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### Performers:

Tod Brody, flute (Felder, Matalon, Mantovani)  
Stacey Pelinka, flute (Tharp)  
Carey Bell, clarinet (Mantovani)  
Peter Josheff, clarinet (Tharp, Felder)  
Lawrence Ragent, horn  
Jeff Biancalana, piccolo trumpet  
Karen Gottlieb, harp  
Julie Steinberg, piano (Felder, Tharp)  
Vicki Ray, piano (Mantovani)  
Christopher Froh, percussion (Tharp)  
Daniel Kennedy, percussion (Felder)  
Graeme Jennings, violin (Tharp, Mantovani, Felder), viola (Felder)  
Nanci Severance, viola (Mantovani)  
Ellen Ruth Rose, viola (Matalon)  
Stephen Harrison, cello (Tharp, Felder)  
Leighton Fong, cello (Mantovani)

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*The U.S. premiere of Bruno Mantovani's Les Danses interrompues is supported in part by the Ross McKee Foundation.*

*Steinway Piano provided by Sherman Clay Concert Event Series.*

# SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

David Milnes, Music Director

Monday, May 5, 2008, 8pm  
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum

## SAN FRANCISCO NIGHT

**DAVID FELDER**, *partial [dist]res[s]toration* (2001-03)

(Approximate duration: 19 minutes)

**REYNOLD THARP**, *San Francisco Night* (2007)

World Premiere

(Approximate duration: 15 minutes)

~ INTERMISSION ~

**MARTIN MATALON**, *Formas de arena* (Forms of sand) (2001)

(Approximate duration: 11 minutes)

**BRUNO MANTOVANI**, *Les Danses interrompues* (Interrupted dances) (2000)

United States Premiere

(Approximate duration: 19 minutes)

## Program Notes

### DAVID FELDER (B. 1953)

When asked by a reviewer for *Sequenza21* about his formative musical influences, composer David Felder replied: “I was a singer and deeply loved 15th- and 16th-century contrapuntal stuff, particularly the Venetians. From there I seem to have gotten to brass music by playing some and hanging out with great players, even conducting quintets, etc. Quickly [Edgard] Varèse became an icon for me while I was very young, and from there it radiates out in a lot of directions—the connective tissue is always the power and beauty in sounds themselves, and the few composers that have the awareness and the ability to make works that can transcend. It’s an elite company; I occasionally return to Mahler, Dufay, Gabrieli, Brahms and North Indian Classical Music, Dervish music, and Tibetan chanting; there are some great contemporaries, too, but I don’t wish to offend by leaving someone off the list...” As Felder’s words suggest, his world of expression is both broad (chronologically, aesthetically, geographically) and focused: his music builds on the energy and evocative power of sound.

Though Felder declined to name his “favorites” among contemporary composers, he is no stranger to the range of creative work today. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of California, San Diego with Roger Reynolds, Donald Erb, and Bernard Rands, and he also taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music and California State University, Long Beach, before joining the faculty of the University at Buffalo (State University of New York). Since 1985, he has been in charge of one of this country’s most important summer new music festivals, June in Buffalo. Begun by Morton Feldman in 1975 (with a substantial pre-history in S. U. N. Y. Buffalo’s Center for the Creative and Performing Arts founded by composers Lukas Foss and Allen Sapp), June in Buffalo suffered a five-year hiatus before Felder joined the faculty and revitalized the festival, paying greater attention to “emerging” composers and expanding in many respects the stylistic diversity of its programming.

S. U. N. Y. Buffalo graduate Nils Vigeland, now Chair of Composition at the Manhattan School of Music, has identified two of the key features of Felder’s oeuvre: “a fierce opposition of states of

activity—muscular, often violent fast music with static, remote music of repose” and an “insistent virtuosity of instrumental projection.” These traits do much to explain the seemingly inexhaustible drama in Felder’s scores. Yet for all the self-sufficient acoustic impact of his music, many of Felder’s best known scores also incorporate video images or poetic texts. His ambitious *Crossfire* series combines music, electronics and video in such pieces as *Boxman* (1986-88); here, the phrases of a solo trombonist are digitally delayed, distorted, or otherwise modified to create a sound collage that is matched and enveloped by images of the performer, captured from different angles and projected onto as many as thirty screens.

