UC SANTA BARBARA
Department of Music

CONTACT:
Adriane Cleary
Marketing and Communications Manager
Remote work number available upon request
adrianecleary@ucsb.edu
music.ucsb.edu

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UC SANTA BARBARA DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC PRESENTS “SPRINGTIME IN FRANCE: MUSIC OF LES SIX” FEATURING PIANIST DR. NATASHA KISLENKO AND FRIENDS

Faculty pianist Dr. Natasha Kislenko and special guests Richie Hawley, Matthew Swihart, Chavdar Parashkevov, and Tali Morgulis present music by Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, and Germaine Tailleferre

Santa Barbara, CA (April 21, 2021)—The UC Santa Barbara Department of Music will present a virtual chamber music recital, “Springtime in France: Music of Les Six,” on Friday, May 7, 2021 at 6 pm PDT as a YouTube Premiere via the Department of Music’s YouTube channel. The concert will feature UC Santa Barbara faculty member and pianist Dr. Natasha Kislenko and special guests, including clarinetist Richie Hawley, trumpeter Matthew Swihart, violinist Chavdar Parashkevov, and pianist Tali Morgulis. The program will include solo and chamber works by the members of Les Six—Arthur Honegger, Georges Auric, Darius Milhaud, Germaine Tailleferre, Francis Poulenc, and Louis Durey.

Following ideas of the well-known poet and playwright Jean Cocteau and composer Erik Satie, this group of young composer friends came together in their negative reaction to weighty German romanticism and complex writings of Debussy and Ravel in the years post-World War I. They took their inspiration from street and cafe music in Paris, as well as the transparent writing style of the old masters such as Jean-Philippe Rameau and Jean-Baptiste Lully. In the 1920s, the music of Les Six appeared light, witty, sardonic, and irresistibly joyful.

“The idea to perform music by Les Six came quite spontaneously,” noted Kislenko. “To me, the early twentieth century is one of the most fascinating and diverse time periods in art and music. In the past, I put several programs together featuring composers from that time. So, I started looking for new ideas…I remembered Les Six from my music history classes. The names of composers came back easily though I only played and knew works by Milhaud and Poulenc, and some Honegger. Three others were a complete mystery. I am fortunate to have come across a wonderful book by Robert Shapiro, where I learned so much about every one of those six. The group did not exist long, each composer had a very unique journey and musical path, but their friendship and collegiality remained strong throughout the century.”

“I was very lucky that several wonderful musicians were willing to join me in this virtual recital project,” Kislenko continued. “We have just completed all the recordings and had a lot of fun, particularly enjoying the lightness of the musical spirit and elegance of the selections.”

Kislenko has frequently collaborated with the artists on this program, both in the concert hall and recording studio. The Kislenko/Parashkevov duo has presented recitals and concerto performances all over the world since forming the duo in 2010, and recorded two albums—Russian Sonatas in 2011 and Beethoven, Brahms, Mahler in 2018. Kislenko and Hawley have served on the Music Academy of the West Summer Festival Faculty, Kislenko (also an alumna, 2001) since 2004 and Hawley since 2005. Throughout the years, they have performed multiple compositions in faculty concerts. Kislenko and
Swihart, Assistant Professor at Nicholls State University in Louisiana, collaborated during their studies at Stony Brook University some twenty years ago, and now meet again to perform upon Kislenko’s invitation. Morgulis, Associate Professor of Piano at the University of Houston’s Moores School of Music, has invited Kislenko to give several masterclasses for her students; the pianists performed together for the first time in Fall 2019. Natasha noted that this program could have been called “Natasha Kislenko and friends” for the strong ties with all four performers, and she is very grateful they were willing to jump on board and join on her exploration journey to France.

The May 7th program will include Arthur Honegger’s Intrada for trumpet and piano, Georges Auric’s Five Bagatelles for piano four hands, Darius Milhaud’s Saudades do Brasil for violin and piano, Germaine Tailleferre’s Deux Valses and Toccata for two pianos, and Francis Poulenc’s Sonata for clarinet and piano, as well as L’Album Les Six, which features solo piano works by each member of Les Six.

