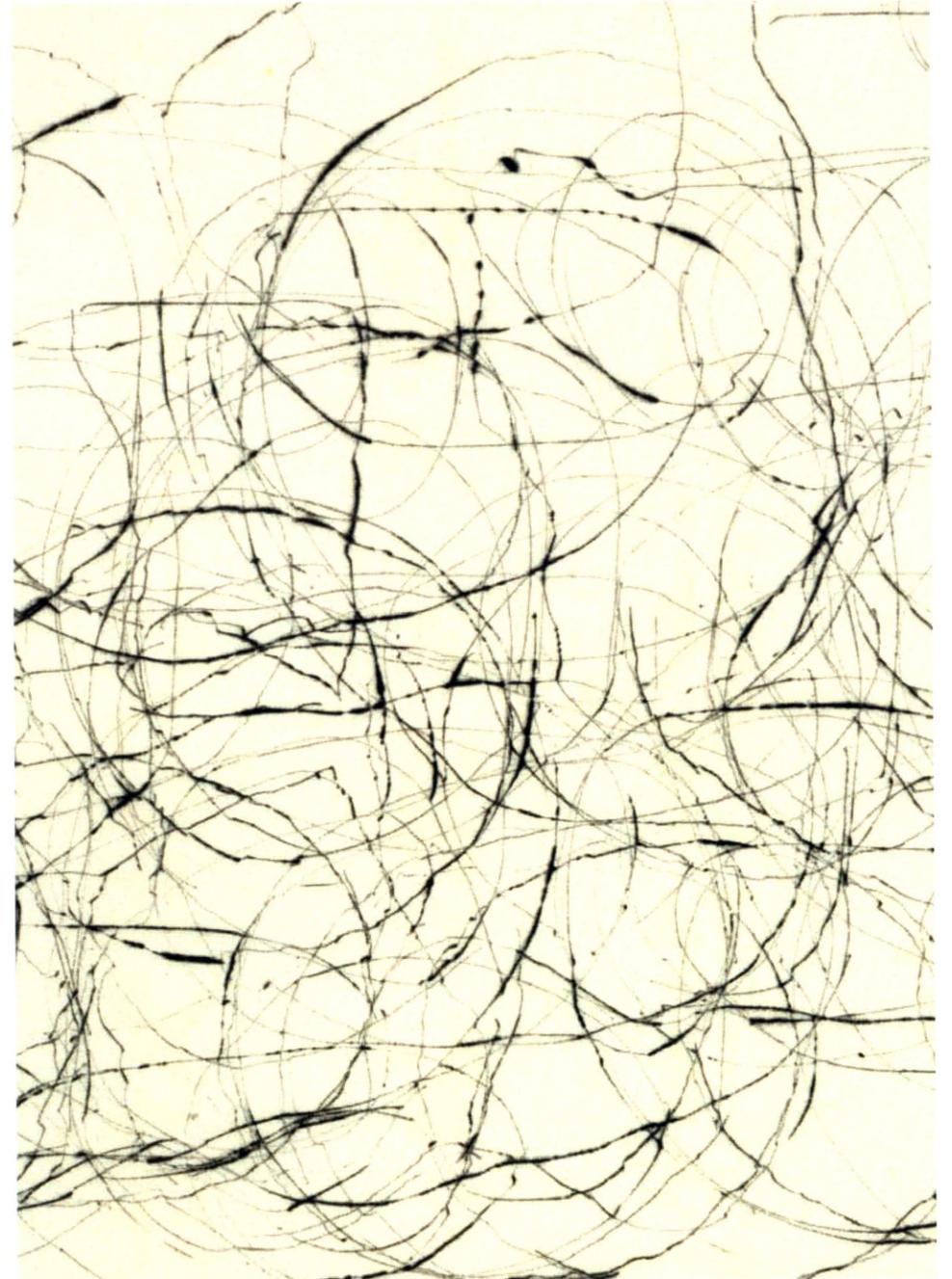




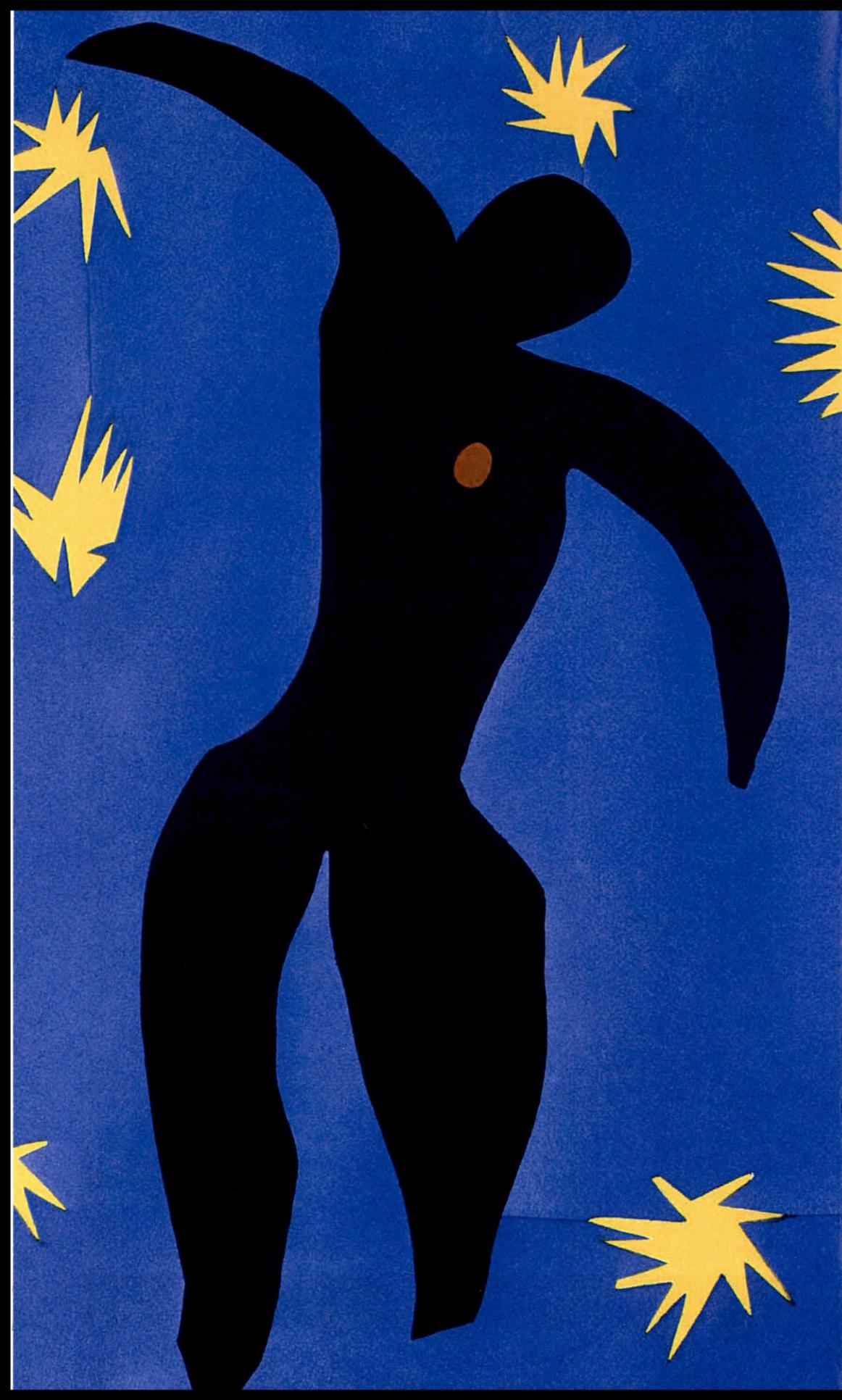
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66TH AMERICAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