Turning to the poetic realm, the fragmentary lines that help shape the work we will hear tonight, *partial [dist]res[s]toration*, in fact come from two of Felder’s favorite poets: friend and colleague Robert Creeley and Chilean Nobel laureate Pablo Neruda. In his recent score *So Quiet Here* (2006), Felder takes not just Creeley’s words but also the sound of his recorded voice, to create an “in memoriam” after the poet’s untimely death. By selecting poems that “evoke a seasonal, cyclic time,” and by presenting Creeley’s poetry readings both in straightforward playback and in radical re-synthesis, Felder plumbs the depths of loss and memory; for example, in the third movement, “Edges,” the composer fashions “a quasi-acoustic bass-drum made from a re-synthesis of [Creeley’s] voice, but dropped down very low in a deliberate way to evoke both his love for jazz, and simultaneously the low rumble of funereal drums.” Neruda has inspired a half dozen of Felder’s scores to date, including his frequently performed *Colección Nocturna* (1983, orchestrated 1984), whose “overflowing evocative tension,” “sensual atmosphere,” “sublime irony,” and occasional klezmer effects inspired critic Hans-Theodor Wohlfahrt to call Felder “a Gustav Mahler for the 21st Century”!

Felder has received grants from the Fromm, Guggenheim, Koussevitzky, and Rockefeller Foundations, and Meet the Composer, as well as six awards from National Endowment for the Arts, two New York State Council Commissions, and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship. His works have been commissioned by the New York New Music Ensemble, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Arditti Quartet, Ensemble Intercontemporain, American Composers Orchestra,

Buffalo Philharmonic, American Brass Quintet, Cassatt String Quartet, and New York Virtuoso Singers, among others, and his music has been featured at such international festivals as Ars Electronica, Aspen, Bourges, Brussels, Darmstadt, Geneva, Holland, Huddersfield, ISCM, Ravinia, and Vienna Modern. CD’s of his works have been named “Disc of the Year” by the *American Record Guide* and “Best of the Year,” by *Fanfare Magazine*. From 1992-96, Felder was Composer-in-Residence with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Greater Buffalo Opera Company. In addition to holding the Birge-Cary Chair in composition at S. U. N. Y. Buffalo, he is also the artistic director of the Slee Sinfonietta and the University’s Center for 21st-Century Music, which he founded in 2006.

### **Felder, *partial [dist]res[s]toration* (2001-03)**

*for flute/piccolo/bass flute, clarinet/bass clarinet, percussion, piano, violin/viola, and cello*

The story told by Felder in his seven-movement sextet is as elusive (and allusive) as its title. The composer explains: “Numerous materials are brought together in this composition: both newly composed fragments and those rescued from older sketch pads—all are subjected to both ‘restoration’ (making the older appear refreshed), and ‘distressing’ (newer materials are treated to ‘age’ them). And the word ‘partial’ refers both to incomplete presentation, and to the harmonic series, which serves overtly to harmonize different things.”

Like the “partials” that sound above any given pitch as part of its overtones or harmonic series, the fragmentary components of *partial [dist]res[s]toration* sometimes run together and sometimes remain discrete, as their titles suggest:

1. a puro sol escribo... (I write in the pure sun...), *Pablo Neruda*
2. I remember, I remember Memory the great pretender, *Robert Creeley*
- 3.a. I sing...
- 3.b. because I sing...
- 3.c. and because I sing..., *Pablo Neruda*
4. Ris de ton nom... (laugh at the sound of your name), *Rene Daumal*
5. Die Felder sind grau... (The fields are grey), *anonymous*

Commissioned by Harvard University's Fromm Foundation for the New York New Music Ensemble, *partial [dist]res[s]toration* invites one to listen for layers of sound and meaning: fragmentary bits of song; timbres ranging from the brilliance of "pure sun" to the "grey" of fields in winter; an array of textures wholly original, yet reminiscent of Stravinsky's neoclassicism, Webern's lucid expression, and Renaissance polyphony. The work even contains some "textural washes" that Felder initially composed for the American Dance Festival in 1982. The old is hidden within the new, the new is altered as if through recollection—"Memory the great pretender."

