



# The New York Flute Club

## NEWSLETTER

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## Villanueva Cultivates The Music of Mexico

*By Stephanie Jutt*

Miguel Ángel Villanueva, the Flute Club's Nov. 17 soloist, says he grew up "marinated in music."

"My mother wanted me to play the piano," he says, "because my brother already played the guitar and my sister played the violin, so she bought a piano for me." But something changed when "one of my other brothers (when I was age seven) brought home an LP from the library. The recording was the J.S. Bach Sonatas played by the great Mexican flutist Gildardo Mojica and harpsichordist Luisa Durón. My life totally changed at that moment. All my passion for sports went to music and

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The Flute Club proudly co-commissioned Tyson Gholston Davis's new chamber work, *Cyan Lyricism*, which premieres at the club Dec. 15.

## The Influence of Art, Flute and Voice

An Interview With Tyson Gholston Davis

*By Lish Lindsey*

**T**yson Gholston Davis's career started to gradually take off around the time he was selected to be one of the composers for the National Youth Orchestra (NYO-USA), where the U.S Embassy in Berlin commissioned him to write a concert opener that would commemorate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. NYO performed this work in Berlin, Hamburg, and Edinburgh during the summer of 2019.

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2024-2025

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**From the President**



**Autumn  
Gets Going  
With Live  
And Online  
Events**

The fall is underway, and I have so much joy and excitement for this season: I can stride outside without spotted lanternflies erratically leaping onto my face, I can play without icky-sticky sounds emanating from my flute because it had a COA, and of course, I can spend time with you as the club’s 105th season officially begins!

October opened with an in-person traverso masterclass and recital featuring Sandra Miller in collaboration with Sarah Cunningham (viola da gamba), Peter Sykes (harpsichord), and flutists Kelsey Burnham, Mei Stone, and Melanie Williams performing the works of Leclair, Telemann, J.S. Bach, and Boismortier.

Members near and far can jump on Zoom and meet up with jazz flutist Kim Scott (Oct. 17) for our first “I Just Wanna Play” event, and spend an hour with me for a special interactive “Play with the President: Finding Your Fall Practicing Groove!” (Oct. 14). The Jazz Flute Workshop meets for the first time (Oct. 13), and the Flute Ensemble Program will meet for its second rehearsal on Oct. 20.

Finally, if you are interested in contributing to the activities behind the scenes, please consider serving on our DEI or Education and Outreach Committees, or keep in touch by letting us know the skills and expertise you would like to bring to the club.

I hope to meet you, your friends/colleagues, and your students in person or online this month!

~Lish  
president@nyfluteclub.org

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# Making Music to Ease the Pain of War

Club Features Ukrainian Flutist Denis Savelyev in 'I Just Wanna Play' Online Series

By Christine Moulton

I spoke online with flutist **Denis Savelyev** in anticipation of the NY Flute Club's Nov. 21 virtual concert under the *I Just Wanna Play* initiative with duo partner Radosia Jasik, pianist.

Savelyev is a pleasure to speak with and to hear play the flute. He generously made time for our Zoom conversation on a recent morning amidst a full schedule. We spoke of how he met his duo partner, his devotion to the music of the composers from Ukraine and Poland, his process of collaboration and preparation for concerts, his recent recording and his hopes for the future.

He met pianist Radosia Jasik, his duo partner, in a class not long after moving to the United States to study with Judith Mendenhall, and developed a fast friendship.

"I'm from Ukraine, she's from Poland. ...Her grandma is from my city, where I grew up when it used to be part of Poland, and so we had this exchange that definitely made us feel connected," he said.

They started to explore the piano and flute repertoire and when the war in Ukraine started Jasik suggested Savelyev channel his energy and grief for the people in Ukraine into music.

The donations from those concerts were sent to the places where Ukrainian refugees were coming into Poland. This project grew into a European concert tour, gathering donations to help the Ukrainian people, and a recording project.

They have spent countless hours giving voice to composers including Ukrainian-born Reinhold Glière (c.1875-1956) and Zhanna Kolodub (b.1930), currently living in Kyiv, Ukraine, who did not start composing until later in life. Her music is full of joy and purity, inspired by the nature and country of Ukraine.



Denis Savelyev and his duo partner, pianist Radosia Jasik, give voice to composers such as Ukrainian-born Reinhold Glière and Zhanna Kolodub.

