



**Bard  
Music West**

## **Bard Music West Launches New Concert Series**

### **Bard Music West Plays: Games and Revolutions**

featuring composers Danny Clay and Gabriella Smith

March 28-31, 2019

**February 20, 2019 - San Francisco, CA** – From March 28-31, 2019, **Bard Music West** will offer the first program of its new concert series, **Bard Music West Plays**. The program, **Games and Revolutions**, will be performed at four different venues around the Bay Area. Featuring two brilliant young composers with Bay Area ties, [Danny Clay](#) and [Gabriella Smith](#), the program explores their music and inspirations which range from children's games to Joseph Haydn.

### **Dates and Tickets**

Please visit [www.bardmusicwest.org/bmw-plays](http://www.bardmusicwest.org/bmw-plays) to purchase tickets.

Thursday, March 28, 2019, 8pm

Center for New Music

55 Taylor Street, San Francisco

*Tickets are \$15 general; \$10 members; \$5 student*

Friday, March 29, 2019, 7:30pm

Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, Fireside Room

505 E Charleston Rd., Palo Alto

*Pay what you can, suggested minimum of \$15.*

Saturday, March 30, 2019, 1pm

Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA)

2155 Center Street, Berkeley

*Free with museum admission*

Sunday, March 31, 2019, 2:30pm

Performance Space of Vivian Fung

Address will be made available after ticket purchase.

*Pay what you can, suggested minimum of \$15.*

## The Program

*Program runs approximately 70 minutes with no intermission*

Danny Clay - *Toy Piano Music* for string quartet and toy piano

Clay – *Playbook*

Gabriella Smith - *Carrot Revolution* for string quartet

Smith – *Anthozoa* for violin, cello, piano, and percussion

*Please note: Anthozoa will not be performed at Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.*

Phyllis Chen – *Carousel* for toy piano and music box

Stephen Montague - *Mirabella: a Tarantella for Toy Piano*

Joseph Haydn - String Quartet in A Major, Op. 20, No. 6

Danny Clay and Gabriella Smith have co-curated Games and Revolutions with Bard Music West artistic directors Allegra Chapman and Laura Gaynon, suggesting pieces to pair with some of their own works for string quartet, toy piano, percussion, and various combinations of these instruments. This collaborative process of curation gives the composers a rare opportunity to have a say in how their music is heard in the context of a larger program, offering a perspective on their work to listeners. The composers will be present at almost all of the performances to have a direct conversation about their music with the audience. (Note: Danny Clay will not be present at the March 31, 2019 San Jose concert).

The works on this program question the nature of music and look for new ways to create it. First performed in 2016 by Third Coast Percussion, **Danny Clay's** *Playbook* is an adaptable collection of sound games for flexible instrumentation. Clay will compose a new iteration of *Playbook* scored for string quartet, toy piano, and audience participation. *Playbook* is inspired by Clay's work as an elementary school teacher and in this version written specially for Bard Music West Plays, Clay will involve the audience directly in exploring the nature of music and communal sound-making. A short work, *Toy Piano Music*, highlights Clay's love of the toy piano and explores the back-and-forth conversation of chamber music. Solo toy piano pieces by **Phyllis Chen** and **Stephen Montague** further explore Clay's interest in unconventional instruments and his passion for "collaboration and the sheer joy of making things" (quotation from Danny Clay's biography).

Premiered in 2015 at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, **Gabriella Smith's** *Carrot Revolution* looks at the string quartet from a fresh perspective. The Barnes Foundation commissioned the work for the opening of *The Order of Things*, an exhibition featuring three new art installations inspired by the unconventional ways in which Dr. Albert C. Barnes displayed his art collection. The string quartet takes its name from a quote attributed to Paul Cézanne in a novel by Emil Zola: "The day will come when a freshly observed carrot will start a revolution." In *Anthozoa*, premiered recently in 2018 by Ensemble Connect, Smith took inspiration from the underwater sounds of coral reefs as recorded with her hydrophone. To create these unusual sounds, Smith calls for found kitchen percussion instruments (cheese graters, frying pans, and other kitchen items left up to the discretion of the performer). The piano, cello, and violin are also used largely percussively. Smith has paired her pieces with a playful and surprising **Joseph Haydn** string quartet.

"We could not be more excited to inaugurate Bard Music West Plays with these two wonderful composers. Danny and Gabriella compose in very different idioms, yet share a similar underlying spirit

of adventure and joy. The name of our new series feels particularly apt here – in this program, the musicians will “play” in many senses of the word (and the audience will be invited to join as well!). We can’t wait to explore the magical worlds of these two composers with audiences around the Bay Area.” —[Laura Gaynon](#), Artistic Codirector, Bard Music West

## The Artists

Artistic directors Allegra Chapman and Laura Gaynon perform alongside some of the top chamber musicians in the Bay Area and welcome back violinist Zenas Hsu, member of Boston-based, Grammy-nominated chamber orchestra A Far Cry. Artist biographies and images are available on the Bard Music West website: <http://www.bardmusicwest.org/2019-artists>.

Jessica Chang, viola

Allegra Chapman, piano and toy piano

Mélanie Clapiès, violin

Zenas Hsu, violin

Laura Gaynon, cello

Mika Nakamura, percussion

## The Series – Bard Music West Plays

**Games and Revolutions** is the **first program of Bard Music West’s new series, Bard Music West Plays**, which will explore the music and inspirations of emerging composers. Bard Music West Plays offers a window into the minds of some of the most exciting musical voices today. Each program is co-curated by the featured composers, offering composers a rare opportunity to contextualize themselves and share insights into their music and inspirations with the audience. Programs include solo and chamber works by the composers paired with pieces that represent some of the composers’ most important artistic influences. As in Bard Music West’s festival, programs often cross time-period and genre. The series draws on artists from Bard Music West’s festival.

Bard Music West Plays aims to foster an informal atmosphere where composers, audience, and performers can get to know each other. Concerts will be compact **at ninety minutes** in length and composers will be present at selected performances to discuss their work with the audience.

## About Bard Music West

Founded in 2016 by pianist Allegra Chapman and cellist Laura Gaynon, Bard Music West presents innovative concert programs that explore the worlds of contemporary and 20th-century classical composers in depth and in context. Every concert of Bard Music West is designed to inspire a deep connection to the composer and their work.

At the center of Bard Music West’s offerings is a festival that delves into the life, work, and inspirations of one contemporary or 20th-century composer each year, providing an immersive experience into the composer’s world. Concerts, talks, and related events range across time, genre, and artistic media as they follow the boundary-defying work and inspirations of each composer. Now in its third year, Bard Music West has presented more than sixty world-class artists from the Bay Area and

beyond in two festivals exploring the worlds of György Ligeti (2017) and Henry Cowell (2018). In October 2019, it will present its third festival, The World of Grażyna Bacewicz.

Bard Music West Plays is a new concert series of Bard Music West exploring the music and influences of emerging contemporary composers. Co-curated by the featured composers, the series offers a window into the minds of some of the most exciting musical voices today. Intimate, informal chamber music performances of compact length offer audiences a chance to get to know the composers and performers.

Bard Music West is independently-operated branch of the **Bard Music Festival (BMF)**, the summer classical music destination at Bard College in New York's Hudson Valley, which has examined the life, influences, and music of a single composer each year since 1990. Bard Music West combines the depth and creativity of the BMF with a modern twist for the San Francisco Bay Area.

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