

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

**JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY.**

School of Music

*presents*

*the faculty recital of*

**Dr. Eric Ruple, piano**

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

7 pm

Recital Hall



There will be one 15-minute intermission.

## Biographies

Steinway Artist **Eric Ruple** is on the piano faculty at James Madison University. He enjoys an active career as a solo and chamber musician, including several performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC and Steinway Hall in New York. For a number of years, he was pianist for the Virginia Symphony Orchestra and played with the VSO Jazz Ensemble. His recording “Musica Incognito” with hornist and JMU colleague Ian Zook has earned unanimously positive reviews from several national and international publications. A second CD with violinist Maureen Yuen was released in 2023. He has most recently performed with violinist Brendon Elliott, both in Virginia and on WQXR: National Public Radio, New York City. He is a member of the American Liszt Society and has been an adjudicator in Hong Kong. He received his doctoral degree from the University of Michigan. He twice served as Interim Director for the JMU School of Music and will be retiring from JMU in Spring of 2026.

### **Gabriela Ortiz**

“The vertiginous technological developments of recent times have had an overwhelming impact in all fields of music making. The ways of listening to music, new collaborative possibilities, the infinite arsenal of compositional tools available and the direct contact with the media has driven us towards an eclectic universe of sound languages which define today’s musical world. For myself, I aim to refine day by day those techniques which facilitate my imperative need to communicate through music.

I grew up surrounded by Latin-American music and love dancing salsa, which is something that comes natural to me. Writing this piece, I tried to let this joy filter through in my writing so that it would be a personal portrayal of me and not just a literal approach to salsa. But I trained as a classical pianist and also love Ravel, Bartók and Stravinsky.”

from *Salsa Nueva*, ed. Elena Riu (2004)

### **Tania León**

“Like everything in life, we are all reinventing ourselves constantly. Cultures have emerged from the influences of people travelling around the planet. The same could be said for the evolution of music. In a hundred years from now, we might have a hybrid developed from the pollination that is going on in the world of music at this moment. I draw my inspiration from my ancestors and all of those I have been able to learn about or learn from in all walks of life. My early influences were Bach and Cervantes. The piano was the first instrument I touched as a baby – Grandma gave me a toy piano before I was one year old, I began my music studies, on the piano, at four. In *Tumbáo*, I enjoyed being able to release some of my most vital roots into my compositional roots.”

from *Salsa Nueva*, ed. Elena Riu (2004)

### **Margaret Bonds**

Composer, pianist, and teacher Margaret Bonds first studied composition and piano with noted composer Florence B. Price. She studied at Northwestern University and the Juilliard School. She was the first African American to solo with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. As a highly successful composer, Bonds wrote for orchestra, choir, chamber ensemble, piano, and voice. Little of her piano music was written down since she was a master improvisor and played most of her works from memory. Bonds received numerous awards during her lifetime for her contributions to the music of African Americans. Her piano music includes *Spiritual Suite* consisting of *Valley of the Bones*, *The Bells*, and *Troubled Water*.

from *Piano Music of Africa and the African Diaspora*, ed. William Chapman Nyaho (2008).

## A rough synopsis of Liszt's Petrarch Sonnets for piano (Humphrey Searle)

*Sonnet 47* – “Blessed by the day, the month, the year, the season, the time, the hour, the moment, the fair country, the place where I was put in thrall by two beautiful eyes which bind me fast”

*Sonnet 104* – “I find no peace, but do not want war; I fear and hope, I burn and yet am ice; I soar to heaven and lie in earth; I hold nothing, and embrace the whole world...To this state, Lady, am I come through you”

*Sonnet 123* – “I saw angelic grace on earth and heavenly beauty unmatched in this world...And I saw tears spring from two bright eyes which often have put the sun to shame, heard words uttered with such sighs as to move mountains and stay the rivers...And heaven in that harmony was so intent that not a leaf on the bough was seen to stir, such sweetness had filled the air and the winds”

## Program

Piano Sonata in C Minor, Op. 13 *Pathétique*  
Grave – Allegro di molto e con brio  
Adagio cantabile  
Rondo: Allegro vivace

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

from *Années de pèlerinage II: Italie*  
*Sonetto 47 del Petrarca*  
*Sonetto 104 del Petrarca*  
*Sonetto 123 del Petrarca*

Franz Liszt  
(1811-1886)

*Suy Muy-Key* (2004)

Gabriela Ortiz  
(b. 1964)

*Tumbáo* (2005)

Tania León  
(b. 1943)

*Troubled Water* (1967)

Margaret Bonds  
(1913-1972)

Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 109  
Vivace ma non troppo  
Prestissimo  
Gesang mit innigster Empfindung (variations)

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

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Thank you for attending this School of Music performance, we appreciate your support! The QR code below will take you to a page where you can donate to the Marlon Foster Scholarship. Marlon Foster ('82, '95) served in the United States Air Force, taught in Harrisonburg City Public Schools for 26 years, and taught percussion in the JMU School of Music. Marlon was awarded Teacher of the Year from Harrisonburg City Public Schools, and he was inducted into the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association's Hall of Fame.