Her story is "inspiring, because it's an example for all of us to believe in ourselves, that it's never too late to start something," Savelyev said.

When asked how he developed the ability to communicate so expressively, Savelyev responded: "We would get together and work for many hours and because of that devotion of both of our spirits, we are able to achieve some results. ... We are able to trust our work and our craft... to be free and let our emotions dictate our way."

This connection has resulted in the extraordinarily expressive powerhouse duo we will be hearing in the upcoming concert.

Savelyev has much inspiration and insight to share and hopes to broaden the scope of his teaching.

Want to help the people of Ukraine? In addition to supporting the duo's concerts and recording, one of many aid organizations we can donate to is Razom: [www.razomforukraine.org](http://www.razomforukraine.org)

*Catch Denis Savelyev at 7pm on Nov. 21, as he appears in the New York Flute Club's I Just Wanna Play online series. Zoom link at [nyfluteclub.org](http://nyfluteclub.org).*



## An Interview With Tyson Davis

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After returning to the States, he began working on a series of solo works for various instruments, and musicians started asking for the works for their recitals. Eventually, organizations contacted Davis for new compositions.

Davis is inspired by a variety of composers and genres. Henri Dutilleux, Oliver Knussen, Augusta Read Thomas, George Benjamin and Julian Anderson have greatly influenced his writing because of the soaring lines, resonant harmonies, and the influence of jazz (specifically Augusta Read Thomas) because the detailed understanding of the past great composers is all-encompassing within their works.

Tyson Davis says, “I adore Miles Davis’s music and admire how he evolved himself throughout his career. From his modal *Kind of Blue* album to the bebop of *Milestones*, and the captivating fusion of *Bitches Brew* and *Doo-Bop*. The way Miles challenged his preconceived notions about his own work and developed new works that connected the old is really something to admire.”

Interestingly, the visual art of Helen Frankenthaler, a second-generation Abstract Expressionist who was deeply inspired by the impressions of J. W. Turner, the action painting of Jackson Pollock, and the natural landscapes



of the world, prompted Davis to start a cycle of compositions that are “studies” on her paintings. He has composed five studies related to Frankenthaler’s paintings, starting with *Grey Fireworks* (2021) for the Lucerne Festival, a capricious five-minute

composition for Samuel Neybu’s debut recital. *Amorphous Figures* (2021), a commission for the Juilliard String Quartet, came second. *Expansions of Light* (2023), a 16-minute solo piano work, was the fifth installment written for Jonathan Biss. *Cyan Lyricism* for solo flute, soprano, and flute ensemble will be the newest premiere in this cycle.

“My relationship with the flute began with my 2017 work for the alto flute entitled *Absolute Zero*,” Davis says. “This work was written for Savannah Rose Ridley, one of Tadeu Coelho’s students at the time. My sixteen-year-old self was captivated by the luscious tone color of the alto flute. The title for the piece came from the physics class I was taking at the time, where we discussed the concept of absolute zero

— the lowest theoretical temperature possible in the universe. The piece is extremely slow-moving and prioritizes melodic gestures.”

It wasn’t until the *Tableaux* series of solo works that Davis began to explore the entire gamut of character and dynamic range of instruments. Written between 2019 and 2021, these works are typically capricious and fleeting and last around five minutes.

**The composer Tyson Davis finds inspiration in the work of Helen Frankenthaler.**

**Artwork © 2024 Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.**

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## An Interview With Tyson Davis

*Continued from previous page*

The flute tableau was the third in the series and was composed for his friend Dayna Hagesedt.

Davis says that his compositional process has changed drastically since 2019. He primarily uses staff paper, pencils (either metal mechanical or Blackwings), a large drafting table, and his baby grand Knabe from 1927 and inputs his work via Sibelius. Davis usually works best early in the morning because he loves the sunrises, as his room faces east, and says he really must be relaxed: "...no distractions like Instagram or YouTube."

Davis finds it important when starting a piece to improvise freely by humming, singing, and/or "think-singing." Imaging the soundscape, texture, and intensity of a passage or entire piece is the most organic way for him to write. In this stage, his sketchbooks will consist of adjectives and other descriptive words such as "bird-like," "angular," or "with spunk," rather than pitches and rhythms. In addition, Davis has taken after composers like Augusta Read Thomas and John Corigliano by creating sonic sketches resembling heartbeat monitors. This early stage clarifies his sense of form, pacing and structure for the music based on the material he was imposing/imaging.

