



Sunday, March 29, 2015, 7pm
Hertz Hall

San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

Steven Schick, *Artistic Director*

Project TenFourteen

PROGRAM

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| George Crumb (b. 1929) | Xylophony* (2015)
<i>World Première</i> |
| I. | Song of the Forest Primeval |
| II. | Forest Murmurs |
| III. | The Sylvan Spirit-World: Invocation and Prayer |
| Chris Froh | <i>percussion</i> |
| Dan Kennedy | <i>percussion</i> |
| Loren Mach | <i>percussion</i> |
| Ben Prima | <i>percussion</i> |
| Andrew G. Heglund | <i>percussion</i> |
| Koji Nakano (b. 1974) | Time Song V: Mandala* (2014)
<i>World Première</i> |
| Tod Brody | <i>flute</i> |
| Kate Campbell | <i>piano</i> |
| Susan Freier | <i>violin</i> |
| Hall Goff | <i>trombone</i> |
| Stephen Harrison | <i>cello</i> |
| Peter Josheff | <i>clarinet</i> |
| Megan Shieh | <i>percussion</i> |
| Nick Woodbury | <i>percussion</i> |

INTERMISSION

PROGRAM

Edgard Varèse (1883–1965) Ionisation (1929–1931)

Victor Avdienko	<i>percussion</i>
Kate Campbell	<i>percussion</i>
Christopher Froh	<i>percussion</i>
Jim Kassiss	<i>percussion</i>
Dan Kennedy	<i>percussion</i>
Loren Mach	<i>percussion</i>
Jake Nissly	<i>percussion</i>
Ben Prima	<i>percussion</i>
Megan Shieh	<i>percussion</i>
Mark Veregge	<i>percussion</i>
Willie Winant	<i>percussion</i>
Nick Woodbury	<i>percussion</i>
Cynthia Yeh	<i>percussion</i>

Lei Liang (b. 1972) Luminous* (2014)
World Première

Mark Dresser	<i>contrabass solo</i>
Jeff Anderle	<i>clarinet</i>
Kate Campbell	<i>piano</i>
Stephen Harrison	<i>cello</i>
Roy Malan	<i>violin</i>
Larry Ragent	<i>horn</i>
Nanci Severance	<i>viola</i>
Nick Woodbury	<i>percussion</i>

** Project TenFourteen commission*

Project TenFourteen is a series of four programs featuring world premières simultaneously commissioned from ten distinctive composers, all challenged to reflect upon and address the human condition, common to us all.

Project TenFourteen is dedicated to the memory and celebration of Lee Hyla.

Audio streams of the TenFourteen commissioned works will be available on www.sfcmp.org approximately two weeks after the concert. Visit tenfourteen.com for further exploration of archival content and evolving commentary stimulated by Project TenFourteen.

Cal Performances' 2014–2015 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

Tod Brody	<i>flute</i>
Kyle Bruckmann	<i>oboe</i>
Sarah Rathke	<i>oboe</i>
Jeff Anderle	<i>clarinet</i>
Peter Josheff	<i>clarinet</i>
Bill Kalinkos	<i>clarinet</i>
Lawrence Ragent	<i>horn</i>
Hall Goff	<i>trombone</i>
Peter Wahrhaftig	<i>tuba</i>
Karen Gottlieb	<i>harp</i>
David Tanenbaum	<i>guitar</i>
Kate Campbell	<i>piano</i>
William Winant	<i>percussion</i>
Daniel Kennedy	<i>percussion</i>
Christopher Froh	<i>percussion</i>
Roy Malan	<i>violin</i>
Graeme Jennings	<i>violin</i>
Susan Freier	<i>violin</i>
Nanci Severance	<i>viola</i>
Stephen Harrison	<i>cello</i>
Richard Worn	<i>bass</i>
Steven Schick	<i>Artistic Director</i>
Rozella Kennedy	<i>Executive Director</i>
Adam Fong	<i>Project Manager</i>
Luis Escareño	<i>Administrative Manager</i>
Jon Yu	<i>Production Manager</i>
Brenna Noonan	<i>Media Coordinator</i>
Travis Andrews & Andrew Meyerson	<i>Ministers of Fun</i>

PROJECT TENFOURTEEN

ON A COLD AND CLEAR late fall day in 1975—my first day in New York City and by my reckoning the fifth happiest day of my life—I walked from my friend’s apartment near Columbia University down the entire length of Manhattan to stand in front of a house in Soho, in which Edgard Varèse once lived. Years later I told that story to Chou Wen-chung, the current occupant of the house and one-time Varèse protégé, who said to me, “Next time, ring the doorbell!” Since that day I have rung the bell many times. Wen-chung and I have sat together in the living room as he related the story of his first composition lesson with Varèse. (“Varèse was there at the piano, I sat where you are now...”) We talked shop in the upstairs library while I dusted Chou’s collection of gongs, one of which belonging to Varèse himself. We have become friends.

