

ABOUT GENEVIEVE FEIWEN LEE A versatile performer of music spanning five centuries, **Genevieve Feiwen Lee** has dazzled audiences on the piano, harpsichord, toy piano, keyboard, and electronics. She enjoys finding repertoire that challenges her to go outside of her comfort zone to sing, speak, act, and play many new instruments. Her lively and insightful comments introducing each piece connect her directly with her audience. Her live performances have brought her to Carnegie Hall and Merkin Concert Hall, NY; Salle Gaveau, Paris; the Spiegelzaal at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam; Changsha, China, São Paulo, Brazil; and Vratza, Bulgaria. She is a founding member of the Mojave Trio, based in Southern California, and plays regularly with the Garth Newel Piano Quartet in Virginia. A graduate of Peabody Institute, École Normale de Musique de Paris, and the Yale School of Music, Ms. Lee is currently the Everett S. Olive Professor of Music at Pomona College, in Southern California.

ABOUT NADIA SHPACHENKO-GOTTESMAN Described by critics as a “truly inspiring and brilliant pianist..spellbinding in sensitivity and mastery of technique,” **Nadia Shpachenko-Gottesman** is best known for her irrepressible drive for excellence. Whether painting a wall, teaching a student, collaborating with other musicians, or interpreting new compositions, she won't stop until every spark of potential has roared into flame. While this leads to her uniquely soulful interpretations of baroque, classical, and romantic music, Nadia directs a great deal of her energy at contemporary music, whose fresh ideas are most in need of deep and thoughtful interpretation. Her skill, imagination, and dedication allow her not only to perform these technically challenging pieces, but to bring out the emotion and nuance that is often lost in their novel structures, textures, and sound production techniques. Nadia's process of extensive research in preparing pieces for performance has led also to a series of lecture-recitals that relate artistic and philosophical developments with musical ones, and explore the new ways in which composers and performers interact in today's networked world.

Nadia's performances across North America, Europe and Asia include solo recitals at Carnegie Hall, Concertgebouw, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, a tour of Mexico with Orquesta de Baja California, and performances with the Kharkov Philharmonic and the Ukrainian National Symphony Orchestras. As a distinguished chamber musician, Nadia frequently collaborates with prominent artists, most recently including Emanuel Borok, Martin Chalifour, Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Maja Jasper, Genevieve Lee, Jerome Lowenthal, Marek Szpakiewicz, and the Biava String Quartet. An enthusiastic promoter of contemporary music, she has given world and national premieres of numerous piano, string piano and toy piano works by composers such as Elliott Carter, George Crumb, Tom Flaherty, Yury Ishchenko, Leon Kirchner, Dave Kopplin, James Matheson, Adam Schoenberg, Diego Vega, Iannis Xenakis, Peter Yates, and others. Her new World Premieres CD *Woman at the New Piano: American Music of 2013* was released worldwide on the Reference Recordings label in November 2014, featuring four solo and two duet compositions (with pianist Genevieve Feiwen Lee) by Tom Flaherty, James Matheson, Adam Schoenberg, and Peter Yates.

Nadia Shpachenko is currently on the faculties of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Claremont Graduate University, and Montecito International Music Festival. In addition, she has recently served as visiting faculty at Pomona College, guest lecturer at the California Institute of the Arts, Artist in Residence at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, and Associate Faculty at the Sarasota International Music Festival. Winner of many international piano competitions, she frequently gives master classes and presents contemporary music workshops in conservatories and universities worldwide. Nadia completed her DMA and MM degrees at the University of Southern California, where she was awarded the title of Outstanding Graduate. Her principal teachers included John Perry, Victor Rosenbaum, and Victor Derevianko.

Please visit www.ullanta.com/nadia to learn more about Nadia Shpachenko and to listen to some of her performances.

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THE BOB COLE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AT
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH AND THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS PROUDLY PRESENT:



GUEST ARTIST RECITAL

**NADIA
SHPACHENKO-
GOTTESMAN**

PIANO + PERCUSSION + ELECTRONICS

MUSIC FOR A NEW B'AK'TUN

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2015

8:00PM

DANIEL RECITAL HALL

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC MOBILE DEVICES.

