

Piano Music of the Elements
Robbie Padilla, piano
Wednesday, July 21, 2021, 3:30
The Nottingham, Jamesville, NY

Two Summer Scenes (2018)

1. Sunshower
2. Sunshine

Rachel Lanik Whelan (*b. 1992*)

Lilac (2018)

Stephanie Ann Boyd (*b. 1990*)

“Raindrop” Prelude in D-flat, Op. 28, No. 15 (1839)

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Voiles (1909)

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Bells in the Wind (2020)

Robbie Padilla (*b. 1992*)

Jeux d’eau (1901)

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Danza ritual del fuego (1915; 1921)

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

Wade in the Water, Op. 59, No. 24 (1905)

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)



As an accomplished pianist, Robbie Padilla’s work spans the Central New York region and beyond. Padilla has been involved in a wide range of musical experiences from classical recitals to musical theatre productions as both a pit musician and music director. He regularly gives solo piano recitals and has ventured into giving online recitals to reach a larger audience. He collaborates with both experienced and upcoming vocalists and instrumentalists in both recitals and competitions.

Padilla is passionate and determined to both spread music to the next generation and keep classical music alive. He remains active as a board member in Syracuse-area music associations Central New York Association of Music Teachers and Civic Morning Musicals, a non-profit organization that has promoted Syracuse-area classical musicians for over 130 years. Padilla believes that, to keep classical music thriving, we must promote, in our students’ and our own performances, new music and works from composers representing the broad diversity of our society.

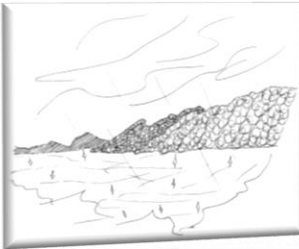
Robbie Padilla earned his Master of Music (2016) at Syracuse University's Setnor School of Music where he studied Piano Performance with Ida Tili-Trebicka. His undergraduate studies were in Music Education (2013) at SUNY Fredonia where he studied piano with Dr. Anne Kissel. Padilla also holds a Level II certification (2018) in Orff Schulwerk pedagogy from the Eastman School of Music.

Piano Music of the Elements

About the Composers and Their Music

Whelan: Two Summer Scenes

Composer [Rachel Lanik Whelan](#) (b. 1992) writes lyrical, honest, narrative-driven music. Much of her work is written in collaboration with living poets. A child of English majors, she strives to honor and elevate texts through melody, gesture, and repetition. Her instrumental music is an exploration in color and character and is full of delightfully unpredictable grooves.



From the composer: “*Two Summer Scenes* is a work inspired by Lago Maggiore in Italy. I spent two weeks on the shore of the lake during a particularly rainy July. During long breaks in the day, I would walk up the winding pathways to Campagnano for a view of the lake and the surrounding mountains.



...The first movement, *Sunshower*, depicts the sudden storms that would erupt from the sunny skies and descend upon the lake. Through the rain, the lake would still shimmer with light and fresh water. These brief storms would roll through the town and sunlight would return, dewy in the soft light of post-rain. The final descending figure of this movement depicts the storm fading away towards another direction. The second movement, *Sunshine*, plays with harmonic spectra to show the glittering glow of sunshine on the surface of the lake. Rippling figures imitate flashes of light and splashes of wave. This movement shows the warmth of summer, the glow of July in Italy, the brightness of the memory of a place.”

Boyd: Lilac

Michigan-born, Manhattan-based American composer [Stephanie Ann Boyd](#) (b. 1990) writes melodic music about women’s memoirs and the natural world for symphonic and chamber ensembles. Her work has been performed in nearly all 50 states and has been commissioned by musicians and organizations in 37 countries.



From the composer: “Lilacs are my favorite flower, this probably arising from a childhood spent running around in the back yard of my home that was graced by two gigantic lilac bushes whose blooms appeared for two weeks every May. It made sense to have lovely things in twos: after all, the back yard was a secret garden playspace only inhabited by two little Boyd girls as their childhood together ran its span. My little sister and I would take cuttings of the fragrant purple fronds and make small bouquets for our bedroom dresser but try as we might, our bouquets would always wilt and die within mere hours. Nonetheless, we kept making those tiny bouquets, year after year. In the next chapter of my life, I made prom corsages out of cuttings from those same bushes. In college, I would time my trips home from Chicago for the end of May so that I could be present for their period of blooming. Now that I live in Manhattan, I visit the bodega on the corner about once a week in May and June and spend too much money on bouquets of lilacs that hang on for a few days, pumping my apartment full of purple perfume and the memories that are now intrinsically bonded with it.”



Chopin: Raindrop Prelude

Frédéric François Chopin (1810-1849) was a Polish composer and virtuoso pianist of the Romantic period who wrote primarily for solo piano. He has maintained worldwide renown as a leading musician of his era, one whose "poetic genius was based on a professional technique that was without equal in his generation."

