

ENSEMBLE FOR

E4TT

THESE TIMES

Mothers & Daughters

Ensemble for These Times

Nanette McGuinness, Soprano

Laura Reynolds, English Horn

Ilana Blumberg, Violin

Anne Lerner, Cello

Dale Tsang, Piano

Noe Valley Ministry

Sunday, March 8, 2020 | 7:00 p.m.

E4TT.org

Welcome and thank you for joining us on International Women's Day for our 2020 commissions concert, a musical exploration of relationships between mothers and daughters.

When we first dreamed of this program, Gini Savage's *Gripe Water* was our starting point. We soon added three of Rita Dove's *Persephone/Demeter* poems to the mix, as these figures from Greek mythology represent two-thirds of this primary archetypal maternal-filial triangle, with Hades as the third "leg." We were thrilled to have Elinor Armer join the project very early on, as well, and greatly enjoyed searching for just the right texts with her for *Matrix*. Indeed, it felt fitting that *Matrix* should, in the end, include a poem by unparalleled author Ursula Le Guin, Armer's long-time collaborator, whose passing in 2018 readers and creative artists worldwide mourned. Sadly, Savage also passed away in 2018 before we completed the project and we are honored to include two of her *Gripe Water* poems in *The Light Within the Dark*.

Today's concert is our most diverse program to date, and deliberately so, with works by LGBTQ, African-American, Chinese-American, Latinx, and women composers and poets from three different generations, plus a preview from our next release, "Once/Memory/Night: Paul Celan." We've let fathers and sons into this concert's "family tent," as it were, but the focus remains on mothers and daughters.

We're excited to have guest artists Ilana Blumberg, violin, and Laura Reynolds, English horn, join us again for this concert, as well as composers Elinor Armer, David Garner, and Brennan Stokes.

Thank you for joining us today!

- Nanette, Dale, Anne, and David

"Mothers & Daughters" is made possible with funds from the Musical Grant Program, which is administered by InterMusic SF and supported by the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and San Francisco Grants for the Arts and also by a grant from the Zellerbach Family Foundation.

Thank you to our 2019 and 2020 individual donors and foundations for supporting our twelfth season of relevant, timely, rare, contemporary music.

Time Lord (\$1,000+)

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E4TT is honored to be fiscally sponsored by InterMusic SF, a non-profit organization dedicated to small-ensemble music in the San Francisco Bay Area.

List current as of January 15, 2020.

About Ensemble for These Times

Awarded second place for Chamber Music Performance in 2018/19 by The American Prize and Finalists for the Ernest Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music, E4TT consists of award-winning soprano and co-director Nanette McGuinness, Van Cliburn competitor pianist Dale Tsang, cellist Anne Lerner-Wright, and co-director and 2015 American Prize in Composition winner David Garner. The group focuses on 20th and 21st century music that is relevant, engaging, original and compelling—music that resonates with today and speaks to tomorrow, that harnesses the power of artistic beauty, intelligence, wit, lyricism, and irony to create a deep understanding of our times and the human condition.

E4TT toured to Madrid, Spain in 2017, performed at the 2016 Krakow Culture Festival (where the group has been invited to return in 2021), was sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Budapest in 2014 for a four-city tour in Hungary, and made its international debut in Berlin in 2012. E4TT has performed locally at the German Consulate General, SF Conservatory of Music, Old First Concerts, JCC Peninsula, Trinity Chamber Concerts, and Noontime Concerts, among other venues, and has commissioned two dozen works. E4TT's debut CD, *Surviving: Women's Words* (Centaur, 2016) won a Silver Medal in the 2016 Global Music Awards; two of the songs on the CD have also been nominated as finalists in the 2017 Global Peace Song Awards. Lesley Mitchell-Clarke in *The Whole Note* wrote "Now more than ever [...] the potent and timeless messages of survival, love, tolerance and forgiveness contained on this brilliant presentation need to resonate throughout the world."