PROGRAM

- Part Suite-a* for solo piano (2013)..... Tom Flaherty
Passacaglia lude (b. 1950)
Lullabande
Scherzoid
- Picture Etudes* for solo piano, with percussion (2013)..... Adam Schoenberg
Three Pierrots (b. 1980)
Olive Orchard
Miró's World
- Finger Songs* for solo piano (2013)..... Peter Yates
Mood Swing (b.1980)
Gambol
Mysterious Dawn
Brave Show
All Better
- Cretic Variations* for solo piano (2013)..... James Matheson
(b. 1970)
- Airdancing* for toy piano, piano, and electronics (2013)..... Tom Flaherty
(b. 1950)
Genevieve Feiwen Lee—pre-recorded toy piano

PROGRAM NOTES

In the year 2012 the nation was swept by a fear that had not been seen since the Y2K transition of January, 1, 2000. According to a misinterpretation of the Mayan Long Count calendar, it was believed that the world would end on December 21, 2012—the end of the 13th *b'ak'tun*, 5,125 years since the previous apocalypse. Popular books, movies, and TV shows attempted to deal with the impending disaster. Sure, Mayanist scholars claimed it would really just be a time of celebration. Sure, many said that this was at most a time of transformation, with no basis for apocalyptic predictions. Yet we lived in panic, reading and watching images of the destruction of all we knew.

So, waking up after a good night's sleep on December 22, 2012, I first breathed a sigh of relief, then became quite exhilarated. A new *b'ak'tun*! A newly transformed world! What wonders would it hold for us? As a pianist with a passion for contemporary music, I thought, "Let's celebrate and document this great transition! Let's write and perform new pieces which capture where we are, and where we're going. It's a whole new world, let's play it!" I grabbed my phone and called up the composers who I thought would be most influential to the development of piano music over the course of this new 5,125 year cycle. One by one they awoke, groggily, then realized the day, and said "We're alive! We're transformed! Let's now make the music of this new *b'ak'tun*!" So I said to each, "Can you have something for me to premiere in 2013? The first program of music all written in this new world, and not the old?" And, meeting upon the great pyramid at Chichen Itza, under the rays of the new sun, we pledged ourselves to this goal.

At least, that's how I remember it.

alternately thunderous and playful, melancholy and spirited. *Cretic Variations* explores this basic rhythm and its expressive potential exhaustively - there is scarcely a measure in which this rhythm or some closely-related version of it is not sounding somewhere on the instrument. Nor is there any note here that wasn't inspired directly by the brilliance, bravado, subtlety, poetry, explosiveness and restraint of Nadia Shpachenko, to whom *Cretic Variations* is gratefully dedicated.

"I think of my works as objects; as sculptures unfolded, dissected and blown through time."

—James Matheson (2013)

Among the most distinctive, vital, and creative musical voices of his generation, **James Matheson** has composed works for the New York and LA Philharmonics, the Chicago and Albany Symphony Orchestras, Carnegie Hall, the St. Lawrence and Borromeo String Quartets, soprano Kiera Duffy and many others. His works often focus almost obsessively on their materials, with large, dramatic shapes that kaleidoscopically shift between extremes of lightness and darkness, sparseness and density, and evoke a wide-ranging emotional palette.

In addition to his work as a composer, James is a committed educator. Since 2009 he has been Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Composer Fellowship Program, where he oversees the development of young composers working with the orchestra. Recent projects include *Violin Concerto*, co-commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the LA Philharmonic, *True South*, commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, *Four Fanfares (with Assorted Nightmares)*, commissioned by the LA Philharmonic, *String Quartet*, commissioned by Justus and Elizabeth Schlichting for the St. Lawrence String Quartet, and *Borromeo Rings*, commissioned by the Cheswaty Foundation for the Borromeo String Quartet and pianist Judith Gordon.

In 2012, the American Academy of Arts and Letters awarded James with the Charles Ives Living, the Academy's highest honor for a composer. He has received fellowships and awards from the Guggenheim, Civitella Ranieri, Bogliasco and Sage Foundations, ASCAP, and the Robbins Prize. From 2005-2007, he was Executive Director of the MATA Festival of New Music in New York, which commissions and performs the work of young composers who are making their entry into professional musical life. He has held residencies at Yaddo and the Liguria Study Center. He lives in New York. For more information please visit: www.jamesmatheson.com

AIRDANCING "The number of colors that Nadia can coax from a piano is infinite. Adding the surreal sounds of a toy piano and electronics squares or cubes infinity, and opens the door to strange new visions."