### REYNOLD THARP (B. 1973)

There is something emblematic about the title Reynold Tharp has chosen for his newest chamber score: *San Francisco Night*. Not only does the composer have a strong affection for the Bay Area, but certain of the city's distinguishing features also seem to find parallels in his oeuvre as a whole: cosmopolitan refinement, vibrant colors often shrouded in fog, and the intersection of varied architectural forms. Serene surfaces above barely mask the strong fault lines and elemental energy below.

Born in Indiana, Tharp came of age in Southern California and did his undergraduate work at Oberlin College/Conservatory of Music, where he received Bachelor's Degrees in Music and History. At U. C. Berkeley, he studied with Cindy Cox, Richard Felciano, and the late Jorge Liderman, before traveling to Paris, where he spent two years working with Philippe Leroux (composition) and Marc-André Dabavie (orchestration). In 2000, he was selected to participate in an intensive program for computer music studies, the Stage d'Automne at IRCAM [Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique], and he has also participated in workshops with composers Ivan Fedele, Brian Ferneyhough, and Jonathan Harvey.

From his work both in Berkeley and in France, Tharp developed an interest in what he calls the "transitory physical aspects of sound, such as resonance and decay." This interest is perhaps most obvious

in works like *Cold* (2002) and *Mountains and Seas* (2005). Conceived without electronics, both works explore the properties of the entire sound continuum between piano and (usually pitched) percussion, paying particular attention to moments of attack (the thump of a piano hammer), the minute changes that happen as a pitch is sustained, the messy process by which a sound disappears in to silence. Despite their similar preoccupations, the two works conjure up rather different worlds. *Cold*, written under the influence of a Parisian winter, offers up "hesitant, distant, and shimmering" textures; *Mountains and Seas*, written shortly after Tharp moved to Illinois, involves a "kinetic, flamboyant and occasionally violent" atmosphere which the composer describes as "the music of a recently transplanted Californian."

In addition to the material matters of attack and decay, Tharp has also developed a keen interest in the broader properties of sound. "Much of my music," he writes, "[is] concerned with resonance, a fundamental sonic phenomenon, as a model or metaphor for developing musical gestures and forms. Often resonance is used to create a sense of perspective, to make manifest that music takes place not only in time but also in space. Musical lines slightly out of alignment seem to shadow each other as they echo in space. Similarly, rhythmic processes create the illusion of musical gestures that approach or recede. Harmonically this is paralleled by the filtering of complex, dense chords into simple intervals, floating points of temporary stability that form a thread of consonance woven across the span of each piece."

The thread and the line, the horizon and the shore—these are the images favored by Tharp's titles. Take, for example, his 1997 quartet *Etching*, which draws on the delicate artworks of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, or his series of pieces for solo strings (commissioned by the Irving M. Klein International String Competition in 2006): *Vertiginous Lines*, *Fog Lines*, *Wavering Lines*. More complicated still is the figurative impression of works like *Littoral* (2006), commissioned by American-born Parisian pianist Ivan Ilíc, or *Cold Horizon* (2003-05, for chamber orchestra), based loosely on the earlier duo *Cold* and recently heard as part of the Minnesota Orchestra Reading Sessions. The harmonies and timbres of *Cold Horizon* may be "frigid" or even "glacial," but if so they suggest not the majestic glacier as viewed

from a distance, but the up-close and turbulent borderline where ice and rock disrupt one another. In similar fashion, *Littoral* takes its title from the composer's fascination with "the constantly shifting zone of waves, rocks, and wind where water meets land." He writes: "Across the span of the piece, melodic fragments and larger contours rise, float, and fall, recalling vistas, both sunlit and shrouded in fog, of the Pacific coastline and the ocean beyond as seen from the steeply falling hills below Mount Tamalpais north of San Francisco—a vertiginous sensation of standing high above the edge of the world." Like *Mountains and Sea*, these works explore the meeting of entities—sea and sand, earth and sky—as sites of both beauty and action.

