

PRESS RELEASE

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Sara Davis Buechner, internationally renowned pianist and transgender activist, performs a recital and two concertos with the Bay Area Rainbow Symphony (BARS) at the San Francisco Conservatory, June 6, 3pm (recital) and 8pm (orchestra concert)

Saturday June 6, 2015 3pm, Piano Recital *Crossing the Concourse: Sara Davis Buechner in Music and Words*

Saturday June 6, 2015 8pm *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman*. Sara Davis Buechner performs two concertos with the Bay Area Rainbow Symphony in an entire program of compositions by women.

The Bay Area Rainbow Symphony (BARS) is San Francisco's leading orchestra dedicated to promoting LGBTQ composers and artists. For BARS's June 6th Pride Concert at 8pm, BARS will perform compositions exclusively by women, with soloist Sara Davis Buechner, an internationally renowned pianist and transgender activist. In conjunction with the BARS concert, Buechner will perform an additional recital at 3pm during which she will speak about her transgender journey, gender and gender roles. She will play short piano pieces, including one of her own compositions.

About the June 6, 3pm, Piano Recital: *Crossing the Concourse: Sara Davis Buechner in Music and Words*. Buechner will illustrate her life story and transgender journey with short piano pieces, including one of her own compositions. Buechner will talk about being the T in LGBTQ and share with dignity and humor what she has learned along the way about gender, gender roles, and discuss how preconceptions have both limited and enhanced her own life. Followed by a Q&A session.

About the June 6, 8pm BARS orchestral concert *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman* with soloist Sara Davis Buechner. To meet its objectives of inclusivity, visibility and pride more fully, BARS will feature pianist Sara Davis Buechner in a program of compositions exclusively by women. This is the first time BARS will perform with a transgender soloist. All of the pieces in this concert were written when the composers were starting to write orchestral works. The orchestra will open with *Partita*, a work for strings and piano written in 1938 by

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Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915-1940) when she was 23. She was forced to leave Czechoslovakia right before the Nazi occupation and died in exile at age 25. Sara Davis Buechner gave the US and Canadian premieres of the *Partita*, and the performance will be part of the centenary celebration of Kaprálová's birth.

Second, Buechner will perform Clara Wieck Schumann's Piano Concerto. Schumann was a child prodigy. She started work on her piano concerto at age 13 and premiered it at age 16 with the Leipzig Gewandhaus, with Mendelssohn conducting.

The concert will conclude with *Serenade* (1889), which is English lesbian composer Ethel Smyth's (1858-1944) first orchestral piece. Smyth studied music at Leipzig in the 1870's where she met Clara Schumann and Brahms. Subsequently, she socialized with Clara Schumann and her lesbian daughter Eugenie Schumann in Frankfurt. Smyth still has the distinction of being the only woman to have an opera performed by the Metropolitan Opera in New York. She also dedicated two years to working in the suffragist movement. This will be only the second performance of the *Serenade* in the US; the Women's Philharmonic performed the US premiere in 1993.

BARS will have a reception following the concert to honor Sara Davis Buechner.

About Sara Davis Buechner:

In her twenties, Buechner won the Gold Medal at the 1984 Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition, and was a Bronze Medalist of the 1986 Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in Moscow. With an active repertoire of more than 100 piano concertos, she has appeared as soloist with many of the world's prominent orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Japan Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony and BBC Philharmonic.

Audiences have applauded Buechner's recitals in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center and the Hollywood Bowl; she enjoys wide success throughout Asia where she tours annually.

Sara Davis Buechner's numerous CD and DVD recordings have received prominent critical appraisal. She can be seen and heard on numerous live video and audio recordings on her website and YouTube Channel. She has created many essays in written, spoken and film format on her blog "Sara Says."

She is a Professor of Piano at the University of British Columbia and an Honorary Visiting Professor of Music at the University of Shanghai.

In 2012, she spoke before a standing committee on human rights in Ottawa in support a federal transgender rights bill. She was a keynote speaker at the

Outgames Human Rights conference.

