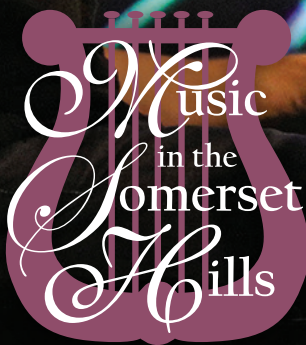


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DAN TEPFER'S
NATURAL MACHINES
FEBRUARY 4, 2024 • 3:00 PM

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PROGRAM

DAN TEPFER'S NATURAL MACHINES

In an age of unprecedented technological advancement, Dan Tepfer is changing the definition of what a musical instrument can be. Featured in an NPR documentary viewed by 1.5 million people, Dan Tepfer shows his pioneering skill in this concert by programming a Yamaha Disklavier to respond in real time to the music he improvises at the piano. Meanwhile, another computer program turns the music into stunning animated visual art. Called "fascinating and ingenious" by Rolling Stone, the Natural Machines performance lives at a unique intersection of mechanical and natural processes, making it "more than a solo piano album... a multimedia piece of contemporary art so well made in its process and components and expressed by such a thoughtful, talented, evocative pianist... that it becomes a complete experience" (NextBop).

ARTIST STATEMENT

"Natural Machines is a project where I explore the intersection, in music, between natural and mechanical processes. I improvise at the piano, and programs I've written on my computer interact with me in real-time as I'm playing, both musically and visually.

I'm playing on the Yamaha Disklavier. It's an acoustic piano with extra abilities: when I play, it sends data to my computer, and when my computer sends it data, it plays by moving the keys on its own. The sound the computer makes, through the piano, is exactly the same sound that I make myself.

In Natural Machines, instead of composing a piece, I decide the way a piece works. I program simple rules for the computer to follow when responding to what I play. Since I'm improvising, I'm always listening to what the computer is playing and responding to it as well. So the rules end up affecting me, too.

The visualizations I've made are intended to reveal the underlying musical structure of each piece. They're generated in real-time as I play. Everything on the screen is a direct representation of some aspect of the music: pitch, dynamics, rhythm, harmony.

I've programmed the musical algorithms in SuperCollider, and the visuals in Processing."

DAN TEPFER, PIANIST

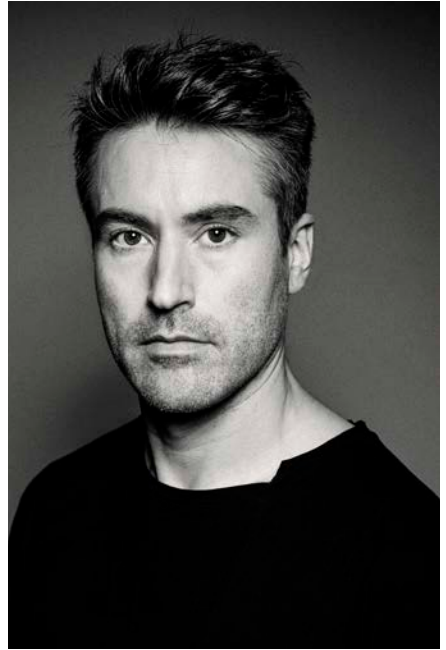
BIOGRAPHY

One of his generation's extraordinary talents, Dan Tepfer has earned an international reputation as a pianist-composer of wide-ranging innovation, individuality, and drive—one "who refuses to set himself limits" (France's *Télérama*). The New York City-based Tepfer, born in 1982 in Paris to American parents, has recorded and performed around the world with some of the leading lights in jazz and classical music, from Lee Konitz to Renée Fleming, and released eleven albums of his own in solo, duo and trio formats.

Tepfer earned global acclaim for his 2011 release *Goldberg Variations / Variations*, a disc that sees him performing J.S. Bach's masterpiece as well as improvising upon it—to "elegant, thoughtful and thrilling" effect (New York magazine). Tepfer's 2019 video album *Natural Machines* stands as one of his most ingeniously forward-minded yet, finding him exploring in real time the intersection between science and art, coding and improvisation, digital algorithms and the rhythms of the heart. The New York Times has called him "a deeply rational improviser drawn to the unknown." His 2023 return to Bach, *Inventions / Reinventions*, an exploration of the narrative processes behind Bach's beloved *Inventions*, became a best-seller, spending two weeks in the #1 spot on the Billboard Classical Charts.

During the Covid pandemic, his belief that music brings people together in times of crisis led him to dive headlong into live-streaming, performing close to two hundred online concerts from his home for a devoted community of listeners. As part of this effort, he pioneered ultra-low-latency audio technology enabling him to perform live through the internet with musicians in separate locations, culminating in the development of his own app, *FarPlay*.

Tepfer has composed for various ensembles beyond jazz. His piano quintet *Solar Spiral* was premiered in 2016 at Chicago's Ravinia Festival, with Tepfer performing alongside the Avalon String Quartet. Tepfer has received commissions from the Prague Castle Guard Orchestra for two works:



the suite *Algorithmic Transform*(2015) and a concerto for symphonic wind band and improvising piano, *The View from Orohena* (2010). In summer 2019, Tepfer unveiled his jazz-trio arrangement of Stravinsky's Baroque-channeling *Pulcinella*. In 2024-2025, he'll premiere three new major commissions: a suite for choir and piano in memory of his mother, a chorister at the Paris Opera; a song cycle for jazz great Cécile McLorin Salvant and string orchestra; and a symphonic work featuring algorithms and visuals.