**HOW TO WATCH**

“Springtime in France: Music of Les Six” will be free and available to the public to view as a YouTube Premiere via the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music’s YouTube channel (youtube.com/c/UCSantaBarbaraDepartmentofMusic) on Friday, May 7, 2021 at 6 pm PDT. The direct link to the video of the performance will be available on the event page on the Department of Music’s website the week of the event. For more information, please visit music.ucsb.edu/news/event/2204.

**PROGRAM**

*Intrada* for trumpet and piano  
Arthur Honegger

*Five Bagatelles* for piano four hands  
Georges Auric

*Saudades* do Brasil for violin and piano  
Darius Milhaud, arr. Claude Levy

*Deux Valses and Toccata* for two pianos  
Germaine Tailleferre

*Sonata* for clarinet and piano  
Francis Poulenc

*L’Album Les Six*  
Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Germaine Tailleferre

**PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES**

**Richie Hawley, Clarinet**

There are those who define their instrument and those who are defined by their instrument. Richie Hawley, a musician whose name has become a byword for exceptional clarinet playing, is among the distinguished former group. Richie is one of the most celebrated clarinetists of his generation, a sought-after recitalist and chamber musician who regularly appears on stages around the world. During his 17 years as principal clarinet of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (CSO), Richie made an indelible mark on the institution. Hailed by the *Cincinnati Enquirer* as “an example of the real virtuosity that lies within the [CSO’s] ranks” and praised for possessing the “seamless flowing tone so many clarinetists long for and few can achieve,” he has wowed audiences and critics with his technique and velvety tone. Richie has also left his mark on recorded classical music, appearing on dozens of albums with the CSO. With many of the 60+ TELARC recordings by the CSO and Cincinnati Pops during his tenure featuring major solos of

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the clarinet repertoire, Richie’s memorable playing has been frequently singled out. *American Record Guide* hailed his "gorgeous" solo in Rachmaninoff’s Symphony No. 2 as "the crowning achievement" of the CSO’s recording with Maestro Jesus Lopez-Cobos. Read Hawley’s full biography at [richiehawley.com/about](http://richiehawley.com/about).

**Matthew Swihart, Trumpet**

Matthew Swihart is a professor of high brass at Nicholls State University in Louisiana. He received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in trumpet performance and literature from the Eastman School of Music. Matt has studied at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, and SUNY Stony Brook. He was a Fulbright Fellow at the Hochschule fur Musik in Detmold, Germany from 2001 to 2003. Matthew was a member of the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in the summer of 1997 and the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival Orchestra in the summer of 1999. He was awarded 3rd prize in the International Trumpet Guild Solo Competition both in 1995 and 1998. Matthew has performed with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Opera Orchestra, the Tacoma Philharmonic, and the Eastman Virtuosi. Matthew’s primary instructors include Armando Ghitalla, Max Sommerhalder, and James Thompson. He has performed under the batons of Seiji Ozawa, Mstislav Rostropovich, and Christoph Eschenbach.

**Chavdar Parashkevov, Violin**

Praised by *Strad* magazine as “a romantic virtuoso with sparkling and brilliant tone and clarity of gesture,” Bulgarian violinist Chavdar Parashkevov’s diverse career has included numerous appearances with orchestra and in recital in Bulgaria, Turkey, the United States, Germany, Russia, Italy, and Denmark. Recent appearances include chamber music recitals at the Round Top Festival, Houston Museum of Art concert series, and Cypress Creek FACE Foundation. Parashkevov was awarded First Prize in the National Competition Svetoslav Obretenov in Provadia, First Prize and a special Bach prize in the “Young Talents Competition” in Sofia, Second Prize in "The Best Performance of Bulgarian Music” in Varna, and First Prize for the “Best Performance of Czech and Slovak Music” in Varna. In 2005 Parashkevov and pianist Vessy Smith released their debut album *Moto Perpetuo* featuring works by Bulgarian composers; the CD was played in 2009 on the Space Shuttle Atlantis. Parashkevov is a graduate of the School for the Arts in Varna, and also attended SMU as well as the University of Houston. His teachers have included Peter Hristoskov, Veronica Bogaertz, Thomas Hapanen, Nelli Shkolnikova, Edward Schmieder, and Andzrej Grabiec. He currently combines performing and teaching careers, and plays for the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet Orchestras.

