverotta.com) or his YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/DavideVerotta](http://www.youtube.com/DavideVerotta).

## Five Poems for Soprano, Flute & Piano

Kyle Hovatter

These five short songs are compiled from collaborations with the terrific musicians Jane Spencer Mills, Diana Gomez, Nicole Faghihi. The poems are from Vachel Lindsay and Carl Sandburg.

San Francisco-based composer Kyle Hovatter (b. 1986) writes for classical and unconventional instruments. In addition to composing, he serves as Director of Music at Zion Lutheran Church in San Francisco.

**Grass** by Carl Sandburg (1878-1967)

Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo.

Shovel them under and let me work—

I am the grass; I cover all.

And pile them high at Gettysburg

And pile them high at Ypres and Verdun.

Shovel them under and let me work.

Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor:

What place is this?

Where are we now?

I am the grass.

Let me work.

**Korrespondenz**

Gott, Er selbst der vom Körper nicht gesehen werden kann,

Er selbst, der von der Seele nicht gesehen werden kann,

Er selbst lässt sich im Spiegel betrachten.

**Unjust** (Excerpt from “Why I Voted the Socialist Ticket”) by Vachel Lindsay (1879-1931)

I am unjust, but I can strive for justice.

My life’s unkind, but I can vote for kindness.

I, the unloving, say life should be lovely.

I, that am blind, cry out against my blindness.

**A Sense of Humor** by Lindsay

No man should stand before the moon  
To make sweet song thereon,  
With dandified importance,  
His sense of humor gone.

Nay, let us don the motley cap,  
The jester's chastened mien,  
If we would woo that looking-glass  
And see what should be seen.

O mirror on fair Heaven's wall,  
We find there what we bring.  
So, let us smile in honest part  
And deck our souls and sing.

Yea, by the chastened jest alone  
Will ghosts and terrors pass,  
And fays, or suchlike friendly things,  
Throw kisses through the glass.

**Rain** by Lindsay

Each storm-soaked flower has a beautiful eye.  
And this is the voice of the stone-cold sky:  
"Only boys keep their cheeks dry.  
Men thank God for tears  
Alone with the memory of their dead,  
Alone with lost years."