

ISABELLA
STEWART GARDNER
MUSEUM

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**The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Continues
Thursday Night Music**

A New Series of Concerts Held on Thursday Nights at Calderwood Hall

**October 29: Georg Friedrich Haas's *in vain*
Performed by Alarm Will Sound, Conducted by Alan Pierson**



Alarm Will Sound, photo by Michael Clayville. Press photos available [here](#).

Thursday, October 29, 2026 at 7 pm
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum | Calderwood Hall | 25 Evans Way | Boston, MA
Tickets: www.gardnermuseum.org/about/music

BOSTON, MA – The **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum** continues its bold new concert series, **Thursday Night Music**, curated by *Abrams Curator of Music* **George Steel** and held on select Thursday evenings. Thursday Night Music brings a different energy to the concert hall than the afternoon performances of the Museum's Weekend Concert Series, featuring edgier, more experimental work. With no intermissions, open seating, and a relaxed atmosphere, these single-set performances offer immersive and adventurous listening experiences. All concerts take place in the Museum's extraordinary Calderwood Hall—a 300-seat “sonic cube” with three levels of balconies

designed so that 80% of seats are front row, creating a uniquely intimate and intense acoustic environment.

The next Thursday Night Music concert on **October 29, 2026** features the kinetic ensemble **Alarm Will Sound** conducted by **Alan Pierson** performing **Georg Friedrich Haas's** masterpiece *in vain*, a 70-minute work for 24 players, much of which is played in complete darkness. Haas wrote *in vain* in 2000 in response to the rise of far-right parties in his native Austria in 1999. The piece is described as a “modern masterpiece” by Alex Ross in his influential book *The Rest is Noise*.

“*in vain* is Haas’s reflection on this situation: music in which peace is repeatedly achieved, only to again and again unravel. The work begins with a maelstrom of descending notes and dissonant, unsettled harmonies which eventually settles into a static and dark place,” writes Alan Pierson in his notes for this performance. “The darkness here is not merely musical—the opening’s dissonant harmonies freezing into slowly diverging unisons—but also literal: This is the first of two sections of the work performed in darkness. Haas uses darkness to catalyze novel kinds of listening and playing: With the players unable to see their music, the conductor, or one another, Haas had to develop unconventional ways for musicians to play together.”

Georg Friedrich Haas is one of the major European composers of his generation. His music synthesizes in a highly original way the Austrian tradition of grand orchestral statement with forward-looking interests in harmonic color and microtonal tuning that stem from both French spectralism and a strand of American experimentalism. The result is an exploratory, uncompromising music that is also sensuously attractive. His music appeals to unusually diverse constituencies, from avant-garde composers for its microtonal investigations to casual listeners for its spacious forms and euphonious harmony. Haas has been on Columbia University’s composition faculty since 2013.

Alarm Will Sound is a 20-member band committed to innovative performances and recordings of today’s music. They have established a reputation for performing demanding music with energetic skill in the world’s leading concert halls. Their performances have been described as “equal parts exuberance, nonchalance, and virtuosity” by *The Financial Times* and as “a triumph of ensemble playing” by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. *The New York Times* reports that Alarm Will Sound is “one of the most vital and original ensembles on the American music scene.” The group has an extensive discography, and in 2026, won the Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance for their recording of Donnacha Dennehy’s *Land Of Winter*.

Alarm Will Sound’s performance of Georg Friedrich Haas’s *in vain* is made possible with the friendly support of the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation.

Ticketing Information

Tickets are available at gardnermuseum.org/about/music or by calling the Box Office at 617 278 5156. For additional information including about accessibility, please contact boxoffice@isgm.org.

Performances take place in Calderwood Hall at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (25 Evans Way, Boston, MA).

About Music at the Gardner

George Steel’s music programming for the Museum continues founder and legendary arts patron Isabella Stewart Gardner’s vision of bringing together musicians and audiences for inspiring gatherings. Dating to 1927, the Gardner’s Weekend Concert Series is the longest running museum music program in the country. Much like Isabella Stewart Gardner did in her time, Steel champions

unknown repertoire and embraces new works, creates connections and builds community among musicians, and supports them by presenting them in new endeavors and collaborations. His programming also frequently draws on the history of the Gardner Museum, featuring instruments from the Museum's collection and music by composers who were associated with its founder. In honoring Isabella Stewart Gardner's musical legacy, Music at the Gardner remains strongly committed to broadening the repertoire of music presented to include previously overlooked and marginalized composers as well as performers of all backgrounds.

About the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum invites you to escape the ordinary in a magical setting where art and community come together to inspire new ways of envisioning our world. Embodying the fearless legacy of its founder, the Museum offers a singular invitation to explore the past through a contemporary lens, creating meaningful encounters with art and joyful connections for all. Modeled after a Venetian palazzo, unforgettable galleries surround a luminous Courtyard and are home to masters such as Rembrandt, Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo, Whistler, and Sargent. The Renzo Piano Wing provides a platform for contemporary artists, musicians, and scholars and serves as an innovative venue where creativity is celebrated in all of its forms.

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum • 25 Evans Way, Boston, MA 02115 • Hours: Open Weekends from 10 am to 5 pm, Weekdays from 11 am to 5 pm, and Thursdays until 9 pm. Closed Tuesdays. • General admission: Adults \$25; Seniors \$22; Students \$15; Free Thursdays from 5 – 9 pm and for members, children 17 and under, and everyone named Isabella • Information: 617 566 1401 • Box Office: 617 278 5156 • www.gardnermuseum.org

Thursday Night Music at the Gardner is sponsored by Barbara and Amos Hostetter.

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