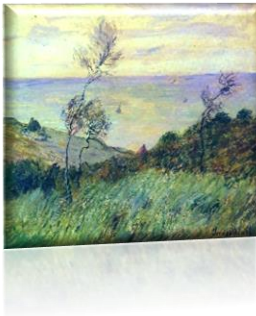


The *Prelude, Op. 28, No. 15*, was written as part of a larger set of 24 Preludes in each major and minor key. It is commonly known as the *Raindrop Prelude* due to its steadily repeated note that resembles the raindrop through calm and storm.

From George Sand: "He saw himself drowned in a lake. Heavy drops of icy water fell in a regular rhythm on his breast, and when I made him listen to the sound of the drops of water indeed falling in rhythm on the roof, he denied having heard it. He was even angry that I should interpret this in terms of imitative sounds. He protested with all his might – and he was right to – against the childishness of such aural imitations. His genius was filled with the mysterious sounds of nature, but transformed into sublime equivalents in musical thought, and not through slavish imitation of the actual external sounds."

Debussy: Voiles

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was a French composer. He is sometimes seen as the first Impressionist composer, although he vigorously rejected the term. He was among the most influential composers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



Voiles, the second of twelve *Préludes*, uses an unconventional whole-tone scale to create a now-familiar up-in-the-clouds sound. The title translates in English to *veils* or *sails* and elements of wind or rippling water can easily be imagined. The mood of this piece can represent a number of objects or vessels responding to and interacting with the wind.



Padilla: Bells in the Wind



Bells in the Wind integrates melody within a texture of sweeping arpeggios to depict images to interpret with our imaginations. There are virtuosic passages as well as a hard rock B section and improvised cadenzas. The arpeggios represent the wind and contained within are accented notes representing the bells that ring in an unsteady manner. Feelings of intensity and calm are depicted throughout the work. Artwork by [Rachel Lenihan](#).

Ravel: Jeux d'eau

Joseph Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) was a French composer, pianist and conductor. He is often associated with impressionism along with his elder contemporary Claude Debussy, although both composers rejected the term. In the 1920s and 1930s Ravel was internationally regarded as France's greatest living composer. Ravel was among the first composers to recognise the potential of recording to bring their music to a wider public. From the 1920s, despite limited technique as a pianist or conductor, he took part in recordings of several of his works; others were made under his supervision.



Jeux d'eau directly translates to English as *water games*, though is also loosely translated as *fountains*. This work explores the adventures in water and many of its possible settings. You may imagine yourself at a fountain, the water park, in a rainstorm, or even underwater in an ocean.

From the composer: "*Jeux d'eau*, appearing in 1901, is at the origin of the pianistic novelties which one would notice in my work. This piece, inspired by the noise of water and by the musical sounds which make one hear the sprays of water, the cascades, and the brooks, is based on two motives in the manner of the movement of a sonata—without, however, subjecting itself to the classical tonal plan."

Falla: Danza ritual del fuego

Manuel de Falla y Matheu (1876-1946) was a Spanish composer and pianist. Along with Isaac Albéniz, Francisco Tárrega, and Enrique Granados, he was one of Spain's most important musicians of the first half of the 20th century. He has a claim to being Spain's greatest composer of the 20th century.

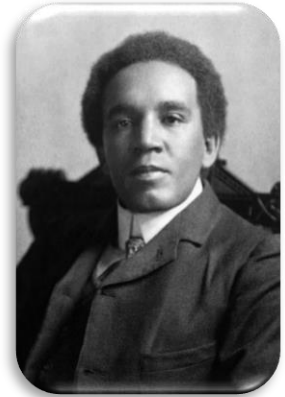


Danza ritual del fuego, or *Ritual Fire Dance*, comes from Falla's 1915 ballet *El amor brujo*, or *The Bewitched Love*. The work can be associated to 1910 Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumblebee* due to its fast, repetitive trills and ornaments. The piece was also influenced by the traditional, religious ceremony of a fire dance. This is a dance which was used to worship the fire-god, and in which people would often jump through or leap around the fire. In the ballet, a young Andalusian girl called Candela is haunted by the ghost of her dead husband. To get rid of him, the group makes a large circle around their campfire at midnight. Candela then performs the Ritual Fire Dance. This causes the ghost to appear, with whom she then dances. As they whirl around faster and faster, the ghost is drawn into the fire, making it vanish forever.



Coleridge-Taylor: Wade in the Water

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912) was an English composer and conductor. Of mixed-race birth, Coleridge-Taylor achieved such success that he was referred to by white New York musicians as the "African Mahler" when he had three tours of the United States in the early 1900s. Coleridge-Taylor was greatly admired by African Americans; in 1901, a 200-voice African-American chorus was founded in Washington, D.C., named the Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Society. Public schools were named after him in Louisville and Baltimore.



Wade in the Water is an American spiritual whose lyrics were first published in the 1901 collection entitled *New Jubilee Songs*. Coleridge-Taylor arranged a solo piano version of this song as the final work of his *Twenty-Four Negro Melodies*.

"Wade in the water.
Wade in the water, children.
Wade in the water.

God's gonna trouble the water."

Thank you for attending today's recital! And another thank-you to The Nottingham for the opportunity to play for you once again. It is always a pleasure. If you want to stay tuned for more of Robbie's performances, go to rpadillamusic.com.

