

I l l i n o i s   S t a t e   U n i v e r s i t y

# RED NOTE

NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL

**MARCH 26 – MARCH 30, 2023**



**DIRECTOR**

Carl Schimmel

**GUEST COMPOSERS**

George Tsontakis

Melinda Wagner

**GUEST ENSEMBLES**

Momenta Quartet

Utari Duo



× Lay left hand on keys, then press left hand down

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**SUNDAY, MARCH 26 - 8 PM**

*Normal Theater*

**UTARI DUO**

**MONDAY, MARCH 27 - 8 PM**

*Kemp Recital Hall*

**MOMENTA QUARTET**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 28 - 8 PM**

*Kemp Recital Hall*

**MUSIC OF GEORGE TSONTAKIS & MELINDA WAGNER**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29 - 8 PM**

*Kemp Recital Hall*

**STUDENT WORKSHOP PREMIERES**

**featuring Momenta Quartet & Utari Duo**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 30 - 8 PM**

*Center for the Performing Arts*

**ISU SYMPHONY & CHORUS**

**featuring music of the guest composers  
and winning works in the Composition Competition**

## RED NOTE NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL COMPOSITION COMPETITION

We are pleased to announce the results of the Twelfth Annual RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Competition. The winning piece in each category will be performed at the RED NOTE New Music Festival, and each winner receives a \$1000 prize.

This year, there were three categories: Category A (Works for Chamber Ensemble), Category B (Works for Full Orchestra), and Category C (Works for Chorus). There were many outstanding entries in all three categories.

### CATEGORY A (CHAMBER ENSEMBLE)

In Category A (Chamber Ensemble) there were 468 anonymous submissions from 43 states and Canadian provinces and from 38 other nations around the world, the highest number of submissions entered in this category in its 12-year history. Initial rounds were judged by the Music Composition faculty at Illinois State University. The final round was judged by the esteemed composers:

Benet Casablancas (Liceu Conservatory, Barcelona)  
Melinda Wagner (The Juilliard School)  
Yehudi Wyner (Brandeis University, emeritus)

#### WINNER

*Quintet for clarinet, strings, and piano*, by Max Grafe (Wallkill, NY)

#### RUNNERS-UP:

*Grin*, by Robin Haigh (London, United Kingdom)  
*Winter Sister*, by Timothy Peterson (Los Angeles, CA)

#### HONORABLE MENTIONS:

*Nonsense Passacaglia*, by Theo Chandler (Houston, TX)  
*Piano Quartet No. 2*, by Douglas Boyce (Blowing Rock, NC)  
*roses*, by Baldwin Giang (Malvern, PA)  
*Taxonomies of Pulse*, by Benjamin Krause (Holland, MI)

### RED NOTE NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL COMPOSITION WORKSHOP

This year at the RED NOTE New Music Festival we are pleased to host 8 talented student composers who are taking part in the RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Workshop. The students will have their new compositions rehearsed and performed by Momenta Quartet and Utari Duo, under the mentorship of guest composers George Tsontakis and Melinda Wagner. Rehearsals are free and open to the public. In addition, they and several esteemed visiting composers will give presentations on their music. All dates and times are subject to change.

### REHEARSALS & READINGS

Monday, March 27, Kemp Recital Hall  
(9:00 am - 1:00 pm) (Utari Duo)

Tuesday, March 28, Julian Hall room 67  
(10:00 - 11:30 am) (Momenta Quartet)

Tuesday, March 28, Center for the Performing Arts  
(12:10 - 2:50 pm) (Momenta Quartet)

### CATEGORY B (FULL ORCHESTRA)

In Category B (Full Orchestra), there were a record number of submissions received with 211 submissions from 33 states and provinces in the United States and Canada and from 37 other nations around the world. Initial rounds were judged by the Music Composition faculty at Illinois State University. The final round was judged by Dr. Glenn Block, director of orchestras at Illinois State University.

#### WINNER

*Hydrosphere*, by Sam Wu (Melbourne, Australia)

#### RUNNER-UP

*Who We Are*, by Cody Hutcheson (Eastland, TX)

#### HONORABLE MENTION

*Breathe, Come Together, Embrace*, by Angeliqwe Poteat (Seattle, WA)

### CATEGORY C (CHORUS)

In Category C (Chorus), there were 111 submissions from 32 states and provinces in the United States and Canada and from 17 other nations around the world. Initial rounds were judged by the Music Composition faculty at Illinois State University. The final round was judged by Dr. Mark Grizzard, interim director of choral activities at Illinois State University.

#### WINNER

*Absalom*, by Adrian Wong (Ho Man Tin, Hong Kong)

#### RUNNER-UP

*Two Falling Stars*, by Paul Rudoi (West Saint Paul, MN)

#### HONORABLE MENTION

*To Music*, by Mark Kilstofte (Greenville, SC)

### COMPOSER & PERFORMER PRESENTATIONS

Monday, March 27, Julian Hall room 62  
(4:00 - 5:00 pm) (Competition Winner Max Grafe)

March 28, Center for the Performing Arts  
(11:00 - 11:50 am) (Utari Duo)

Tuesday, March 28, Julian Hall room 52  
(3:00 - 4:15 pm) (George Tsontakis)

Tuesday, March 28, Julian Hall room 52  
(4:15 - 5:30 pm) (Melinda Wagner)

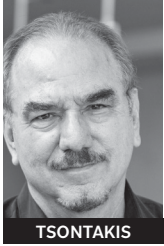
Wednesday, March 29, Kemp Recital Hall  
(9:00 - 11:00 am) (Workshop Students)

Wednesday, March 29, Julian Hall room 52  
(1:00 - 3:00 pm) (Workshop Students)

Wednesday, March 29, Julian Hall room 52  
(4:00 - 5:20 pm) (Workshop Students)

Thursday, March 30, Julian Hall room 67  
(4:00 - 5:00 pm) (Competition Winner Adrian Wong)

## GUEST COMPOSERS



Recently called “a giant of the American music scene” by *Gramophone Magazine*, **George Tsontakis** has been the recipient of two of the richest prizes awarded in all of classical music: the International Grawemeyer Award in 2005 and the Ives Living from the American Academy. He studied with Roger Sessions at Juilliard and in Rome with Franco Donatoni. Born

in Astoria, NY, into Cretan heritage, he has become a recognized figure in Greece with performances worldwide each season. Most of his music has been recorded by Hyperion, Koch, INNOVA and NAXOS, including fifteen works for orchestra — over five hours of orchestral music, leading to two Grammy Nominations for Best Classical Composition.

He served as Composer-in-Residence with the Aspen Music Festival for 40 years, where he was founding director of the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, with the Oxford (England) Philomusica, the Albany Symphony, and with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, among others. He is Distinguished Composer-in-Residence at the Bard College Conservatory.

His most recent premieres include an English Horn Concerto for the Boston Symphony, his Third Violin Concerto for the Dallas Symphony, a Requiem for the Albany Symphony, a work for the St Paul Chamber Orchestra, and his *The Air of Greece*, an opera-drama on Lord Byron, commissioned and premiered by the Greek National Opera in December 2021. NAXOS’ release of three of his concertos with the Albany Symphony was heralded as one of NPR’s “Top Ten Classical Recordings of 2017” and of the NAXOS CD with his *Sonnets* by the Boston Symphony, *BBC Magazine* declared that the Tsontakis work was “the sparkingly expressive jewel in this crown.” He lives in New York’s Catskill Mountains.



Celebrated as an “...eloquent, poetic voice in contemporary music...” (*American Record Guide*), **Melinda Wagner**’s esteemed catalog of works embodies music of exceptional beauty, power, and intelligence. Wagner received widespread attention when her colorful *Concerto for Flute, Strings and Percussion* earned her the Pulitzer Prize in 1999. Since then,

major works have included *Concerto for Trombone*, for Joseph Alessi and the New York Philharmonic, a piano concerto, *Extremity of Sky*, commissioned by the Chicago Symphony for Emanuel Ax, and *Little Moonhead*, composed for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra as part of its popular “New Brandenburgs” project.

Noted for its “...prismatic colors and...lithe sense of mystery...” (*Washington Post*), *Extremity of Sky* has been performed by Emanuel Ax with the National Symphony (on tour), the Toronto and Kansas City Symphonies, and the Staatskapelle Berlin.

