

# Spring Recital: For the Love of Music



Jonathan Lin | piano  
Aaron Robinson | piano  
Wenley Tong | piano & violin  
Jinny Wang | piano  
Yunyi Zhang | piano

Saturday, May 24, 2025 | 7:30pm  
San Francisco Community Music Center Concert Hall

## am·a·teur

/ 'amədər, 'amə,tər, 'amə,tHər /

*noun*

a person who engages in a pursuit on an unpaid rather than a professional basis.

*origin*

mid 18th century: French, from Latin **amator** 'lover', from **amare** 'to love'.

# About the Performers

## **Jonathan Lin | piano**

Jonathan has played piano since age 5 and has explored a variety of genres on the instrument including classical, jazz, and musical theater. As a pianist, Jonathan regularly accompanies singers and musical improvisers, hosts “piano bar parties” in his home, and performs in recitals with friends such as this one! When not playing piano, Jonathan enjoys singing, going to the theater, hiking and backpacking, and solving the New York Times crossword. He is also a software engineer at Databricks.

## **Aaron Robinson | piano**

Aaron holds bachelor's degrees in music and computer science from Sonoma State University and works as a software engineer at YouTube. He has played piano on and off for 18 years, with around 9 years of more active study (his tech career took over). He lives in San Francisco with his partner, Zhihao, and enjoys cooking, baking, working out, and exploring the city's many cafes, bakeries, restaurants, and parks.

## **Wenley Tong | piano & violin**

Wenley started playing violin at age 4, starting with holding a ruler taped to a jigsaw puzzle box for 5 minutes a day. Piano soon followed at age 8. Music quickly became a source of joy and connection with others. After moving to SF in 2014, Wenley picked up singing, currently performing with two groups: the Fog City Singers and Harmonic License. When not working or making music, he reads voraciously, and trains aerials at the Circus Center.

## **Jinny Wang | piano**

Jinny started playing piano when she was 8 and stopped at the age of 12. Her path crossed with music again just over three years ago, when she stumbled upon a second-hand piano for sale—an unexpected encounter that rekindled a long-lost passion.

Since then piano has become the container for her emotions, her therapy, and a guide for the journey inwards. In 2024, Jinny had the opportunity to join the InterHarmony Music Festival in Italy, where she connected with musicians from around the world. By day, she works as a software engineer at Uber. Outside of piano and work, she's often found at a cappella gatherings, nurturing her love for community through singing and hosting authentic relating activities.

## **Yunyi Zhang | piano**

Yunyi started playing piano when she was just 4 years old, going through all the ups and downs of early music lessons. After sticking with it for 9 years as a kid, she took a long break before picking it up again in 2021, finding that it's become a great way to express feelings and connect with people. When she's not at the piano, Yunyi designs enterprise software and helps other early-stage startups figure things out. She calls San Francisco home, where you'll find her checking out local parks, gardens, and museums—always with an extra layer because SF weather never makes up its mind.

# Spring Recital: For the Love of Music

**Debussy**

**Petite Suite**

*I. En bateau ("Sailing")*

Jinny Wang  
Yunyi Zhang

**Brahms**

**Intermezzo in A Major, Op. 118 No. 2**

Jonathan Lin

**Mozart**

**Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major, K. 448**

*Allegro*

*Andante*

*Allegro*

Aaron Robinson  
Wenley Tong

INTERMISSION

**Piazzola**

**Retrato de Alfredo Gobbi**

Jonathan Lin

**Franck**

**Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major**

*Allegretto ben moderato*

*Allegretto poco mosso*

*Recitativo-Fantasia: Ben moderato*

*Allegretto poco mosso*

Aaron Robinson | piano  
Wenley Tong | violin

# Program Notes

## Petite Suite: En bateau ("Sailing")

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

4 minutes

Composed between 1886-1889 for piano four hands, *En bateau* is the dreamy opening to Debussy's *Petite Suite*. Inspired by the soft movement of a boat gliding over calm waters, the piece shimmers with gentle rhythms and flowing melodies. It reflects Debussy's early exploration of the impressionist style he would later become famous for. *En bateau* paints a serene, atmospheric scene through delicate interplay between the two pianists.

## Intermezzo in A Major, Opus 118, No. 2

Johannes Brahms (1862-1918)

6 minutes

The term *intermezzo* originally referred to a short piece played between larger works, but by Brahms's time it had come to suggest something more introspective and lyrical. Composed in 1893, Brahms' *Intermezzo in A Major* stands out for its lyrical, almost song-like character, as it gently weaves together rich harmonies and a flowing, expressive melody.

With its bittersweet undertones and moments of quiet reflection, the piece showcases Brahms' skill in creating deep emotional resonance through simplicity and restraint. It moves between sections of intimate warmth and subtle tension, inviting the listener into a deeply personal, introspective world.

## Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major, K. 448

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

24 minutes

Mozart's *Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major* is a lively and charming work that showcases a dynamic conversation between two pianos. The piece is divided into three movements: the energetic *Allegro*; the lyrical and introspective *Andante*; and the bright, spirited rondo-like *Allegro* that brings the sonata to a joyful finale.

Written for two of Mozart's close associates, the sonata is both a display of technical brilliance and a work of pure musical enjoyment. The interaction between the pianos highlights Mozart's skill in creating balance and contrast, offering both players a chance to shine.

## Retrato de Alfredo Gobbi

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)

5 minutes

Astor Piazzolla revolutionized tango by blending it with jazz, classical music, and avant-garde techniques to create *nuevo tango*: a bold, modern reimagining of Argentina's signature genre. *Retrato de Alfredo Gobbi* ("Portrait of Alfredo Gobbi") is a tribute to one of Piazzolla's early musical influences, a tango violinist known for his expressive and refined style.

In this piece, Piazzolla paints a brooding and elegant character study. The music sways between lyrical melancholy and rhythmic urgency, rich with tango's signature syncopations and sighing phrases. Though written in a classical idiom, the piece remains unmistakably tango: evocative, moody, and full of personality. It's a vivid homage from one master of the genre to another.

## Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major

César Franck (1822-1890)

30 minutes

Franck's *Sonata for Piano and Violin in A Major* has become one of the cornerstones of the violin-piano repertoire. Written in 1886 as a wedding gift for the renowned Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, the sonata is a lush, dynamic work that blends rich, soaring violin lines with a powerful and expressive piano part.

The piece is structured in four movements, with themes recurring and developing throughout. The first movement, *Allegretto ben moderato*, begins with a lyrical dialogue between the violin and piano, while the second, *Allegretto poco mosso*, offers a vigorous contrast. The third movement, *Recitativo-Fantasia: Ben moderato*, is the emotional heart of the

piece, with moments of intimate reflection and passionate intensity. The final movement, *Allegretto poco mosso*, brings the sonata to a dramatic and triumphant conclusion.

The sonata's depth and intensity make it a truly captivating piece that highlights the expressive potential of both violin and piano.

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## Acknowledgements

We're so grateful to the Community Music Center for hosting us in their concert hall, and especially to Shannon Koehler, CMC's Operations Director, for patiently responding to many (many) emails from Aaron.

Many heartfelt thanks to all of our friends, family, coworkers, and loved ones for their ongoing support and encouragement, and for showing up for us today!

Deep appreciation to our neighbors and roommates for enduring months of the same music played over...and over...and over again.

We also acknowledge the generous support of modern AI: ChatGPT-4o for helping draft these program notes, and Google Gemini for generating the Kandinsky-inspired recital image.

## If You'd Like to Support Us...

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