

Saturday, February 7, 2026, 8pm
Hertz Hall

Eco Ensemble

Stacey Pelinka, *flute*

Tod Brody, *flute*

Juliana Gaona Villamizar, *oboe*

Andrew Friedman, *clarinet*

Peter Josheff, *clarinet*

Jeff Robinson, *bassoon*

Scott Macomber, *trumpet*

Brendan Lai-Tong, *trombone*

Gregory Messa, *percussion*

Jordan Glenn, *drum set*

Dan Levitan, *harp*

Keisuke Nakagoshi, *piano*

Hrabba Atladottir, *violin*

Dan Flanagan, *violin*

Ellen Ruth Rose, *viola*

Leighton Fong, *cello*

Richard Worn, *double bass*

Nikolas Nackley, *baritone*

David Milnes, *artistic director*

Jon Yu, *production director*

Brendan West, *technical director*

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PROGRAM

Matthew Evan Taylor

In this Moment 02072026

for solo wind instruments and loop station

Myra Melford and Matthew Monaco

Thrum (2026)

for two improvising pianists

Mu-Xuan Lin

Concupiscentia Femina (2024–25)

for trumpet, trombone, bass clarinet, baritone voice, electronics, and video

INTERMISSION

Mu-Xuan Lin

Double Jeopardy (2014, 12-instrument version)

Matthew Evan Taylor

pneuma iii: in response to MZH (2025)

for violin and cello

Ken Ueno

Bokuseki (2026)

for solo oboe

Matthew Evan Taylor

Prayer Service for Earnestine (2017)

for chamber orchestra

*Special thanks to the University of California, Berkeley Department of Music,
Meyer Sound, and CNMAT (Center for New Music and Audio Technology)*

PROGRAM NOTES

MATTHEW EVAN TAYLOR

In this Moment 02072026

Dr. Matthew Evan Taylor is an AfroPneumatic composer, multi-instrumentalist, and improviser who has “...wrestled with the societal boundaries of Black artistry only to blast them apart....” (Dr. Kori Hill, *I Care if You Listen*) through creating music that is “insistent and defiant...envelopingly hypnotic” (Alan Young, *Lucid Culture*).

An artist at the intersection of concert music, free improvisation, and multi-disciplinary performance, Taylor has worked with leading artists and ensembles including the Metropolis Ensemble, Turtle Island String Quartet featuring Cyrus Chestnut, Elliott Sharp, dancer Laurel Jenkins, and visual artist Dannielle Tegeder, in front of audiences at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the World Saxophone Congress 17, Cine-

Jazz Film Music Festival Paris, and the Perez Art Museum Miami.

A “risk taker” (Neil De La Flor, *Huffington Post*), Taylor’s latest work focuses on expression and liberation through breath. This music, AfroPneumaism, subverts Western aesthetics and philosophy by replacing chronometric and metronomic time with the human breath. Through this work, musicians are asked to listen inward as well as across the ensemble, as the audience joins in the collective act of deliberate breathing.

Taylor’s forthcoming album, *Life Returns*, will be released in May on Navona Records. He serves as Assistant Professor of Composition at UC Berkeley.

MYRA MELFORD AND MATTHEW MONACO

Thrum

Thrum evokes, somewhat contradictorily, both the beating of drums and the idle strumming of a string instrument. The percussive nature of the piano, or “88 tuned drums” as Val Wilmer describes the playing of one of our shared musical influences, Cecil Taylor, fits somewhere in between.

Additionally, thrum can refer to the loose ends left on a loom after the fabric has been cut. These loose ends are continuously created by one musician playing and cutting off both the sound and intention of the other, who must respond in real-time to the changed musical situation.

—Myra Melford and Matthew Monaco

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The pianist, composer, bandleader, and professor Myra Melford—whom the *New Yorker* called “a stalwart of the new-jazz movement”—has spent the last three decades making original music that is equally challenging and engaging. Culling inspiration from a wide range of sources that include the blues of her native Chicago, the poetry of Fernando Pessoa, literature by Eduardo Galeano, visual art and architecture, innovative jazz artists such as Cecil

Taylor and the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, yoga, and Eastern philosophy. She has explored an array of formats, among them solo-piano recitals, deeply interactive combos, and ambitious multidisciplinary programs.

Melford’s all-star ensemble project, Fire and Water, debuted its critically acclaimed release, *For the Love of Fire and Water*, in April 2022 on RogueArt Records and on a second release in November 2023, *Hear the Light Singing. The Other Side of Air*, the 2018 release by her quintet Snowy Egret, was named one of the best jazz recordings of 2018 by the *New York Times* and one of NPR Music’s 50 Best Albums of 2018. “This is music with an endless capacity for elasticity and surprise,” NPR wrote, “along with an affirming spirit of coherence.”

