

Lamont School of Music

Faculty Recital Series

Stephanie Cheng, piano
Michael Van Wirt, percussion

with guests:

Naomi Niskala, piano

Michael Tetreault, percussion

Sunday, April 19, 2026

4:30 p.m.

Frederic C. Hamilton Family Recital Hall Concert Hall



**Robert & Judi Newman Center
for the Performing Arts**

Program

Lounge Lizards
for 2 Pianos and 2 Percussion

Michael Daugherty
(b. 1954)

- I. Sip 'N' Stir (Ceder Rapids, Iowa)
- II. Dennis Swing Club (Hamburg, Germany)
- III. Ramada Inn (Exit 1, New Jersey Turnpike)
- IV. Bamboo Bar (Amsterdam, the Netherlands)

I n t e r m i s s i o n

Sonata for Two Pianos
and Percussion, Sz. 110

Béla Bartók
(1881–1945)

- I. Assai lento–Allegro molto
- II. Lento, ma non troppo
- III. Allegro non troppo

Please silence your cell phones

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Biographies

Celebrated Taiwanese-American pianist **Stephanie Shih-yu Cheng** brings her “fearless” and “eloquent” artistry to stages across the globe, from Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall and the Dame Myra Hess Series in Chicago to Tokyo’s Opera City Hall, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and the National Concert Hall in Taipei. Her playing has been featured on NPR, WFMT, Nippon Television, Radio Video Mediterraneo, and MSNBC.

Her solo album *Ravel: Masterworks for the Piano* (Centaur Records) was hailed as “a massive achievement... one of the finest Ravel discs to have come my way for quite some time” — and praised as “required listening for Francophiles.” She is also heard on Summit Records’ *License to Thrill* and has performed alongside luminaries such as Leon Fleisher and Sara Davis Buechner.

Dr. Cheng holds degrees from the Peabody Conservatory and Stony Brook University, where she studied with Ann Schein and Gilbert Kalish, and was awarded the prestigious Prix-Ville de Fontainebleau, presented by Philippe Entremont. A devoted and transformative educator, she has taught at the Manhattan School of Music Precollege, the City University of New York, and the American University of Kuwait — where she made regional history as the first pianist to conduct a concerto from the keyboard.

Currently serving as Teaching Professor of Piano and Chair of the Keyboard Department at the University of Denver’s Lamont School of Music, Dr. Cheng was inducted into the Steinway & Sons Teacher Hall of Fame in 2025.

For further listening and information, visit stephanie-cheng.com. Stephanie is a Steinway Artist.

Michael Van Wirt joined the percussion section of the Colorado Symphony in 2015. He has performed with the Houston Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Colorado Music Festival, and was a New World Symphony Fellow. Michael was also a member of Seraphic Fire’s Fire-bird Chamber Orchestra, serving as timpanist from 2012-2015. He is an alumnus of the Aspen Music Festival, Colorado College Summer Music Festival, and the Alan Abel Summer Percussion Seminar.

Michael holds degrees from the University of Denver and the University of Miami. As an educator, Michael has taught at the Lamont School of

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Music Summer Academy, the Colorado College Summer Music Festival, and was Artist-in-Residence at the University of Northern Colorado. Michael also participates in the Colorado Symphony's education and outreach programs, including the Master Mentor, Mini Musica, and Canta y Baila Conmigo programs. He is currently head of the percussion department at the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver, where he teaches percussion, timpani, and directs the Lamont Percussion Ensemble.

Michael and his wife Elizabeth perform regularly as a percussion duo, including performances at the University of Denver, Regis University, and the Colorado Symphony's Drums of the World concert. He is a Zildjian performing artist and clinician. In his free time, Michael enjoys skiing and hiking, completing the Colorado Trail in the summer of 2012.