"The Hungarians: From Rózsa to Justus" (Centaur, 2018) won a Gold Medal in the Global Music Awards. The recording features a rarely heard cello duo by Hollywood movie maven (and Hungarian émigré) Miklós Rózsa (*Spellbound*, *Ben-Hur*), along with works by three others of his compatriots who perished in the Holocaust, including the premiere recording of a work by the young Lajos Delej, and an end-of-the-era waltz song with text and music by György Justus. E4TT's next recording, *Once/Memory/Night: Paul Celan* will be released in spring 2020.

Program

Brennan Stokes (b. 1990)	Mother Love (2019, Rita Dove, b. 1952) S / V / P	10'
	Persephone, Falling Demeter Mourning Demeter's Prayer to Hades	
William Grant Still (b. 1895-1978)	Mother and Child (1943, arr. Timothy Holley) C / P	6'
David Garner (b. 1954)	The Light Within the Dark (2019) S / EH / V / C / P	12'
	The Light Within the Dark (Gini Savage, 1944-2018) Cardigan (Savage) Candid View (Rhina P. Espaillat, b. 1932)	

Intermission

Garner	Espenbaum 2017 (from <i>Die eichne Tür</i> , Paul Celan, 1920-1970) S / EH / V / C / P	5'
Anna Clyne (b. 1953)	Rest These Hands (from <i>The Violin</i> , 2014) (Colleen Clyne) SV / P	9'
Chen Yi (b. 1953)	<i>Ji-Dong-Nuo</i> (2007) P	3'
Elinor Armer (b. 1939)	Matrix (2019) S / P	6'
	Child Your Eyes (Rella Lossy, 1944-96) Song for a Daughter (Ursula Le Guin, 1929-2018)	

S - Soprano	EH - English horn	V - Violin
C - Cello	P - Piano	SV - Spoken Voice

"Espenbaum" from *Mohn und Gedächtnis*, © Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, München, in dem Verlagsgruppe Random House GmbH. "The Light Within the Dark" and "The Cardigan" copyright © 2002 by Gini Savage, from her book of poems, *Gripe Water*, Nighthawk Books, 2002. Used with the kind permission of the poet. "Candid View" copyright © 2019 by Rhina P. Espaillat from her book of poems, *And After All*, Able Muse Press, 2019. "Persephone, Falling," "Demeter Mourning," and "Demeter's Prayer to Hades" from *Mother Love*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York. © 1995 by Rita Dove. Used by permission of Rita Dove. All rights reserved. "Child, Your Eyes" from *Audible Dawn* by Rella Lossy, copyright © 1975. Used by permission of Frank Lossy. "SONG FOR A DAUGHTER" by Ursula K. Le Guin. Used by permission of Curtis Brown, Ltd. Copyright © 2012. All rights reserved.

Texts and Translations

Mother Love (by Rita Dove)

Persephone, Falling

One narcissus among the ordinary
beautiful flowers, one unlike all the others!
She pulled, stooped to pull harder—
when, sprung out of the earth on his glittering
terrible carriage, he claimed his due.
It is finished. No one heard her.
No one! She had strayed from the herd.

(Remember: go straight to school.
This is important, stop fooling around!
Don't answer to strangers.
Stick with your playmates.
Keep your eyes down.)
This is how easily the pit opens.
This is how one foot sinks into the ground.

Demeter Mourning

Nothing can console me.
You may bring silk to make the skin sigh,
dispense yellow roses in the manner of ripened
dignitaries. You can tell me repeatedly I am
unbearable (and I know this): still, nothing turns
the gold to corn, nothing is sweet to the tooth
crushing in.

I'll not ask for the impossible; one learns to walk
by walking. In time I'll forget this empty brimming.
I may laugh again at a bird, perhaps, chucking the
nest— but it will not be happiness, for I have
known that.

Demeter's Prayer to Hades

This alone is what I wish for you: knowledge.
To understand each desire has an edge,
to know we are responsible for the lives
we change. No faith comes without cost,
no one believes without dying.
Now for the first time I see clearly the trail
you planted, what ground opened to waste,
though you dreamed a wealth of flowers.

There are no curses - only mirrors held
up to the souls of gods and mortals. And so I give
up this fate, too. Believe in yourself, go ahead -
see where it gets you.