Championed early on by Daniel Barenboim, Wagner has received three commissions from the Chicago Symphony; the most recent of these, *Proceed, Moon*, was premiered by the CSO under the baton of Susanna Mälkki in 2017. Other recent performances have come from the American Composers Orchestra, the United States Marine Band, BMOP, the American Brass Quintet, the Empyrean Ensemble, and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

Among honors Wagner has received is a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and ASCAP. Wagner was given an honorary doctorate from Hamilton College, and a Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Pennsylvania in 2003. Melinda Wagner was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2017.

A passionate and inspiring teacher, Melinda Wagner has given master classes at many fine institutions across the United States, including Harvard, Yale, Eastman, Juilliard, and UC Davis. She has held faculty positions at Brandeis University and Smith College and has served as a mentor at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, the Wellesley Composers Conference, and Yellow Barn. Ms. Wagner currently serves on the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music.

## GUEST ENSEMBLES



MOMENTA QUARTET

The New York City-based **Momenta Quartet** has premiered over 200 works, collaborated with over 250 living composers and was praised by *The New York Times* for its “diligence, curiosity and excellence.” In the words of *The New*

*Yorker’s* Alex Ross, “few American players assume Haydn’s idiom with such ease.”

Momenta’s educational-performing circuit includes Binghamton, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Hawaii Pacific, Michigan State, New York, Temple, Tufts, Washington and Yeshiva Universities; Bard, Barnard, Bates, Haverford, Hunter, Ithaca, Lehman and Williams Colleges; and Boston, Cincinnati, Eastman and Mannes conservatories. Momenta has received two Koussevitzky Foundation commission grants, for Malaysian composer Kee Yong Chong in 2009 and for Bolivian composer Agustín Fernández in 2011; a Barlow Foundation commission for Claude Baker in 2016; a Jerome Foundation grant to commission Eric Nathan in 2013; and a Chamber Music America commission for Alvin Singleton, whose resulting work *Hallelujah Anyhow* (2019) is featured prominently in Momenta’s repertoire. Deeply committed to the musical avant-garde of the developing world, Momenta has premiered and championed the works of Tony Prabowo (Indonesia), Cergio Prudencio (Bolivia) and Hana Ajiashvili (Georgia); has collaborated with numerous gamelan ensembles; and in 2018, was brought by the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Embassy La Paz to Cochabamba, Bolivia for new-music concerts and a teaching-performing residency at the Instituto Laredo.

Momenta has appeared at such prestigious venues as the Library of Congress, National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian’s Freer Gallery, Rubin Museum, Miller Theatre at Columbia University, the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, Chamber Music Cincinnati, and the Louisville and Philadelphia Chamber Music Societies. Festival credits include the renowned Cervantino Festival in Mexico; MATA; Music from Japan; Ostrava Days in the Czech Republic; RED NOTE New Music; the Smithsonian’s “Performing Indonesia”; the Yellow Barn Artist Residency; and since 2015, the quartet’s own annual member-curated Momenta Festival in New York City, featuring world premieres and samplings from Momenta’s unique personal repertoire.

Momenta has recorded for the Albany, Bridge, Centaur, Furious Artisans, Innova, Navona, New Focus, New World and PARMA labels; and has been broadcast on WQXR, Q2 Music, Austria’s Oe1 and Vermont Public Radio. Upcoming recording adventures include a project to perform and record all thirteen string quartets by Mexican microtonal maverick Julián Carrillo (1875-1965) and an American album featuring diverse works by Elizabeth Brown, Jason Hwang, Shawn Jaeger, Yusef Lateef, and Roberto Sierra.



UTARI

**UTARI** is a percussion duo project by sisters Haruka Fujii — a percussionist of the Grammy Award winning Silkroad Ensemble, based in San Francisco Bay Area — and Rika Fujii — multi percussionist in Tokyo known for her performances

in solo, chamber music, orchestra, and the female Taiko group Hono Daiko. Utari’s passion for Japanese percussion music has led them to tour internationally for the past ten years. Following the path of their mother Mutsuko Fujii, noted marimbist of Japan, they have been introducing Japanese percussion works at major venues in the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Croatia, Slovenia, and Taiwan. Recent appearances include a New York recital at Lincoln Center, a concert at Koerner Hall in Toronto, and showcase performances at the PASIC percussion convention.

Utari’s mission is to introduce audiences to master works which are not known outside of Japan, many of which are written for and dedicated to Mutsuko Fujii by luminary composers Maki Ishii, Akira Miyoshi, Isao Matsushita and Akira Nishimura. In addition to music from Japan’s “golden age” of modern music, Utari actively works with and performs music by young composers who are defining the sound of the current generation.

Haruka Fujii has won international acclaim as a solo percussionist for her interpretations of contemporary music, having performed premieres of works by many composers including Tan Dun, Nico Muhly, Joji Yuasa, and Maki Ishii. She has appeared in major venues across the world as a soloist and as a chamber musician with Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble, NY based quartet Line C3 Percussion Group, and The Fujii Trio. She has recently joined the percussion faculty at San Francisco Conservatory of Music and has been a frequent guest instructor at Juilliard Summer Percussion Seminar and several international percussion festivals.

Rika Fujii is an active percussionist based in Tokyo, Japan. She performs frequently in orchestral and chamber music settings as well as in traditional Japanese taiko drumming concerts with the first female taiko group Hono-O-daiko. She has performed internationally, including appearances at Carnegie Hall in New York, New Zealand International Arts Festival, and the Japanese Consulate in Geneva, Switzerland. Ms. Fujii is a faculty member of the Toho Gakuen School of Music.

**CONCERT I**

8 pm, March 26, 2023, Normal Theater

**UTARI DUO**

Haruka Fujii &amp; Rika Fujii, percussionists

Postludes VIII (2012)

Cross Hatch (1982)

Etude Concertante (2019)

Mirage (1971)

For two, for Utari (2012) \* \*\*\*

Small Chat (2023) \* \*\*

Aetherium (2012) \*

Marking Time (2021) \*

Postludes VI (2012)

Elliot Cole (b. 1984)

Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996)

Akira Miyoshi (1933-2013)

Yasuo Sueyoshi (1937-2018)

Hiroto Kobayashi (b. 1973)

Haruka Fujii (b. 1975)

Chris Kapica (b. 1986)

Chris P. Thompson (b. 1978)

Elliot Cole

\* written for Utari Percussion Duo

\*\* world premiere performance

\*\*\* US premiere performance

**PROGRAM NOTES**

**Postludes** is a book of eight pieces for a familiar instrument played in a new way. Four players, with eight double-bass bows, play interlocking lines on a single vibraphone. The interplay of bows and hands tapping, muting and touching harmonics, weaves an intimate and intricate counterpoint that is as beautiful to watch as it is to hear: fragile, tender, and haunting. – *E. Cole*

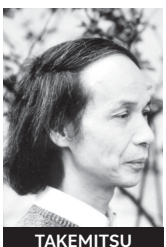


COLE

**Elliot Cole** is a composer and “charismatic contemporary bard” (*New York Times*). He scored *Evolver* (directed by Terrence Malick), alongside Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead) and Wu Tang Clan, and he has written for and performed with Grammy Winners Roomful of Teeth, Grammy Nominees A Far Cry and Metropolis Ensemble, and many other ensembles.

His percussion music evokes “sparkling icicles of sound” (*Rolling Stone*) and has been performed by over 250 groups all over the world. He is currently on faculty at the The New School and Juilliard Evening Division, and is Program Director of Musicambia at Sing Sing, where he runs a music school for incarcerated men. He is a PhD candidate in Composition at Princeton University.

Premiered in 1982 as a gift to Hiroyuki Iwaki for his percussion concert in Karuizawa, **Cross Hatch** is a short work for marimba and vibraphone. One of the rare keyboard percussion works by Takemitsu, it was written about one year after the renowned larger work *Rain Tree*.