On that day 40 years ago, I fell in love with New York and renewed my vows with Varèse’s great work for 13 percussionists, *Ionisation*. I remember how marvelous it was to hear the noises of *Ionisation* reflected in the soundscape of New York: the famous sirens; the low booms and metal-on-metal cacophony of Manhattan under construction. Varèse was a pivotal figure in two great 20th-century revolutions. The first was the liberation noise, and, with *Ionisation*, the founding of the contemporary percussive art. The second began on a day nearly 70 years ago, when Chou Wen-chung himself rang the doorbell on Sullivan Street and became Varèse’s student and eventually his assistant and the executor of his estate. Chou was the first, and remains the most influential, composer of Asian descent in this country. It’s a distinguished lineage that includes his students Chinari Ung, Chen Yi, Tan Dun, and many others, along with their students, including the two young composers featured tonight, Lei Liang and Koji Nakano.

We intended to present a new work by Chou Wen-chung tonight. But persistent poor health has forced Professor Chou to withdraw from Project TenFourteen. But as we perform tonight, especially that greatest of percussion works, *Ionisation*, we honor Chou Wen-chung’s legacy. Here’s to you, Wen-chung! Someday soon I’ll ring the bell on the Sullivan

Street and again we’ll talk about music while I dust your gongs.

Steven Schick

THE MUSIC

George Crumb (b. 1929)
***Xylophony* (2015)**

Following SFCMP’s presentations of the George Crumb’s new vocal works *Yesteryear* and *The Yellow Moon of Andalusia* last November, the ensemble introduces his major *Xylophony*, which calls for nearly 100 instruments, including amplified piano. The composer writes:

Forests, like other sublime manifestations of nature—mountains, great rivers and the immense oceans—must evoke feelings of religious awe. Having chosen forests as the subject of a musical “song of praise,” I decided on *Xylophony* (in Greek “the voice of wood” or, by extension, “music of the forest”) as an appropriate title.... *Xylophony* is the third of what I would call my “ecological” works, the others being *Vox Balaenae* (“Voice of the Whale”) of 1971 and *An Idyll for the Misbegotten* of 1985. I have deplored the destructive exploitation of our natural world and these pieces are my artistic response to the terrible abuses which must result in the destruction of life on earth unless reversed.

The opening “Song of the Forest Primeval” expresses the sense of majesty and solemnity of “nature’s cathedral.” The music, in tremulous figurations, gradually rises from the lowest registers of the marimbas and climaxes in incisive xylophone passages, before again subsiding to a “quiet” conclusion. “Forest Murmurs” (with its tongue-in-cheek reference to Wagner’s *Siegfried*) presents the whisperings and rustlings of the woodland—the sounds of insects, frogs, birds and the sighing of the wind are omnipresent. The tempo is *Molto vivace*, the metrical format is seven 16th-notes per bar, and the dynamic is *pianississimo*. The performer’s whispered phonetics add a ritualistic coloration to the web of sound. The title of the concluding movement—“The Sylvan Spirit-World: Invocation and Prayer”—is, I believe, self-explanatory. The final prayer

carries the marking “like a breath, quasi subliminal” and recedes into silence.

Koji Nakano (b. 1974)
Time Song V: Mandala (2014)

Koji Nakano's *Time Song V: Mandala*, is dedicated to his former teacher Lee Hyla, who passed away last year while Nakano was writing the piece. Studies with Chinary Ung reaffirmed Chou Wen-chung's pan-Asian ideas, leading Nakano to work throughout Asia with musicians to bridge Western and Asian traditional approaches to notation and performance. In his composed music, much of which incorporates multi-media elements, he asks much of his musicians: virtuosic notated passages, graphically notated gestures, and, most notably, vocalization from instrumentalists, which adds another level of communicative potential. *Time Song V: Mandala* builds upon a ten-year span of works exploring the relationship between ritual and individual expression.

The composer writes: “The initial inspiration came from the Tibetan Sand Mandala, which the Buddhist monks create from colorful sands, promptly destroying it upon completion. To me, it represents a transformation of life (birth, death, and re-creation/re-continuation).”

The instrumental setup, with trombone at the center, reflects the shape of the mandala. There are four connected sections—“Incantation,” “Reading a Mantra,” “Ritualistic Dance,” and “Drawing a Mandala”—the energy transforming from the rhythmically free opening, through the ritualistic “Reading,” to the energetic “Dance,” finally to the ecstatic and subtle “Mandala,” which even as we glimpse its shape begins to waft away.

