

# ZOFO PLAYS TERRY RILEY





## Etude from the Old Country

From *The Heaven Ladder, Book 5*, Comissioned by Sarah Cahill [13:04]

## Jaztine

From *The Heaven Ladder, Book 5*, Comissioned by Sarah Cahill [9:06]

## Tango Doble Ladiado

From *The Heaven Ladder, Book 5*, Comissioned by Sarah Cahill [3:21]

## Half-Wolf Dances Mad In Moonlight

Commissioned by the Kronos Quartet, Arranged by ZOFO [7:21]

## Simone's Lullaby

From *The Heaven Ladder, Book 7*, Commissioned by Gloria Cheng, Arranged by ZOFO [5:56]

## G Song

Commissioned by the Kronos Quartet, Arranged by ZOFO [9:44]

## Praying Mantis Rag

Commissioned by ZOFO [3:44]

## Waltz for Charismas

From *The Heaven Ladder, Book 5*, Comissioned by Sarah Cahill [4:39]

## Cinco de Mayo

From *The Heaven Ladder, Book 5*, Comissioned by Sarah Cahill [12:26]

Total time: [1:09:16]

# ZOFO

“...jaw-dropping awesome!” —SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

“...energetically and electrifyingly out of this world” —  
BACHTRACK

“One of the most enthralling piano duets of today’s millennial generation” —SAN FRANCISCO CLASSICAL VOICE

Since joining forces as a professional duo in 2009, internationally acclaimed solo pianists Eva-Maria Zimmermann and Keisuke Nakagoshi – ZOFO - have electrified audiences from Carnegie Hall to Tokyo, Japan with their dazzling artistry and outside-the-box thematic programming for piano-four-hands. This GRAMMY®-nominated, prize-winning Steinway Artist Ensemble – one of only a handful of duos worldwide devoted exclusively to piano duets – is blazing a bold new path for piano-four-hands groups by focusing on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century repertoire and by commissioning new works from noted composers each year.

ZOFO, which is shorthand for 20-finger orchestra (ZO=20 and FO=finger orchestra), also performs heart-pumping duet arrangements of famous orchestral pieces such as Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* (found on *Mind Meld*, DSL-92151) exploring the realms in which many composers first experienced their symphonic visions.

ZOFO is based in San Francisco, California.



# Terry Riley

Born June 24, 1935 in Colfax, California, composer and performer Terry Riley is one of the founders of what is now known as music's Minimalist movement. With his seminal composition "In C" (1964), he pioneered a new concept in Western musical form based on structured interlocking repetitive patterns. The composition's creation was to impact and change the course of 20th century music. The influence of Riley's hypnotic, multi-layered, polymetric, brightly orchestrated eastern flavored improvisations and compositions can be heard in the works of prominent composers such as Steve Reich, Philip Glass and John Adams, and in the music of rock groups such as The Who, The Soft Machine, Tangerine Dream, Curved Air and many others. His compositions set the stage for the prevailing interest in a new tonality.

Riley studied at Shasta College, San Francisco State University and the San Francisco Conservatory before earning an MA in composition at the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied with Seymour Shifrin and Robert Erickson. It was while he was at UC Berkeley that Riley met La Monte Young in 1960, with whom he established a lifelong association. Riley and Young, while working with influential dancer Anna Halprin at this time, honed many of their groundbreaking ideas. During a sojourn to Europe from 1962-64, Riley collaborated with members of the Fluxus group, playwright Ken Dewey and trumpeter Chet Baker, and was involved in street theater and other happenings. He continued to travel frequently around Europe throughout the 1960's, absorbing musical influences and

supporting himself by playing in piano bars.

In 1965 Riley moved to New York and joined La Monte Young's "Theater of Eternal Music." In 1967 he began a collaboration with visual artist Robert Benson and inaugurated the first of many "All Night Concerts" at the Philadelphia College of Art, during which he performed mostly improvised music from sunset until sunrise. Terry continued to put on these concerts for several years, to which people came with sleeping bags, family and friends. In 1970, Riley became a disciple of Pandit Pran Nath, a master of Indian classical voice, and made his first of many trips to India to study with him. Riley appeared frequently in concert with the influential singer as tempura, table and vocal accompanist until Pran Nath's death in 1996, and continues to appear regularly in concerts of Indian Classical Music as well as conducting raga singing seminars.

After joining the faculty of Mills College in Oakland, California in 1971, Riley met David Harrington, founder and leader of the Kronos Quartet, and began a long association with the group. Over the course of his career, Terry has composed 13 string quartets for the ensemble, the concerto "The Sands" (1990), the multimedia choral work commissioned by NASA, "Sun Rings" (2003), and "The Cusp of Magic" (2004) with pipa. The Kronos recording of his epic five-quartet cycle, "Salome Dances for Peace" was selected as the Classical Album of the Year by *USA Today* and was nominated for a GRAMMY® Award.

