



Festival for Creative Pianists

For all pianists up to age 19

Colorado Mesa University, Grand Junction, CO

Arthur Houle, Founder & Director

www.pianofestival.org

Judges & Director Program

**Colorado Mesa University
Moss Performing Arts Center Recital Hall
Grand Junction, CO**

**Friday, April 13, 2012
7:30 P.M.**

Suggested donation: \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors & \$5 for students

Arthur Houle, piano:

Under the Stars: A Cowboy's Dream ("Cowboy Jazz" unpublished, 2004).....Arthur Houle
 Fancy Footwork (from "Cowboy Jazz," published 2008).....Arthur Houle (b. 1955)
 Brother, Can You Spare a Dime? (1931).....Jay Gorney (1894-1990)

John Salmon, piano:

Fughetta on "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?"John Salmon (b.1954)
with Arthur Houle, piano

Mambo Madness.....John Salmon
with Ben McLam, piano (CMU student of Dr. Houle)

Salmon Is A Jumpin'.....John Salmon
with Gary Smart, Arthur Houle & Ben McLam, piano

Sonata in C Major, K. 159.....Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

The Duke.....Dave Brubeck (b. 1920)

Prelude in B Major, Op. 53, No. 11

Prelude in G-sharp Minor, Op. 53, No. 12

Prelude in G-flat Major, Op. 53, No. 13

Prelude in F Minor, Op. 53, No. 18

Prelude in A-flat Major, Op. 53, No. 17

Etude ("Toccatina"), Op. 40, No. 3.....Nikolai Kapustin (b. 1937)

Short intermission

Gary Smart, piano

Songs by the Beatles:

Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown)

Let it Be

Fool on the Hill.....John Lennon (1940-1980) & Paul McCartney (b. 1942)

TBA selections

PROGRAM NOTES



By Arthur Houle:

Fancy Footwork was written in my youth (its main melody having been written in my mid teens) and was then dubbed *Frolicking Freazies*. I appended the word "Freazies" to many of my early jazzy pieces. It is a contraction of "free" and "easy." I abandoned the word when I realized that nobody – and I mean absolutely nobody – ever got the connection between my clever word (clever in my mind, anyway) and its meaning (sigh). The editor of *Cowboy Jazz*, Peggy Otwell, came up with the title *Fancy Footwork* without my input or permission. Generally this kind of thing would elicit extreme consternation, sputtering fulminations and perhaps even foul language unbecoming polite company. But lo and behold, I like her title better than mine! (Goodness, what's next? The repeal of the immutable laws of gravity, taxes and death?!)

Of the two original pieces I play tonight, *Under the Stars* is the more tonally grounded, in the key of F Major. Its lyrical melody could be transcribed for almost any "singing" instrument (flute, violin, etc.). The descending bass line may have been influenced by the Beatles – especially John Lennon, who often wrote melodies with descending bass lines (e.g., *All You Need is Love* and *A Day in the Life*).

By John Salmon:

Fughetta on Brother, Can You Spare a Dime? is as much a response to Dave Brubeck's fugal treatment of E.Y. "Yip" Harburg's and Jay Gorney's well-known Depression-era song as to the original *Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?* My piece does borrow harmonies from the Harburg/Gorney song and the melody does appear briefly (about three minutes in), but my rendition is cast in Brubeck's distinctively imitative counterpoint.

Mambo Madness is my interpretation of the mambo, a lively Cuban dance, made even livelier because of its seven beats to the measure (7/4). Most mambos are in 4/4 meter.

My compositions are from my recent CD, *Salmon Is A Jumpin'* (Albany/Troy 1224), which features me playing my own jazz-inspired compositions. To make matters more interesting, on the recording I overdubbed myself on every track, resulting in a kind of duet with myself (reminiscent of Bill Evans' iconic 1963 LP *Conversations with Myself*). To help me recreate those works in a live setting, tonight I recruited the help of Arthur Houle, his student Ben McLam, and Gary Smart (who is totally "winging" it!). I am grateful to them for "jumping" in at the last minute ☺.

Salmon Is A-Jumpin' would have been grammatically incorrect if referring to the fish. But, as an autobiographical statement, it is correct, especially when I get in a B-flat blues swinging mood.

Perhaps there is a bit of random association going on in my selection of the first two pieces tonight. The Scarlatti sonata and Brubeck's tribute to Duke Ellington, *The Duke*, are both in C major. There is a certain happiness that C major conveys and somehow *The Duke*, wry and witty, feels like a natural consequent to the upbeat Scarlatti sonata. I also use a G pedal point in both pieces, employing the sostenuto pedal. Aren't those enough reasons to pair them?