Tharp has received the George Ladd and Nicola de Lorenzo Prizes from U. C. Berkeley, the Joseph Bearns Prize from Columbia University for his orchestral score *Drift*, and BMI's William Schuman Prize. His music has been broadcast over French and Dutch national radio, featured at festivals held by Centre Acanthes and IRCAM, and performed by such ensembles as the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, Ensemble Diffraction of Paris, the Cal State Long Beach New Music Ensemble, the Orchestre Lyrique de region Avignon-Provence, and Amsterdam's Nieuw Ensemble, which commissioned and premiered his chamber score *A Backward Glance* in 2000. Tharp is presently Visiting Assistant Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and he has also held teaching positions at Northwestern University, U. C. Berkeley, and San Francisco State University. Alongside tonight's world premiere, his current projects include a chamber orchestra piece called *wide sea, changeful heaven* and the piano score *Chaparral (In memoriam John Thow)*.

### **Tharp, *San Francisco Night* (2007)**

*for flute, clarinet, horn, piccolo trumpet, percussion, piano, violin, and cello*

The composer writes: "In June of 2006, I was visiting San Francisco. On my last day in town, while watching the late afternoon fog roll in, I was reminded of György Ligeti's *Clocks and Clouds*, which was inspired by his stays in the Bay Area in the late 1960s and early 70s. I was eager to listen to *Clocks and Clouds* again when I returned to

Chicago the next day, but arrived home to an inbox full of forwarded obituaries. Ligeti had passed away the day before. That chance association of San Francisco fog and the melancholy of loss became the starting point for my *San Francisco Night*. The title comes from a poem by the rather obscure French poet Paul Gilson, which begins:

*Je crois qu'il n'a jamais fait plus noir que ce soir  
où la sirène pleure au bord du monde en ruines  
mais la merveille vaut le prix du désespoir...*

I think it's never been blacker than tonight  
as the siren cries at the edge of the ruined world  
but the wonder repays the cost of despair...

"The ensemble (flute, clarinet, horn, piccolo trumpet, percussion, piano, violin, and cello) is treated as a miniature orchestra (two instruments from each family of winds, brass, percussion, and strings) without a strong bass. Recently, while teaching Debussy's *Jeux* to my orchestration class, I recalled a comment of his I'd read years ago—that he wished to create 'an orchestra without feet' in his ballet. This chamber ensemble 'without feet' allowed me to create intricately detailed, floating textures while maintaining clarity of line and shape. While the piece traverses a variety of musical materials and moods, they are bound together by similar falling contours or gestures that recall the spreading fog.

"Throughout its composition, I was always spurred on by the knowledge that it would eventually be brought to life by the wonderful musicians of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and it is dedicated to the ensemble, Music Director David Milnes, and Executive Director Adam Frey."

**MARTÍN MATALON (B. 1958)**

From the opera house to the art museum, Argentinian Martín Matalon has made a name for himself as the creator of imaginative abstract scores and successful multimedia works. Whether on



the conductor's podium or at his composing desk, he discovers and communicates new insights into the relationships between literature, painting, and film.

Born in Buenos Aires, Matalon received degrees in music from Boston Conservatory and the Juilliard School of Music, where he worked with Vincent Persichetti and Bernard Rands. A Fulbright Fellowship enabled him to study composition in Paris with Tristan Murail in 1988; he also studied conducting with Jacques-Louis Monod from 1987-89. These combined skills led to Matalon's founding of the New York-based chamber ensemble Music Mobile (1989-96), which aimed to spur advances in music technology, to bring together composers of diverse socio-cultural origins.

