

Blue+Bob - Music of “Blue” Gene Tyranny and

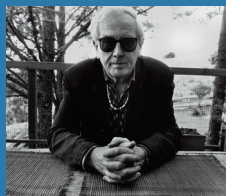
Other Minds® presents in cooperation with the
Center for Contemporary Music, Northeastern
University and Mills Performing Arts.



Sunday, September 7, 2025,
7:00 pm Littlefield Concert
Hall, Mills College at
Northeastern University.

Robert

Ashley



Sarah Cahill and Joseph Kubera, pianos.

Program

“Blue” Gene Tyranny (1945–2020)
Decertified Highway of Dreams (1991)

Robert Ashley (1930–2014)
Sonata (Christopher Columbus Crosses
to the New World in the Niña, the Pinta
and the Santa Maria Using Only Dead
Reckoning and a Crude Astrolabe)
(1959/1979/1985)

Sarah Cahill and Joseph Kubera, pianos

“Blue” Gene Tyranny
The Drifter (1994)

Joseph Kubera, piano

“Blue” Gene Tyranny
Spirit (1996/2002)

Sarah Cahill, piano

INTERMISSION

“Blue” Gene Tyranny
Nocturne With and Without Memory (1989)

Sarah Cahill, piano

Robert Ashley
Viva’s Boy (1991)
Details (2b) (1962)

“Blue” Gene Tyranny
A Letter from Home (2002)

Sarah Cahill and Joseph Kubera, pianos

Follow the QR code link for notes on the
individual pieces on tonight’s program,
photographs, score pages, and more.



More History in the Making at Other Minds

Cahill, Sarah.

Kubera, Joseph.

Our music reference sources
will enshrine these names in
the list of heroic performers
who have devoted their lifetimes
to collaborating with the most
innovative composers of
their times.

Robert Ashley and “Blue”
Gene Tyranny served for many
years throughout the 1970s
on the faculty of Mills College,
and it’s appropriate that we
celebrate their memory here in
this building where they held
sway with such profound and
inspirational influence. Their
work will be performed by Sarah
Cahill and Joseph Kubera who
are intimately familiar with the
composers’ music.

We’re overjoyed and honored
to bring you these legendary
advocates for the American
Experimental Tradition.

And thank you for your loyal
support of these artists and
this work.

Charles Amirkhanian

Artist Bios

Sarah Cahill, hailed as “a sterling pianist and an intrepid illuminator of the classical avant-garde” by *The New York Times*, has commissioned and premiered over seventy compositions for solo piano. Composers who have dedicated works to her include John Adams, Annea Lockwood, Terry Riley, Frederic Rzewski, Pauline Oliveros, Julia Wolfe, Roscoe Mitchell, and Ingram Marshall. She was named a 2018 Champion of New Music, awarded by the American Composers Forum (ACF). Recent performances include The Barbican Centre in London, The National Gallery of Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center, and an NPR Tiny Desk concert. Sarah’s radio show, *Revolutions Per Minute*, can be heard every Sunday evening from 6 to 8 pm on KALW 91.7 FM in San Francisco. She is on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory and is a regular pre-concert speaker with the San Francisco Symphony and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Praised in *The Wire* (UK) for his “instrumental athleticism, technical precision and conceptual lucidity,” and his “capacity to stretch limits and redefine horizons,” Joseph Kubera has been a leading new music pianist for the past four decades. Recently he played at De Singel in Antwerp, at the “Christian Wolff at 90” celebration in New York, and recorded piano music by Laurie Spiegel, Daniel Goode, and Lejaren Hiller. He has directed performances of Julius Eastman’s music in New York, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, and has worked closely with such luminaries as Morton Feldman, Julius Eastman, Robert Ashley, and La Monte Young. Composers who have written works for him include Larry Austin, Michael Byron, Anthony Coleman, Alvin Lucier, Roscoe Mitchell, and “Blue” Gene Tyranny. A longtime Cage advocate, Kubera has made definitive recordings of *Music of Changes* and the Concert for Piano and toured widely with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company at Cage’s invitation. He has worked with S.E.M. Ensemble, Steve Reich and Musicians, and myriad other ensembles in New York City.

Composer Bios

Robert Ashley holds an international reputation for his work in new forms of opera and multi-disciplinary projects. His operatic works are distinctly original in style, and distinctly American in their subject matter and in their use of American language. Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan on March 28, 1930, Robert Ashley was educated at the University of Michigan and at the Manhattan School of Music. During the 1960s, Ashley organized the ONCE Festival, the annual festival of contemporary performing arts in Ann Arbor. In 1969, Ashley was appointed Director of the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College, where he organized the first public-access music and media facility. In 1980, The Kitchen commissioned *Perfect Lives*, an opera for television in seven half-hour episodes. It is widely considered to be the precursor of “music-television.” Ashley was at work on two new operas when he died: *Crash*, which was premiered at the 2014 Whitney Biennial, and *Quicksand*, an “opera-novel,” first released in novel form by Burning Books in 2011, recorded by Ashley, and completed by his collaborators, Tom Hamilton, David Moodey, and Steve Paxton, for its premiere in 2016.

“Blue” Gene Tyranny, born Joe Gantic in 1945 in San Antonio, Texas and then adopted as Robert Nathan Sheff, lived a life dominated by music. Blue’s approach to music is best demonstrated through his own words: “Music is my way of being in the world. It teaches subtle feelings, natural growth, social interaction, and more. Music is the art of time passing filled with motion, emotion, locomotion, love of sound, and much more in bits and pieces. Music takes care of two basic needs that last throughout a lifetime: the need to relate to others and the need for freedom.” During the ‘60s and ‘70s, he toured with jazz and rock groups (Carla Bley Band, Iggy Pop, the Prime Movers Blues Band, etc.). From 1971 to 1982, as a Lecturer and Instructor in Music and served on graduate committees in the Music Department of Mills College in Oakland, California. He also worked as a technician at the Center for Contemporary Music. He moved to New York in 1983, where he was a self-employed composer-performer of solo and group concerts, audio consultancy, film soundtracks, and commissioned work. “Blue” Gene Tyranny died on December 12, 2020, in Long Island City, New York at the age of 75; his death was brought on by complications from diabetes.

Upcoming Other Minds Events

OCTOBER 16–19, 2025

OTHER MINDS FESTIVAL 29

Music by Pamela Z, Samuel Adams, Kristine Tjøgersen, Putu Septa,
Peter Garland, Zeena Parkins, Ingram Marshall, James Tenney;
choreography by Nancy Karp
Brava Theater, San Francisco, Tickets on sale now

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025, 7:30 PM

THE NATURE OF MUSIC 19

AND NO BIRDS SING: A REQUIEM FOR THE EARTH

Margaret Leng Tan, piano and toy piano

Littlefield Concert Hall, Mills College at Northeastern University

Tickets on sale now

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2026, 7:30 PM

FELDMAN AT 100: TRIADIC MEMORIES

Amy Williams, piano

Location to be announced

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026, 7:30 PM

A LOTTA SONATAS

Dennis Russell Davies and Maki Namekawa, piano four hands

Littlefield Concert Hall, Mills College at Northeastern University, Oakland

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