MARCH 8 - 22, 2015 • PERSONAL VISIONS

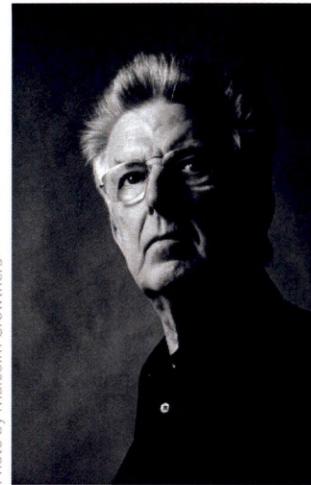


NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART



WELCOME

Photo by Malcolm Crowthers



“We occasionally catch a glimpse...”

One of the most distinctive aspects of American music over the past century has been the presence of arresting, sometimes quirky personal visions in our creative landscape. They are to be found in the work of women and men, in the native-born and others who emigrated here from all parts of the world. They represent all ages and stylistic persuasions. At the time of our “cultural ignition” in the early twentieth century, composer Charles Ives once described Ralph Waldo Emerson as “an invader of the unknown... reaching out through and beyond mankind, trying to see what he can of the infinite and its immensities — throwing back to us whatever he can — but ever conscious that he but occasionally catches a glimpse...” This view might feel grandiose to some. Others might favor a contrasting extreme, a place where Bob Dylan can say, “There’s nothing secret about it. You just do it subliminally and unconsciously, because that’s all enough... I just opened up a different door in a different kind of way.”

We might wonder how a personal vision comes into being, and there are doubtless many paths, but they all entail making choices: what is included, what excluded. The inner imagining that we all engage in can be a source — the particular consistency with which we see, that we have *chosen* to see or hear or feel in the world we live in. But I want to draw attention here to the lithograph of John Cage’s on the festival program cover. Cage has a reputation for disconnecting himself from intention. But, looking at the spidery rock-tracings that characterize this work — the sheer complexities throughout — it is clear the art entailed a chain of choice by the artist. It is the product of a personal vision. This, I think, is how we become more ourselves: the artist makes choice after choice after choice, so that, in the end, the vision is what we allow to remain, what we accept.

I’m struck in the music and also the notes of those represented here by allied threads. For example, Michelle Lou (among the youngest of the composers represented) writes, “My porcupine nature reveals itself in... [the] desire to stake out a place that is entirely my own and yet...” she acknowledges, “this task is perhaps only truly successful by not completely forsaking familiar musical elements.” Composer Robert Ashley speaks of “missed opportunities, memory, loss and regret.” Flutist Claire Chase asks, “Of what will the Density of our time be made?” And bassist Mark Dresser identifies his Trio’s purpose as “a dedication to discovering our collective voice through improvisation and composition.”

He continues, "Though this music is collaborative in process, it retains the imprint of my own personal background in jazz, experimentalism, and classical music." So, together, the musicians of this festival reference indebtedness, discovery, hope, memory, and the occasional "glimpse" of the infinite and its immensities.

Charles Ives observed that "Emerson [is] always beating down through the crust towards the first fire of life, of death and of eternity." We might not phrase the artist's compulsions in the same way now, but that essence remains. The festival's remarkable array of differently manifested creative energy will bring to Washington an unusual prospect for engagement and consideration.

— Roger Reynolds, Guest Musical Director

MARCH 8

2:00 • Sunday Lecture • West Building Lecture Hall

Intermedial Collaboration and Production

Roger Reynolds's FLIGHT Project and Robert Ashley's Operas
Roger Reynolds, moderator, Ross Karre, performer and videographer, Tom Hamilton, composer and sound designer for Robert Ashley's operas

6:30 • 3,041st Concert • West Building, West Garden Court

JACK Quartet

Roger Reynolds, composer and pianist

Ross Karre, percussionist and videographer

Paul Hembree, computer musician

Michelle Lou, composer

Ingrid De Sanctis, Quynh-My Luu, Ben Lambert, and Adrian Tafesh, actors

Michelle Lou

Porcupine (2012)*

Conlon Nancarrow (1912 - 1997)

String Quartet no. 3 (1987)

Robert Ashley (1930 - 2014)

Resonant Combinations (a tribute to John Cage) (2012)

Roger Reynolds (b. 1935)

The FLIGHT Project (An Initial Encounter) (2014 - 2015)*

The National Gallery of Art extends special thanks to the drama department of James Madison University, represented by faculty and student actors in the performance of Roger Reynolds's *The FLIGHT Project*: Ingrid De Sanctis (Sage), Quynh-My Luu (Woman), Ben Lambert (Man), and Adrian Tafesh (Youth).

*Washington Premiere Performance

Program Notes

String Quartet no. 3

Living in self-imposed exile in the 1940s in Mexico City (after having fought in the Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War), Canlon Nancarrow found a way to explore, with magnificent precision, his central interest, which he termed “the clashing of tempos.” Utilizing Ampico player-pianos and a paper-punching machine, he set about in 1948 to create a series of “Studies” inscribed on player-piano rolls. His punching device allowed not only precise placement of events in time as related to a prevailing tempo, but also the possibility of canonic lines evolving over time in accelerating or decelerating fashion relative to one another.

One of Nancarrow’s most successful ventures outside the realm of mechanical precision was the *String Quartet no. 3*, which nevertheless requires precise calculation and performance on the part of players. Written for the celebrated Arditti Quartet, it features canons for four voices that are defined by the relative speeds of 3-4-5-6. The second movement is written entirely in harmonics, and the third is an “acceleration canon,” in which the four voices relate to one another in the ratios of 3 percent to 4-5-6 percent. Such demands are unique to the music of Nancarrow.