In addition to Kronos, many influential performers

and ensembles have commissioned and played Terry's works, including The Rova Saxophone Quartet, the ARTE Quartet, Array Music, Zeitgeist, the Steven Scott Bowed Piano Ensemble, John Zorn, Sarah Cahill, The California E.A.R. Unit, guitarist David Tanenbaum, drummer George Marsh, bassist Bill Douglass, the Assad brothers, Cello Octet Conjunto Ibérico, the Crash Ensemble, Abel Steinberg-Winant Trio, Pianist Werner Bartschi, Gloria Cheng, the Calder Quartet, the Arditti Quartet and the Amati Quartet, Alter Ego, Sounds Bazaar, Paul Drescher, singer Amelia Cuni, The Bang on a Can All Stars and guitarist Gyan Riley.

Listed in the *London Sunday Times* as "one of the 1000 makers of the 20th Century," Terry continues to compose, teach, and tour as solo pianist and accompanist. He currently resides in the greater San Francisco Bay Area.

References:

[terryriley.net](http://terryriley.net)

[musicsalesclassical.com](http://musicsalesclassical.com)

[last.fm/music/Terry+Riley](https://last.fm/music/Terry+Riley)

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry\\_Riley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry_Riley)

# An Interview With ZOFO

**This is an "All Riley" album. How did that idea come about, and when?**

**Keisuke:** We always wanted to play all of his piano-four-hand pieces, since four years ago when we started with "Cinco de Mayo." We immediately felt a deep connection to this piece and wanted to explore everything else there was. I think an All Riley album makes sense, because the five piano-four-hand pieces from *The Heaven Ladder, Book 5* commissioned by Sarah Cahill are all very different from each other, and so are the other four pieces on the CD.

**When did you first play a Terry Riley piece, either as a soloist, with other ensembles, or together as ZOFO? Can you talk about the emotions you felt the first time you played Riley?**

**Keisuke:** "In C" with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players was my first Riley piece. I was really astonished how different his piano-four-hand music was from it.

**Eva:** For me it was "Cinco de Mayo." We had a lot of fun with it right away.

**How did your collaboration with Terry Riley begin? Who approached whom?**

**Eva:** We're very grateful to our friend Katrina Krinsky for connecting us with Terry. She's very close to the Rileys and has been playing the "pulse" for "In C" over many years. She gave us the score for "Cinco de Mayo" after one of our first ZOFO concerts and told Terry about us. We sent him a concert recording of "Cinco" and he then emailed us, saying how happy he was with it. He also sent us the four remaining pieces from *The Heaven Ladder, Book 5*. We were in heaven!





### **What do you find most compelling about Riley's work?**

**Eva:** His music talks to me in a way that I only have experienced with Schubert and Brahms, or Bent Sorensen, a Danish composer. I feel a deep connection to his music. Preparing for this album, these pieces became the sound track of my life.

**Keisuke:** It's funny - usually we don't fight so much as a duo. But preparing for this album was challenging in this regard...We sometimes had completely opposite ideas and felt very strongly about them. I think it just shows how much this music engages us in a very personal way.

### **How did you meet Mr. Riley?**

**Keisuke:** Katrina Krinsky invited us to a concert of Terry's, with his son Gyan, at Yoshi's San Francisco. She introduced us to him after the concert.

**Eva:** Of course I knew how famous he is. Many people get distorted by fame and can't talk but about themselves. But I was pleasantly surprised how humble and approachable Terry was, and how interested in his counterpart.

### **Did you work closely with Terry Riley in preparation for this album, and if so, how?**

**Eva:** When we started preparing for the album Terry said "hold on," and revised two pieces: "Etude from the Old Country" and "Jaztine." They sound quite different now.

**Keisuke:** We kept sending him rehearsal or concert recordings. Then in October 2014 we met for a run-through of all the music. We thought it would take forever, but Terry only had a few things to say, guiding us to find the soul of each piece. He said he trusted our musical instincts and that we should feel free.

**Eva:** For me to see Terry perform also played a big role in how I approached this recording session. He is so totally free when he performs, improvising over his own ideas. It's so much about the moment and the essence of the music. This is so healthy for me as a perfectionist and somehow this time when stepping into the recording studio I was much less stressed out than usual...

### **Some of the pieces on the album had their start in other formats, i.e. the two pieces that were composed for the Kronos Quartet. How well do you know the string quartet versions of these pieces? When did Riley complete the four-hands transcriptions, and were they done specifically for ZOFO?**

**Eva:** Terry's original four-hand pieces only made up 45 minutes, so there was a lot of room on the album for more music and so we decided to arrange some pieces. Together with Terry we picked "G Song" and "Half-Wolf Dances Mad in Moonlight," both string quartets. Keisuke made the arrangements for piano-four-hands and of course he knows the original versions very well. He took a lot of liberties in "G Song," a bit less in "Half-Wolf Dances." Terry then looked over the scores and added a few things here and there. It was a joint effort...