Edgard Varèse (1883–1965)
Ionisation (1929–1931)

Born in Paris but from 1915 on living in the United States, Edgard Varèse was influenced deeply by the Dada and Futurist movements as well as America's urban landscape and industrial energy. *Ionisation*, the first important independent work for all-percussion ensemble in Western concert music, told us we could never take sound for granted again. It was revolutionary in marshalling “pure” timbre and rhythmic

gestures to create clear musical impulse and architecture without the underlying armature of harmony and melody. Its almost traditional ideas of subject and development create a fairly straightforward and conservative musical shape. Timbral layering and rhythmic cells are analogous (given some leeway) to harmony and melodic motif in pitch-based music; these and a persistent pulse allow deviations from prevailing states, like curves within a grid. What is perhaps most surprising is the subtlety and refinement with which Varèse treats the ensemble.

Lei Liang (b. 1972)
Luminous (2014)

Lei Liang is interested the ways a sound can reveal many dimensions and associations over the course of its life within a piece—dramatic, purely physical, or referential to other kinds of gestures. Like Chou Wen-chung, he has explored analogies with mark-making in Chinese calligraphy and painting. He coaxes the listener to a heightened sense of each gesture's inner life, and how this translates, universally and specifically, human experience and expression. *Luminous* was composed for UC San Diego colleague Mark Dresser, whose multidimensional approach to the double bass parallels Liang's aesthetic. The composer writes:

The instrument's rich spectra embody “voices” that encompass extreme opposites—lightness and darkness, angels and ghosts, paradise and inferno—unified by a singular vibrating body. The composition explores these voices in a few large sections, starting with bowing on one string that produces multiphonics, double-stop bowing, and pizzicati. It concludes with the threading technique (attaching the bow from beneath the string) which allows the performer to bow multiple strings simultaneously. The last section is subtitled “The Answer Questioned” as an homage to Charles Ives and György Kurtág.

The restrained ensemble provides and exquisitely detailed commentary and resonance chamber for the soloist.

Robert Kirzinger



The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players (SFCMP), an ensemble of highly skilled musicians, performs innovative new music. We nourish the creation and dissemination of new work through high-quality musical performances, commissions, and community outreach. We promote the music of composers from across cultures and stylistic traditions who are creating a vast and vital 21st-century musical language. We seek to share these experiences with as many people as possible, both in and outside of traditional concert settings.

SFCMP was founded by Jean-Louis LeRoux, Marcella DeCray, and Charles Boone as “Bring Your Own Pillow” on March 25, 1971, and incorporated as a nonprofit on August 14, 1974. Throughout its history, SFCMP has been led by six Artistic Directors and six Executive Directors with continuous authorization, support and fiscal oversight by a board of directors.

In addition to programmatic innovation, our performances are rooted in artistic virtuosity. Our 22 core San Francisco Contemporary Music Players are among the Bay Area’s leading musicians and educators. They are active as soloists and chamber musicians and leaders of several dynamic performance groups in California and beyond.

SFCMP is the longest standing, continuously performing new music ensemble outside the East Coast. Over its 43 seasons, SFCMP’s work has greatly contributed to the art form and the new music sector. We have performed more than 1,200 new works by 560 composers. Nearly 150 of these have been premières, and

we have commissioned more than 80 new works by composers from around the world. SFCMP has been presented by leading cultural festivals and concert series in the San Francisco Bay Area and around the country.



George Crumb was born in West Virginia in 1929 into a musical family, and studied at various schools in the Midwest as well as at the Berlin Hochschule as a Fulbright Scholar. He eventually joined the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania, where he composed and taught for three decades. His highly intuitive approach to composition, with its emphasis on texture, timbre, and line, bore substantial fruit during the 1960s, including the *Madrigals* (1966–1969), *Eleven Echoes of Autumn* (1965), and, inspired by the Apollo 11 lunar landing, *Night of the Four Moons* (1969). *Echoes of Time and the River*, one of Crumb’s rare orchestral works, earned the composer the Pulitzer Prize.



Ron Jones

Heralded as “one of the most exciting voices in New Music” by *The Wire*, Lei Liang (b. 1972) is a Chinese-born American composer whose works have been described as “hauntingly beautiful and sonically colorful” by *The New York Times*, and as “far, far out of the ordinary, brilliantly original and inarguably gorgeous” by *The Washington Post*.

Winner of the 2011 Rome Prize, Liang is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and an Aaron Copland Award. He was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic and Alan Gilbert for the inaugural concert of the CONTACT! new music series.

Other commissions and performances come from the Taipei Chinese Orchestra, the Heidelberger Philharmonisches Orchester, Thailand Philharmonic, Berkeley Symphony, the Fromm Music Foundation, Meet the

Composer, Chamber Music America, the National Endowment for the Arts, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, New York New Music Ensemble and Boston Musica Viva. Liang's music is recorded on Mode, New World, Innova, Telarc, and Naxos Records. As a scholar he is active in the research and preservation of traditional Asian music.

