

*The Evelyn Miller*  
Young Pianist Series

# *Piano Recital*

"Songs of Innocence and Experience"  
(Inspired by the poetry of William Blake)

**Parnian Rezaei**



"To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour."  
— William Blake, *Auguries of Innocence*



Feb. 9th. 2025

2 p.m

Sandra. G Powell Recital Hall

## About the program

This program is inspired by William Blake's poetry, where he beautifully captures two sides of life: the simplicity and purity of innocence, and the complexity and depth of experience.

Through this recital, I have brought together music from different eras to reflect those themes. Five poems have been chosen to address similar situations with vastly different tones, mirroring and complementing each other.

The first half of the program focuses on innocence, with pieces ranging from the French Baroque to the late 19th century.

These works reflect lightness, playfulness, and clarity—the kind of feelings and imagery that Blake evokes in his songs of childhood and purity. The pieces are paired with Blake's illuminated manuscripts and related artworks to further highlight the themes of innocence.

The second half shifts to experience. This section moves into the 20th century, with works that explore more complex, raw, and even turbulent emotions. Extended piano techniques, bold harmonies, and experimental textures challenge traditional ideas of what piano music can be, mirroring the depth and tension found in Blake's darker, more reflective poetry. Paired artwork will also accompany this half, adding another layer to the narrative.

## Lambs at Play

Louis Couperin (1626-1661), *Unmeasured Prelude for Harpsichord N. 13 in F Major*

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764), *La Poule*

## Innocent Joys

Claude Debussy (1862-1918), *Ballade L. 70*

Franz Schubert (1797-1828), *Impromptu Op. 90, No. 2*

## Echoes of Innocence

Clara Schumann (1819-1896), *Piano Sonata in G Minor: I. Allegro*  
Schumann/Liszt, *Widmung*

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## Fires in the Forest

Henry Cowell (1897-1965), *Tiger*

Paul Dessau (1894-1979), *Guernica*

## Visions of the Fallen World

George Crumb (1929-2022), *From Mikrokosmos II: No. 7, Tora! Tora! Tora! Cadenza Apocalittica, and No. 8, A Prophecy of Nostradamus*

Galina Ustvolskaya (1919-2006), *Piano Sonata No. 6*

## Echoes of Experience

Fazil Say (b. 1970), *Black Earth*

## About the artist

Parnian Rezaei (b. 1995) is an accomplished Iranian pianist, music educator, and performer. She began her musical journey at the age of 7 and started studying piano at 9. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Piano Performance from the University of Tehran, and a Master's degree in Piano Performance from the University of South Florida, where she received a full scholarship and served as a graduate assistant in accompanying. Currently, she is pursuing an Artist Certificate in Piano performance at the University of Tennessee, supported by a full scholarship and an assistantship. Her piano teachers include Dr. Chih-Long Hu, Dr. Svetozar Ivanov and Arpineh Israyilian.

Parnian has appeared in numerous concerts across Iran, the United States, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, and Northern Ireland. In February 2022, she was invited to perform in the Steinway Series at the University of South Florida, where she showcased her talent as a solo and ensemble pianist. That same year, she participated in an exchange program with the Utrecht Conservatory, attending masterclasses and studying harpsichord and fortepiano with renowned professors such as Henry Kelder and Siebe Henstra. In July 2022, she performed at the Prague Piano Festival, and in July 2023, she participated in the Derry International Music Festival, delivering successful performances of classical masterpieces as well as modern and unconventional piano repertoire. Most recently, in March 2024, Parnian won first place at the Knoxville International Piano Festival and Competition. She also secured first prize in the contemporary music category at the Charleston Piano Competition.

## Acknowledgments

This recital would not have been possible without the support, guidance, and inspiration of so many people in my life.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my professor, Dr. Chih-Long Hu for his wisdom, encouragement, and dedication to my growth as a musician.

I would also like to express gratitude to Dr. Eddie Johnson, Dr. Fay Adams, Dr. Mary Campbell, Evelyn Miller Young Piano Series, and Natalie Haslam Music Center to have made this recital possible.