Porcupine

Michelle Lou writes: “My porcupine nature reveals itself in the intricacies of my own relationship to my creativity and with our shared history and reception of music. I desire to stake out a place that is entirely my own and yet I acknowledge that this task is perhaps only truly successful by not completely forsaking familiar musical elements. I resolve this problem by close analysis of other works and the assimilation of intimate aspects of them into my new work. I create a ‘cantus firmus’ of sorts by predetermining a formal structure that is grounded in preexisting works. I took Webern’s *Six Bagatelles*, parts of Feldman’s *First String Quartet*, and a small part from an adagio of Joseph Haydn. But I ask myself: is the process of taking and then erasing an act of defiance, a lack of inspiration, or worse, an appropriation? Does simply writing over someone else’s carefully constructed voice carry a meaning beyond the need to move the pencil? I am seeking a way to negotiate productively with my relationship to the music that resonates with me/us and with my own creative voice. Negotiating a further distance from the traditional string quartet idiom, I chose to take the shared strings — E, A, D, G — and retune them. This allows for interesting combinations of open strings and natural harmonics. *Porcupine* is dedicated to the JACK Quartet.”

Resonant Combinations (a tribute to John Cage)

In an email message to Roger Reynolds on June 24, 2012, the late Robert Ashley wrote: “I hate to do a long explanation, but this is one of a group of short pieces — each 16 measures long — based on 16 combinations (chord/bass/struck note). But the reason I sent you the piece is that I thought of it as basically something you would use to make an interesting sound out of. So, if you want to use amplification, that would be your decision. And I would be happy with it... I didn’t expect big resonant chords/many pitches. On my Young Chang sturdy upright, well maintained and often tuned, when I play the sfz note — not even very loud, I get a sustained sound of that note — the sfz note — that has an ‘aura’ of the chord notes.”



James Lesesne Wells, *Icarus*, 1968, wood engraving in black on Japan paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Ruth Cole Kainen

The FLiGHT Project (An Initial Encounter)

Wishing for, imagining, and eventually achieving the ability to fly has been a prominent theme in humankind’s aspirations. Flight was and continues to be the stuff of dreams. The *FLiGHT Project* responds to the varieties of human desire for flight: birds, angels, kites, balloons, gliders, powered flight, and space exploration. Its center is a four-movement composition for string quartet, but *FLiGHT* is a multi-staged undertaking, entailing a text, montaged from existing sources, real-time computer sound transformation, and related images projected on continually reconfigured surfaces. Each layer of *FLiGHT* involves an interactive, performative character in tribute to the string quartet medium. So the text evolves into a four-voiced conversational phantasma. Multiple images are simultaneously projected on modular surfaces allowing a counterpoint of visual materials reflecting a musical conversation. *FLiGHT* is imagined as a multi-year collaborative effort. Listener/viewers will share in the evolution of the project. Within the next few years, a full performance is anticipated as a part of the reopening of the East Building of the National Gallery of Art.

Program notes by Roger Reynolds

MARCH 9 & 11

March 9 • 12:00 and 1:00 • Works-in-Progress • West Building Lecture Hall

Personal Vision and the Education of Young Composers in America

A conversation between an outstanding young composer and one of America's leading mentors of young composers. Roger Reynolds, moderator, Michelle Lou, composer

March 11 • 12:10 • 3,042nd Concert • West Building, West Garden Court

JACK Quartet

Eric Huebner, pianist

David Felder, guest composer

Lewis Nielson, guest composer

Morton Feldman (1926 - 1987)

Intermission I (1950)

Lewis Nielson (b. 1950)

Le Journal du Corps (2010)*

Roger Reynolds (b. 1935)

imagE/piano (2007)*

David Felder

Stuck-stücke for String Quartet (2007, revised 2008)*

Stefan Wolpe

Form for Piano (1959)*

John Zorn (b. 1953)

The Dead Man (1990)*

Variations

Sonatas

Manifesto

Fanfare

Meditation

Rondo

Romance

Blossoms

Fantasy

Nocturne

Folio

Etude (hockey)

Prelude

*Washington Premiere Performance

March 11 • 2:30 • Film • West Building Lecture Hall

Dust

An opera by Robert Ashley

Robert Ashley wrote about *Dust*: "Imagine a street corner anywhere in the world, where those who live on the fringes of society gather to talk, to each other and to themselves, about life-changing events, missed opportunities, memory, loss, and regret. Five 'street people' recount the memories and experiences of one of their group, a man who has lost his legs in some unnamed war. As part of the experience of losing his legs, he earlier began a conversation with God, under the influence of the morphine he was given to ease his pain. Now he wishes that the conversation, which was interrupted when the morphine wore off, could be continued so that he could get the 'secret word' that would stop all wars and suffering. . . . The opera moves through different groups of people who are marginalized until finally, when you get to the last four songs, you get to people who are marginalized because they're old. . . . In the plot of the opera, [the songs are] what the hero of the opera heard on the radio when he was in the hospital. They're not popular music in the strict sense. . . . When we get to the last four songs, the hero has been thinking about these energies for a long time, so he's made little narratives of these." (1999)

Program Notes

Intermission I

The first in a series of compositions by Morton Feldman that feature the piano and reveal the composer's early enthusiasm for the works of Anton Webern, *Intermission I* uses a sparse texture to focus the listener on a series of intervals and single notes, seemingly disconnected from any larger musical narrative. Like the music of Feldman's mentor, John Cage, the work is intent on focusing the listener's attention on the sound itself, free of any larger, dramatic implications.

Le Journal du Corps

In addition to complex and technically diverse string writing, *Le Journal du Corps* involves singing and playing at the same time, toward the end of the piece. The texts are taken from the play *Et les chiens se taisaient* (*And the Dogs Were Quiet*) by Aimé Césaire. The song is of my own composition and my translations appear below. The text is sung in French:

Here is my hand, here is my hand
my fresh hand, my hand of a jet of water, of blood...
my hand of light and of vengeance...
It was me, it was indeed me, I said, the good slave, the faithful slave,
the slavish slave...
I struck, the blood spurted: this is the only baptism that I remember today.

I use Césaire's text because it perfectly expresses the cultural degeneracy caused by human slavery, a function of colonial imposition or corporate purchasing power. Césaire's influence on Frantz Fanon and, closer to home, on Eldridge Cleaver and Malcolm X in the fight against the "inner colonialism" or racism, addresses the necessity of freedom, equality, and social justice in a way I endorse. *Le Journal du Corps* was written for and is dedicated to the splendid JACK Quartet.

image/piano

The *image/* and *image/* series involve complementary explorations of evocative and articulate ideals, respectively. This is an ongoing project that will eventually include a wide range of instruments (already flute, piano, guitar, viola, cello, and contrabass). The project is an outgrowth of *The Angel of Death* (for piano, orchestra, and computer sound), with its two contrasted journeys across parallel landscapes, as well as *The Image Machine*, a real-time computer composition in which the notion of "images" first became a central concern for me. The evocative *image/* studies are gentle, atmospheric, and symmetrical, while those of articulate bent are sectional, forceful, and asymmetrical. Each pair explores characteristic aspects of its medium in a fashion that may be acrobatic or reserved. *image/piano* melds passages from two earlier keyboard works of mine: *Epigram and Evolution* (1961) and *Variation* (1984). Dedicated to Eric Huebner, this brief work is fluid, even rhapsodic in character.