Davis began dreaming up *Cyan Lyricism* in December 2023 and had a special timbre in mind for flute ensemble with soprano and flute soloists.

He reached out to Tadeu Coelho because he knew him from attending the University of North Carolina School for the Arts for high school. Coelho was immediately interested and, with Emi Ferguson's recommendation, contacted the New York Flute Club to help get together a

consortium that was organized by Jayn Rosenfeld, whom he met at a New York New Music Ensemble concert in 2021, where Emi Ferguson and Dan Druckman premiered his *Canto I* for flute and marimba.

*Cyan Lyricism* is a double concerto in which the soprano floats above the ensemble, singing alluring fragmented lines. At the same time, the solo flute responds to the texture in a contrasting, capricious, and flirtatious manner. The flute ensemble passes around trills, fluttertonguing, and tremolos to rhythmically accent the underlying harmonies.

Davis says he believes "the audience will hear a lot of impressionistic influences in the work. The textures and material, along with the

soprano, remind me of Debussy's orchestral works. This makes sense to an extent, considering just how important the flute was to the French composers of the early 20th century. I hope that the audience will be able to capture the essence of the painting that the work is based off. As I've said before, the compositions I've done in response to

Frankenthaler's work have gotten their general musical ideas from the makeup of her canvases."

Davis's new chamber work, *Cyan Lyricism*, premieres Dec. 15, 2024, at the Allen-Stevenson School, 32 East 78th St., at 5:30pm.

*Davis's sketchbooks consist of adjectives and other descriptive words such as 'bird-like,' 'angular,' or 'with spunk,' rather than pitches and rhythms.*

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*Tyson Gholston Davis (b. 2000), a Raleigh, N.C., native, currently attends the Juilliard School; he previously studied at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. His commissions include Eighth Blackbird, the Juilliard String Quartet, the New York New Music Ensemble and the American Embassy in Berlin/National Youth Orchestra.*

# Ensemble Launches a New Season



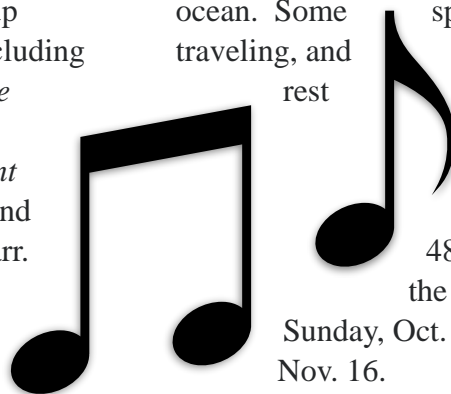
**Participants, left to right, front row seated or kneeling: Laura Pologe, Elizabeth LaBarbera, Alexis Leiderman, Ambika Bansal, Cora Reichert. Left to right, back row, standing: Javad Yaramadi, Karen Robbins, Doug Ramsdell, Courtney Hollingsworth, Roger Brooks, Lester Yu, Bette Druck, Iona Aibel, Gene Coleman, Lauren Kurtz, David Russell, Danielle Schussel, Chip Shelton, Bill Giannone, Gwen Mandell, Hannah Goldstein, Ian Barbour, Mark Vickers, Katie Soricelli, Stephen Josephs, Lish Lindsey.**

On Saturday Sept. 21 the NYFC Ensemble began its new 2024-2025 season with 26 (23 returning and 3 new) members participating at Studios 353 in Manhattan.

Director Mark Vickers led the group through a set of old and new pieces including *Scarborough Fair* (arr. Young), *Reverie* (arr. Ben-Meir), McGinty's *Masques*, McIntosh's *Diffusion and Light*, *Ancient Airs and Dances Suite No. 1*, mvts. 1 and 2 (arr. Jicha), *American Flute Salute* (arr. Holcombe), *A Musical Snuff Box* arranged by ensemble member Bill Giannone, and *Edelweiss* arranged by former co-director Denise Koncelik. Returning members miss Denise and wish her the best.

Within the group was NYFC president Lish Lindsey, sharing the deep, dark sounds of the contra-bass flute, a great addition to the ensemble.