TAKEMITSU

**Toru Takemitsu** gained initial recognition with his *Requiem* for strings (1957) which incorporates serial techniques. His interest in a wide variety of artistic expressive forms and his individual sense of freedom developed through his autodidacticism shaped the character of his avant-garde style. In the early 1960s,

two new elements appeared in Takemitsu’s works: on the one hand, traditional Japanese music (*November Steps*, 1967, for biwa, shakuhachi, and orchestra) in the form of the deliberate juxtaposition of Eastern and Western musical culture and, on the other hand, the musical representation of natural phenomena (*ARCI* for orchestra, 1963-1966). Representations of the art of Japanese gardens through the utilization of symbolic musical metaphors are frequently encountered in his compositions (*A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* for orchestra, 1977). His scores for films such as *Ran* and *Woman in the Dunes*, and his *12 Songs for Guitar* (1977), containing passages with arrangements of world-famous pop classics (including songs by the Beatles), demonstrate Takemitsu’s affinity with the broader musical tastes generated by the hyper-cultural influences of a media-dominated world. Takemitsu was the recipient of numerous awards and prizes including the Otaka Prize (1976 and 1981), the UNESCO-IMC Music Prize (1991), and the Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition (1994). Takemitsu was appointed as an honorary member of the Academy of Arts in the German Democratic Republic, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a member of the Ordre des arts et des lettres, and a member of the Royal Academy of Music in London. – *Schott Music*

**Etude Concertante** was written for and premiered by Mutoko Fujii and Tomoko Kusakari in 1977 and was revised in 1979. Anticipating union yet desiring separation, the breathing of the two performers builds a sustained form. Since the breathing is unpredictable, the identity of this piece will be determined by the internal ecology of the two marimba players from moment to moment. – *A. Miyoshi*



MIYOSHI

**Akira Miyoshi** was born in Sugunami, Tokyo. He was a child prodigy on the piano, studying with Kozaburo Hirai and Tomojiro Ikenouchi. He studied French literature at the University of Tokyo, and then studied composition with Henri Challan and Raymond Gallois-Montbrun at the Paris Conservatory from 1955 to 1957.

He was very influenced by Henri Dutilleux. He returned to Japan in 1957 and graduated from the University of Tokyo in 1960. In 1965, he became a professor at the Toho Gakuen School of Music. In 1996, Miyoshi was awarded the Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from the French Government. In 1999, he received the 31st Suntory Music Award. He received the Otaka prize six times for his compositions.

*Mirage* was written in 1971 and was commissioned and premiered by Keiko Abe. I took the title from its primary meaning "to look into oneself in the mirror." The pieces progress in the form of: introduction – song/theme – procession – recapitulation – cadenza – coda. The variation of the introduction functions as a liaison to each section. The song/theme consists of polyphonic psalm, the exposition consists of my memory of a Spanish Easter procession, and finally the coda is based on the idea of "roppo" in the Japanese traditional theater form *kabuki*: the dramatic exit technique at the ending of the act, in which the actor performs a kind of hopping step which commences slowly but increases in tempo to elevate the excitement of the climax. The successions of different scenery and surreal images should evoke the natural phenomenon, mirage. – *Y. Sueyoshi*



SUEYOSHI

**Yasuo Sueyoshi** is a leading Japanese composer known for his compositions for voice, flute, and percussion, in which he explores connections to Japanese traditional music. His inspiration for writing music comes both from his personal relationship with performers and from children. Sueyoshi directed several educational broadcast programs at NHK radio and TV. Sueyoshi is a graduate of the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, and the École Normale de Musique de Paris.

*For two, for Utari* – An imaginary space by the shore becomes filled with collected items from two people. Over time, these collections inspire each other's imagination of the initial space itself.

I, in 5/8, with layers of a variety of rhythm groups.

II, a duet with two melodies.

III, in 6/4, in cheerful tempo.

IV, not as tremolo, as a choral with consecutive pearls of sound.

With sincere gratitude to the performers who helped me create this composition. – *H. Kobayashi*



KOBAYASHI

**Hiroto Kobayashi** completed graduate school in 2000 after studying composition at Tokyo University of the Arts, where he studied composition under Makoto Sato and Hikaru Hayashi. In 1998, he won prizes at the Tokyo International Chamber Music Composition Competition. While still a student, he has been commissioned to compose and arrange orchestral music

and stage music. As a pianist, he continues to perform in a wide range of genres, including his own compositions. In

recent years, he has appeared as a silent film accompanist at the National Film Center of the Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, the Jimbocho Theater, and the Tokyo International Film Festival. Currently, he is a lecturer at Tokyo University of the Arts, Tokyo College of Music, and Senzoku Gakuen College of Music.

*Small Chat* – Improvisation used to be a foreign world of practice until very recently when I started to realize that it is just another way of communicating, using a collection of sounds as if it is another language, which often transcends the sense of awareness that we have when communicating with actual spoken languages. With the right space, collaborator, and some fun frames, it could create quite an amusing dialogue, by the exchange of listening, learning, offering and inspiring each other. *Small Chat* is a piece featuring my favorite small found objects (non traditional percussion instruments, found in kitchen, garden, buddhist altar, etc.) with lots of spaces for us sisters to have a small chat. – *H. Fujii*

Please see page 7 for **Haruka Fujii's** biography.

*Aetherium* – Everyone has her go-to escape from quotidian minutiae — maybe a show, a drink, a book. An ever-expanding demographic unplugs itself from the world by plugging in a game. The surrealism can be arresting and immersive, and *Aetherium* strives to depict such a virtual atmosphere, utilizing the crystalline timbre of the vibraphone. Based on the fictitious liquid-gas "aether" circulating through certain realms in fantasy games, the piece ebbs and flows around one evolving melody. *Aetherium* attempts to evoke the mysticism of *noh* theater while slowly introducing a quasi-improvised groove that comes to climax and self-destructs. After all, every game has to end. – *C. Kapica*



KAPICA

**Chris Kapica** is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, and educator from Carmel, NY, who strives to straddle the line between the classical and pop music worlds. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School (B.M., M.M.), where he was a student of Christopher Rouse. Kapica has written works for orchestra, dance, theater, television, and advertising and toured the country as a bassist. His music has appeared in Cirque du Soleil, the TV network VICELAND, the New York Philharmonic's inaugural Biennial Festival, Carnegie Hall's Neighborhood Concert Series, and the Albany Symphony's American Music Festival. Steve Smith of the *New York Times* wrote that Chris's musical offerings in *Juice Box Hero*, his 2010 oratorio about the last day of kindergarten, were "deployed with sure instincts and dramatic flair." Chris also received a 2009 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award for his choreographed work for mixed ensemble *Flak*, in which he performed on guitar. As a bassist he has performed in groups who have opened for major artists like the Allman Brothers Band, Neil Young, Heart, the Black Keys, the Neville Brothers, McCoy Tyner, the Raconteurs, Buddy Guy, and Esperanza Spalding in venues ranging from Alice Tully Hall in New York to the Roxy Theatre in Los Angeles to DTE Energy Music Theater in Michigan. He also started a "cinematic industrial" project called FauxFriend and released his first

single, “The Void,” on all platforms.

**Marking Time** - In my memories of intense drum & bugle corps rehearsals over the hottest days of summer, the sound of a crudely amplified “Dr. Beat” metronome is ubiquitous. As we sweat, its relentless music melted into the background, becoming another member of the ensemble. A timekeeper is typically viewed by musicians as a tool to be endured ... just until it is no longer needed. But after living with its voice for so long, I started to imagine it had a soul of its own, and thus deserved a part in the show, not just in the rehearsals. - *C. Thompson*



**Chris P. Thompson** is a composer and percussionist whose work draws equally from electronic music, marching percussion, and contemporary classical music. His fourth solo album *True Stories & Rational Numbers* combines an exploration into just intonation and the natural mathematics of rhythm and harmony, his search for a performance practice to

incorporate these into live contemporary music, and his personal fan-fiction about Hermann and Anna von Helmholtz. *True Stories* received its world premiere live performance at the Barbican Centre, London in November 2021. His album *Red Folder* was a collaboration with playwright Rajiv Joseph for the Steppenwolf Theater’s STEPPENWOLF NOW series, and his first two records, the LP *Everything Imaginable Comes True* (2019) and EP *Lot Hero* (2017), drew heavily on the high-energy sound world of modern drum & bugle corps while incorporating luminaries of the New York City contemporary classical music scene in both familiar and unexpected capacities. Thompson is a member of Alarm Will Sound and American Contemporary Music Ensemble. He has toured internationally as a performer with Tyondai Braxton’s HIVE, participated in the world premieres of over a hundred new works, and can be heard on 40 studio albums. He has also been a frequent performer in the pits of many NYC Broadway show productions including *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Wicked*. He has collaborated with Björk, Dirty Projectors, James McVinnie, Medeski Martin & Wood, the Metropolitan Opera, Nico Muhly, Brian Reitzell, They Might Be Giants, and Valgeir Siggurðsson. He holds degrees from UCLA and The Juilliard School.