Stuck-stücke for String Quartet

Composed for and dedicated to the Arditti Quartet on commission from the Siemens Foundation, *Stuck-stücke* is a work of thirteen miniatures formed out of three discontinuous, though related, streams of musical material. I think of them as streams because they are continuous in an abstract sense, merely interrupted, sliced, and juxtaposed locally. A stream suggests continuity to me, with a force behind it providing some sort of propulsion-movement. The separate pieces are played in close juxtaposition, with minimal transition. The title refers to an incessant, repetitive iteration of small gestures that characterize some, but not all, of the streams in the work. The Arditti have inspired my work for over twenty years now, and this composition is offered in friendship, gratitude, and deepest admiration.

Form for Piano

Form for Piano is a small-scale solo work that Stefan Wolpe composed over ten years after completing *Battle Piece*—an ambitious and intensely modern work that consumed his attention throughout the 1940s and grew out of his experiences as a German Jew who immigrated to the United States in 1938 to escape Nazi persecution. *Form* demonstrates the full maturity of Wolpe's serial approach to composition, following in the footsteps of his mentors, Schoenberg and Webern. Wolpe became an enormously influential teacher himself, mentoring not only Morton Feldman but also jazz greats Gil Evans and Lennie Tristano.

The Dead Man

Screams, scrapes, scratches, and howls in the night. These thirteen short movements, inspired by the book of the same name by French philosopher Georges Bataille, contain perhaps the most overt sadomasochistic subtexts in all of my work. Journalist Daniele Sahr writes: "Beating their bows against the air like leather whips in *The Dead Man*, JACK sliced up the nothingness of ether into pieces of airy sound pie. It's from the crumbs we catch that we glean all that can be seen, heard, felt, and desired."

Program notes on Feldman and Wolpe by Eric Huebner; all other notes by the composers

MARCH 15

3:30 • 3,043rd Concert • West Building, West Garden Court

Gabriela Diaz, violinist
Eric Huebner, pianist

Charles Ives
Sonata no. 4 for Violin and Piano ("Children's Day at the Camp") (1914 - 1917)

Chinary Ung
Seven Mirrors, for piano (1997)*
A Window in the Sky
Dotted Path
Roar, Lion of the Heart
Laughter Passes over the Earth
Space Between the Fish and the Moon
Tattooing Space-Time
Flying Mirrors

Charles Ives (1874 - 1954)
Sonata no. 2 for Piano: Concord, Mass., 1840 - 1860 (1911 - 1915)
Emerson

Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)
Violin Sonata (1924 - 1943)
Andante semplice
Lento
Allegretto giusto

*Washington Premiere Performance

Program Notes

Sonata no. 4 for Violin and Piano ("Children's Day at the Camp")

Many of the details of Ives's *Violin Sonata no. 4* can be appreciated in the context of a marginal note in one of his piano sonatas: "What is it all about...? Mostly about the outdoor life in Conn[ecticut] villages in the [18]80s and 90s — impressions, remembrances, & reflections...." The deliberately bitonal harmony of the first movement (two different keys presented at the same time) calls to mind a detail from Ives's recollections of his childhood: his father taught his children to sing familiar hymns together in two different keys to sharpen their sense of pitch. Two such hymns — "Tell Me the Old, Old Story" and "Work, for the Night is Coming" — are quoted in the movement. The second movement, framed by a peaceful rendition of "Tell Me the Old, Old, Story," contains a raucous middle section mischievously subtitled "conslugarocko." Here Ives is recalling the custom of releasing restless boys in the middle of church services, at which point they went out and skipped rocks in a nearby stream. A subtler pun appears with the hymn tune quoted in the final movement, "Shall We Gather at the River."

Seven Mirrors

Given his penchant for an instrumental approach that involves sliding, swelling, modulating sounds, it is no wonder that Chinary Ung was wary of composing a work for solo piano. The rigidity of the piano attack and the relative lack of control over its decay meant that he could not rely upon practices already perfected; however, when one dimension of music is suppressed, another can emerge in profile. In this case, time became central to the work.

In Ung's music, one rarely encounters an orderly succession of events that corresponds to the Western tradition of musical time. Rather, there are suspension and silence. The latter is considered sacred space in the Buddhist tradition, while suspension — the separate and singular sound event — would seem to be a companion idea. *Seven Mirrors* is a set of short pieces that have the quality of interludes. Some of the titles are drawn from writings by Tagore (movement four's "laughter passes over the earth") or by Rumi (movement five's "space between the fish and the moon"). These aphorisms allow Ung to create an interpretive sound world to match his conception of the poetry. Rather than hearing an idea sound, transform, and recur (as in a sonata), Ung's listeners hear it sound and resonate.

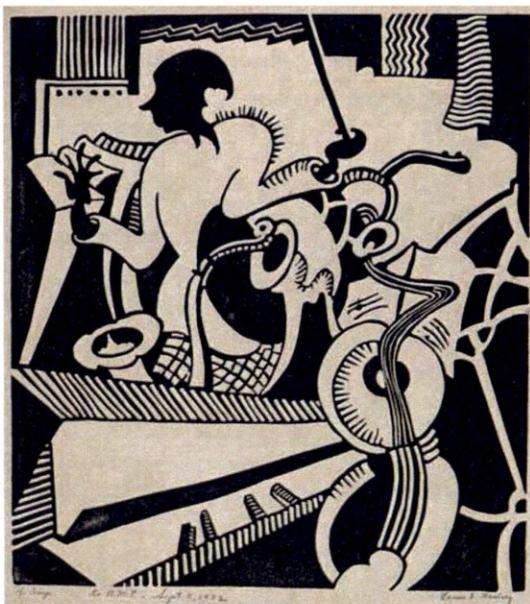
Sonata no. 2 for Piano: Concord, Mass., 1840 - 1860

One of Ives's most extensive works, the "Concord" Sonata is described by the composer as "impressionistic pictures of Emerson and Thoreau, a sketch of the Alcotts, and a scherzo supposed to reflect a lighter quality, which is often found in the fantastic side of Hawthorne." The subtitle of the sonata reflects that all of those authors lived and worked in Concord, Massachusetts, between 1840 and 1860. Today's concert includes only the first movement, Emerson, in which Ives presents the power and density that he found in the author's writings and a creative process that he felt both author and composer had in common. In *Essays Before a Sonata* (1920), Ives wrote: "[Emerson's] underlying plan of work seems based on the large unity of a series of particular aspects of a subject rather than on the continuity of its expression. As thoughts surge to his mind, he fills the heavens with them, crowds them in, if necessary, but seldom arranges them along the ground first."

Violin Sonata

Remembered as one of the most important composers of the twentieth century and credited with creating the "American sound," Aaron Copland gained recognition during his lifetime not only as a composer but also as a conductor, pianist, teacher, author, and concert promoter. His approach to composition involved absorbing everything in his aural environment, including jazz, folk music, and folk dance, enabling him to produce music that is nationalistic and at the same time sophisticated. His *Violin Sonata* combines both sides of his musical personality — the populist and the esthetic. A clearly neoclassical work in three movements with traditional titles, the sonata is appealing and full of good tunes. It is dedicated to Lieutenant Harry H. Dunham, a close friend of Copland, who died in battle in World War II.