Nikolai Kapustin is one of the most phenomenal composers I've ever encountered. Educated at the Moscow Conservatory and trained as a classical pianist, he then immersed himself in the underground jazz movement in the Soviet Union and went on to play in Oleg Lundstrem's Jazz Orchestra. His music is a nimble mix of classical virtuosity and jazz sounds – kind of like a merger of Sergei Rachmaninoff and Oscar Peterson.

The five preludes I have chosen from his Op. 53 start with No. 11, a slow, grinding blues reminiscent of Beale Street in Memphis. The air is thick with Marlboros. Guitars twang. Glasses clink. No. 12 reminds us alternatively of a tango or a 1970s detective TV show (*Mannix* in Argentina?). No. 13 seems like a gentle allusion to Paul Desmond's *Take Five* (in E-flat minor; Prelude No. 13 is in the relative major of G-flat major). That accompanying figure—pah-dum, pah-dum, pum, pum—will forever be associated with Dave Brubeck's vamp, created in 1959. No. 18 suggests another detective-show theme. Those jazzy F minor chords bring to mind the sound track of a James Bond movie. No. 17 recalls the styles of bright stride or novelty piano (James P. Johnson meets Zez Confrey?). To conclude the Kapustin set, I will play Etude No. 3 from Op. 40, subtitled *Toccatina*—two minutes of non-stop-full-throttling-across-the-keyboard pianistic ecstasy for any fourteen-year-old pianist (and at least one fifty-seven-year-old); it's no accident that this music was used for the intro trailer to PlayStation's PS3 Gran Turismo 5.

By Arthur Houle:

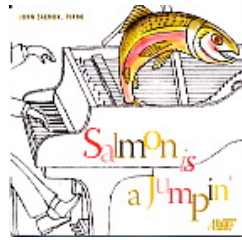
I am grateful for John Salmon for suggesting that Gary Smart be our third 2012 judge and Guest Artist. The contributions by Dr. Smart on tonight's program were at my request. I had heard Gary's stylings on Beatles tunes online sometime ago and was absolutely captivated by his imagination and artistic sophistication.

The first song, *Norwegian Wood*, written primarily by Lennon with help from McCartney on the middle section, appeared on the 1965 Beatles album, *Rubber Soul*. Written in folk-rock style, it went on to rank number 83 on Rolling Stone's listing of "The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time." It is ironic that such an angelic melody was set to lyrics that chronicled (in a veiled, quasi-autobiographical way) Lennon's marital infidelities at the time.

Let it Be is, in contrast, an untainted, uplifting Gospel-esque ode of consolation. The title of the song (written in 1969 and released in 1970 on the album by the same title) references McCartney's mother, who died when Paul was only fourteen years old. In a 2009 interview, McCartney explained that his mother had appeared in a dream saying, "It will be all right, just let it be." Though credited to Lennon/McCartney, it was written solely by McCartney at a point when the Beatles were coming apart as a band.

The 1967 song, *Fool on the Hill*, is another McCartney tune, written to cryptic lyrics that have led to much speculation. Who is "the fool"? An individual? A metaphor for mankind? What (or where) is "the hill"? A specific and literal place? A reference to politics ("Capitol Hill")? In 1997, McCartney himself recalled that perhaps he was "writing about someone like Maharishi [Mahesh Yogi]," who was, at that time, a guru to the Beatles. A proponent of Transcendental Meditation technique, the Maharishi was known as the "giggling guru" due to his propensity for giggling during television interviews. It is not clear to me whether the lyrics depict a scathing put-down of the Maharishi (or people like him) or simply connote a wry, gentle spoof of the caricaturish way the Maharishi was perceived by the press. I prefer to think the latter, which is more in character for the generally genial Sir Paul McCartney.

Salmon's original compositions can be found on his latest CD for Albany Records, available for sale online at www.albanyrecords.com.
(For the record, John is pictured at left—not to be confused with the creature emerging from the piano.)