A recording by Melford’s new trio, *Splash*, with Michael Formanek and Ches Smith, was released on Intakt Records in March 2025 to worldwide critical acclaim. Other current performing ensembles include Lux Quartet (co-led with Allison Miller, featuring Scott Colley and Dayna Stephens), the collectively led Tiger Trio (with Joelle Leandre and Nicole Mitchell), and Trio M (with Mark Dresser and Matt Wilson).

Two upcoming recordings in 2026 include *Katarai*, a two-piano duo with pianist Satoko Fujii and a third studio recording, *Sure Grand Out*, from her quintet Fire and Water, both on RogueArt Records, Paris.

Melford has received a Fulbright Scholarship (2000), the Alpert Award in the Arts for Music (2012) a Guggenheim Fellowship (2013), the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award (2013–16), and the Doris Duke Residency to Build Demand for the Arts (2013). She has appeared in the *Down Beat* Magazine and Jazz Journalists Association polls numerous times since 1990.

Since debuting on record as a bandleader in 1990, Melford has built a discography of more than 50 albums as a leader or co-leader, and side-person, and has collabora-

rated with such luminary musicians as Nicole Mitchell, Joelle Leandre, Han Bennink, Miya Masaoka, Zeena Parkins, Lauren Newton, Stomu Takeishi, Rudy Royston, Fay Victor, Mary Halvorson, Tomeka Reid, Ingrid Laubrock, Susie Ibarra, Lesley Mok, Dave Douglas, Marty Ehrlich, Matana Roberts, Michael Formanek, Ches Smith, Liberty Ellman, Erik Friedlander, Fred Frith, Ben Goldberg, Joseph Jarman, Leroy Jenkins, Ron Miles, Tyshawn Sorey, Mary Oliver, Michael Sarin, Mark Dresser, Matt Wilson, Allison Miller, Scott Colley, Dayna Stephens, Jenny Scheinman, Chris Speed, Cuong Vu, Roscoe Mitchell, Francois Houle, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and the Eco Ensemble. As a young musician in New York City, Melford worked with Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris and Henry Threadgill.

—myramelford.com

Matthew Monaco (b. 1997) was immersed in jazz music from an early age, beginning his musical training improvising at the piano. Further studies in jazz were interrupted by his simultaneous encounter with the works of J.S. Bach and Stravinsky, leading to an instant fascination with notated classical music. Committed to maintaining jazz and classical as essential aspects of his musical identity, Monaco began his training and career as a composer of acoustic and electroacoustic music at the New England Conservatory in Boston, in the class of Stratis Minakakis.

After obtaining his bachelor's degree in 2020, Monaco moved to Paris, studying with Stefano Gervasoni for two years at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris (CNSMDP) and earning his master's degree in 2022. While at the Paris Conservatory, Monaco deepened his knowledge of electronic music through courses with Yan Maresz, Luis

Naon, and Grégoire Lorieux. These years of study led to collaborations with groups including Ensemble intercontemporain, Ensemble Itinéraire, Ensemble Court-circuit, Ensemble Linea, the Callithumpian Consort, the Del Sol Quartet, the Brouwer Trio, Orchestre des lauréats at CNSMDP, and conductors including Hugh Wolff, Jean Deroyer, Jean-Philippe Wurtz, Stephen Drury, David Loebel, and Léo Margue.

Monaco continued his studies with another change of scene, entering the doctorate program in composition at UC Berkeley in 2022. In particular, he studied piano with Myra Melford, with whom he expanded and refined his improvisational skills, following in the heritage of American free jazz, a source from which much of his musical language draws inspiration.

Monaco's research focuses on intersections of phenomenology and music theory, creating a space for work-specific methods in contemporary music analysis. Two current (separate) research projects focus on musico-grammatical paradigms in the solo performances of Cecil Taylor and rhythmic processes in Beat Furrer's *Konzert*.