Program notes on Ives and Copland by Stephen Ackert, Senior Music Program Advisor, National Gallery of Art; note on Ung by composer Adam Greene



Laura I. Woolsey, *Jazz Band*, woodcut, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Reba and Dave Williams Collection, Gift of Reba and Dave Williams

MARCH 16 & 18

March 16 • 12:00 and 1:00 • Works-in-Progress • West Building Lecture Hall

Two Approaches to Making a New Music out of the Traditions of Jazz

An Encounter Between Two of the Leading Performing Practitioners — Composer and Percussionist Mark Dresser and Composer Tyshawn Sorey — Moderated by Roger Reynolds

March 18 • 3,044th Concert • West Building, West Garden Court

12:10

Mark Dresser Trio
Mark Dresser, contrabassist
Matthias Ziegler, electro-acoustic flutist
Denman Maroney, hyperpianist
Ben Mangold and Mario Diaz de León,
sound projection

*From the Known to Invention***

1:00

Claire Chase, flutist
Gabriela Diaz, violinist

Elliott Carter (1909 - 2012)
Rhapsodic Musings (from *4 Lauds*) (2001)*

Morton Feldman (1926 - 1987)
For Aaron Copland (1981)*

Alvin Lucier (b. 1931)
Tapper (2004)*

Lee Hyla (1952 - 2014)
Passeggiata (2007)*

Edgard Varèse (1883 - 1965)
Density 21.5 (1936)

Pauline Oliveros (b. 1932)
A Fluting Moment (2008)*

George Lewis (b. 1952)
Emergent (for flute and electronics)*

Mario Diaz de León (b. 1979)
*Luciform**

*Washington Premiere Performance

**World Premiere Performance

Program Notes

From the Known to Invention

The Mark Dresser Trio formed in 1999 out of shared affinities for researching the sonic potentials of the performers' respective instruments, unorthodox electro-acoustic reinforcement to amplify normally soft but rich sounds, and a dedication to discovering the group's collective voice through improvisation and composition. Though collaborative in approach, the trio's music retains the imprint of Dresser's background in jazz, experimentalism, and classical music as well as his love for temporal and sonic gradience. Much of the music for this concert is on the ensemble's CD *Aquifer*, released in 2002 by Cryptogramophone.

Program note by Mark Dresser

Rhapsodic Musings

Offered as a present to Robert Mann on his eightieth birthday, *Rhapsodic Musings* is a small tribute to Mann's extraordinary advocacy of contemporary music. As is well known, with the other members of the Juilliard Quartet, he gave such pioneering and commanding performances of works by Bartók, Schoenberg, and many others, including my own, that many of these works became part of the performers' repertory. His teaching and other activities brought these scores to the attention of students. Using the initials R. M. in the title of this short violin solo and in its main motive — re, mi (D, E) — this piece tries to suggest some of his remarkable human and artistic qualities. *Program note by Elliott Carter*

For Aaron Copland

Gabriela Diaz writes about *For Aaron Copland*: "Written in 1981, [it] is a short work for solo violin that was originally intended to be used in a short film about Copland. This hypnotic work contains only diatonic notes (no sharps or flats), and the pitches span only slightly more than two octaves. The pitches are played one at a time, often with silence separating them. The notation is strikingly spare, containing few dynamic indications and no articulations, eliciting a contemplative character throughout."

Tapper

During the course of the performance of *Tapper*, a violinist repeatedly taps the body of her instrument with the end of the bow. As she does so, echoes, resonances, and other acoustic phenomena are produced as the sharp sounds of the tapping reflect off the surfaces of the room. The performer is given flexibility with regard to tempo, loudness, damping of the instrument, and location of tapping on the violin. The performer is instructed to move about the room to discover the different echoes singular to the performance space.

Passeggiata

Gabriela Diaz writes about *Passeggiata*: "Commissioned by the Midori/Repin Fund, *Passeggiata* oscillates between Hyla's high-energy, groove-based rhythm and soulful singing lines. His colorful character markings occur throughout the score — 'Searing,' 'With Frozen Intensity,' 'Mournful,' 'Severe and Popping,' and 'Grooving,' to name a few. There is an optional ending that the performer may or may not play, depending on the mood and context of the performance."

Density 21.5

In her essay, "In Search of the New Density," Claire Chase writes: "In my current daydreams, I muse that I will be fifty-eight years old in 2036, at the 100th anniversary of *Density 21.5*. I dream that I will have commissioned and premiered the twenty-first-century *Density* by then, a work that will singularly change the definition of the instrument. What will it look like? What will it sound like? Where will the newest innovations on the flute, humankind's oldest musical instrument, take us? Oskar Fischinger once told a young John Cage: 'Everything in the world has a spirit that can be released through its sound.' Varèse unleashed this spirit for the flute, for the one all alone, in these staggering four minutes of music. Did he go as far as one could go, metaphorically and otherwise? Of what will the Density of our time be made? Of osmium? Of signal processing? Of wood? Of carbon? Of flesh? Of air?"

A Fluting Moment

Composed during a residency at the Carmargo Foundation in Cassis, France, *a Fluting Moment* is dedicated to Jean-Pierre Dautricourt. In addition to establishing a personal rhythm with key clicks attuned to breath, the player eventually acknowledges objects and persons with particular sounds while continuing the personal rhythm. *Program note by Pauline Oliveros*

Emergent

Written for Claire Chase, *Emergent* uses interactive digital delays, spatialization, and timbre transformation to create a dance among multiple flutists following diverse yet intersecting spatial trajectories. Although the work does not deploy explicit models of self-similarity, the more immediate spatial trajectories expand into larger trajectories of affect across the duration of the piece. Advancing a conversational aesthetic, albeit in a non-improvised work, foreground and background deliberately conflate. The electronics and the flute blend, intersect, and ultimately diverge into multiple digital personalities that can suddenly converge into unified ensembles while shrouding their origin in processes of repetition. The software for *Emergent* was written by Brooklyn-based composer Damon Holzborn. *Program note by George Lewis*

Luciform

Seeking illumination through transgression of boundaries, *Luciform* is a journey inward, a movement through a series of vision states — a difficult path, a rite of passage, hovering between diabolical intensity and lucid wakefulness. The electronic music is a series of sound environments (vision states) through which the soloist travels during the inner journey. These are trials to be transcended and to be recognized as "light-forms," projections of one's own wakefulness. The electronics shift between their role as external environment (accompaniment) and as an extension of the soloist's voice. *Luciform* was written for and is dedicated to Claire Chase. *Program note by Mario Diaz de León*

MARCH 22

6:30 • 3,045th Concert • West Building, West Garden Court

Third Coast Percussion

Rachel Beetz, guest flutist

Ross Karre, guest percussionist

Augusta Read Thomas (b. 1964)*

Resounding Earth (2012)

INVOCATION — *PULSE RADIANCE*

(Homage to Olivier Messiaen and Igor Stravinsky)