#### PERFORMER NOTES



**Haruka Fujii** has won international acclaim as a solo percussionist for her interpretations of contemporary music, having performed premieres of works by many composers including Tan Dun, Nico Muhly, Joji Yuasa, and Maki Ishii. She has appeared in major venues across the world as a soloist, and as a chamber musician with Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble, NY

based quartet Line C3 Percussion Group, and The Fujii Trio. She also enjoys teaching as a frequent guest instructor at Juilliard Summer Percussion Seminar and several international percussion festivals.



**Rika Fujii** is an active percussionist based in Tokyo, Japan. She performs frequently in theatrical and orchestral settings as well as in traditional Japanese taiko drumming concerts. She has performed internationally, including appearances at Carnegie Hall in New York, New Zealand International Arts Festival, and the Japanese Consulate in Geneva, Switzerland. Ms. Fujii is a faculty member of the Toho Gakuen School of Music and the Saitama High School of Music.

**PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 4  
FOR UTARI DUO BIO**



**CONCERT II**

8 pm, March 27, 2023, Kemp Recital Hall

**MOMENTA QUARTET**

Emilie-Anne Gendron and Alex Shiozaki, violins  
Stephanie Griffin, viola  
Michael Haas, cello

Secret Desire to Be Black (String Quartet No. 2) (1988)	Alvin Singleton (b. 1940)
The Memory Palace (String Quartet No. 3) (2021)	Carl Schimmel (b. 1975)
I. The Memory Palace	
II. The New Horses	
III. September	
IV. Paradise	
V. Rapture	

world premiere, written for Momena Quartet

**INTERMISSION**

Suite: Remembered and Imagined (2014)	Han Lash (b. 1981)
I. Allemande	
II. Courante	
III. Sarabande	
IV. Gavotte	
V. Gigue	
VI. Menuet antique et fragile	
Stringsongs (2005)	Meredith Monk (b. 1942)
I. Cliff Light	
II. Tendrils	
III. Obsidian Chorale	
IV. Phantom Strings	

**PROGRAM NOTES**

**Secret Desire to Be Black** – Singleton is famously reticent when it comes to describing his works (despite their often intriguing titles), preferring the music to speak for itself. In an interview with Ethan Iverson he said, “My second string quartet is called *Secret Desire to Be Black*. It was for the Kronos Quartet, and I remember when I told [Kronos’ first violinist] David Harrington the title he just said, ‘Great.’ But this title ended up driving a lot of other people nuts! On a panel I was asked, ‘What does that title mean?’ and I responded, ‘It’s a secret.’” Momena first performed the work at Singleton’s 75th birthday tribute concert on the Interpretations series at Roulette in Brooklyn, NY. This performance led to the commission of his most recent quartet *Hallelujah Anyhow* (2019) for Momena Quartet by Chamber Music America, and to Momena’s album *Alvin Singleton: Four String Quartets*, released by New World Records in 2022.



SINGLETON

**Alvin Singleton** was born in Brooklyn in 1940 and completed his studies at NYU and Yale. As a Fulbright Scholar, he studied with Goffredo Petrassi at Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome. After living and working in Europe for 14 years, Singleton returned to the US to become Composer-in-Residence with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (1985-88).

He has served as Visiting Professor of Composition at the Yale School of Music, Composer-In-Residence at the Curtis Institute, and as the Karel Husa Visiting Professor of Composition at Ithaca College. Singleton has worked with major orchestras worldwide and has written significant works for chamber and vocal ensembles and the theater. His set of *Argoru* pieces for solo instruments span a compositional period from 1968-2002 and have been championed by soloists across the world. Singleton is the recipient of a 2003 Guggenheim Fellowship and was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation and American Composers Orchestra for the orchestral work *When Given a Choice*, which premiered at Carnegie Hall in April 2004. Other awards include the Kranichsteiner Musikpreis by the City of Darmstadt, Germany, twice the Musikprotokoll Kompositionsspreis by the Austrian Radio, the Mayor’s Fellowship in the Arts Award by the City of Atlanta, and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. His music is published exclusively worldwide by Schott Music, New York.

**The Memory Palace** is my third work inspired by the poetry of American poet James Tate (the others being my song cycle *Four Nocturnes from The Oblivion Ha-Ha* and my sextet *Day into Night at the Breakwater*). In this composition the music closely parallels the bizarre and dreamlike plots of Tate’s prose poetry, reprinted in this program by permission of his estate. I encourage you to follow along. – C. Schimmel

## THE MEMORY PALACE

poems by James Tate  
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### I. The Memory Palace

from *The Ghost Soldiers*, © 2008 by James Tate

There wasn't a light on in the place at that time of night. I walked around in back and tried the door. Of course it was locked. There was a thick vine growing up the side of the building, so I tried climbing that. I was almost up when it started to wobble and detach itself from the building. I came crashing down and cut my forehead and arms. I found a fire escape in front and climbed that. I broke into the second-story window and was amazed to find stacks and stacks of photo albums and files overflowing on the floor. I turned on a light, though I knew the dangers of that. There seemed to be no order to anything. I pulled up a chair and picked up an album—children on ponies in cowboy outfits, children holding fish they caught, birthday cakes, parties, swings, dances, no end to the fascination with children, but somehow they all seemed to be a part of the same childhood. Then there was the album of the near-dead, breathing tubes, feeding bags, the glazed, faraway looks of the nearly departed. In the Memory Palace nothing is lost, just misplaced. I spent most of the night there until I was so exhausted I could barely keep my eyes open. While going through the many albums devoted to young lovers, I suddenly froze. There was a photo of my mother and father, badly faded, barely twenty years old, perhaps not even married yet, holding hands and smiling into the camera, the world holding back its fury for one brief second, giving them their moment of sunshine, so fragile and tenuous. I removed the photo from its pocket and stuck it in mine. I went to the window and looked down. An old man in a uniform stood there. "Come on down, son, we're going to have to arrest you," he said. "But, officer, I'm an old man," I said. "The Memory Palace has no memory. See, it just doesn't care," he said.

### II. The New Horses

from *The Ghost Soldiers*, © 2008 by James Tate

When the horses arrived I was so happy. I put them out in the field and they seemed to like it, except for the flies. Then, later, I made sure they got fed. The pinto bucked up and kicked the fence, which shocked me, but then everything was all right again. Later, when they settled down for the night, there was a sound like a snake hissing in one of the stalls, but I couldn't find anything. In the morning, when I let them out, the bay was limping. I tried to examine her, but she kicked me in the head and I was out for a good fifteen minutes before I woke. She was all right by then. The sorrel had jumped the fence while I was out and I went and got the truck. I found her about three miles down the road. Someone in a truck or car had grazed her and she was lying down by the side of the road. I managed to pull her up and she made it up the plank into the back of the truck. When I let her back in the pen, I realized her leg was broken and she would have to be shot. The chestnut let out a loud whinny. The roan walked over and stomped on my foot very deliberately. My foot hurt, but, more importantly, my feelings were hurt. I really wanted to make these horses happy. The pinto took off running and crashed into the fence. The chestnut started chasing the sorrel until the sorrel collapsed. My head was buzzing, my stomach churning. The bay jumped over the tractor and was headed right for me. I ran out of the pen and shut the fence. The sorrel was suffering. I had to put her out of her misery. I got my rifle from the house. I loved these horses, I really did, but something wasn't right with them. The chestnut wouldn't let me in the gate. The pinto started chanting in Latin. The roan looked like it had grown a horn in its forehead. I started firing every which way, blind as a bat.

### III. September

from *Memoir of the Hawk*, © 2001 by James Tate

Near September the moose retreat to the ice cream shops.  
A flotilla of hunters sinks to the bottom of the lake singing "Pennies from Heaven."  
A little girl in green pajamas is swinging from a maple tree.  
The maple tree is blushing but still manages to whisper its love for her.  
September is coming, balancing one-hundred-and-one gifts on its head and shoulders,  
twittering as if someone were tickling it.  
"It's coming," shouts the woodsman.  
A priest was prattling on about his disappointments in love  
until two white doves flew out of his eyes and drew thunderous applause from everyone.