Tepfer's honors include first prizes at the 2006 Montreux Jazz Festival Solo Piano Competition, the 2006 East Coast Jazz Festival Competition, and the 2007 American Pianists Association Jazz Piano Competition, as well as fellowships from the American Academy of Arts and Letters (2014), the MacDowell Colony (2016), and the Fondation BNP-Paribas (2018, 2021 & 2024).

For further information please contact:
Helen Henson; helen@bluoceanarts.com t. 612-280-6665

dantepfer.com



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MISSION STATEMENT

Music in the Somerset Hills (MISH) is a musical community whose mission is to create musical experiences of the highest quality for those who live and work in the Somerset Hills and the surrounding area. Founded in 2010 by Artistic Director Stephen Sands, MISH's primary focus is the Somerset Hills Chorus, the Concert Series and Music Education.

The **Somerset Hills Chorus**, is open to anyone aged 14 and upwards, with or without expertise, and enables young performers to sing extraordinary repertoire alongside more seasoned professionals in fine venues within and around the community.

The **Concert Series**, brings accomplished professional musicians to perform in local venues.

Since 2010, performances have included the Vivaldi *Gloria*, Handel's *Semele* and *Messiah*, a centenary concert of works by Benjamin Britten, a jazz concert of George Shearing works, the Fauré *Requiem*, Bach's *St. John Passion*, *Music of the Movies* (with Peter Dinklage), and, in 2018, a Bernstein Centenary concert. The Concert Series also includes performances by distinguished visitors - concerts by Chanticleer (2016), Canadian Brass (2017) and The King's Singers (2019), as well as occasional outdoor concerts in the summer, including Handel's *Water Music* on the Lake at Far Hills in 2017.

Music Education centers on an **Early Childhood Music Program**, which runs classes for children up to 4-years old. MISH runs the a very popular **Summer Voices Camp** for children and teens in June each year. MISH also offers **scholarships to high school seniors** who demonstrate musical excellence.

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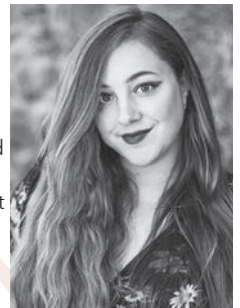
Stephen Sands, Music in the Somerset Hills founder and Artistic Director is highly sought after as a soloist, conductor, music educator and ensemble member. He holds his Bachelors and Masters degrees from Westminster Choir College. Stephen is the director of Downtown Voices, a semi-pro choral group that is part of the Trinity Wall Street Music program, focused on bringing the best volunteer and professional singers in the NYC area together for high level performances. He has taught choral music to thousands of students in grades 3-12 in the Somerset Hills School District for more than 20 years, and is a founding member and executive director of the internationally acclaimed Antioch Chamber Ensemble. Stephen sings with the Grammy-nominated Trinity Choir in New York. He has been praised as a “crystalline tenor” (Backstage) and “a tenor with a focused, powerful tone” who sings with “subtlety” and “poignancy” by the New York Times. Stephen has been heard as the Evangelist and tenor soloist in numerous performances of Bach’s sacred oratorios, most recently with the Trinity Choir and Baroque Orchestra in the *St. John Passion* of J.S. Bach. StephenSands.net

Joan Seigle, President, is a native of the Somerset Hills. Raised by two music enthusiasts, both proficient pianists, she was exposed to concerts and theater at a very young age. As a child, she took piano lessons and played in a recorder quartet and handbell choir, further nurturing her love for the performing arts. She graduated from the University of the South, Seawee with a degree in English literature and a minor in French. Today, with three grown children out of the nest, she combines her appreciation for excellent music with the gift of time by working to promote the mission of Music in the Somerset Hills throughout the greater community. A passionate advocate for music as a form of therapy and healing, she believes that all genres, performed at their highest level, hold the unique power to transport us out of the ordinary into the otherworldly and profound.



Pamela L. Nardone, Chair of Events, has been a part of Music in the Somerset Hills, almost from the beginning, as a member of its Community Chorus. Her singing and performing go all the way back to her early school years and have never stopped, simply for the pure joy it brings her. In addition to the Somerset Hills Chorus, she also sings in the choir of St. Luke’s, Gladstone, and rings in their Bell Choir. Pam has a day job, too. She owns and operates Hibernata Bedding in Bernardsville. Pamela brings her love and passion for music and this organization along with her many years of experience chairing fundraising events to her role with Music in the Somerset Hills.

Erin Schwab, Marketing & Communications Director, is an experienced arts administrator, performer, and teaching artist. She holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree in Music from Rutgers Mason Gross School of the Arts, where she studied Vocal Performance and was the recipient of the Olga Marsano Burian award for “Outstanding Achievement in Music” in 2014, and the Michael Fardink award for “Outstanding Vocalist” in 2019. In addition to her role at Music in the Somerset Hills, Erin serves as Marketing Coordinator for PROTESTRA (protest + orchestra), an ensemble that inspires activism through benefit concerts and turns voluntary audience donations into targeted support for mission- and policy-driven groups related to their concerts’ themes. In September 2022 she became Executive Director of Skylands Music Academy, a new after-school music program in Ringwood, NJ that offers vocal and ringing choirs for students in grades 1-8. She is also the Chorus Manager for Trinity Church Wall Street’s Downtown Voices ensemble, which combines NYC’s best volunteer singers with members of the GRAMMY-nominated Trinity Choir.



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