Biographies

John Salmon holds B.M. and B.A. (philosophy) degrees from Texas Christian University, the "Solistendiplom" from the Freiburg Hochschule für Musik, an M.M. from the Juilliard School, and a D.M.A. from the University of Texas-Austin. His awards include a fellowship from The Beethoven Foundation (now the American Pianists Association), the Premio Jaén, the Loren Eiseley Memorial Award from the University of Maryland Piano Competition, and the Gina Bachauer Memorial Award from Juilliard. Salmon performs internationally and has recorded for Radio Suisse Romande, RAI Italian Radio, Spanish National Radio, Canadian Broadcasting Corp., WFMT Radio in Chicago, C-Span and PBS television. Salmon is also active as a jazz pianist and has released CD's of the music of the legendary Dave Brubeck. Dr. Salmon is founder and former director of the annual "Focus on Piano Literature" symposium at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, where he is Professor of Piano.

Gary Smart's career has encompassed a wide range of activities as composer, classical and jazz pianist, and teacher. Always a musician with varied interests, he may be the only pianist to have studied with Yale scholar/keyboardist Ralph Kirkpatrick, the great Cuban virtuoso Jorge Bolet, and the master jazz pianist Oscar Peterson. A true American pluralist, Dr. Smart composes and improvises a music that reflects an abiding interest in Americana, jazz, and world musics, as well as the Western classical tradition. Smart's music has been performed in major venues in the US, including the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall, as well as venues in Europe and Asia. Smart's compositions are published by Margun Music (G. Schirmer) and his work has been recorded on the Mastersound, Capstone and Albany labels. Gary Smart is a Presidential Professor of Music at the University of North Florida.

Arthur Houle is Professor of Music and Director of Keyboard Studies at Colorado Mesa University. He holds degrees from the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, New England Conservatory and the University of Iowa. A piano teacher since the age of thirteen, Dr. Houle has taught at major institutions in the United States. Last year he was named a "Music Teachers National Association Fellow" for his outstanding contributions to the music teaching profession.

We are grateful to the following individuals, without whom this festival would not be possible:

Evelyn Billberg, assistant coordinator

Karen Combs

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Azam and Arthur Houle

Bijan and Jenny Houle

Amber & Jay Seaton

Frank & Jayne Steuart

Susan Torgrude

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Mary Leah Chavies

Stephanie Haren

Ben McLam

Hope Chenoweth

Evelyn Mertes

Sydnee Martinez

Olivia Christensen

Brita Fay

Dr. Andrea Arese-Elias

...and anyone else we may have inadvertently forgotten to mention 🙌

Thanks also to the **Grand Junction Music Teachers Association** (www.gjmta.org), **J. B. Hart Music & Colorado Mesa University** for their sponsorship.



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We also appreciate the day-to-day support and tireless contributions of our music department chair, **Calvin Hofer**, and our *very fine* ☺ fine arts administrative assistant, **Lyn Ross**. Finally, a hearty "thank you" goes to **Frank & Jayne Stuart** for their hospitality in hosting John Salmon at their home.

We need and appreciate your generous support!
Donations have tax benefits, and are payable to
Colorado Mesa University Music Department.

IMPORTANT: Please write "piano festival" in the memo portion of checks.

Mailing address for donations:
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☞ *Festival participants: Please don't forget to sign in ☞ before and after this program!*

Upcoming:

• Winners' Recital & Awards Ceremony

Tomorrow evening, Sat., April 14, 7:30 P.M., MPAC Recital Hall (\$10/\$8/\$5).

Festival participants please note: Tomorrow at approx. ⌚ 4:00 – 4:30 P.M., the names of the festival First Prize winners will be posted on the MPAC hallway bulletin board. Students should consult this in order to know if they are performing at the Winners Recital. Students generally play one piece (chosen by judges) per prize won. Memory is not required. Honorable Mention Prizes will be announced at the Awards Ceremony (not in advance).

• Wednesday Music Club Student Winners Recital

Wed., May 2, 1:00 P.M., MPAC Recital Hall (Free admission)

DO YOU KNOW YOUR HYMNS?