### IV. Paradise

from *The Ghost Soldiers*, © 2008 by James Tate

After Ashley disappeared from camp, I was put in charge of gathering the firewood. I didn't mind the job, because I got to be alone for much of the day and away from the constant bickering that went on with the others. I came back to dump my armload and then I would be off again. Each day I had to go a little farther out and this made it something of an adventure. There was always some wildlife to scare up, and some odd thing lost or left behind by hunters. I found combs and canteens and whiskey bottles and a keychain. And once I found a wallet with three hundred dollars in it. I didn't tell anyone. The further I went into the woods the more peaceful I felt. Some days I didn't really feel like returning to the camp. I couldn't stand the thought of Raymond getting drunk around the campfire and singing the same song over and over again, and of Tammy eventually slamming him on the head with the skillet, all the old routine. One morning I slipped out of my tent with my sleeping bag before anyone was awake. I didn't know what I was going to do, but I had a feeling I wasn't coming back. I walked rapidly for what must have been a mile, then I let myself slow down. I stopped to pick a bunch of blackberries which were ripe and delicious. A doe and two fawns stopped to stare at me, then ran on. By noon I was further away from the camp than I had ever been. The forest was denser and covered with vines. I had slowed my pace considerably. At one point I thought I spotted Ashley up ahead of me, but the shadows were also playing tricks. I was using my machete now to make progress. I imagined a huge snake dropping from the trees and strangling me. I had gotten myself into a very inhospitable situation. It was too far to go back, and I had no idea how long it would continue. I was hoping for a lake or a meadow on the other side of this. I kept slashing my way forward slowly. There was a loud screech somewhere, but I looked around and could see nothing. I was convinced that Ashley was in here somewhere, lost and unable to extricate herself. I yelled her name several times, but nothing came back. A small snake dropped from a tree in front of me, nearly scaring me to death. My arm was tired of hacking, and I stood still and rested. I wasn't going to spend the night in this terrible place. There was no place to lie down or build a fire. When I had rested for several minutes, I started again moving forward. It occurred to me that I was being punished for abandoning my friends, but I quickly banished that thought. Something wonderful was waiting for me if I could only get to it. I hacked and slashed with renewed strength. I saw more daylight. Nothing could stop me now. The air smelled fresh and clean. Finally I broke through the last stand of trees and I was standing on green grass. And there was Ashley standing there, naked. I said, "Thank God you're alive! I'm so glad to see you, Ashley. But why are you naked?" "Oh, Buddy, I'm glad to see you, too. This is paradise, you'll see. It's everything you've ever dreamed of," she said. I tried not to look at her body. "Well, it was hell to get here, but I guess it was worth it," I said. I looked around. There was a dingy shack at the bottom of the hill. "Who lives there?" I said. "God," she said. "Oh, that's just what I call him. He owns me, and when he sees you he'll own you, too. He's not too bad if you follow all his rules." "No one owns me," I said. "Then he'll kill you," she said. He was already walking up the hill with his shotgun in his hand. He looked real friendly, and I was already starting to like him.

### V. Rapture

from *Memoir of the Hawk*, © 2001 by James Tate

"If you sit here a long time and are real quiet, you might just get to see one of those blue antelope," I said to Cora. "I'd do anything to see a blue antelope," she said. "I'd take off all my clothes and lie completely still in the grass all day." "That's a good idea," I said, "taking off the clothes, I mean, it's more natural." I'd met Cora in the library the night before and had told her about the blue antelope, so we'd made a date to try and see them. We lay naked next to one another for hours. It was a beautiful, sunny day with a breeze that tickled. Finally, Cora whispered in my ear, "My god, I see them. They're so delicate, so graceful. They're like angels, cornflower angels." I looked at Cora. She was disappearing. She was becoming one of them.



SCHIMMEL

Praised by *The New York Times* as “vivid and dramatic,” the music of **Carl Schimmel** is dense with literary and musical references, often humorous, and combines intensity of expression with a structural rigor which is influenced in part by his mathematics background. A recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship, a Fromm Foundation Commission, the Bearns Prize,

a Barlow Commission, and the Goddard Lieberman Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Schimmel has received honors and awards from many organizations, including the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Bogliasco Foundation, Copland House, New Music USA, and ASCAP. His works have been performed in Carnegie Hall’s Weill Hall, Merkin Hall in New York, Severance Hall in Cleveland, the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London, Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, and at other venues worldwide. He has received performances and commissions from the American Composers Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, California EAR Unit, the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Alarm Will Sound, and many others. He is Professor of Music Theory and Composition at Illinois State University.

*Suite: Remembered and Imagined* is based on the idea of a Baroque dance suite, with characteristics from each movement of a typical suite re-interpreted to my own purpose. Sometimes these ideas are quite closely linked to the original dance suite movements: the Courante is based upon a single line that runs in continuous fast note-values and features harmonic sequences. Sometimes the ideas are completely re-imagined: the Allemande is based upon the aural illusion that — within the typical metric structure of an Allemande — the second violin plays at a slower tempo than the other instruments.



LASH

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “striking and resourceful...handsomely brooding,” **Han Lash**’s music has been performed at Carnegie Hall, Los Angeles’ Walt Disney Concert Hall, Lincoln Center, Tanglewood Music Center, and Harvard University. Commissions include The Fromm Foundation, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Carnegie

Hall, The Naumburg Foundation, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, among many others, with recent premieres by the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Ensemble Intercontemporain, and the Minnesota Orchestra. Lash’s Concertos for Harp Nos. 1 and 2 were premiered by the American Composers Orchestra and Colorado Music Festival with Lash as soloist, and Lash’s double harp concerto, *The Peril of Dreams*, was premiered by the Seattle Symphony in November 2021.

Composed in 2005, *Stringsongs* is Monk’s first work for string quartet. It was premiered by the Kronos Quartet at the Barbican in London. The composer writes: “In *Stringsongs*, my first piece for string quartet, I explored using instruments to create unexpected textures and sounds in much the same way that I have worked with the voice over many years. I was inspired by the profound musicianship

and passionate commitment of the Kronos Quartet. During the rehearsal period, as I got to know the players, the music came to life in surprising ways, colored by the distinctive ‘voice’ of each musician.”



MONK

**Meredith Monk** is a composer, singer, and creator of new opera and music-theater works. Recognized as one of the most unique and influential artists of our time, she is a pioneer in what is now called “extended vocal technique”. In 1965, Monk began her innovative exploration of the voice as a multifaceted instrument, composing solo pieces for unaccompanied voice and voice and keyboard. In 1978, she formed Meredith Monk & Vocal Ensemble to further expand her musical textures and forms. Since the early 2000s, Monk has been creating vital new repertoire for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and solo instruments, with recent commissions from the San Francisco Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Alarm Will Sound, Young People’s Chorus of New York City, and Carnegie Hall where she held the 2014-15 Richard and Barbara Debs Composer’s Chair in conjunction with her 50th Season of creating and performing.

## PERFORMER NOTES



GENDRON

Lauded by *The New York Times* as “brilliant” and by *Strad Magazine* for her “marvellous and lyrical playing,” violinist **Emilie-Anne Gendron** enjoys an active freelance career based in New York. A deeply committed chamber musician, Ms. Gendron has appeared with A Far Cry, Argento Ensemble, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Chamber

Orchestra of Philadelphia, Ensemble Échappé, Gamut Bach Ensemble, Talea Ensemble, Sejong Soloists, and with the touring Musicians from Marlboro. Her extensively varied international appearances have included recitals in Sweden and at the Louvre in Paris; festivals in Russia, Finland, and Jordan; and recently, major venues in China, South Korea, Argentina, Chile, and Colombia. She was trained at the Juilliard School where her teachers were Won Bin Yim, Dorothy DeLay, David Chan, and Hyo Kang. She holds a B.A. in Classics from Columbia as a graduate of the Columbia-Juilliard joint-degree program, and a Master of Music degree and the coveted Artist Diploma from Juilliard.