For more information, please see two profiles in the *New York Times* [NYT 1](#), [NYT2](#), an essay she wrote for the *New York Times* [NYT3](#), a brief documentary by the *New York Times* [NYTV](#), and [her website](#).

Calendar editors, please note:

June 6, 2015

San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 50 Oak St @ Van Ness

3pm Piano Recital: ***Crossing the Concourse: Sara Davis Buechner in Music and Words*** Tickets \$10-20

8pm Concert: ***A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman*** Tickets \$15-35

Dawn Harms, Music Director & Conductor

Vítězslava Kaprálová – *Partita for Piano and Strings*

Clara Wieck Schumann – Piano Concerto

Sara Davis Buechner, piano

Ethel Smyth – *Serenade*

Tickets: www.bars-sf.org or call 1-800-595-4TIX

Bay Area Rainbow Symphony

The Bay Area Rainbow Symphony (BARS) is an orchestra that provides a safe and supportive environment for musicians of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. BARS makes cultural, social, and educational contributions to the SF/Bay Area by performing ambitious repertoire to a high standard. BARS had its first concert in June 2008. A leader in the LGBTQ orchestra movement, BARS is one of the few LGBTQ symphony orchestras in the US, and one of twelve worldwide.

BARS stages four concerts annually. Each performance features 60-80 musicians. The BARS LGBTQ Composers and Performing Artist Series showcases LGBTQ composers and soloists. This series has included works by Schubert, De Falla, Barber, Smyth, Britten, and Copland, as well as works by living LGBTQ composers like John Corigliano, Jennifer Higdon, David Conte, Elinor Armer, Clarice Assad, Conrad Susa, and Lowell Liebermann. Many esteemed LGBTQ soloists and conductors have performed with us including violinist Bettina Mussumeli, soprano Christine Brandes, organist Jonathan Dimmock, soprano Melody Moore, saxophonist David Henderson, and conductor Michael Morgan. For more info see <http://bars-sf.org/> and videos in [BARS Vimeo](#)

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(which includes a performance by Frederica von Stade, in the last trio from the opera *Der Rosenkavalier*)

Dawn Harms, BARS Music Director and Conductor

Dawn Harms' diverse career ranges from chamber musician, violin soloist, and concertmaster, to music director and conductor. She is a first violinist in the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, Associate Concertmaster for the New Century Chamber Orchestra, and Co-Concertmaster with the Oakland East Bay Symphony. She recently conducted the San Francisco Opera orchestra in a full concert “Overture to the 2014-15 Season”. She is the only woman music director of an orchestra in San Francisco.

Dawn has conducted the Amy Beach Piano Concerto with Daniel Glover, soloist and the world premiere of *Scattered: Concerto for Scat Singing and Piano* by Clarice Assad. As a chamber performer, she performed the world premiere *Times of Day* for piano trio and soprano, composed and performed with Jake Heggie at New York’s Guggenheim Museum.

A strong advocate for music education, Dawn designs and performs her family concerts for children with symphony orchestras throughout the United States. She also teaches at Stanford University.

FUNDING: These concerts are funded in part by the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund and the Women’s Philharmonic Advocacy.

Images for download:

Sara Davis Buechner:

<http://bars-sf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/buechner-w-little-piano-larger.jpg>

(photo credit Yukiko Onley)

Ethel Smyth by John Singer Sargent:

http://bars-sf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Ethel_Smyth_by_John_Singer_Sargent.jpg

Dawn Harms Photo:

<http://bars-sf.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/DawnHarmsPhoto.jpg>

BARS Photo:

<http://bars-sf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/BARS-Group-Photo.jpg>

Links in article:

Bay Area Rainbow Symphony: www.bars-sf.org

New York Times:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1998/09/13/magazine/his-debut-as-a-woman.html>

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/15/fashion/15genb.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/04/booming/growing-acceptance-for-the-transgendered.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0BR-54xzkE>

Sara Davis Buechner website: <http://saradavisbuechner.com/>

BARS Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/user24480644>