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SoundWorks

Featuring the Astrodon String Quartet
and Renova New Music Ensemble
Friday, Nov. 6, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Grusin Music Hall

Program

Il Riposo di Orvieto e Ponza

Glenda Luck

I. Riposo di Orvieto

Astrodon String Quartet:
Dallas Noble, violin
Zach Levin, violin
Amelia Eckloff, viola
Tim Beccue, cello

After the End of History

Benjamin Portzen

Benjamin Portzen, piano

Flower Pieces

Riley Fuller

I. Peruvian Lily
II. Dutch Tulips
III. The Peony

Riley Fuller, piano

Endlings

J. Clay Gonzalez

Renova New Music Ensemble

Psalm 13

Mason McCool

Renova New Music Ensemble

BRAIN/MIND

Jessie Lause

Jessie Lause, electronics

Program Notes

Il Riposo di Orvieto e Ponza

Glenda Luck

Across the Mediterranean, the hottest hours of the day belong to rest. In Italy it is il riposo: shutters close, cafés fall quiet, and a whole town exhales.

In the summer of 2026 I spent three weeks in Orvieto, a medieval hill town in Umbria set high on a plateau of volcanic tufa, whose people trace their lineage back to the Etruscans. Four of my works were premiered there by musicians who performed 21 nights beneath hand-painted ceilings, in extraordinary heat. Temperatures held between 97 and 100 degrees every day, with no air conditioning and no escape. The rest the title promises came only in listening to those musicians play so exquisitely. And in the kindness of strangers.

The piece's motifs are drawn from the city's own voices. The distant tread of a military march becomes the heat itself, relentless and unyielding. The doves calling from the rooftops carry the soul, and the swallows, cutting through the evening air, trace its despair. *Il Riposo di Orvieto* is a love letter to a place and a portrait of the restlessness beneath its repose. It is anxious by design, and it does not resolve. It is the first of two movements; the second, *Ponza*, brings the release this one longs for.

Flower Pieces

Riley Fuller

The first three pieces of what will one day become a complete *Book of Flowers*. The first, *Peruvian Lily*, a delicate yet warm piece dedicated to my mother, to whom I have recently begun to teach piano. The second, *Dutch Tulip*, was inspired by my recent visit to Amsterdam during the spring, where the fields of vibrant tulips created an endless flow of changing color. The third, *The Peony*, contrasts the light and dark, as well as the fragile yet full-textured characteristics of the flower, where I imagine an afternoon on a hill surrounded by peonies of every kind.

Endlings

J. Clay Gonzalez

In ancient Rome, the herb sylphium was at the very center of the culture. It was cooked in every meal, used in various forms of medicine, even appearing on their coins. It only grew on one hillside in present-day Libya, and after centuries of overharvesting the population of the plant dwindled. It dwindled and dwindled, until no more could be found. The last time sylphium was ever found, it was a single stalk growing on a Libyan hillside. It was plucked, and presented to the emperor as a curiosity. This one will be the last one. See it, watch it go. An endling is the last surviving member of a species, and when the endling dies, the species becomes extinct. This is *Endlings*.

This one will be the last one, won't be another, no,
See the bloom, and know,
How it feels to see the last one, to see the last one grow,
See it bloom, and know,

You get yours, I get mine, take a number wait in line,
Oh, endlings in a line,
But you should know before you go,
You can see her flowers start to show,
Take it in, and take it slow

Because, all who walk above will sink below,
Will see their last one grow,
See it bloom, then watch it all go
Every living thing is bound in time
To leave this world behind,
Ya see it bloom, then you gotta go, a-sangin'
This one will be the last one, won't be another, no,
See the bloom, and know,
How it feels to see the last one, to see the last one grow,
See it bloom, and know,
You get yours, I get mine, take a number wait in line,
Oh, endlings in a line,
But you should know before you go,
You can see her flowers start to show,
Take it in, and take it slow

But as you know before you go,
Time to live and space to grow,
Oh, take it in, and take it slow
We get this little scrap of time,
Where the moon does moon and the sun does shine
Then we're endlings in a line.
So I'll be yours and you'll be mine,
As our molecules so briefly align,

Endlings in a line!
But as you know before you go,
Time to live and space to grow,
Take it in, and take it slow.
We get this little scrap of time,
Where the moon does moon and the sun does shine
Then we're endlings in a line.

Psalm 13

Mason McCool

To be human is to struggle. We experience grief in all its ugliness and messiness, with it sometimes overwhelming every part of us.