SHIOZAKI

Praised by *The New York Times* as “spell-binding,” violinist **Alex Shiozaki** is emerging as a strong advocate for the music of today. At home with music new and old, he has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including the Sendai Philharmonic, AXIOM Ensemble, and the Juilliard Orchestra. Other highlights include summer residencies at the Tanglewood

Music Center as a New Fromm Player and a Japan tour with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. A member of the Momenta Quartet since 2016, he also regularly performs with Le Train Bleu, ACME, and Argento Ensemble. As part of the Shiozaki Duo with his wife and pianist Nana Shi, Alex has

given recitals in New York, Boston, Washington D.C., and California. Holding a B.A. from Harvard College and an M.M. and D.M.A. from the Juilliard School, he counts among his teachers Ronald Copes and Joseph Lin of the Juilliard String Quartet, Lynn Chang, and Robin Sharp.



**Stephanie Griffin** is an innovative composer and violist with an eclectic musical vision. Born in Canada and based in New York City, her musical adventures have taken her to Indonesia, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, England, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, Mexico, and Mongolia. Stephanie founded the Momenta Quartet in 2004 and is a member of the Argento Chamber

Ensemble and Continuum; principal violist of the Princeton Symphony; and viola faculty at Brooklyn and Hunter Colleges. She received prestigious composition fellowships from the Jerome Foundation (2017) and the New York Foundation for the Arts (2016) and was a 2014 fellow at Music Omi. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The Juilliard School where she studied with Samuel Rhodes, and has recorded for Tzadik, Innova, Naxos, Aeon, New World and Albany records.



**Michael Haas** is an accomplished and exciting young cellist, performing in New York City and around the world. In a recent performance his playing was noted as “refined and attractive” by *The New York Times*. Leading a varied musical life, Michael is equally at home performing chamber music and orchestral repertoire both old and new. He has recently

appeared performing at Symphony Space, the New York Live Arts Theater, Le Poisson Rouge, as well as for Tertulia, a new series bringing chamber music to intimate settings around New York City. In addition to his work with Momenta, Michael has been a member of the New Haven Symphony since 2008. He regularly performs with the Princeton Symphony and in New York with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s. Michael holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School studying with David Soyer, Peter Wiley, Joel Krosnick, and Darrett Adkins. Also an active teacher, he received Suzuki teaching certification from New York’s School for Strings and has taught at the CUNY Bronx Community College.

**PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 4 FOR  
MOMENTA QUARTET BIO**

**CONCERT III**

8 pm, March 28, 2023, Kemp Recital Hall

**MUSIC OF GEORGE TSONTAKIS & MELINDA WAGNER**

featuring

ISU School of Music faculty

Trio Diorama

Dominic Johnson, viola

Knick Knacks (2013) George Tsontakis (b. 1951)  
 V. Shufflin'  
 II. Goodnight Lullaby (Tomorrow Much Sweeter)  
 III. Bumpkinesque

Igor Kalnin, violin  
 Katherine Lewis, viola

Hushing Song (2022) Melinda Wagner (b. 1957)

Nick Photinos, cello

Sarabesque (2003) George Tsontakis

Geoffrey Duce, piano

Witness Tree (2022) Melinda Wagner

Winston Choi, piano  
 MingHuan Xu, violin

Romanze with Faux Variations (2003) Melinda Wagner

Trio Diorama

**INTERMISSION**

Quintet for clarinet, strings, and piano (2018) Max Grafe (b. 1988)

*Winner, RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Competition – Chamber Ensemble Category*

Introduction

Part I

Dance I

Impromptu I – Piano

Song

Impromptu II – Clarinet

Dance II (after *Taches lumineuses*)

Impromptu III – Strings

Part II

Fantasy

Winston Choi, piano • David Gresham, clarinet • Dominic Johnson, viola  
 Nick Photinos, cello • MingHuan Xu, violin

Portraits by El Greco, Book II (2020) George Tsontakis

I. Mary Magdalene in Penitence – St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata

II. Laocoon

III. Agony in the Garden

IV. St. Sebastian

V. Repentant St. Peter

VI. Resurrection

VII. Dormition of the Virgin

Andrea DiOrio, clarinet • Igor Kalnin, violin • Katherine Lewis, viola  
 Cora Lee Swenson, cello • Tuyen Tonnu, piano  
 Mark Babbitt, conductor

## PROGRAM NOTES

In *Knick Knacks*, George Tsontakis adapts classical instruments to percussive folk-inspired motifs inspired by music from his family's roots in Crete.

**Hushing Song** comprises the middle part of a recently completed work for solo cello entitled *Limbic Notes*. While the term “hushing song” refers to a kind of lullaby, the dramatic profile of this movement, while often lyrical, is likely not entirely conducive to sleep! I enjoyed bringing out the beautiful singing qualities of the cello up high, as well as the deeply rich sound of its lower register. The somewhat sad, unsettled nature of this music is reflective, perhaps, of a composer whose children have recently flown. – *M. Wagner*

George Tsontakis composed *Sarabesque* for pianist Sarah Rothenberg, Artistic Director of Da Camera of Houston, for the ensemble's 2003 Koch International CD of works by Tsontakis. The six-minute piece begins with sparse, special tones which seem to float aimlessly, but from time to time find their way to a “home”; a warm, tonally based cadence. The middle of the work features a wispy high tremolo figure, which then amasses, transforming suddenly into a low, visceral and Beethovenian pattern of rising sixths, effecting a series of cadences as well.

**Witness Tree** – Many species of trees survive for myriad generations. Some live their noble lives solely among their leafy (or needle-y) brethren, while others bravely bear witness to the celebrations, missteps — the vagaries of human activity. Traditionally, a “witness tree” is one that is present during a significant historical event, surviving into future generations to “tell the tale.” While composing my own *Witness Tree*, I drew inspiration from memories of the woods (and all the trees therein) which still stand across the street from my childhood home. Before the days of hovering parents, these woods saw the travels of many children — playing, making forts, camping, hiding and seeking, telling scary stories, catching crayfish. Barefoot more often than not, my brother and I learned about ferns and wildflowers there; we got stung by bees, scratched by thorn bushes, and sometimes we got lost. On snowy days, the woods were breathtakingly beautiful — a cathedral of lace. In the heat of summer, they offered a shady refuge. There were no “historical events” to be witnessed there — none beyond the drama of children at play in a world that seemed magical. *Witness Tree* does not have a story of words to tell about these things, but rather offers a range of musical gestures. These are at turns playful, whimsical, melancholic, mischievous — and above all, nostalgic. *Witness Tree* is dedicated to my brother, with love. – *M. Wagner*

**Romanze with Faux Variations** – The glorious combination of violin, cello and piano has always been one of my favorites. The violin and cello together produce nearly the entire range of the orchestra (actually, the cello alone has an extraordinary reach). Each is capable of invoking high drama, poignancy, anger, sadness, light-heartedness, and on and on. I am particularly fond of the violin's lovely, gutsy bass voice, and the wonderful, soaring soprano of the cello and find myself using these ranges frequently. Joined by the almost orchestral voice of the piano, and the unifying “wash” of

sound provided by its sustaining pedal, this ensemble offers a rich variety of sonorities as well as a never-ending range of expressive possibilities. It is scary writing for the piano trio because it is so beautiful, and there are so many choices! It is also fun and highly rewarding; certainly it was a great pleasure to write for such a wonderful group of musicians. The core of the piece consists of a set of thorny, rhythmically-driven, sometimes highly contrapuntal episodes. Quite without my planning it, each episode seemed to want to be varied, yet the music to follow never ended up being more than an imposter variation, or, put more gently, simply another episode with the potential for being varied (hence the word “faux” in the title). It is not important for the listener to hear the piece in this way, but only to know that my hearing it this way helped to generate ideas as I was working. The piece begins with a quiet and sad melody for violin into which the cello gradually weaves itself. A fragmented version of this tune returns at the end, thereby providing the other side of the work's “frame.” *Romanze with Faux Variations* is dedicated to the Network for New Music. – *M. Wagner*