Like the concert programs of Music Mobile, which juxtaposed contemporary and "classic" works, Matalon's music creates "a transformed continuity with the complex traditions of the past." In Matalon's case, however, the agent of transformation (or spark of inspiration) has often been some kind of contact with word or image, beginning in 1989 with his award-winning opera *El Milagro Secreto* (The Secret Miracle) based on a short story by Jorge Luis Borges. Perhaps in response to this success, IRCAM and the Centre Pompidou asked Matalon to compose music for their 1992-93 exhibition "The Universe of Borges." The exhibition took its shape from one of Borges's favorite figures, the labyrinth, and Matalon responded with a collage of miniatures, *La Rosa Profunda* (arranged for concert performance as *Monedas de Hierro*), which reflects Borges's treatment of small literary forms and was originally meant to lead viewers from one point in the museum maze to the next.

When Matalon settled in Paris in 1993, IRCAM again requested music from him, this time for the newly restored version of Fritz Lang's famous silent film *Metropolis*. The resulting score for large ensemble and electronics transferred the editing techniques and pacing of Lang's expressionist film into musical terms through rapid juxtapositions in instrumental texture and tone color. After its premiere in May 1995 with live musicians at the Théâtre du Châtelet, the score solidified Matalon's international fame during a world tour that included London, Buenos Aires, Hong Kong, Vienna, and Helsinki, among others. Subsequent multimedia commissions have included

*Le Tunnel sous l'Atlantique*, interactive music for an exhibition at the Centre Pompidou and the Museum of Modern Art of Montreal; *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* (1997), a choreographic work for the Centre de Cultural Contemporánea de Barcelona based on the writings of Italian novelist Italo Calvino; and two scores for the groundbreaking surrealist films of Luis Buñuel: *L'Age d'or* (The Golden Age, new score commissioned by IRCAM and Percussion de Strasbourg in 2001) and *Un chien andalou* (An Andalusian dog), for which Matalon composed *Las siete vidas de un gato* (A cat's seven lives, 1996). Featured by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 2004, Matalon's score offers its own musical "counterpoint" to Buñuel's fragmentary images, creating new associations between sound and sight. The musical techniques that Matalon has devised to mirror literary fragmentation, film splicing, and visual perspective have also found their way into chamber and orchestral works that do not have overt links to other art forms. In his 1998 cello octet *...Del Matiz al color...* (...From nuance to color...), for example, he describes a "palette" of tone colors or articulations, and rhythmic structures that can be manipulated like "plastic forms."

In addition to serving as Artistic Director for Music Mobile from 1989-96, Matalon has received a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, an award from the city of Barcelona, and the Centre Acanthes's "Opera Autrement" award for *El Milagro Secreto*. Beginning in 1997, Matalon has been working on a group of substantial compositions that blur the boundary between solo concertos and chamber works. Known as the *Trame* (Plot) series, these pieces include works for harpsichord and small ensemble, a 1999 Cello Concerto commissioned by Radio France, and a work premiered in 2000-01 at La Cité de la Musique by the Orchestre de Paris under Cristoph Eschenbach. Other *Trame* commissions include a Viola Concerto for Odile Auboin and the Ensemble Intercontemporain as well as a Trumpet Concerto for the Orchestra National de Lorraine, with whom he was Composer in Residence from 2003-05. More recently, during 2007-08, Matalon was selected to serve as Regents' Lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley and to work at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies [CNMAT].

## Matalon, *Formas de Arena* (Forms of Sand) (2001)

for flute/alto flute, viola, and harp

Commissioned by the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris for the Nobis Trio, Matalon's *Formas de arena* (Forms of sand) offers up passages that the composer described in an interview with organist Pascal Ianco as "rapid comings-and-goings between the three protagonists, who establish complex ties by weaving a sort of gossamer 'mobile.'" It is no accident that the word "mobile" appears in this description. It is a favorite analogy for Matalon—one that he values not only for its allusion to motion, but also for the meanings it evokes by association with visual artists such as Alexander Calder whose mobile sculptures place carefully chosen objects into a setting enlivened by a play of light, shadow, and space.