As I worked on this piece, images of falling, floating, and flying often came across my computer monitor. Stunning videos of Felix Baumgartner's recent jump from space, the second stage of a rocket falling from edge of space into the ocean, and people jumping off cliffs in wing suits were in the back of my mind as I began the piece. The fascinating and unprecedented video of a giant squid swimming in its natural habitat was released as the piece progressed. All these images seem to have woven themselves into the texture of the piece; many of the musical gestures fall or float. On the other hand, the pitches, rhythms and sounds of the music itself often turn to frenzied dance.

All the electronic sounds are fairly straightforward manipulations of toy piano samples. Most of the pitches in the piece come from the first chord in the piano part.

Airdancing is dedicated to Nadia Shpachenko and Genevieve Feiwen Lee. Their artistry is the real inspiration for the piece.

—Tom Flaherty (2013)

came threads of song stitching through sonic fabrics, above and below, each changing the other's meaning."

Finger Songs were written in response to answering nagging questions such as: What if a comi-tragic text were steeped in music, the notes absorbing the marrow of the syllables, and then the exhausted words thrown away? What if twin toddlers sat down at matching toy pianos? What if spangled Ds were approached and left by melodies from above and below, symmetrical and asymmetrical? What if a rock song written at age 17 became lost in a dreamscape celebrating the pitch B? What if a ragtime became drunk on itself, succumbed to a motivic orgy, and at last returned, sated, to its senses?

In these pieces various means are used to bring to the keyboard the syllabic accents, timbres and articulations of speech or vocal music. Off-beat dissonances resolve to on-beat pure tones. Syncopations flicker around beats present or implied. Here and there, a silence carries an accent. Moods range from childlike, to adolescent, to aged reflection.

The inspiration throughout is the wonderful musicianship of the dedicatee, Nadia Shpachenko—though as composing progressed, the antics of her wise and impish twins, Ace and Mondy, began to work their way into the proceedings.

"I like to make music that supports interpretation and nuance—which is biological in its pulse, breath, gesture and linguistic character."

—Peter Yates (2013)

Peter Yates is a composer and a guitarist whose interest in things not usually done has led to cycles of "PopArt" songs, a puppet opera about the Watts Towers, and a DVD ghost-town opera in which historic photographs come to life and sing. In *The Egg and the Seed* he developed a form of "graphic oratorio," setting to music 250 original narrative collages whose text blocks and word balloons are not read, but sung. His work with the Elgart-Yates Guitar Duo, formed in 1975, includes sixteen tours of Europe, over one hundred premieres, and the publication of a book on prepared guitar. He also builds and plays versions of the arpeggione, a bowed guitar invented in 1823 and rarely seen since. Yates's works have been performed on Italian National Radio (RAI), microfest, The Living Arts Festival, NOW Festival, Festival of American Music, in Mexico, Europe and across the United States. He is on the faculties of music at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona and at UCLA. He takes inspiration from the full history of music, and is happy to notice that the memorable composers from the American West have been its mavericks. Further examples of his work can be found at California Guitar Archives (www.calguitar.com) and at www.youtube.com/peterfyates.

CRETIC VARIATIONS "I need to write music that is extremely difficult to play, that treads the line between the possible and the impossible, in which the drama of seeing and hearing extraordinary performers accomplish incredible feats plays an important role. Cretic Variations requires quite a lot of the pianist's hands and brain sudden shifts of register, simultaneous lines, seamlessly crossing hands, carefully balancing multiple elements... I love the feeling of wonder that comes from sensing that no one person should be actually able to play so many things at once - and that yet, there it is, happening right before us..."

The cretic foot, in poetic meter, consists simply of the stress pattern long-short-long. As in, say, the childish taunt "lah di dah" or Shakespeare's "Shall I die? Shall I fly?" - not, most would admit, among his best works. Something about this rhythm—a bit sing-songy—lends itself better to Dr. Seuss than to more serious poetic endeavors. It is simple, and almost inherently playful.

At the same time, in music, this simple rhythm is enormously versatile, and can be

This project of *World Premieres* brings together piano repertoire representing the diversity of today's American classical music, in a program both innovative (stylistically, sonically and programmatically) and cohesive. One of the greatest challenges in commissioning new music is the unknown of how the pieces will turn out, and in case of my very time-specific project, whether they will even be finished in time or work well together. The compositions presented here and their programmatic flow exceeded all expectations. Each of these pieces, in the composers' own assessments, rank among their strongest and favorite works, and they complement and contrast each other exquisitely. This program is a remarkable snapshot of contemporary compositional activity, a fascinating exposé of how four brilliant people see and experience this newly transformed world, how they express themselves through music, and how their different ideas are brought together by an enthusiastic performer who believes in their legacy.