Yet still, to be human is to live. Psalm 13 is a journey of overwhelming darkness to radiant light through the help of something bigger than ourselves. Whether you look to friendship, love, self, or a higher power, my hope is that this piece will help you find the courage to continue on your journey and sing to that which gives you strength.

How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? For ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?
How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?
Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;
Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.
But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.
I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

Personnel

Egemen Kesikli, director
Annika Socolofsky, faculty coach
Remy deParis, stage manager
Addison Hill, social media coordinator

Riley Fuller

Riley Fuller is a pianist and composer in his 4th year at CU. He is influenced by Jazz, French impressionism and Russian romanticism, all of which inform his piano improvisation from where most of his compositional ideas are derived. Fuller was raised in Colorado and enjoys skiing, cooking,and traveling. He hopes to move to Europe after graduating to further his study in composition and piano.

J. Clay Gonzalez

J. Clay Gonzalez is a composer, arts organizer and sound artist whose work explores music-making as a means of building community and connection. He is the founder and artistic director of Regenerate!, an experimental orchestral project that brings together musicians of all backgrounds and skill levels to create immersive, site-specific performances. His work draws on experimental music, folk traditions, improvisation and acoustic ecology. Originally from Kentucky, he is currently pursuing a doctorate in composition at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Glenda Luck

Glenda Luck is a composer whose music offers a sanctuary from the relentless pace of modern life, an invitation to pause, breathe, and reconnect with what matters most. She is completing her Bachelor of Music in composition at the University of Colorado Boulder under Carter Pann, Pulitzer Prize finalist and two-time Grammy nominee, and studies privately with Barlow Prize–winning composer Forrest Pierce.

Tonight's *Il Riposo di Orvieto* marks her seventh world premiere this year. The piece was born of the sounds of Orvieto, Italy, where Luck spent the summer as a Dante Alighieri Society and Orvieto Musica scholar, studying with Charles Ives Living Award recipient Sean Shepherd. Four of her works received their world premieres there, with instrumentation ranging from string quartet to 28 trumpets. Earlier this year, Ars Nova Singers commissioned and premiered *On Quiet Feet*, and as a CU NOW composer fellow, she celebrated the premiere of a scene from her opera *Xenia* under the mentorship of composer Tom Cipullo. Renova New Music Ensemble premiered her *Soleil d'automne* for choir and classical guitar in 2025. She is now composing *End Game* for the Nois saxophone quartet, to premiere April 21, 2027.

She was honored with CU Boulder's Composition Department Choral Award in 2025 and the Spark Award in 2026. Earlier, a fellowship in composition from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts supported her folk album *Manisses: A People and A Place*, which documents Block Island's First Nations history.

That sense of sanctuary extends beyond the concert hall. Through her newly launched Bloomscore, patrons can commission an original work inspired by their own garden or land. The place becomes both muse and concert hall: the piece premieres there, with invitations hand-pressed from its botanicals. Learn more at glendaluck.com.

Mason McCool

Mason McCool is an award-winning American composer and choral music educator. His works have received national and international acclaim, and he regularly has works performed by collegiate, secondary, and community ensembles. McCool holds a BM in music composition and BA in French from the University of Alabama, and he is currently pursuing a master's in music education from the University of Colorado Boulder. You can find more music at masonmccoolmusic.com.

Benjamin Portzen

Benjamin Portzen is a composer and improviser working at the intersection of sounding and moving, principally concerned with matters of being: the transformation of consciousness through art, aesthetic experience as divine. He investigates these through the media of concert and recorded music, dance, field recording, instrument building using found/natural materials and software design, treating each as a lens through which to look deeply into apparent binaries between living and nonliving, creation and destruction, remembering and forgetting, emergence and senescence. He is currently pursuing a Master of Music in composition at the University of Colorado: Boulder.

Renova New Music Ensemble

Soprano 1
Aimee Kennedy
Abygail Mayberry
Emma Olivier
Brooklyn Stellato

Soprano 2
Katy Bowman
Saige Curro
Flyn Gagnier
Payton Keeler
Emily Staton

Alto 1
Rebecah Deans
Hannah Flinkman
Sara Strauss
Lelle Szucs

Alto 2
Iona Binnie
Jenna Clawson
Merryn Madison

Tenor 1
Will Atkinson
Collin Deans

Tenor 2
Peter Kennedy
Jamie Lammers

Bass 1
Andrew Obler
Autumn Stephens
Levi Walker

Bass 2
James Battersby
Blake Clawson



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