In the four continuous movements of *Formas de arena*, the individual performers are highlighted in turn: the "ethereal" alto flute, the "overheated" viola, a "metallic racket" from the harp. Despite their moments of individual glory, however, the real joy of the trio lies in its ever-changing textures. As Ianco observes: "The instruments give themselves over to constant, mutual reinterpretation, which goes from literal imitation and echo to the freest allusion and the play of a distorting mirror whose reflection is muddled by the innumerable color changes." The players surge and subside, they dance, they develop and re-align until they melt into the "haunting" final movement, which gave the work its title.

### BRUNO MANTOVANI (B. 1974)

Born near Paris, Bruno Mantovani studied piano, percussion, composition and jazz at the Perpignan Conservatory before enrolling at the Paris Conservatory (where he won first prizes in analysis, aesthetics, orchestration, composition, and music history) and at the University of Rouen, where he received a Master's Degree in musicology. He worked with Brian Ferneyhough at the Royaumont Academy, and has spent time at IRCAM. His music has been commissioned by the French government, Radio France, the Orchestre de Paris, Ensemble InterContemporain, Cologne Radio,

and others, winning him prizes at the Stuttgart and Gaudeamus Competitions, an award from the UNESCO International Composers' Tribune, scholarships from the Academie des Beaux-Arts and the Nadia and Lili Boulanger Foundation, the Grand Prix from the French Recording Academy, and the prestigious Prix de Rome.

Perhaps because of his status as "emerging composer," Mantovani understands his aesthetic as a reflection of his generation's place in music history. In a recent interview, he observed: "We no longer live in an epoch of radical invention of material, an epoch worked through by Boulez, Stockhausen, Lachenmann, and Grisey among others.... There is no reason to ignore the lessons of the past... nor is it necessary to consider the works of yesterday as museum pieces. The compositions of today open new perspectives yet they do not rest on fundamentally new and revolutionary bases." This view may explain Mantovani's fascination with the question of "style" and his willingness to try on different musical idioms, whether funk and techno—in portions of his *Grand Jeu* (1999) for percussion and live electronics—or free jazz in his piano solo *Jazz Connotation*, which Jay Gottlieb played for the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 2006.

*Jazz Connotation* is typical of Mantovani's oeuvre in that it plays on allusive ideas (particularly the "free jazz" of Ornette Coleman) with such freedom and imagination, that the result is almost improvisatory. As he puts it: "Jazz has always occupied an important place in my life as a musician, both as listener as well as practitioner. Moreover, the notion of improvisation is primordial for me. Indeed, despite the complexity of processes that I might use in my music, I try constantly to preserve a certain spontaneity in my work. Improvisation is one of the means I use in order to achieve this. To refer to jazz is for me a totally natural act." A similar tension between order and spontaneity pervades his prize-winning *Turbulences* (1998), premiered in Cologne by Péter Eötvös and his large chamber work *Streets*, which was inspired by New York City and is dedicated to Pierre Boulez. Here the composer aimed to portray a "density of simultaneous human activity" that made it "practically impossible to isolate any individual motion"; built around a single chord, *Streets* (2005) takes shape through textural flux, thinning and thickening in an ever-changing stasis.

Mantovani has recently won greater international attention for his first opera *L'Autre Côte* (The other side) with libretto by François Regnault (best known for his collaborations with Georges Aperghis). Given that the plot is adapted from the only novel by cartoonist Alfred Kubin, it is no surprise to find both political and fantastic allusions intermingling in this fable about a utopian city on the brink of disaster—an “empire of dreams” that border on nightmares. The opera is elusive, and Mantovani prefers to describe what it is *not*. “In the novel,” he warns, “there’s everything you need to make an opera about opera, a nostalgic pastiche—and that’s what I urgently wanted to avoid.” Instead, he plays with the theatrical experience, positioning percussionists in the loges and leaving more detailed interpretations to his future audiences: “*L'Autre Côté* shows us an ideal society cultivating ‘the same old stuff,’ and it views this as a dictatorship: the message seems clear to me, isn’t it?... Kubin’s novel is from 1909; the opera was premiered in 2006: in both cases, we are at the end of an age!”

