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TAMMY ABBOTT News-Press and Leader

Pianist Arman Keyvanian and cellist Janice Foy practice for the Friends of the Alex benefit recital at the Brand Library recital hall.

Classical friends unite

New work premiere included with classics at Friends of the Alex fifth annual benefit recital.

By Joyce Rudolph
News-Press and Leader

Pianist Arman Keyvanian has put together a concert with friends for friends.

When the 20-year-old Glendale resident was asked by the Friends of the Alex to coordinate a recital for their upcoming benefit, he went through his contact list and came up with three musicians he enjoys playing music with, he said.

He met Glendale Symphony Orchestra cellist Janice Foy after he debuted with the orchestra in 2004. They found they click musically and they share the same quirky sense of humor.

He's worked with the other performers, violinist Adis Gabrielyan and soprano Molly McKnight, on other projects, but this is the first time they will play together in front of an audience, Keyvanian said.

The criteria he used to choose the group included a balance of tone quality, musicianship and personalities he thought would get along, he said.

"I thought that this group would be the best," he said.

FYI

WHAT: Friends of the Alex offers "An Evening of Classical Music with Friends"

WHEN: Reception and silent auction from 6:30 to 8 p.m., recital 8 to 9 p.m. May 17

WHERE: Brand Library Gallery and Recital Hall, Brand Park, 1601 W. Mountain St., Glendale

TICKETS: \$50

CONTACT: Alex Theatre Box Office (818) 243-2539 and www.alextheatre.org

There are three styles of composition in this recital — chamber music, some vocal pieces and some solo instrumental pieces.

The concert will feature works of composers Alkan, Haydn, Mozart, Fibich and Chopin and two Armenian works for trio written by Spendarian and Babajanian. But, Keyvanian is most excited about performing two world-premiere works by Glendale contemporary composer Shahnour Nazaretian titled "Rebirth" and "The Dream."

What makes Nazaretian unique is he doesn't know how to read or write music, Keyvanian said.

"He's quite educated in listening to music, and has an extremely rich ear," he said. "He has about 400 tapes of works of classical music he's taped from the radio."

Nazaretian can just sit at the



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Going over their music are pianist Arman Keyvanian and cellist Janice Foy who will play for "An Evening of Classical Music with Friends" on May 17.

piano, hear the melody in his head and then play it, Keyvanian said.

Nazaretian has filled about 10 tapes of his own material, and for this concert Keyvanian has transcribed two of them for his fellow musicians.

"He's a very humble man," he said. "Much like a composer you'd meet in the 1800s. He's easy to talk to and extremely helpful. He was ecstatic we were going to premiere his

music."

And Nazaretian's music doesn't sound like anyone else's, Keyvanian said.

"It's gorgeous, relaxing," he said. "The audience will get a glimpse of what his body of work is composed of. It's romantic. The music is simple, not complex, but very close to the heart, very tender."

Nazaretian is very appreciative that the group will be premiering his work, Foy

said.

"He's 83," she said. "I suggested he talk to the audience about his music. He's had an interesting experience. He'll talk about what inspired him to write his music."

The fundraiser, which benefits the Alex Theatre in Glendale, will begin with a reception and silent auction followed by the recital said

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