MU-XUAN LIN

Concupiscentia Femina

Concupiscentia Femina is written for trumpet, trombone, bass clarinet, baritone singer, electronics, and video. The four instruments and voice that made up the ensemble are ones that were stereotypically associated with a hunky type of masculinity—the brass, the big bands, the military, the gusty and brash tones, and the macho operatic roles. And this piece does exactly that, except in an oddly introspective, self-aware, and fragmented manner. The optic is another oxymoron: the video projected behind the ensemble shows footages of female nude, figure or figurine, that would stereotypically be considered erotic, almost soft-porn-ish. The baritone vocalist, whose

voice was captured and re-enunciated in the electronics, is performing squats, sit-ups, and push-ups onstage while vocalizing, with his vocalization contingent to the breathing patterns required for the workout, or to the obstructed cavity and curled up tongue due to a candy he places in his mouth. The effort of mediating between the score and the performance and, in the case of the vocalist, the physical effort, were intended to result in a crude, sloppy, high-testosterone musical montage that weirdly complements or even emboldens the expressivity and agency of the slowly pulsing, quietly breathing yet seemingly objectified female sexuality in the video.

Concupiscentia Femina is one of my most recent works that materializes, questions, ruminates, or contests the sensibilities surrounding female sexuality.

—Mu-Xuan Lin, 2025

Double Jeopardy (12-instrument version)
 Certain deed, once done can never be done, at least not in the same way. That is the law of music. Walking the way of music one is both at the moment and through time; objects present themselves blunt and front, shaking off droplets when one is just making out the shape of them, and flee away with too much said and unsaid, leaving one at the mercy of recognition and recollection. Each object once appeared can never appear, and each presence is the compromise of its own possible double. Even *déjà-vu* entails the existence of a set of Another—another time, another presence, another experience. Therefore it is allowed for every musical gesture to exert its transgression over and over in repetition, in disguise, in reverse, in distortion, in magnitude; and it is therefore just for every counter-gesture to respond over and over in subversion, in annihilation, in coercion, in assimilation, in emergence. Hence the double jeopardy in multitude.

Double Jeopardy was originally commissioned, and subsequently premiered by, the Ensemble Proton Bern in Bern, Switzerland, in 2013. The 12-instrument version was created in 2014 and received its premiere performance by the International Contemporary Ensemble in Los Angeles in 2024.

—Mu-Xuan Lin, 2014

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Composer (curator/writer/researcher) **Mu-Xuan Lin** (林慕萱) (Taiwan/USA) defines her life as a quest for an artistic autonomy poetically engendered by both its will and its vulnerability to one's corporeal experience and to the world one lives in. Having extensive training in the visual arts and creative writing and frequent exposure to theater, dance, and literature from an early age, and profound influences from the cinema, Mu-Xuan is interested in the montage and the *mise-en-scène* of contemporary individuals' fragmented yet interlaced truths, of the confusion of time and place, and of identities construed and broken. She creates with an emphasis on the kinetic formulation and transfer between various expressive art forms or matters with the sonic and temporal one.

Mu-Xuan enjoys an international career; her music has been heard on SOOND and ein_klang records, and on platforms such as Festival AFEKT (Estonia), Beijing Modern Music Festival (China), Donaueschinger Musiktage (Germany), Innovation Series (Taiwan), and Piano Spheres (Los Angeles). She has worked with Ensemble Proton Bern (Switzerland), International Contemporary Ensemble (USA), Ensemble Adapter (Germany), Avanti! Chamber Orchestra (Finland), and pianist Vicki Ray among others, and is currently working with 20° dans le noir (Paris), duo NéMeu (Paris/Tokyo), and *sheng* artist Li-Chin Li (Taiwan). As a writer, her article “The Erotic and the Melancholy of a Sincere Postmodern Identity—cinematic spaces and vulnerable time” will be published by Cambridge

Scholars in the volume *Crossing into Distance: Contemporary Composers on the Present and Future of Art Music*. She has also conducted interviews with philosopher Klaus Theweleit and with composer and music theater director Heiner Goebbels (publications forthcoming). Since 2023, in addition to increased activities as a video artist, Mu-Xuan has ventured into the work of curation and direction and founded Studio Nekton with flutist Shao-Wei Chou.

Mu-Xuan received BM in composition from the New England Conservatory, MFA and PhD in music composition and theory from Brandeis University, and Certificate of Advanced Studies in Curating at Zürcher Hochschule der Künste. Previously she has taught at Brandeis University, California State University Long Beach, and Chapman University. Dr. Lin is the Assistant Professor of Composition at UC Berkeley.