Dentist's Hymn	Crown Him with Many Crowns	Realtor's Hymn	I've Got a Mansion Just Over the Hilltop
Weatherman's Hymn	There Shall Be Showers of Blessings	Doctor's Hymn	The Great Physician
Contractor's Hymn	The Church's One Foundation		
Tailor's Hymn	Holy, Holy, Holy		
Golfer's Hymn	There's a Green Hill Far Away		
Politician's Hymn	Standing on the Promises!		
Optometrist's Hymn	Open My Eyes That I Might See	55 mph	God Will Take Care of You
IRS Agent's Hymn	I Surrender All	75 mph	Nearer My God To Thee
Gossip's Hymn	Pass It On	85 mph	This World Is Not My Home
Electrician's Hymn	Send The Light	95 mph	Lord, I'm Coming Home
Shopper's Hymn	Sweet Bye and Bye	100 mph	Precious Memories

And for those who drive our highways:

AUDIENCE BEHAVIOR (UNDERSTANDING THE MUSICIAN)

MUSICIANS ARE EXPERT MIND READERS – When requesting a song from the band, just say “play my song,” or “it goes something like this,” then hum a few bars! We have a chip implanted in our heads with an unlimited database with the favorite tunes of every patron who ever walked into a bar and all songs ever recorded, so feel free to be vague, we love the challenge. If we do not remember exactly what tune you want, we’re only kidding. Bands know every song ever recorded, so keep humming. Hum harder, if need be. It helps jog the memory. If a band tells you they do not know a song you want to hear, they either forgot that they know the tune or they are just putting you on. Try singing a few words for the band. Any words. If one member halfway knows part of a chorus, the rest of the band will instantly learn the entire song by osmosis. Knowing this, if the band still claims to not know your song, it helps to just keep requesting the same song every time there is a break. It also helps to scream your request from across the room several times per set followed by, “Aw come on!” Exaggerated hand gestures expressing disapproval from the dance floor are a big help as well, such as the thumbs down or...well, you get the drift. Put-downs are the best way to jog a band’s memory. This instantly promotes you to the status of “Personal Friend of the Band.” Entertainers are notorious fakers and jokesters and never really prepare for their shows. They simply walk on stage with no prior thought to what they will do once they arrive. An entertainer’s job is so easy, even a monkey could do it, so don’t let them off the hook easily. Your request is all that matters. If a metal band had played at the club a few weeks ago, the next band that follows will automatically know every metal tune the previous band ever played, even if the current band is a blues or country band. It’s the law. Feel free to yell “AC/DC” or “Slayer” to a band that plays strictly originals or jazz, for example. Conversely, Deadheads may yell for Grateful Dead tunes at a dance or metal band.

IMPORTANT – When an entertainer leans over to hear you better, grab his or her head in both hands and yell directly into their ear, while holding their head securely so they cannot pull away. This will be taken as an invitation to a friendly and playful game of tug-of-war between their head and your hands. Don’t give up! Hang on until the singer or guitar player submits. Drummers are often safe from this fun game since they usually sit in the back, protected by the guitar players. Keyboard players are protected by their instrument, and only play the game when tricked into coming out from behind their keyboards. Though difficult to get them to play, it’s not impossible, so keep trying. They’re especially vulnerable during the break between songs.

TALKING WITH THE BAND – The best time to discuss anything with the band in any meaningful way is in the middle of a song when all members are singing at the same time (such as a multi-part harmony). Our hearing is so advanced that we can pick out your tiny voice from the megawatt wall of sound blasting all around us. Musicians are expert lip readers too. If a musician does not reply to your question or comment during a tune, it’s because they didn’t get a good look at your mouth in order to read your lips. Simply continue to scream your request and be sure to over emphasize the words with your lips. This helps immensely. Don’t be fooled. Singers have the innate ability to answer questions and to sing at the same time. If the singer doesn’t answer your questions immediately, regardless of how stupid the question may seem, it’s because they are purposely ignoring you. If this happens, immediately cop an attitude. We love this.

HELPING THE BAND – If you inform the band that you are a singer, the band will appreciate your help with the next few tunes, or however long you can remain standing on stage. Just pretend you’re in a Karaoke bar. Simply feel free to walk up on stage and join in. By the way, the drunker you are, the better you sound, and the louder you should sing. If by chance you fall off the stage, be sure to crawl back up and attempt to sing harmony. Keep in mind that nothing assists the band more than outrageous dancing, third and fourth part harmonies, or a tambourine played out of tempo. Try the cowbell, they love the challenge. The band always needs the help and will take this as a compliment. One step further...while playing the cowbell, try to step up onto the stage, knock down a few mic stands and fall into the drum set pushing the female singer into the bass guitar player. Musicians are very limber. Most of them were acrobats before musicians and have great balance. Hey, it all adds to their show!

BONUS TIP – As a last resort, wait until the band takes a break and then get on stage and start playing their instruments. They love this. Even if you are ejected from the club, you can rest assured that you have successfully completed your audition. The band will call you immediately the following day to offer you a position.

See you at the next gig! -- *The Band*