The Light Within the Dark

The Light Within the Dark (by Gini Savage)

Of such deep	its light beams
Witnessing	onto our dense
	silences
we have heard	
about the book	peasoup fogs
	of grief
but we don't buy it	but one sip
aboriginal to ourselves	of light
we sit in pain	
denying freedom	purest water
	after the arduous
or we buy it so	
it sits on our shelves	desert journey
	nothing pre—pares
years gathering moss	us
eating profound	
darkness	for the
	sudden grace
	of the plum
	blossoms

Cardigan (Savage)

Having donned my mother's sorrow I put on her
heavy—balled dun lambswool cardigan, the one
I could not wash...
Uncertain I stand, walk stiffly, ...a new fawn
savoring it all: death, grief, childhood nostalgia,
woes, regret still longing for tomorrows...,
when we might have undone miscalculations,
salved pains, said what we really meant.

To wear her latest mantle, my stomach aches...
Strange our lives can inspire others, though not
ourselves. We smother in their folds, unable to
breathe free. Mother. Victim. It hurts horribly...
These temporary shapes definitely not our homes.
Imprisoned in mantles of untimely flesh,
our sharpened bones prod and prick us...

Why not leap, clear the garden wall,
instead of lingering any longer in old misery.
Take charge, finally. Good Morrow Me.
Good Morrow You. I think *chocolate*.



LAURA REYNOLDS is an active chamber and orchestral performer throughout Northern California. Principal oboist with the Santa Rosa Symphony, the California Symphony, and English horn with Marin Symphony, Ms. Reynolds is additionally a member of the wind Trois Bois and was a founding member of Citywinds, a San Francisco woodwind quintet dedicated to contemporary repertoire. She is a past participant in the Carmel Bach Festival and Sun Valley Music Festival and is currently a member of the applied faculty of Sonoma State University and the Pre-College and Continuing Education Divisions at the SF Conservatory of Music.

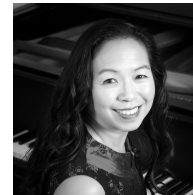


Photo by Frogsong Photography

Pianist **DALE TSANG** earned her BM in piano performance from the University of Southern California, studying with John Perry; her MM from the University of Michigan, studying with Dickran Atamian; and her DMA from Rice University, studying with John Perry. Dale is a faculty member at Laney College, teaches an inspiring assortment of adult students, and serves as a competition adjudicator for many local and statewide piano competitions. A winner of numerous competitions, and an active solo and chamber musician, she frequently performs locally and in Europe and Asia.

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1930), the first African-American to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the U.S. (L.A. Phil., 1936), and the first opera by an African-American composer to be performed by a major opera company (*Troubled Island*, New York City. Opera, 1949) and the first opera by an African-American to be nationally televised.

About the Performers



Violinist **ILANA BLUMBERG** has appeared across the United States and internationally, in solo appearances with the San Francisco Symphony, the Albany Symphony (NY), Symphony Napa Valley, and the Merced Symphony, as well as performances at the prestigious Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, the Marlboro Music Festival, the La Jolla Summerfest as a 'Rising Star', the Aspen Music Festival, and many others. She appears frequently throughout the Bay Area with the Marin, Silicon Valley, West Edge Opera, Berkeley, and California Symphonies, as well as with the Golden Gate String Quartet, eco ensemble, and Left Coast Chamber Ensemble.



Cellist **ANNE LERNER** completed her B.A. in Music at Northwestern University as a Cello Performance major after three years as a Spanish Literature major at Bryn Mawr College, earning a M.M. in cello performance at the San Francisco Conservatory, where she earned a Master of Music in Cello Performance. She has performed with numerous Bay Area orchestras and is a sought-after chamber musician and performer of contemporary music. A dedicated educator, Anne conducts two youth orchestras in the Marin Symphony Youth Program, is on the faculties of Dominican University and San Rafael High School and maintains a large private studio.