**Quintet for Clarinet, Violin, Viola, Cello, and Piano** – The basic goal I had in mind while writing my *Quintet* was to provide the listener with a bit of insight into the piece's inner workings by virtue of the way in which it was organized within the context of a musical rhetoric that was heavily informed by the high modernist aesthetic of the last half century. As a composer whose concept of music is as a primarily dramatic, communal art form, but who feels a deep attachment to the music of such composers as Carter, Boulez, Messiaen, and Ligeti — in other words, composers whose work often exhibits a forbidding, esoteric character despite remaining richly expressive — I felt a growing responsibility to provide a certain level of access to the audiences who would hear my music as I began to engage on an increasingly prominent level with the languages of the aforementioned composers. The *Quintet* acts as something of a manifesto of this philosophy. After a brief introduction to set the tone, the first part of the work presents the principal ideas through a series of six tightly focused vignettes. These alternate between sections for the entire ensemble and improvisatory episodes featuring the piano, the clarinet, and the strings respectively. The second part of the work, devoted entirely to a single movement, then synthesizes all the material for which the first part served as an exposition. My sincere hope is that the de facto “listening guide” provided by the first half of the work will allow the listener to experience some of the beauty and expressive power of a language that might at first seem abstruse and inaccessible. The *Quintet* was composed in New York from 2017-2018; I am very grateful to the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival for helping to make it a reality. – *M. Grafe*



GRAFE

**Max Grafe** writes music characterized by “jagged declamations and muffled filigree” (*Gramophone*) with the aim of striking a distinctive balance between the stylistic immediacy of modernism and the dramatic power of romanticism. Max's music has been commissioned and programmed by a wide range of ensembles—including the New York Philhar-

monic, the New York New Music Ensemble, Quince Ensemble, ensembleNEWSRQ, and Duo Entre-Nous—and has been featured at numerous music festivals across the country, including the Tanglewood Music Center, the Resonant Bodies Festival, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. Current and upcoming projects include collaborations with Hypercube and pianist Benjamin Hochman. Max is a founding member of New York-based composer collective ICEBERG New Music, which recently concluded its sixth annual season in collaboration with Decoda Ensemble and poet Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz. Max's music appears on commercial recordings by the New York Philharmonic, Quince Ensemble, Duo Entre-Nous, pianists Jenny Lin and Mika Sasaki, and harpist Emily Levin. Max has received several of the most prestigious awards available to emerging American composers, including a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a William Schuman Prize from BMI, two consecutive Palmer Dixon Prizes from the Juilliard School, and a Morton Gould Young Composer Award from ASCAP. Max is a member of the music faculties at Montclair State University and the Kaufman Music Center. He received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Juilliard School in 2018, a Master of Music degree from Juilliard in 2013, and a Bachelor of Music degree from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in 2011. Further studies have taken place at Mannes College of Music, the Freie Universität Berlin, the Aspen Music Festival and School, and the Tanglewood Music Center.

**Portraits by El Greco**—My family is from Chania and Sfakia, Crete, which was the birthplace and home of Theotocopoulos until his early twenties. The long Venetian domination of Crete was specific to the island and in some ways, Crete remains a “different” Greece, with a separate but parallel history. I see a tangential trilogy of factors which, together, helped to allow Theotocopoulos become “El Greco”. First, his seminal training as an inspired Byzantine iconographer (aghiografos) in Crete, his move to Venice to study, as it is thought, with Titian — and his settling in Toledo, Spain. In Cretan iconography, he inherited the technique of a kind of mystical elongation — which he carried through his career, perhaps even making it his identifying schtick. In Venice he assimilated the Italian masters and in Toledo he may have acquired the freedom to express his individual style — a synergy of the two learned forms — without the aesthetic and stylistic pressures which would most certainly be imposed upon him in Venice. I chose the paintings not directly but by letting my musical impulses combine with the source, Theotocoulos himself (he often added “Kries” after his signature, “Cretan”) in the form of his creations. That is, I began to compose with “all” of his works in my studied imagination and then allowing the impulses find their way to me through each painting. The order set forth in both these “Book I and Book II” is obviously not chronological in any way. The first set of El Greco painting inspirations were commissioned by the Boston Chamber Music Society and premiered by them at Sanders Theatre, Cambridge. After being performed many times and in places as far off as Crete and Hong Kong, a kindly consortium of five organizations — Schubert Club, Colorado College Chamber Music, Festival Mozaic, Arizona Chamber Music and the Hellenic American Cultural Foundation together, commissioned a book II, where eight other paintings form the inspiration. Both sets

include one painting not related to the life of Jesus, Toledo and Laocoon respectively, and of course, some pictorial themes engage both sets, most notably, the Annunciation and the personal sufferings of Jesus. The second book reflects personal human repentance; of Mary Magdalene and of the Apostle Peter. There is a bit of a surprise “throwback” ending, also concerning the Virgin Mary — an early icon in resplendent Byzantine style, painted by a young Theotocopoulos before he left Crete for his studies in Rome and Venice. — *G. Tsontakis*

## PERFORMER NOTES



BABBITT

Dr. **Mark Babbitt** is Professor of Trombone at Illinois State University and Principal Trombone of the Peoria Symphony Orchestra. He earned degrees in trombone performance from the Eastman School of Music, Cleveland Institute of Music, and the University of Washington. He has performed extensively throughout the country, winning major competitions, appearing as soloist with numerous orchestras and bands, and given master classes at dozens of universities. He can be heard on several recordings with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, as well as over a dozen movie soundtracks (*The Incredible Hulk, Valkyrie, Punisher: War Zone, Stargate: Continuum*, etc.).



CHOI

Canadian pianist **Winston Choi** is Associate Professor of Piano and the Head of the Piano Program at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts. His professional career was launched when he was named Laureate of the 2003 Honens Piano Competition and winner of France's Concours International de Piano 20e siècle d'Orléans in 2002. In demand as a concerto soloist, he has appeared with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, the CBC Radio Orchestra, the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra, the Fort Collins Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Iowa, La Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia, l'Orchestre Symphony d'Orléans, l'Orchestre National de Lille, the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, and many others. Known for his colorful approach to programming and insightful commentary from the stage, Choi has recently appeared in recital at the National Arts Centre of Canada, the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto, New York's Carnegie-Weill Recital Hall and Merkin Recital Hall, the Kennedy Center and the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., the Kravis Center in Florida, and the “Cicle Grans Solistes” in Spain. Choi performs extensively in France, having played venues such as the Salle Cortot, Lille's Festival Rencontre Robert Casadesus, the Messiaen Festival, and the Strasbourg Festival. Frequently in demand throughout his native Canada, his numerous performances can often be heard on CBC radio broadcasts. Recently, he toured Eastern Ontario and Quebec under the auspices of Jeunesses Musicales and embarked on a 10-city Prairie Debut tour of the Canadian Prairie provinces. An accomplished chamber

musician, he has performed with the Aeolus, Avalon, Philomusica and Spektral string quartets. He also tours regularly with the Civitas Ensemble, and as a part of Duo Diorama (with his wife, violinist MingHuan Xu). As Duo Diorama, they are the Artistic Directors of the Unity Chamber Music Series held at the Unity Temple in Oak Park, IL. Choi has premiered and commissioned over 100 works by young composers as well as established masters. He was the first pianist to perform Pierre Boulez's last version of *Incises* in North America and made the South American premiere of Luciano Berio's *Sonata* for pianoforte solo. He also regularly appears in concert at IRCAM, the world's most renowned institution for contemporary music. Composers he has collaborated with include William Bolcom, Elliott Carter, John Corigliano, Brian Ferneyhough, Jacques Lenot, George Lewis, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Bright Sheng, Christian Wolff, Chen Yi, and John Zorn. He is also a core member of Ensemble Dal Niente. A frequent performer on the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW Series, Choi has also performed with Contempo and the Fulcrum Point New Music Project. A prolific recording artist, Choi's debut CD, the complete piano works of Elliott Carter (*l'Empreinte Digitale* in France) was given 5 stars by *BBC Music Magazine*. He has also recorded the complete piano music of Jacques Lenot for the Intrada label, having won the Grand Prix du Disque from l'Académie Charles Cros for Volume I. Other labels he can be heard on include Aeolian Classics, Albany, Arktos, BIS, Buissonne, Cedille, Crystal Records, Naxos, New World Records and QuadroFrame. Choi obtained his Bachelor and Master of Music from Indiana University, and his DM from Northwestern University. His studies were with Vivienne Bailey, James Tweedie, Menahem Pressler, and Ursula Oppens. An accomplished teacher, Choi is also in demand as a master class clinician and lecturer on a variety of pedagogical topics. Two of his presentations: "Towards a More Organic Approach to Phrasing at the Piano" and "Symmetrical Inversion: A Pianist's Journey Towards Ambidexterity" have been presented nationally and internationally at conferences. Prior to his position at Roosevelt University, he was on the faculties of Bowling Green State University and the Oberlin Conservatory. He has been a guest professor at Indiana University, and he also currently teaches at the Academy of the Music Institute of Chicago as well as the New Music School in Chicago.