Mantovani has received the Hervé Dugardin prize of the French composers and publishers organization SACEM and composition fellowships from the Academy of Beaux-Arts and the Nadia and Lili Boulanger Foundation. He has been invited to the Artists’ House at Herrenhaus Edenkoben, the October in Normandy Festival, Festival des Arcs, and Bologna’s Villa Médici at the invitation of the Association Française d’Action Artistique. In addition, his works have been commissioned by the French government, Radio France, Ensemble Intercontemporain, the Orchestre de Paris, the Orchestre de Saarbrücken, the Cologne Radio, as well as various organizations (such as Musique Nouvelle en Liberté and Musik Der Jahrhunderte) and festivals (Musica, Octobre en Normandie, Aujourd’hui musique). His Violin Concerto and *Turbulences* won the first prize of the City of Stuttgart contest of 1999; *D’un rêve parti* was selected by Gaudeamus in Amsterdam in 2001; and *Série noire* (Black cycle) was recommended to broadcasters by the Tribune of Composers of UNESCO the same year. In 2006, his piano score *Suonare* (Sounding) was premiered at the Festival Piano aux Jacobins in Toulouse and he was honored by the Strasburg Festival Musica with three world premieres, including a cantata, *Quelques effervescences* (Some effervescent things), and the opera *L'Autre Côte*.

### **Mantovani, *Les Danses interrompues* (Interrupted dances) (2000)**

*for flute/alto flute/piccolo, clarinet/bass clarinet, piano, violin, viola, and cello*

Mantovani was inspired to write *Les Danses interrompues* by a unique combination of factors: the varied personalities of the Alternance Ensemble, the terrific skills of their pianist Jay Gottlieb, and the desire to create a sort of “middle ground” between his solo piano work *Jazz Connotation* (1998) and the playful sextet *D’un Rêve parti* (Of a departed dream) (1999). Like the earlier pair of works, *Les Danses interrompues*, makes use of “certain types of popular music (such as jazz, techno and even flamenco in the short central section).” References to these two companion pieces are also woven into the musical tapestry of *Les Danses interrompues*, as the composer explains: “The back and forth movement between the material borrowed from the first two pre-existing pieces punctuates the drama, in which development only rarely takes place. In fact, the music works for the most part on juxtaposition, and ‘interruption’ (hence the title), the structure as a whole taking its meaning from the recurrent flashes which always appear in different disguises. The piano occupies an important place... so much so that the work could be considered a vast concerto. But it was not my wish to imprison this piece, with its unusual genesis, in the confines of such a well-defined genre, for I wanted rather to present this ‘imaginary ballet’ to the listener for what it is—a large, rhapsodic, playful divertissement.”



## The Performers

Pianist **Vicki Ray** is a member of the California E.A.R. Unit and Xtet, and a founder of the acclaimed solo piano series, PianoSpheres. A long-time champion of new music, Ray has worked with György Ligeti, John Adams, Pierre Boulez, Elliot Carter, Morton Subotnick, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Thomas Ades, Oliver Knussen, among others. She has been heard at Festivals (Salzburg, Berlin 750 Jahre, Ojai, and Dartington), on the Los Angeles Philharmonic Green Umbrella Series, and with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Germany's Compania and the Blue Rider Ensemble of Toronto, with whom she made the first Canadian recording of *Pierrot Lunaire*. In addition to her CD *from the left edge*, featuring works written for her by California composers, Ray has recorded music by Adams, Morton Feldman, Mel Powell, and Wadada Leo Smith. A member of the California Institute of the Arts faculty since 1991, Ray has recently served as pianist for the Bang On a Can Summer Festival at Mass MoCA and has appeared with the Harry Partch Ensemble—playing instruments of Partch's invention, the harmonic canon and kithara, an experience she appreciates as “mind- and ear-altering.”

*-Program notes by Beth E. Levy*

Join us for a reception in the lobby following the concert.  
Scores from tonight's program are also on display there.