Below you will read the composers' own words about each of their works, but I will note that the pieces all touch on the themes of transformation, of resonances across time, of cycles of rebirth. *Cretic Variations* and *Part-Suite-a* emphasize lengthy resonances, how momentary events persist, shape new events, and how our memory of the past is revised by events of the now. In *Kandinsky*, the extended resonance of the gong seems to parallel the rise and fall of civilizations. Where *Picture Etudes* take us through a variety of worlds, from placid to frightening, *Finger Songs* take us on a journey through time, playing on our sentiments with flashes and resonances of musics past. Where *Airdancing* and *Picture Etudes* introduce novel combinations of sound sources, *Part-Suite-a* and *Finger Songs* feature novel combinations of musical forms and genres. A number of the pieces feature descent into true musical chaos, and emergence into the new—whether momentous, as in the thunder and dawn of *Cretic Variations*, or thrilling, as in whoops and swirls of *Airdancing*.

This performance/recording project is inspiring, humbling, and triumphant, overcoming many obstacles and challenges—many of these pieces are among the most technically and musically demanding works I have had the privilege of bringing to life. Sweat and bloody fingers (and tired feet!) that accompanied my work on *Kandinsky*... transportation into the colorful, romantic, and scenic world of *Olive Orchard*... complete immersion into the poignant, poetic and thunderous world of *Cretic Variations*... the vividly alluring, shifting, puzzling and exciting imagery of *Airdancing*, and the intricate, mosaic, lulling and humorously tumultuous *Part Suite-a*... the intimate acquaintance with the ever so fleeting and spontaneously changing melodies of *Finger Songs*!

Today's performance celebrates my new album *Woman at the New Piano: American Music of 2013*, produced by six-time GRAMMY® nominees Marina and Victor Ledin and released Worldwide in November 2014 on the Reference Recordings label. A new era, a new world, a new piano! A new me? In thinking about the presentation of this recording, we came across the painting "Woman at the Piano" by Kazimir Malevich. It was created in 1913, exactly 100 years before this recording, by an immigrant to pre-Soviet Ukraine. What was this woman playing, at that earlier time of artistic innovation, and what has changed between she and I, an emigrant from post-Soviet Ukraine? She sits at her piano, both transformed by Malevich's cubo-futurist style. To what might I and my piano be transformed by the music of this new b'ak'tun? This is the question the composers and I have sought to answer, and indeed after this challenging and innovative program, neither I nor the piano will be the same.

—Nadia Shpachenko-Gottesman (2015)

PART SUITE-A "In my next life I hope to be a pianist. I've been grateful for such traditional compositional tools as pencil, paper, and more recently computer, but they are all a step or two from actually making music with your own hands. It must be a joy to have a world of harmony, rhythm, and color literally at one's fingertips."

Part Suite-a (rhymes with “partita”) scrambles elements familiar from Baroque suites and partitas with other musical flavors.

The introductory “Passacaglia” follows the usual form of a passacaglia, which is unified by a repeating bass line and series of chords. (Well, it’s not in three-four, but the word “passacaglia” has an irresistible taste.) The movement’s seven-measure ostinato consists of the same six-note chord throughout, in seven different voicings. The ostinato gradually speeds up. “Lullabande” features the strong second beat of the sarabande in a mostly serene lullaby. “Scherzoid” is generally playful, in the manner of scherzo, though it is perhaps occasionally threatening, in a friendly sort of way.

Part Suite-a was written for Nadia Shpachenko, whose sparkling musicality is a constant inspiration.

“I have been long been fascinated with how the meanings of simple things are transformed when they are juxtaposed in unusual ways.”

—Tom Flaherty (2013)

Informed by his experience as a cellist, **Tom Flaherty’s** music is directed to both the performer and the listener. Beneath a simple surface, his compositions are often motivated by colliding rhythms, meters, and tempos, amid widely ranging levels of dissonance. The identities of meters, harmonies, and even single pitches are often called into question, and can be heard in different ways by performers and listeners. Tom Flaherty has received grants, prizes, awards, and residencies from the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, American Music Center, Meet the Composer, and Yaddo.

His music is recorded on the Reference, Albany, Klavier, Bridge, SEAMUS, Capstone, and Advance labels. He appears as a cellist on the Naxos, Bridge, and Cambria labels. Published by American Composers Editions and G. Schirmer, Inc., His music has been performed throughout Europe and North America, by such new music ensembles as Volti and Earplay in San Francisco, Dinosaur Annex in Boston, Speculum Musicae and Odyssey Chamber Players in New York, Xtet and Ensemble GREEN in LA.