—muxuanlin.com

MATTHEW EVAN TAYLOR

pneuma iii: in response to MZH

This is a piece of starts and stops, textures, and extremes. This characterizes the first conversations I had with my friend, the visual artist and writer Molly Zuckerman-Hartung (Professor of Art at UCLA). She captured this dynamic faithfully in her gift to me, *Miami Coke Table* (2015). (No cocaine was consumed!) When you look closely at the wooden palette, you see peaks and valleys, shocking juxtapositions of color, and surprising moments of calm. I think we were both startled by how much we understood each other, and how closely we saw the world through our art practices. She remains one of my most dynamic friends; it's the sort of relationship where we are instantly back to our dynamic as soon as we're in a room together.

—Matthew Evan Taylor

Ken Ueno

Bokuseki

This work is inspired by *bokuseki*—the calligraphic writings of Zen and Buddhist monks, valued not for refinement or legibility, but for the immediacy of the gesture and the trace of lived presence it leaves behind. In particular, the piece draws on the *bokuseki* of Nichiren, whose brushwork often privileges urgency, conviction, and force over formal balance or clarity.

Nichiren's *bokuseki*, especially the *Gohonzon*, operates through a palimpsestual field logic in which meaning is distributed across space rather than unfolded through sequence. Radically heterogeneous scales of gestures coexist on a single surface: the monumental *daimoku* at the center; medium-sized names of Buddhas and bodhisattvas; smaller inscriptions orbiting the field. These scales do not form a narrative hierarchy. Scale itself becomes semantic pressure—large writing does not come “first,” and small writing does not “follow,” but both persist simultaneously.

This non-linear inscription anticipates later modernist experiments such as Mallarmé's *Un coup de dés*, not in style but in structure. Where Mallarmé replaces grammar with typography and meter with spacing, Nichiren arrives at a similar spatialization of meaning through ritual cosmology rather than literary modernism. In both cases, the surface functions not as a line of discourse but as a field of forces.

Crucially, this is not collage. The surface behaves as a palimpsest—an accretion of doctrinal time, ritual time, and historical time that remains legible without synthesis. Reading becomes recursive, durational, and navigational. Meaning emerges from tension between scales rather than resolution.

The oboe functions here as a writing instrument without a reservoir. Breath replaces ink; embouchure becomes pressure and angle. Sound persists only as long as the body can sustain it, and each gesture risks

thinning, cracking, or breaking altogether. Silence is not absence but the white of the page—an active space against which each sonic stroke becomes perceptible. Like Cy Twombly’s gestural marks, these sounds hover between the semantic and the non-semantic, suggesting language without resolving into it.

I would like to thank Juliana Gaona Villamizar, whose virtuosity and generosity were instrumental in the genesis of this piece. Her ongoing consultation on oboe techniques throughout the compositional process was invaluable.

—Ken Ueno

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Ken Ueno, recipient of the Berlin Prize and Rome Prize, is a composer, performer, sound artist, and scholar. His works have been championed internationally, including *Shiroi Ishi* for the Hilliard Ensemble, which remained in that group’s repertoire for more than a decade. In 2011, MaerzMusik in Berlin presented a portrait concert of his music, and in 2024 the Arditti Quartet premiered his new string quartet at the Takefu International Music Festival, where he was guest composer. Ueno has performed his vocal concerto with major orchestras worldwide, including with the Boston Modern Orches-

tra Project, Warsaw Philharmonic, Thailand Philharmonic, and Lithuanian National Symphony. A professor at UC Berkeley, his writings have appeared in the *Oxford Handbook*, *New York Times*, and *Drama Review*. Ueno co-edited *East Asian Voices of Resistance Against Racism in Music* (Ethics Press) and recently guest-edited *Sonic Ideas*, contributing the lead article on AI and music.

MATTHEW EVAN TAYLOR

Prayer Service for Earnestine

Prayer Service for Earnestine (2017) is the first of my African American Requiem pieces written in honor of my grandmother, Earnestine Colvin Taylor (Grandmamá), who passed away in 2017 at the age of 90. Written for large ensemble, this reverse theme-and-variations is based on Grandmamá’s favorite hymn, “Come Ye Disconsolate” (Thomas Moore, *The United Methodist Hymnal*, No. 500). Loosely inspired by her funeral service, I emulate sounds of growing up in her church such as hymn-lining, shouting, and whooping. For a final farewell, I conclude the piece with a faithful rendering of the hymn, as my grandmother would have sung it in church.