**Keisuke:** And Eva arranged “Simone’s Lullaby” which is originally a piece for piano solo from *The Heaven Ladder, Book 7*, commissioned by Gloria Cheng.

**Were there any particular challenges when arranging these pieces, and if so, which ones?**

**Keisuke:** Well, one of the main challenges in general when arranging for one-piano-four-hands is how to tackle sections where a lot happens in the same range...or how to make it work when lines cross. This is no problem for a string quartet, as they each have their own instrument. But we have to share one keyboard. Especially in “G Song” there are many sections where a lot of music happens in the same register, for example one line ascending, one staying in place, one jumping up and down, and one playing a beautiful slow melody through the jungle of the others. This means that we have to create a very specific choreography resulting in sometimes three hands on top of each other, not only sharing the length of the keyboard, but also the width of the keys. The challenge is also to still keep the transparency of the music. Sometimes I had to leave out some stuff and supplement with new but similar ideas. Sometimes it makes sense to play certain lines an octave higher or lower than in the original score, but this is not an easy fit-all solution.

**When did you commission “Praying Mantis Rag”?**

**Eva:** We asked Terry to write a piece for us on kind of short notice, but we asked for only three minutes and he accepted happily.

**Riley’s 80th birthday is coming up in June 2015. Was this one of the motivating forces behind your decision to record these pieces now?**

**Keisuke:** An 80th birthday present for Terry!



# Eva-Maria Zimmermann

***“Excellent performance...flawless technique, sensitive touch, dynamic and expressive.”***

—DER BUND, SWITZERLAND

***“Eva-Maria Zimmermann almost blew out the candles with her driving, assured energy.”***

—SAN FRANCISCO CLASSICAL VOICE

Dynamic Swiss pianist Eva-Maria Zimmermann maintains a robust career in Europe and the United States, offering performances that are “breathtakingly intense” (Der Bund) and “passionate and deeply expressive” (Berner Oberlander). Her solo appearances involve recitals as well as concerto performances with major symphonies, including the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.

Winner of the prestigious Rotary International Ambassadorial Scholarship, Ms. Zimmermann has appeared at international festivals worldwide, including the “Festival Piano en Saintonge” France, the “Sommerfestspiele Murten” Switzerland, and San Francisco’s “Other Minds Festival of New Music.” A graduate with highest honors from the Conservatory of Geneva, Eva-Maria has studied with many distinguished musicians - Leon Fleisher, György Sebök, Leonard Hokanson, Tomasz Herbut and Dominique Merlet, among others.

Eva-Maria has been a faculty member of the University of San Francisco and currently teaches in the music program at the Nueva School in Hillsborough, CA, founded by Sir Yehudi Menuhin. She resides in San Francisco, California.

# Keisuke Nakagoshi

***“A standing ovation was the reward for a stunning performance.”***

—CLASSICAL SONOMA

***“...remarkable perfection...”***

—FRANKENBERGER ZEITUNG, GERMANY

***“...wonderfully sonorous, plangent pianism...extreme musicality and warmth.”***

—SAN FRANCISCO CLASSICAL VOICE

Keisuke Nakagoshi began his piano studies at the age of ten, arriving in the United States from Japan at the age of 18. Mr. Nakagoshi earned his Bachelors degree in Composition and Masters degree in Chamber Music from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Graduating as the recipient of multiple top awards, Keisuke was selected to represent the SFCM for the Kennedy Center’s Conservatory Project, a program featuring the most promising young musicians from major conservatories across the United States.

Mr. Nakagoshi has performed to acclaim on prestigious concert stages across the United States, including the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, and Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco. He has received training from some of the most celebrated musicians of our time - Emanuel Ax, Gilbert Kalish, Menahem Pressler, Robert Mann, Paul Hersh, David Zinman - and enjoys collaborating with other accomplished musicians such as Lucy Shelton, Ian Swensen, Jodi Levitz, Robin Sutherland, Lev Polyakin, Axel Strauss, Mark Kosower, Gary Schocker and also conductors such as Alasdair Neale, George Daugherty, Nicole Palement, Michael Tilson Thomas and Herbert Blomstedt.

Mr. Nakagoshi is Pianist-in-Residence at The San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the award-winning Opera Parallèle.



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**ZOFO**  
**Plays Terry Riley**  
DSL-92189

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**Editing Engineers:** Daniel Shores, Dan Merceruio  
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**Piano:** Steinway Model D #590904 (New York)  
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**Booklet Notes:** Ellen Beveridge

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