## Music Director

**David Milnes** is a conductor of extraordinary breadth and long-standing commitment to contemporary music. In his early years, he studied not only piano and organ, but also clarinet, cello, and voice. Milnes received his undergraduate education in music at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1984, at age 27, he won the prestigious Exxon Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony. He remained as the Symphony's Assistant Conductor and Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra until 1986, working closely with Edo de Waart and Herbert Blomstedt. Following study and collaboration with such renowned conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, Otto-Werner Müller, and Michael Tilson Thomas, he earned his doctorate in conducting from Yale University in 1989.

From 1994-2002, Milnes was Principal Guest Conductor of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and also guest conducted numerous orchestras across the United States. He has conducted at the Tanglewood, Aspen, and Monadnock Music Festivals, and has led operatic repertoire ranging from Mozart to Weill.

In 1996, Milnes joined the music faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, where he directs its symphony orchestra and the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players. He first conducted the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1997, and joined the ensemble as Music Director in 2002.

*The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, an ensemble of highly skilled musicians, performs innovative new music of exceptional interest. It attracts and engages audiences through concert events in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, and nourishes the creation and dissemination of new work through commissioning, recording, and outreach.*

**T**he San Francisco Contemporary Music Players (SFCMP), now in its 37th year, is a leader among America's most distinguished and successful chamber music organizations, performing, commissioning, and recording the music of today's composers. The group presents works written for both large and small chamber ensembles. A ten-time winner of the prestigious national ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players has won this award more times than any other ensemble. It has commissioned 68 pieces and performed over 1,000 new works, including 65 U.S. and 135 world premieres.

Each season the ensemble performs a subscription series in the Bay Area. It has also toured widely throughout California, with performances on such concert series as San Francisco Performances, Cal Performances, the Stern Grove Festival, the Other Minds Festival, Los Angeles' Monday Evening Concerts, the Ojai Festival, and the Festival of New American Music in Sacramento. SFCMP made its European debut at the Cheltenham Festival of Music in 1986 and its East Coast debut at the Library of Congress in 2001. The ensemble has recorded ten albums of its own and contributed to nine others. Its musical outreach programs include presentations in public high schools and its new *Contemporary Insights* series of intimate performances with conversation.

**E**xecutive Director **Adam Frey** obtained his B.A. in Music from Harvard University, and his M.B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley, with emphasis on marketing and planning. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1991 after six years with Sherman, Clay Co., the nation's largest keyboard instrument retailer, where he was Vice President in charge of Merchandising. He serves on the Board of Governors of the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. Mr. Frey is also a writer; his work has been published in *The Mississippi Review*.

**C**arrie Blanding, Director of Operations and Marketing, graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a B.A. in Comparative Literature. For six years, she co-owned and served as Administrative Director for Next Big Thing Children's Theatre, a performing arts summer camp in Danville, California. She has worked for the Mountain Play Association and for San Francisco Performances, and sings as a volunteer member of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. Ms. Blanding is new to the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' staff this season.

## Audio Engineer

**R**obert Shumaker, Recording Engineer, has been recording the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' concerts and CD releases for over twenty years. Most recently, he recorded the ensemble's forthcoming album of compositions by Edmund Campion, and the ensemble's Pablo Ortiz album. He has engineered over five hundred commercial recordings of artists ranging from Judy Collins to Diamanda Galas and from Van Morrison to Henry Brant. During the 1970s and '80s, he recorded the complete works of Conlon Nancarrow for 1750 Arch Records and Wergo. His work has been twice nominated for a Grammy Award.

### Not the singer, not the song

Three prints remain for sale out of the series of 32 that the artist, **William T. Wiley**, generously donated to the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players.

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### Rachel Barton Pine, *Guest Concertmaster* June 5–10, 2008

Saint-Georges: *Violin Concerto in A Major*  
George Walker: *Lyric for Strings*  
Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson: *Sinfonietta No. 2, Generations*  
Brahms: *Sextet in B-flat Major, Op. 18*

thu Jun 5	fri Jun 6	sun Jun 8	tue Jun 10
8:00pm	8:00pm	5:00pm	8:00pm
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