**Natasha Kislenko, Piano**

Pianist Natasha Kislenko, hailed for her “vividly expressive” interpretations and “virtuosity that left the audience exhilarated,” (*Santa Barbara Independent*) offers unique concert programs and presentations to the worldwide community of music listeners. A prizewinner of several international piano competitions, she has extensively concertized in Russia, Germany, Italy, Spain, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Turkey, and across the Americas. Ms. Kislenko made her Carnegie Hall solo recital debut after taking the Grand Prize at the Missouri Southern International Piano Competition in 1996. Recent solo engagements include the Eskişehir Greater Municipality Symphony Orchestra, Turkey and the Varna Chamber Orchestra, Bulgaria. A resident pianist of the Santa Barbara Symphony since 2010, she has been a featured soloist for the Shostakovich, Grieg, Clara Schumann, de Falla, and Mozart piano concerti, to great critical acclaim. In 2013, Ms. Kislenko was invited as a special guest to present the new Steinway D piano at the Teatro Municipal Ignacio A. Pane in Asunción, Paraguay, performing with the Orquesta Sinfónica del Congreso Nacional. Read Kislenko's full biography at [music.ucsb.edu/people/natasha-kislenko](http://music.ucsb.edu/people/natasha-kislenko).

**Tali Morgulis, Piano**

Israeli-American pianist Tali Morgulis is a passionate performer and a dedicated pedagogue. Prize winner of several international competitions, Dr. Morgulis continues to present critically acclaimed solo, chamber music, and orchestral performances worldwide. An expert collaborator, Tali has shared the stage with - MORE -
such renowned musicians as soprano Albina Shagimuratova, cellist Misha Quint, violinist Uri Planka, mezzo-soprano Sonja Bruzauskas, and many others. Tali’s recordings can be found on Delos, Albany, and Navona labels. Dr. Morgulis’ students come from many different countries and backgrounds. They describe her as a great motivator and an inspiring mentor. She takes pride in supporting not only their performance and teaching but also in becoming important members of their respective communities. Tali began her college teaching career at Fort Hays State University, KS in 2005. She is currently an Associate Professor of Piano at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston, TX. Tali started her music education in her native Ukraine at age 4. She continued studying piano after moving to Israel at age 15. Dr. Morgulis holds degrees in piano performance from Tel Aviv Academy of Music (BM and MM) and the New England Conservatory in Boston, MA (DMA). She holds diplomas from the Manhattan School of Music and the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles. She was fortunate to study with such wonderful musicians as Esther Balasha, Mikhail Boguslawski, Wha Kyung Byun, Lev Natochenny, Alexander Gorin (organ), and Patricia Zander (chamber music).

ABOUT THE UC SANTA BARBARA DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
From an institution that began life dedicated to training the next generation of music educators, to what is now a multi-faceted department with a fully established research and professional graduate program with degrees in composition, ethnomusicology, musicology, music theory, and performance, the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music has produced many hundreds of graduates who have distinguished themselves both nationally and internationally. Alumni have gone on to teach on faculties of major colleges and universities in the United States and abroad, or in outstanding secondary school positions. Many graduates of the program have published extensively and become widely renowned, prize-winning scholars, while others are award-winning and frequently performed composers writing for television and film. Alumni are also establishing fine reputations as conductors of orchestras, opera, and choruses. Graduates of the instrumental programs have gone on to solo and orchestral careers with leading orchestras, and graduates of the voice program can be heard in opera companies around the world.

With over 150 events presented annually, the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music offers something for every music lover. The department boasts 26 unique performing ensembles, each with a quarterly concert calendar. Chamber music, large ensembles, opera, contemporary groups, world music, and jazz ensembles make up the department’s rich performance calendar, along with lectures, master classes, and presentations from the ethnomusicology, musicology, theory, and composition programs. For a complete listing of performances and lectures for the quarter, please visit the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music website at music.ucsb.edu.

For additional information, photos, or to request an interview with an artist, please contact Adriane Cleary at adrianecleary@ucsb.edu (remote work number available upon request).

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