Photo by Russ Fischella

Soprano and E4TT co-founder and co-director **NANETTE MCGUINNESS** has performed in 12 languages on 2 continents in over 25 roles, with the Silesian State Opera (Czech Republic), Opera San Jose (Opera in the Schools) and West Bay Opera Opera, among many others. Solo concert engagements include Mahler's Fourth Symphony, *Shéhérezade* (Ravel), *Nuits d'étés* (Berlioz), *Stabat Mater* (Rossini), Requiem (Fauré), Gloria (Vivaldi), *Lord Nelson Mass* (Haydn), *Vesperae Solennes* (Mozart), and Handel's *Messiah* and *Solomon*. Her CD of music by 19th and 20th century women composers, *Fabulous Femmes* (Centaur CRC 2461) was called "perfect for the song recital lover" by *Chamber Music Magazine* and features several premiere recordings.

Candid View (by Rhina P. Espaillet)

Clearly, this is no Helen: not one skiff
would have been launched by the pinched smile,
the stiff hand shading one eye from summer sun,
and one eye tearing; it is 'fifty-one, I guess, when
this was taken. And I knew — my mother warned
me—that it would not do to count on beauty, or
what looks procured. Luckily love came early,
and endured.

The warning, I learned later—many years
after the girl I was had dried those tears—
had been *pro forma*, issued to prevent
the sin of vanity. The same intent
had led my mother's mother to the lies
that kept her, also, dim in her own eyes,
told not from malice, but in virtue's name.

*Espenbaum, dein Laub blickt weiss ins Dunkel.
Meiner Mutter Haar ward nimmer weiss.*

*Löwenzahn, so grün ist die Ukraine.
Meine blonde Mutter kam nicht heim.*

*Regenwolke, säumst du an den Brunnen?
Meine leise Mutter weint für alle.*

*Runder Stern, du schlingst die goldne Schleife.
Meiner Mutter Herz ward wund von Blei.*

*Eichne Tür, wer hob dich aus den Angeln?
Meine sanfte Mutter kann nicht kommen.*

The series closed with me: no daughters came
to be kept modest at a price so steep. Lucky,
since what we're taught is what we keep, if
we're taught early.
I have handsome boys;
telling them so is one among my joys.

Another discovering—though late—
how not to credit words that devastate, if they
are spoken by misguided love that once
endured what it is guilty of. And yes, one more:
the pleasure, long deferred, of finding my
young face, of which I heard such painful things,
deserving of no less
than any face we would not curse or bless. I
wonder—having cursed it long ago— what else
would have been comforting to know.

*Aspen tree, your leaves peer white into the dark.
My mother's hair was never white.*

*Dandelion, Ukraine is so green.
My blond mother never came home.*

*Rain cloud, do you linger over the well?
My silent mother cries for all.*

*Round stars, you tie a golden ribbon.
My mother's heart was scarred by lead.*

*Oaken door, who lifted you from your hinges?
My gentle mother cannot come back.*

Translation by McGuinness and Garner

Rest These Hands

(from *The Violin*, 2014)
by Colleen Clyne
I rest these hands
World weary
Misunderstood

I rest these hands
Toiled weary
Long before they should.

These hands
Palmed to palmed
With wonder

Surrendered

Matrix

Child, Your Eyes (by Rella Lossy)

Child, your eyes astonish me
More now than on your first born night.
Like a tooth rooted in urgency
You bolt into my sight;
Your head bangs like a door,
Knocks at my breast,
Then you're back to the dig, uncovering shores
Of secret rivers, boundaries that will not rest.
Who told you to bury your feet in the sand?
Ancestral whispers leave a nameless mark,
My arms open to their command,
And you come running to embrace the dark.
I mother you with the blind past that mothered me;
We wade in ancient waters that we cannot see.

Song for a Daughter

(by Ursula K. Le Guin)

Mother of my granddaughter,
listen to my song:
A mother can't do right,
a daughter can't be wrong.

I have no claim whatever
on amnesty from you;
nor will she forgive you
for anything you do.

So are we knit together
by force of opposites
the daughter that unravels
the skein the mother knits

One must be divided
so that one be whole,
and this is the duplicity
alleged of woman's soul.

To be that heavy mother
who weighs in every thing
is to be the daughter
whose footstep is the Spring.