Liang studied composition with Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Robert Cogan, Chaya Czernowin, and Mario Davidovsky, and received degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music (B.M. and M.M.) and Harvard University (Ph.D.). He currently serves as Associate Professor of Music at UC San Diego. Liang's music is published exclusively by Schott Music Corporation, New York.



Koji Nakano (b. 1974) is a Japanese composer. He was born in Japan and educated in Boston, The Hague, and San Diego. Nakano has been recognized as one of the major voices among Asian composers of his generation. His work strives to merge Western and Eastern musical traditions, and reflects the relationship between beauty, form and imperfection through the formality of music.

Nakano received his bachelor's degree in composition with distinction, and master's degree in composition with academic honors and distinction, Pi Kappa Lambda, from the New England Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Lee Hyla and John Harbison. Later, he studied with Dutch composer Louis Andriessen in Amsterdam and at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague as the Japanese Government Overseas Study Program Artist. Nakano received his Ph.D. in composition from UC San Diego, where he studied with Chinariy Ung.

In addition to being the recipient of The American Artists and Museum Professionals in Asia Fellowship from the Asian Cultural

Council, Nakano is also the first recipient of the Toru Takemitsu Award in Composition from the Japan Society of Boston awarded annually to the most talented young composer in the Boston area. In 2008, he became the first composer to receive the S&R Washington Award Grand Prize from the S&R Foundation, which is awarded annually to the most talented young artist for his or her contributions to U.S.-Japanese relations.



Mark Dresser is an internationally acclaimed bass player, improviser, composer, and interdisciplinary collaborator. Since 2006, he has been researching, performing, composing, and collaborating in the field of telematic performance, which explores the musical, technical, and social dimensions of live performance between multiple locations through high-speed Internet. He was a co-coordinator, composer, performer, and conductor of *Deep Tones for Peace*, a 2009 Internet performance including 13 internationally bassists collaborating live between Jerusalem and New York City.

Mr. Dresser's distinctive sound is documented in more than 100 recordings with John Zorn, Ray Anderson, Jane Ira Bloom, Tim Berne, Gerry Hemingway, Anthony Davis, Dave Douglas, Satoko Fujii, Bob Ostertag, Joe Lovan, and many others. Nearly 30 of these CDs are as a soloist, bandleader, or co-leader during his 18 years living in New York City (1986–2004). From 1985 to 1994, he was a member of MacArthur Award recipient Anthony Braxton's Quartet, which recorded nine CDs and was the subject of Graham Locke's book *Forces in Motion* (Da Capo Press).

He has been a lecturer at Princeton University and served on the faculties of the New School University and Hampshire College. In fall 2004, Mr. Dresser joined the faculty of UC San Diego.



Percussionist, conductor, and author **Steven Schick** was born in Iowa and raised in a farming family. For 40 years, he has championed contemporary music by commissioning or premiering more than

150 new works. He was the founding percussionist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars (1992–2002) and served as Artistic Director of the Centre International de Percussion de Genève (2000–2005). Mr. Schick is founder and Artistic Director of the percussion group red fish blue fish. Currently he is Music Director of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus in addition to serving as SFCMP's Artistic Director. In 2012, he became the first Artist-in-Residence with the International Contemporary Ensemble. Mr. Schick founded and is currently Artistic Director of "Roots and Rhizomes," a summer course on contemporary percussion music held at the Banff Centre for the Arts. He maintains a lively schedule of guest conducting, including appearances this season with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Nova Chamber Ensemble, and the Asko|Schönberg Ensemble. Mr. Schick will be music director of the 2015 Ojai Festival. Among his acclaimed

publications is a book, *The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams*, and numerous recordings of contemporary percussion music, including a three-CD set of the complete percussion music of Xenakis (Mode). Mode also released a companion recording on DVD of the early percussion music of Karlheinz Stockhausen in September 2014.

Mr. Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music at UC San Diego. He was named Artistic Director of SFCMP in 2011.

SFCMP's 2014–2015 season is made possible by the following institutions, among others: The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Amphion Foundation, The Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, The Instituto Italiano de Cultura of San Francisco, The James Irvine Foundation's Exploring Engagement Fund, The Jebediah Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, Polish Cultural Institute New York, San Francisco Grants for the Arts, The Ross McKee Foundation, The Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation, WESTAF, the Western States Arts Federation, and the National Endowment for the Arts, and The Zellerbach Family Foundation, as well as the essential generosity of individuals who make a tax-deductible contribution to our 501(c)3 organization, or who provide volunteer and/or in-kind support. Find out more at sfcmp.org/support. Thank you!