A "bold, rigorous, poetic champion" who plays with "solid, intelligent, and caring virtuosity" and "colorful sonority," pianist **Naomi Niskala** has appeared as soloist and chamber musician in Europe, Russia, and Kosovo, the Middle East, North America, Japan, and Thailand and her performances have been broadcast on BBC Radio, Deutschlandradio, and NPR's Performance Today. A member of Germany's Spectrum Concerts Berlin for a decade, Niskala recorded the solo and chamber works of Robert Helps and Ursula Mamlok with the ensemble for the Naxos and Bridge labels. She also released the complete solo piano works of Robert Helps on two discs with Albany Records. She is a founding member of the Bardin-Niskala Duo, a non-profit organization and cello-piano duo that explores identity, fights racism, and promotes cultural awareness through the commissioning and performance of works by ALAANA and other under-represented composers.

Niskala holds degrees from the Yale School of Music, Stony Brook University, and the New England Conservatory of Music, and her primary teachers are Claude Frank, Gilbert Kalish, and Patricia Zander. She is currently Professor of Music at Susquehanna University, where she teaches piano, chamber music, and theory and leads a summer chamber music program to Japan. She also teaches at the Interlochen Arts Camp in the summer and is Co-Director of the Winterhaven Chamber Music Retreat. She enjoys gardening, cooking, and riding horses with her young daughter in rural Pennsylvania.

Michael Tetreault earned a BM from the Eastman School of Music and an MMus from the Royal Academy of Music in London. Beginning in Fall 2026, he joins the Utah Symphony as Principal Timpanist. He previously served as Head of Percussion at CU Boulder and held principal positions with the Central City Opera Orchestra, Boulder Chamber Orchestra, Fort Collins Symphony, and Boulder Philharmonic.

Tetreault has performed with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Toronto Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Orchestre de Paris, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and others across North America and Europe.

As a chamber musician, he has performed with Roomful of Teeth and performed and recorded with Quattro Mani and Alarm Will Sound. He is a founding member of Throw Down or Shut Up, a CU Boulder faculty ensemble dedicated to performing the most diverse and challenging music they can find or create.

Beyond the concert hall, Tetreault has performed alongside Ben Folds, Ingrid Michaelson, Styx, Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats, Andrea Bocelli, Diana Krall, Elton John, and many others. He has appeared at festivals across the United States, Canada, and Europe, and recorded for Albany Records, Cantaloupe Records, Warner Bros., Sony Classical, BIS Records, and the BBC, among others. Tetreault lives in Longmont, CO with his wife and four children.

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Lamont Society

Donors to the Lamont School of Music are an integral part of the Lamont community. Since 1983, the Lamont Society has provided financial and other support that has sustained our program's excellence. It has enabled us to purchase instruments, underwrite masterclasses and guest artist performances, support touring ensembles, provide students with professional development funds, support faculty initiatives, maintain scholarships for our deserving students, and much more. We are deeply grateful for this philanthropy!

To support Lamont, please contact Laura Mack, Director of Development, at 303.871.6267 or laura.mack@du.edu.

You may also donate through <https://liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/society> or with the QR code on this page.



Upcoming Events

Thursday, April 23 - Saturday April 25, 7:30 p.m.
and Sunday, April 26 at 2:30 p.m.

Lamont Opera Theatre presents: *Die Fledermaus*

Gates Concert Hall

Tickets: \$20 to \$40

Thursday, April 30, 7:30 p.m.

Jennie's Concert: A Brass Celebration

Gates Concert Hall

Free admission, no ticket required

Friday, May 1, 7:30 p.m.

Honors Concert

Hamilton Hall

Free admission, no ticket required

Sunday, May 3, 4:30 p.m.

The Brandenburg Project

Hamilton Hall

Free admission, no ticket required

Wednesday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.

Lamont Wind Ensemble

Gates Concert Hall

\$5 for reserved parterre seats or FREE general admission

Saturday, May 8, 7:30 p.m.

Faculty Recital Series: Ian Wisekal, oboe & Friends

Hamilton Hall

\$12, free for students and faculty

Thursday, May 14, 7:30 p.m.

Trumpet Studio Recital

Hamilton Hall

Free admission, no ticket required

Thursday, May 14, 7:30 p.m.

Lamont Choirs

Gates Concert Hall

\$5 for reserved parterre seats, or FREE general admission

Full events list: liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/performances-events



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