PRAYER — *STAR DUST ORBITS*

(Homage to Luciano Berio and Pierre Boulez)

MANTRA — *CEREMONIAL TIME SHAPES*

(Homage to Lou Harrison and György Ligeti)

REVERIE — *CRYSTAL LATTICE*

(Homage to Edgard Varèse, Harry Partch, and John Cage)

Thomas DeLio (b. 1951)**

From *sound/shivering/silence II*

Mark Applebaum (b. 1967)*

Straitjacket (2009)

Palindrome

Isopangram

Lipogram

Tyshawn Sorey (b. 1980)

Trio for Harold Budd (2012)*

*Washington Premiere Performance

**World Premiere Performance

Program Notes

Resounding Earth

Everything that we are made of, everything that we know and love, is made from the stars. We (like all metals) are stardust. Metals are exceptionally resonant sound sources, rich with vibrational possibilities. As such, artisans across time and earth have been inspired to sculpt metals into musical instruments. Approximately three hundred pieces of metal are incorporated into the instrumentation of *Resounding* (re-sounding) *Earth*. It can be heard and imagined as a "United Nations of Resonances." Scored for four percussionists playing bells from a wide variety of cultures and historical periods, the project celebrates *interdependence* and commonality across all cultures and the extraordinary beauty and diversity of expression inherent in bell sounds. Probing into bells' rich meanings and characteristics as carriers of history, ethnicity, and societal and cultural connotations is a joy and wonder. *Resounding Earth* is dedicated with admiration and gratitude to Third Coast Percussion. *Program note by Roger Reynolds, in consultation with Augusta Read Thomas*

sound/shivering/silence II

The piece consists of five movements, in the third and fifth of which the soloist is called upon to recite two poems by the American poet Cid Corman:

Hinting at
silence

a glinting
windbell.

from OF

Under
the struck bell
welling sound
shivering
silence

from un less

The soloist intertwines the two texts and recites one unvoiced (whispering) and the other voiced (spoken). The percussion sonorities of these movements constitute sonic extensions of these texts. A year later I expanded this work into a percussion quartet. The same texts are employed, and material from the solo work is carried over into this new piece. The original solo work is expanded to seven movements and a new dimension is added, spatialization: the four percussionists are spread out around and among the audience. For me, this spatial dimension adds yet another expressive element to the work that also emerges from the texts. *Program note by Thomas DeLio*

Straitjacket

Commissioned by percussionist Steven Schick for his inaugural residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts, *Straitjacket* carries the private subtitle “four restraint systems for solo percussion and percussion quartet.” Its movements intersect conceptually with formal techniques employed by the French literary group Oulipo: the palindrome, the isopangram, the lipogram, and the taquinoid. The first three movements are presented in this concert.

Palindrome is scored for six drum sets played in unison and with excruciating fastidiousness (despite a profusion of metric modulations), the quartet playing matched kits and the soloist playing two analogous kits with substitute timbres of the player’s choice. At the epicenter of the piece — its palindromic mirror — the soloist switches kits.

The second movement, Isopangram, comprises a lexicon of 118 hand gestures, a kind of index in which each gesture is performed by the soloist once and only once. These silent actions are arrayed in a carefully specified rhythm. Although silent, they are accompanied by a quartet of “foley artists” who give voice to the gestures through a battery of instrumental timbres, each heard exactly twice.

The lipogram is a text that avoids a particular letter. The most arresting example is Perec’s astonishing novel *La Disparition* that manages to avoid the letter “E” throughout its several hundred pages. To me the idea of avoidance conjured a corresponding musical act of removal. Thus in the third movement — Lipogram — the ensemble plays a single vibraphone, the quartet articulating unison chords and the soloist muting particular bars in an act of sonic elimination. *Program note by Mark Applebaum*

Trio for Harold Budd

I began working on the *Trio* in 2012, in Woodside, California, during a residency at the Other Minds Festival. Among the attendees was Harold Budd, and his outlook resonated with me. We had shared influences — improvisation, La Monte Young, John Coltrane, and Pharoah Sanders. I remember Harold mentioning how *beautiful* some of that music is. Contrary to the stereotype that “free jazz” is a turbulent, fiery, furious, energy music, some of the music of these artists is melodic and exhibits love and a sort of *patience*. That is what I had been going for — a music that is about people, a melodious music that resonates emotionally and spiritually with listeners while retaining the idea of beauty and patience.

I began the *Trio* in response to those feelings and limited myself to a small pitch collection. At the same time, I was listening to the musics of Ethiopia and Bansuri flute music. *Trio* derives from all of this. I am committed to my artistic ideal as a composer, which is to cultivate an esthetic that demonstrates an expression of life experience grounded in an understanding of various historical musical lineages. *Program note by Tyshawn Sorey*

MUSICIANS

Roger Reynolds • Guest Musical Director

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in music in 1988 for his composition for string orchestra, *Whispers Out of Time*, Roger Reynolds incorporates a wide variety of elements in his compositions, including theater, digital signal processing, dance, video, and real-time computer processing. Labeled an “all-around sonic visionary” by Mark Swed of the *Los Angeles Times*, Reynolds has repeatedly linked language with musical space, as exemplified by *Sanctuary*, premiered in the National Gallery’s East Building Atrium in 2007, and *OPPOrTuniTy*, performed at the Gallery in 2012, in the context of the John Cage Centennial Festival, which Reynolds codirected. Published exclusively by C.F. Peters, Roger Reynolds’s music is the focus of a special collection at the Library of Congress. Last month, the University of California, San Diego, celebrated his eightieth birthday and long service to the university.

Robert Ashley

Best known for his operas and other theatrical works that incorporate electronics and extended techniques, Robert Ashley taught at Mills College in California, where he directed the Center for Contemporary Music. Following undergraduate music studies at the University of Michigan, he obtained a master of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and subsequently returned to Ann Arbor to study music, speech, and psychoacoustics. His operas require relatively little staging, and some do not have fully notated scores, requiring the performers to improvise large sections. Primarily intended for film and television, they incorporate — when shown as a video rather than performed live — flashing and dissolving images, lines of printed text, and other optical effects scaled to the small screen.

Rachel Beetz

Specializing in music composed during the last century, flutist Rachel Beetz aims to create a dialogue between avant-garde music and modern life. An affiliated artist of San Diego New Music, she has been featured in the XI Festival Internacional de Música Nueva in Monterrey, Mexico, Ojai Music Festival in California, Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles, SoundSCAPE Festival in Maccagno, Italy, and as a guest artist/lecturer at Santa Clara University in California. She is member of the University of California San Diego’s Palimpsest Contemporary Chamber Music Ensemble and frequently plays on the waste-LAnd concert series in Los Angeles. She has worked closely with composers Rick Burkhardt, Chaya Czernowin, Beat Furrer, Roger Reynolds, and Stuart Saunders Smith. A doctoral candidate at the University of California, San Diego, Beetz also studied at Indiana University in Bloomington.