The icebreaker question was "What was your favorite highlight of the summer?" Answers ranged from hiking in Europe to sitting back and enjoying a view of the ocean. Some spent time with family traveling, and some were happy to just rest at home.



The monthly rehearsals are held at Studios 353 at 353 W. 48th St., from 2:00-4:00; the next two dates will be Sunday, Oct. 20 and then Saturday Nov. 16.

To join the ensemble you must be a current member of the NY Flute Club. No audition is required. We accept all levels of players.

If you would like to participate, email Ensemble director Mark Vickers at [ensembles@nyfluteclub.org](mailto:ensembles@nyfluteclub.org)



*Villanueva, continued from page 1*

especially to the flute. I was just haunted!”

When he dove into the flute around age 16, he says, “Almost all flute players were influenced by flutists from the U.S. because Maestro Lozano, when he created the Mexico City Philharmonic, brought the strings from Eastern Europe and the brass and woodwinds from the U.S. But my teacher had just returned from Europe and he introduced me to Rampal’s recordings, as well as Nicolet’s, and especially to Karl-Heinz Zöller’s recordings of the Mozart concertos.

One of the best recordings he gave me was the Bach sonatas with Elaine Shaffer (Kincaid’s student), George Malcolm (clavecin) and Ambrose Gauntlett (viola da gamba). Shaffer played the way flutists are playing now, with almost no vibrato. All the expression was in the sound, in the intention and color, in a time where playing with omnipresent vibrato was characteristic of American and European flutists.”

Asked about his mission to bring Mexican composers to the forefront, Villanueva says, “When I came back to Mexico [after studying in Europe], almost everyone asked me why I didn’t stay in Paris. Even my teacher in Paris asked me to stay because I was already working as a teacher in a conservatoire but I told him: “You know, my work is not necessary here. I think that in my country I can do something meaningful.” When he returned to Mexico, he won the position at the Faculty of Music (UNAM) and started to work 100%.

“The first thing I noticed was that we needed new repertoire,” he says. “The great Mexican flutist Marisa Canales was already working with some composers, commissioning flute concertos and chamber music, so I decided to join her in this endeavor. I commissioned works from Mexican composers such as Eduardo Angulo, Eugenio Toussaint, Roberto Peña, René Torres, Hugo Rosales, Patricia Moya and many others.”

“Another thing I noticed is that Mexican flutists didn’t win orchestral auditions, only foreigners, and not because Mexicans weren’t at the level, but because they didn’t know how to prepare for a competition. In France, I used to participate in at

least four competitions per year, so when I returned to Mexico, I won my position at the University easily because of my training.”

In 2003, he created the National Flute Competition in Mexico. Additionally, he was asked by the Mexican National Flute Association to organize the National Flute Festival as well.

These two events gave him an overview of the whole country concerning the flute milieu. After 23 years of organizing this competition, almost all the positions in professional orchestras in Mexico are occupied by Mexican flutists, even when foreign flutists have participated in the auditions.

Just before the first National Flute Competition, he said to the teachers, “We all have something to learn here: The students have to learn to prepare for a competition. As teachers, we have to learn how to prepare them, and I myself have to learn how to organize a flute competition!”

“Being a musician in Mexican, Caribbean and Latin American countries is not easy. The resilience our musicians have demonstrated all along their careers is really inspiring. When I meet some of them

at a festival or a convention, we realize that we are the survivors because for every one of us, hundreds of flute players have had to abandon their playing. Making a recording in our countries is almost a miracle.”



**Miguel Ángel Villanueva**

**Miguel Ángel Villanueva**  
**Vanessa May-lok Lee, piano**

Sunday, Nov. 17, 2024, 5:30pm  
Mannes School of Music  
55 W. 13th St., NYC

**Program**

- Sonata Aída (2013).....Rodrigo Acevedo (b. 1992)
- Sonata (2017) .....Jorge Vidales (b. 1969)
- Leyendas del Quinto Sol (2022)
- ..... Eduardo Angulo (b. 1954)

# ADVICE CORNER

What’s the best flute playing or musical advice that you ever received from a teacher, colleague or friend?

Drop us a note at [newsletters@nyfluteclub.org](mailto:newsletters@nyfluteclub.org) so that we can share the wisdom with our readers in coming issues of the newsletter. We hope to make this a new column to appear regularly.