Tom Flaherty earned degrees at Brandeis University, S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, and the University of Southern California; his primary teachers in composition include Martin Boykan, Bülent Arel, Robert Linn, and Frederick Lesemann. He currently holds the John P. and Magdalena R. Dexter Professorship in Music and is Director of the Electronic Studio at Pomona College. For more information visit: www.tomflahertymusic.com

PICTURE ETUDES “*Picture Etudes* and *Bounce* are my first substantial works for piano, which, as a pianist, I always wanted to write.”

In November of 2011, I received a commission from the Kansas City Symphony and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art to write a 21st-century *Pictures at an Exhibition*. The idea seemed both intriguing and ambitious, and given my own interest in visual art, I welcomed the challenge. After conceptualizing the piece for six months, and visiting the Nelson-Atkins on three different occasions, I decided to compose a series of studies.

Unlike Modest Mussorgsky, who set all of his movements to the work of Viktor Hartmann, my piece brings eight seemingly disparate works of art to musical life. In honor of Mussorgsky and his original work (for solo piano), four of the ten movements were conceived in the form of piano etudes and later orchestrated.

After the symphonic version (*Picture Studies*) was finished, I returned to the original drafts of the piano etudes and completed *Picture Etudes*. Creating this series pushed me

in a new direction and allowed me to grow as an artist in the most unexpected ways. A special thank you to pianists Daniel Spiegel and Nadia Shpachenko.

The following impromptu notes were jotted down from initial impressions and repeated viewings of the artwork, after my selections had been made. These original notes helped dictate the form, style, and musical arc of each movement, and ultimately the entire piece.

“Three Pierrots” (based on Albert Bloch’s painting, “Die Drei Pierrots Nr. 2”): Comedic, naïve, and excited. A triad will represent the three Pierrots, and throughout the movement the triad will be turned upside down, on its side, and twisted in every possible way. The form will be through-composed. End big.

“Olive Orchard” (Vincent Van Gogh’s painting, “Olive Orchard”): Extended impressionism. Colorful, full of love. Perhaps a meeting place for two lovers. Start thin, gradually build to an expansive texture, end colorful. ABC (C references A to show the organic growth of the piece).

“Miró’s World” (Joan Miró’s painting, “Women at Sunrise”): Child-like, yet delirious. There appears to be a sexually ambiguous tone. Try something new, spontaneous, bouncy, tribal, and raw.

Picture Etudes are dedicated to Daniel Spiegel, Gabriela Martinez, Spencer Myer, and Nadia Shpachenko.

“I strive to create works that challenge the musician. You can push them to the point of breaking, but then you must reward them with something beautiful.”

—Adam Schoenberg (2013)

Adam Schoenberg has quickly become one of the best known and most frequently performed American composers of his generation. Full of “mystery and sensuality” (*New York Times*), Schoenberg’s music embraces both warm tonality and gentle chromaticism and has been heralded as “open, bold, and optimistic” (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*). An improviser at heart, Schoenberg’s engaging musical vocabulary has found resonance with audiences throughout the world. By the conclusion of the 2014/15 season, his orchestral suite *Finding Rothko* will have received over 40 performances and his American Symphony more than 20 performances. Nearly all of his orchestral works have been performed by multiple orchestras.

Major commissions include *Up!* and *La Luna Azul* (Atlanta Symphony Orchestra), *American Symphony and Picture Studies* (Kansas City Symphony), and *Bounce* (LA Philharmonic and Aspen Music Festival and School). Upcoming projects include collaborations with the Fort Worth Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Iris Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, and the Charleston, Louisville, and Amarillo symphonies. Album releases include an upcoming recording of Schoenberg’s orchestral works by the Kansas City Symphony and a newly released recording of his keyboard works by pianist Nadia Shpachenko (*Woman at the New Piano: American Music of 2013*), both for Reference Recordings.

Schoenberg earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree at The Juilliard School and is currently a member of the composition faculty of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. He makes his home in Los Angeles with his wife, screenwriter and filmmaker Janine Salinas Schoenberg, and their baby boy, Luca. For more information please visit: www.adamschoenberg.com

FINGER SONGS “The piano is a Pandora’s box, containing all possible music; to draw from it things that sound like oneself – that is the reinvention. In this case, out