Claire Chase

Virtuoso flutist and 2012 MacArthur Fellow, Claire Chase is an ardent activist for new music. Over the past decade she has given the world premieres of more than one hundred new works for flute, many of them tailor-made for her. In 2014 she began Density 2036, a project to commission, premiere, and record an entirely new program of pieces for flute every year until 2036, the 100th anniversary of Edgard Varèse's *Density 21.5*, a seminal work for solo flute. Chase's recent performances include concerts in Berlin, Frankfurt, Vienna, Paris, London, São Paulo, and Guangzhou. She has released three solo albums, *Aliento* (2010), *Terrestre* (2012), and *Density* (2013).

Thomas DeLio

Described by his peers as "among the most significant experimental composers of his generation... a composer whose work is rooted in every detail of the sonic experience," composer and music theorist Thomas DeLio is known especially for his work in computer music. His essays in music theory have been published by *The Journal of Music Theory*, *Perspectives of New Music*, *Interface*, and *Artforum* as well as *Contemporary Music Review* (London), *Revue d'Esthétique* (Paris), and *MusikText* (Cologne). Among his books are *Circumscribing the Open Universe* (1983), *The Music of Morton Feldman* (1996), and *The Amores of John Cage* (1997). In 2008 a consortium of leading composers and scholars from Europe and the United States contributed to a book about his work titled *Essays on the Music and Theoretical Writings of Thomas DeLio*. Since 1980 DeLio has been a professor of composition at the University of Maryland, where the school has established a new archive, The Thomas DeLio Papers, in his honor. His music is published in the United States by Resonant Editions and Sonic Art Editions and in Italy by Semar Editore.

Gabriela Diaz

Georgia native Gabriela Diaz began her musical training at age five, studying piano with her mother and violin with her father. Shortly before her sixteenth birthday, she was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease and received treatment at Egleston Children's Hospital in Atlanta and the Medical Center in Columbus, Georgia. As a cancer survivor, she has lent her talents to a wide range of programs in support of the Egleston Children's Hospital and other organizations dedicated to fighting the disease. In 2004 Diaz was a recipient of a grant from the Albert Schweitzer Foundation, which she has used for a series of chamber music concerts in cancer units at various hospitals. Diaz holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music, where she was a student of James Buswell. She has worked closely with many significant living composers on their own compositions, including Pierre Boulez, Frederic Rzewski, Steve Reich, John Zorn, and Lee Hyla.

Mario Diaz de León

Composer and guitarist Mario Diaz de León hails from New York City. His influences include modern composition, underground metal, and a wide range of electronic music. His early recording *Mira* (2008) documents his solo performance style using processed voice and guitar. His debut CD as a composer was performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) and released in 2009 on John Zorn's Tzadik label. Since 2012 he has been recording and performing with ONEIROGEN, a project characterized by its merging of ethereal synths, brutal distortion, and noise. The project has released two albums, *Hypnos* and *Kiasma*.

Mark Dresser

Born in 1952 in Los Angeles, Mark Dresser has been actively performing and recording music for double bass since 1983. At the core of his music is an artistic obsession and commitment to expanding the sonic and musical possibilities of the double bass through the use of unconventional amplification and extended techniques. His solo works include the DVD/CD/booklet triptich *Guts: Bass Explorations, Investigations, and Explanations* (2010) and CDs *UNVEIL* (2006) and *Invocation* (1994). A chapter on his extended techniques, "A Personal Pedagogy," appears in the book, *ARCANA* (Granary Press). Dresser has lectured on performance techniques at the 2009 International Society of Bassists convention, where he curated a new music summit.

David Felder

Cleveland-born David Felder is distinguished professor at the State University of New York in Buffalo, as well as the director of the June in Buffalo Festival and the Robert and Carol Morris Center for Twenty-first Century Music. Composer-in-residence of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra from 1993 to 1997, he has received fellowships, awards, and commissions from the New York State Arts Council, New York Foundation for the Arts, Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, and the Guggenheim, Koussevitzky, Rockefeller, and Fromm foundations. In 2010 the American Academy of Arts and Letters gave Felder its Music Award in recognition of his career accomplishments. He holds bachelor and master of music degrees from Miami University and a PhD in music composition from the University of California, San Diego, where he studied with Roger Reynolds, Bernard Rands, Robert Erickson, and Joji Yuasa.

Tom Hamilton

Tom Hamilton has been a member of composer Robert Ashley's touring opera ensemble since 1990, performing sound processing and mixing in both recordings and concerts. At work with electronic music since the late 1960s-era of analog synthesis, he produces concerts, installations, and recordings that contrast structure with improvisation and textural electronics with acoustic instruments. He was the codirector of the 2004 Sounds Like Now festival, and he has coproduced the Cooler in the Shade/Warmer by the Stove new music series since 1993.

Paul Hembree

Currently a PhD candidate at the University of California, San Diego, where he studies with and assists Roger Reynolds, Paul Hembree composes music that explores the boundaries between the perceptual categories of sonic materials and the processes that guide them—specifically navigating the space between organic and synthetic sounds in a search for uncanny or sublime hybrids. Hembree's compositions include *Ouroboros* (2014–2015), a dissertation composition that uses a text collage of German Gothic fiction dealing with automata; *Ikarus-Azur* (2013); *Light: Frozen and Refracted* (2012); and a series of digital audio-visual works based on synthetic biology, known as the *Cellular Automata Studies* (2009–2014).

Eric Huebner

Since making his debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra at age seventeen, pianist Eric Huebner has drawn worldwide acclaim for his performances of new and traditional music. In 2012 he was appointed pianist of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and performed the New York premiere of Elliott Carter's *Two Conversations and a Controversy* for piano, percussion, and chamber orchestra as part of the CONTACT! series. Twice a featured recitalist at the Ojai Festival in California, Huebner has also appeared at the Italian Cultural Institute in Los Angeles, Miller Theater and Le Poisson Rouge in New York, Carlsbad Music Festival, and Shenandoah Conservatory in Winchester, Virginia. His recitals have been included in the Monday Evening Concerts and Piano Spheres series in Los Angeles and the New York Philharmonic Biennial. Currently assistant professor of music at the State University of New York at Buffalo, Huebner holds bachelor and master of music degrees from the Juilliard School, where he studied with Jerome Lowenthal.

Ross Karre

A native of Battle Creek, Michigan, Ross Karre is a percussionist and temporal artist whose primary focus is the combination of media selected from classical percussion, electronics, theater, moving image, visual art, and lighting design. A graduate of the University of California, San Diego, he is the percussionist and director of production for the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). Karre's projection design and video art have been presented at the National Gallery of Art as well as in BBC Scotland's Glasgow Concert Halls, the Kennedy Center, New York's Park Avenue Armory and Miller Theater, and the Netherland's Bimhuis. He maintains a website at www.rosskarre.com.