# Free Jazz Workshops



**In addition to being a jazz flutist, Chip Shelton, organizer of the workshops, is a saxophone player, vocalist, composer, educator and author.**

Flute Club Board Member Chip Shelton is initiating free monthly Jazz Flute Workshops. Shelton and experienced jazz flutists such as Lawrence Liggins and Robert Dick will coach club members (of varying abilities) on musical improvisation, as applied in the “Jazz” idiom during the two-hour live afternoon sessions. Workshop participants will perform publicly on occasion throughout the year, including an end-of-season concert.

Sessions will be held Sundays at Opera America, 330 7th Ave. @ 29th St., 7th floor, on Oct. 13, 2-4pm; Nov. 10, 4-6pm; Dec. 8, 2-4pm. And in 2025: Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 9, April 6, all at 2-4pm. To apply: Email [chipsheltonjazz@gmail.com](mailto:chipsheltonjazz@gmail.com) with the subject “Jazz Flute Workshop.”

## Call for Flute Fair Proposals

The Flute Fair program committee is seeking proposals for workshops and presentations for the 2025 NY Flute Fair: Creative Connections lecture recitals, interactive workshops, immersive performances and sessions designed to involve NYC’s culturally diverse musical community members of all ages.

We are looking for proposals for sessions that will encourage everyone to bring their flutes and play. Workshops and presentations should be no longer than 45 minutes.

The deadline for all submissions is Jan. 15, 2025; Please visit our website <https://www.nyfluteclub.org/> for information and an online proposal form. We are looking forward to hearing your ideas.

Performance-oriented proposals may be accepted on a limited basis. Accepted presenters and performers agree to appear at the 2025 New York Flute Fair at their own expense.

*Questions? Contact Flute Fair program chair  
Deirdre McArdle ([deirdremcardle49@gmail.com](mailto:deirdremcardle49@gmail.com)) or co-chair  
Jenn Forese ([jenn.forese@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.forese@gmail.com))*



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# Sandra Miller Brings Baroque Authenticity



Sandra Miller, right, makes suggestions on Baroque phrasing to Jolie Fitch during the Oct. 6 masterclass.

## 2024-2025 EVENTS

Oct. 6: **Sandra Miller**, concert 5:30 pm at Ernst C. Stiefel Hall, Mannes School of Music\*, 55 W 13th St., NYC

Oct. 14: **Lish Lindsey**, ‘Play With the President,’ online, 7pm

Oct. 17: **Kim Scott**, jazz improv, online, 7:00 pm

Nov. 17: **Miguel Ángel Villanueva**, 3:30 pm masterclass, 5:30pm concert at Mannes

Nov. 21: **Denis Savelyev**, Ukrainian pieces, online, 7 pm

Dec. 5: **Leonard Garrison** on Gaston Crunelle, online, 7:00 pm

Dec. 15: **Chamber music concert** featuring multiple performers and a premiere by **Tyson Gholston Davis**, performed by **Tadeu Coehlo**. 5:30 pm at the Allen-Stevenson School, 132 East 78th St.

Jan. 9, 2025: **Molly Gebrian** on the Neuroscience of Practicing, online, 7:00 pm

Jan. 26: **Robert Dick** 75th Birthday Celebration, 3:30pm masterclass, 5:30 pm concert, live at Mannes

Feb. 2.: World Flutes With **Tereasa Payne**, online, 5:30 pm Sunday

Feb. 20, 2025: **Laura Lentz**, Modal Flute Warmup, online, 7:00 pm

March 1: **Karl-Heinz Schutz**, in-person masterclass 4-6:00 pm, Mannes

March 2: **Karl-Heinz Schutz**, concert 5:30 pm, at Mannes

March 30: NY Flute Fair with **Gary Schocker**, live at Allen-Stevenson School, 132 East 78th St.

April 27: **NYFC competition winners concert**, live at Theatre at St. Jean, 150 East 76th St. Time TBD.

May 18: **NYFC annual meeting** and Ensemble program. Time and venue TBD.

**\*NOTE:** All in-person concerts are held on Sundays unless otherwise

noted. All concerts held at the Mannes

School of Music

are presented in collaboration with the Mannes School and held in Ernst C. Stiefel Hall, 55 W. 13th St., NYC, unless otherwise noted.