—Matthew Evan Taylor

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Eco Ensemble, under the direction of David Milnes, is a group of prominent Bay Area musicians who are passionate about exploring and performing contemporary works. Its mission is to enrich and serve the Bay Area’s cultural life through the creation, performance, and dissemination of new music by composers from Berkeley and around the world. Called a “dream team of local musicians who embody a high point in the Bay Area’s vibrant contemporary music scene” by the *New York Times*, Eco Ensemble has been featured at the Festival of New

American Music and the Venice Biennale and has worked closely with renowned composers including Kaija Saariaho, Beat Furrer, Philippe Leroux, George Lewis, Erin Gee, and Ivan Fedele. The group is the ensemble-in-residence at UC Berkeley’s Department of Music and the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT), and as the university’s principal performance outlet for performers and composers of new music, Eco Ensemble commissions and premieres works from UC Berkeley composers. With a focus on education for

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

both experienced audiences and novices, Eco Ensemble's and CNMAT's public outreach efforts include lectures, demonstrations, workshops, and composer residencies. Members of the ensemble work extensively with undergraduate and graduate musicians in new-music studies. Eco Ensemble's unique collaboration with CNMAT inspires works that are informed by contemporary explorations into the intersection between science and music. The ensemble seeks to expand the possibilities for new music by working with CNMAT faculty, students, and researchers to develop new instruments, new applications of technologies for composition and performance, and new modes of expression.



David Milnes serves as Music Director of the Eco Ensemble, UC Berkeley's internationally recognized professional new music ensemble in residence as well as the UC Berkeley Symphony Orchestra. During his early years, he studied piano, organ, clarinet, cello, and voice, and briefly entertained a career as a jazz pianist, appearing with Chuck Mangione, Gene Krupa, Billy Taylor, and John Pizzarelli. After studying with Charles Rosen, Otto-Werner Müller, Herbert Blomstedt, Erich Leinsdorf, and Leonard Bernstein, Milnes won the prestigious Exxon Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony at age 27, where he appeared frequently on the New and Unusual Music Series. He also served as Music Director of the highly acclaimed San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra, which he led on its first European tour.

A dedicated proponent of new music, Milnes has led many performances with Earplay, the Empyrean Ensemble, Compo-

sers Inc., and the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble. As Music Director of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, he commissioned and premiered new works from around the world from such composers as Phillippe Leroux, Liza Lim, Edmund Campion, Shulamit Ran, Zhou Long, Kui Dong, Earl Kim, Jorge Liderman, and Cindy Cox. With the Eco Ensemble, he has conducted works by Pierre Boulez, Giorgi Ligeti, Jonathan Harvey, Beat Furrer, Harrison Birtwistle, Franck Bedrossian, Andrew Imbrie, and Ivan Fedele. He has made recordings of music by John Anthony Lennon, James Newton, Edmund Campion, Jorge Liderman, and Pablo Ortiz.

Milnes has led the UC Berkeley Symphony Orchestra and Eco Ensemble on four European tours since 2014, each featuring new music from Berkeley composers. In performance, he has collaborated with Pinchas Zukerman, Chanticleer, Frederica von Stade, Dawn Upshaw, Anna Netrebko, Bill T. Jones, and Paul Hillier, and has appeared at the Venice Biennale and Santa Fe, Tanglewood, Aspen, Other Minds and Monadnock music festivals.

The Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT) houses a dynamic group of educational, performance, and research programs focused on the creative interaction between new music and emerging technologies. The center combines technical science-based research with a humanistic critical perspective and practical investigation into the process and possibility for new-music creation. At CNMAT, the laboratory and stage merge to push the boundaries of present-day music making. In addition to three decades of published research, CNMAT continues to support the software tools that it has pioneered since its founding in the late 1980s. CNMAT collaborates with all of UC Berkeley's disciplines dedicated to the study or creative use of sound.



CNMAT was conceived and established by composer and Professor Emeritus Richard Felciano in the 1980s with a focus on the creative interaction between music and technology. Professor David Wessel, a pioneer in computer music and music cognition, directed the center until his death in 2014. During these years, Research Director Adrian Freed, organized an ambitious research agenda that produced concrete, practical developments in music-related technologies, including widely adopted innovations such as Open Sound Control (OSC), the Sound Description Interchange Format (SDIF), the CNMAT tools for Max/MSP, and the recent cross-platform “odot” programming objects.

In the mid 1990s, the team expanded to include current Director, Professor Edmund Campion, current Associate Director Richard Andrews, as well as Musical Applications Programmer Matthew Wright and John MacCallum.

Today's CNMAT works with leading artists, performers, composers and improvisers to continue in the spirit of its history. In addition to its robust research agenda, the center produces numerous concerts, lectures, and symposia.

The Eco Ensemble, a leading Bay Area new music ensemble, is in permanent residence at CNMAT.

To learn more about CNMAT, visit the website at <http://cnmat.berkeley.edu>.