Michelle Lou

Selected by the JACK Quartet as first place in the 2012 Finale/American Composers Forum Composition Competition and the recipient of a Radcliffe Fellowship at Harvard University, composer Michelle Lou is also a bassist and guitarist who performs salsa, Latin jazz, and free improvisation as well as classical chamber music. Her compositions have been heard at the Donaueschinger Musiktage, Wien Modern, and Festival for New American Music as performed by the Arditti and JACK quartets, and the ascolta, SurPlus, Argento, sfsound, Earplay, Talea, and Chamber ensembles. Lou holds bachelor and master of arts degrees in bass performance and composition from the University of California, San Diego, and a doctor of musical arts degree in composition from Stanford University.

Denman Maroney

Denman Maroney coined the term hyperpiano to identify his approach to preparing the instrument, which involves bowing and sliding the piano strings with copper bars, steel cylinders, Tibetan prayer bowls, rubber blocks, and CD cases. Time Out New York attests that "no one has explored the art of prepared piano as diligently or creatively as hyperpianist Denman Maroney." He also uses a system of temporal harmony based on the undertone series that allows him to improvise and compose in several tempos at once. He has made thirty-two commercial recordings, including *Arson*, with Hans Tammen, and *MiND GAMeS*, with James Ilgenfritz, Angelika Niescier, and Andrew Drury, both on the OutNow label.

Lewis Nielson

A member of the composition faculty at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music since 2001, Lewis Nielson has received honors, awards, and commissions from the Fulbright-Hays Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer, Charles Ives Center for American Music, University of Georgia, Maelstrom Percussion Trio, Minneapolis Guitar Quartet, and Aurora Brass Quintet, among others. His numerous works include a concerto for violin and orchestra, *A Generation of Leaves* for soprano and orchestra, *De profundis* for soprano and string quartet, and chamber music for a wide variety of ensembles. Festivals and conventions that have presented his music include the American New Music Consortium Festival, American Society of University Composers national convention, College Band Directors National Association, World Saxophone Congress, and I Seminario Nacional Pesquisa em Performance Musical in Brazil.

Tyshawn Sorey

A native of Newark, New Jersey, Tyshawn Sorey plays jazz drums, percussion, trombone, and piano. A graduate of William Paterson University, in Wayne, New Jersey, and Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, Sorey is well-versed in musical idioms. His compositions have been reviewed in *The Wire*, *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, *Modern Drummer*, and *Down Beat*. In 2009 he curated a month of performances at the Stone, a New York performance space. A doctoral candidate at Columbia University, he has released four albums: *That/Not* for Firehouse 12 Records (2007), *Koan* for 482 Music (2009), and *Oblique* (2011) and *Alloy* (2014) for Pi Recordings. Among the musicians with whom he has recorded or performed are Wadada Leo Smith, Steve Coleman, Anthony Braxton, and John Zorn.

Chinary Ung

Born in Takéo, Cambodia, Chinary Ung was the first American composer to win the highly coveted and international Grawemeyer Award (1989), sometimes called the Nobel Prize for music composition. He has also received the Kennedy Center's Friedheim Award, and awards and fellowships from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Asian Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, and the Asia, Rockefeller, Ford, Guggenheim, and Joyce foundations. Ung has been a featured composer at prominent festivals including those of the Asia Society, World Music Institute, Asian Composers League, and Burapha University in Thailand, as well as the Other Minds Festival in San Francisco. He is distinguished professor of music at the University of California, San Diego.

Matthias Ziegler

A versatile and innovative flutist, Matthias Ziegler is committed to both the traditional literature for flute and contemporary music, especially concepts that cross the boundaries between classical music and jazz. Principal flutist of the Zürich Chamber Orchestra, he has toured with percussionist Pierre Favre, pianist George Gruntz, and Mark Dresser. A faculty member at the Musikhochschule Winterthur Zürich, he is a member of the Collegium Novum Zürich, an ensemble that has worked with Mauricio Kagel, Heinz Holliger, and George Crumb. Matthias Ziegler's participation in today's concert is made possible by support from the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia.

JACK Quartet

Hailed by the *Boston Globe* for its “explosive virtuosity” and by the *New York Times* for its “viscerally exciting performances,” the JACK Quartet holds a prominent position among string quartets that champion new music. The *Washington Post* commented, “The string quartet may be a 250-year-old contraption, but young, brilliant groups like the JACK Quartet are keeping it thrillingly vital.” The ensemble’s National Gallery debut took place in 2012 and included a performance of Roger Reynolds’s *not forgotten* (2010).

The members of the quartet — violinists Christopher Otto and Ari Streisfeld, violist John Pickford Richards, and cellist Kevin McFarland — met while attending the Eastman School of Music. They have since studied with the Arditti, Kronos, and Muir string quartets, as well as with members of Ensemble InterContemporain. Focused on the commissioning and performance of new works, the quartet has collaborated with composers Beat Furrer, Toshio Hosokawa, György Kurtág, Helmut Lachenmann, Matthias Pintscher, and Elliott Sharp, among others.

Mark Dresser Trio

In 1999 Mark Dresser, Denman Maroney, and Matthias Ziegler formed a trio to explore their shared affinities for researching the sonic potentials of their respective instruments. Although this music is collaborative in process, it retains the imprint of Dresser’s personal background in jazz, experimentalism, and classical music, as well as a love for temporal and sonic gradance.

Third Coast Percussion

Hailed by the *New Yorker* as “vibrant” and “superb,” Third Coast Percussion formed in 2005 to explore and expand the extraordinary sonic possibilities of the percussion repertoire. The ensemble’s groundbreaking collaborations have included concerts and residency projects with engineers at the University of Notre Dame, architects at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, and astronomers at the Adler Planetarium. The ensemble enhances its performances with cutting-edge new media, including iPhone and iPad apps that allow audience members to create their own musical performances. Ensemble-in-Residence at the University of Notre Dame’s DeBartolo Performing Arts Center since 2013, the group has also been resident at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. The ensemble’s members — Sean Connors, Robert Dillon, Peter Martin, and David Skidmore — hold degrees in music performance from Northwestern University, the Yale School of Music, the Eastman School of Music, the New England Conservatory, and Rutgers University. Third Coast Percussion performs exclusively with Pearl/Adams Musical Instruments, Zildjian Cymbals, Remo Drumheads, and Vic Firth sticks and mallets.

The Seventy-Third Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin Concerts

Concerts

March 8, Sunday, 6:30 p. 5

March 11, Wednesday, 12:10 p. 8

March 15, Sunday, 3:30 p. 12

March 18, Wednesday, 12:10 p. 15

March 22, Sunday, 6:30 p. 18

Lectures and Works-in-Progress Sessions

March 8, Sunday, 2:00 p. 5

March 9, Monday, 12:00 and 1:00 p. 8

March 16, Monday, 12:00 and 1:00 p. 15

Film

March 11, Wednesday, 2:30 p. 9

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

For the convenience of concertgoers, the Garden Café remains open for light refreshments until 6:00 pm on Sundays.

Please note that late entry or reentry of the West Building after 6:30 is not permitted.

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Back cover John Marin, *New England Landscape* (detail), 1914, water color over graphite on wove paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of James N. Rosenberg