Granddaughter of my mother,
listen to my song:
Nothing you do will ever be right,
nothing you do is wrong.

About the Composers



Photo by Valentina Sadiul

Born in Oakland and raised in Davis, composer **ELINOR ARMER** has spent her life on the West Coast, where she has taught piano, theory, composition, and music history at every level, in schools and universities, at her home in Berkeley as well as in master classes in the U.S. and abroad. For the last fifty years she has been affiliated with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where in 1985 she established the composition department, and where she continues to teach composition. Since 2014, the Conservatory has awarded the Elinor Armer Scholarship in Composition to qualifying women applicants. Armer's music is widely performed worldwide and published by Subito Music Corporation. Among her best-known works is "Uses of Music in Uttermost Parts" a fantasy series created over a ten-year period with writer Ursula K. Le Guin.



Photo by Kuandi Photos

A prolific composer who transcends cultural and musical boundaries, **CHEN YI** (from Guangzhou, China) is a Distinguished Professor at the Conservatory in the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and a recipient of Ives Living Award from the American Academy of Arts & Letters. Her music is published by Theodore Presser, performed and recorded worldwide. Degrees are from Beijing Central Conservatory of Music and Columbia University in NYC. Composition teachers were Wu Zu-qiang, Chou Wen-chung and Mario Davidovsky. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, and the American Academy of Arts & Letters, also a Distinguished Visiting Professor in China. presser.com/chen-yi



Photo by Jennifer Taylor

London-born **ANNA CLYNE** is a Grammy-nominated composer of acoustic and electro-acoustic music. Described as a "composer of uncommon gifts and unusual methods" in a New York Times profile and as "dazzlingly inventive" by Time Out New York, Clyne's work often includes collaborations with cutting-edge choreographers, visual artists, filmmakers, and musicians. Clyne served as composer-in-residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, L'Orchestre national d'Île-de-France, and Berkeley Symphony and currently serves as The Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Associate Composer. Her music is published exclusively by Boosey & Hawkes. boosey.com/clyne

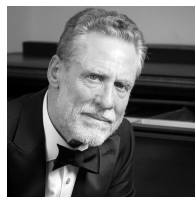


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E4TT composer and founding member **DAVID GARNER** won The American Prize in 2015 for his String Quartet No. 2. Garner's music has been reviewed as "alluring" and "a heady and touching revelation," and his works have been performed nationally and internationally by artists such as Suzanne Mentzner, Catherine Cook, Crystal Philippi, David Krakauer, and Matt Haimowitz. Garner's opera, "Mary Pleasant at Land's End," is in the final stages of pre-production. A faculty member in composition, chamber music, music theory and literature at the SF Conservatory of Music, Garner is a member of BMI, American Composers Forum, and the American Music Center. davidgarner.us



Photo by Valentina Sadiul

Born and raised in Los Angeles, **BRENNAN STOKES** is a composer, pianist, tenor, and teacher in San Francisco. He began piano lessons at age 6 and was active in playing in school ensembles and singing in and accompanying school and church choirs throughout his education. In 2013, he earned a Bachelor's of Music in Piano Performance from Pacific Union College. In 2019, he earned his Master's Degree in Music Composition at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in the studio of David Garner. He has had masterclasses in piano with Leon Bates and Sonstraud Speidel and in composition with Jack Perla and David Conte.



WILLIAM GRANT STILL, the "Dean of African-American Composers," was a pupil of George Chadwick and Edgar Varèse and a major figure in the Harlem Renaissance. His career is remembered by many "firsts": the first African-American composer to have a symphony performed by a professional orchestra in the U.S. (*Afro-American Symphony*,

Don't miss our season closer on
June 12 at Old First Concerts!

Dreams of Distant Lands

Works by or about creative artists who were oppressed or longed for their native lands, featuring Shostakovich's "From Jewish Folk Poetry" in Yiddish, plus music by Dallapiccola, Garner, and Chen and with a special guest appearance by Dalit Warshaw, playing her own music "Winter Dream" (in memoriam Charlotte Solomon), commemorating this talented German Expressionist artist and writer (1917-1943).