DIORIO

Clarinetist **Andrea DiOrio** has performed with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Grant Park Orchestra, Quad City Symphony, Chicago Opera Theater, Elgin Symphony Orchestra, Ravinia Festival Orchestra, Chicago Philharmonic, Lake Forest Symphony, Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, South Bend Symphony Orchestra, Las Vegas Philharmonic, da Corneto Opera Orchestra, Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra, Champaign-Urbana Symphony, Rockford Symphony Orchestra, and Illinois Symphony Orchestra. In addition to her orchestral work, Andrea is the Director of Operations & Marketing and clarinetist of mixed chamber ensemble, Picoso, and teaches at Elmhurst University, Aurora University, North Central College, and Benedictine University. Andrea studied clarinet with Charlene Zimmerman, J. David Harris, Russell Dagon, and John Bruce Yeh. She earned her Master of Music degree

in performance from Northwestern University and her Bachelor of Music degree with honors, in performance, from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



DUCE

**Geoffrey Duce** is Coordinator of the Piano Area at Illinois State University. As a pianist, he has performed in Carnegie Hall, Berlin's Philharmonie and Konzerthaus, London's Wigmore Hall, Manchester's Bridgewater Hall and Edinburgh's Queen's Hall, as well as across Europe, and in Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. His career has featured both solo and collaborative performances. As a concerto soloist he has appeared with the Sinfonie Orchester Berlin, the Chattanooga and Olympia Symphony Orchestras, the Scottish Sinfonia, Edinburgh Philharmonic, New York Sinfonietta, and the Dundee Symphony Orchestra. He was the Peoria Symphony Orchestra's first Artist in Residence for the 2018-19 season, including performances of concertos by Mendelssohn, MacDowell, and Duke Ellington. As a chamber musician and accompanist he has recorded for BBC Radio 3 and performed at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. He won the Young Artists Award from Britain's National Federation of Music Societies, and was awarded the Prix de Piano at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France. He has given masterclasses at institutions including Hawaii University, St. Thomas University in New Brunswick, Canada, Shorter and Darton Colleges, Georgia, for the Orquesta Filarmónica in Bogota, Colombia, at the City of Edinburgh Music School, the Academy of Music Northwest in Seattle, and in the Middle East. During the summer of 2016 he was an International Visiting Faculty member at the University of Taipei, and has taught at Tunghai University in Taichung, Taiwan. In 2019, he was a faculty member of the inaugural Global Immersion Program at SouthWest University in Chongqing, China, and judged the American Classical Pianist International Competition in Hangzhou. He has also served on the faculty of the Chicago Chamber Music Festival. Originally from Edinburgh, Scotland, he initially studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and Manchester University before receiving a DAAD scholarship to the Universität der Künste, Berlin. He received his doctorate from the Manhattan School of Music, where he was also a faculty member, and has previously taught at the SUNY (Westchester Community College) and Indiana University South Bend. His major teachers have included Renna Kellaway, Klaus Hellwig, Ferenc Rados, and Phillip Kavin.



GRESHAM

Clarinetist Dr. **David Gresham**, Professor of Clarinet at Illinois State University, has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician in over 35 countries and all across the United States. Recent concerto performances include performances at the RED NOTE New Music Festival of Roger Zare's *Bennu's Fire* for clarinet and wind ensemble (February 2020), and the world premiere of Sydney Hodkinson's *Embers: an Incantation* for clarinet and orchestra (February 2019). He gave the US or New York premieres of several other concerti as well, including works by David Rakowski, Osvaldo Golijov, and Yevhen Stankovich. He made the premiere recording of



David Maslanka's *Desert Roads* for clarinet and band, released by Albany Records, and presented *Desert Roads* at the 2009 International ClarinetFest in Porto, Portugal. He recorded Mozart's clarinet concerto with the Kiev Camerata for the Troppo Note/Cambria recording label and has performed solo recitals at the Shanghai Symphony Recital Hall in Shanghai, China, in October of 2019, and at the 2018 International ClarinetFest in Ostend, Belgium, and elsewhere. He has given recital tours of Japan, Chile and Argentina, and the U.S., in addition to presenting five recitals at Lincoln Center's Bruno Walter Auditorium in New York. From 1992 to 2009 he performed with the New York based new music group, Continuum, presenting a yearly series in New York, touring throughout North and South America, Europe, and Central Asia, and recording music of Virko Baley, Valentin Bibik, Tania León, and Leonid Hrabovsky. His contemporary music duo Intersecting Lines, with pianist John Orfe, performs at new music festivals, composer conferences, and universities, including the SCI National Conference, the Manchester New Music Festival, the RED NOTE New Music Festival, the University of Iowa Center for New Music, and others. Several composers have written works for him, including Carl Schimmel, David Maslanka, John Orfe, Dick Goodwin, and Paul Harvey. Locally, he performs with the Heartland Festival Orchestra, the Peoria Symphony Orchestra, and the ISU faculty woodwind quintet, Sonneries. He holds the Master of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music, and the Doctoral degree from The Juilliard School.



JOHNSON

**Dominic Johnson** has called Chicago home for over 20 years, and hails originally from the Pacific Northwest. In the 90's he played viola in an indie-rock band based in Chicago and Louisville called rachel's, and subsequently felt the Windy City's magnetic pull draw him into its heady artistic orbit. Career highlights have included co-founding and executive

directing the New Millennium Orchestra from 2005-15, performing his silent film score *Beats, the Bauhaus, and the Birth of Abstract Film* at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage in 2016, and spending three seasons in the music department at Comedy Central's Emmy-nominated TV show *Drunk History*. Freelance engagements of note have included performing with Brian Wilson, Stevie Wonder, Renée Fleming, Father John Misty, Lupe Fiasco, and a tag team DJ set at the Kennedy Center with Composer-in-Residence Mason Bates. Other relatively recent musical activities have included membership in the University of Chicago's Grossman Ensemble for the 2021-22 season and creating arrangements, music directing, and performing for Sudan Archives' 2020 NPR Tiny Desk concert.



KALNIN

A native of Russia, **Igor Kalnin** started his professional career as a faculty member at Glinka State Conservatory in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, and later joined Chamber Orchestra Kremlin in Moscow. After relocating to the United States in 2004, he served as Violin Instructor at Yale University and Assistant Professor of Violin at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa,

as well as a leader for several orchestras on the East Coast and in the Midwest. Presently, he is Artist-Teacher of Violin/Assistant Professor at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois. During the summer season, he teaches at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan, where he also serves as Concertmaster of Blue Lake Festival Orchestra and conducts Advanced Chamber Orchestra. As a soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician, he performed in various venues around the world, including Musikverein in Vienna and Carnegie Hall in New York. *The News-Gazette* praised his playing for the "full rich tone, ... exquisite taste, and admirable skill." *The Uzbekistan News* ([www.nuz.uz](http://www.nuz.uz)) described his performance as "fresh, natural, and impeccably virtuosic." His solo collaborations included Chamber Orchestra Kremlin, Kostroma Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Uzbekistan, Champaign-Urbana Symphony, Sinfonia da Camera, Jackson Symphony (MI), Salisbury Symphony (MD), Chamber Orchestra Turkistan, Blue Lake Festival Orchestra and Rose Chamber Orchestra, among others. An avid proponent of modern music, he commissioned and premiered works by composers from various cultures and backgrounds, including prominent African American composers Jeffrey Mumford and James Lee III, celebrated Uzbek woman composer Dilorom Saidaminova, prolific Spanish composer Salvador Brotons, and rising award-winning Russian composer Anton Prischepa, among others. Together with pianist Rochelle Sennet, he founded Duo MemDi, a forefront chamber group, which focuses on performing repertoire by memory and increasing diversity in the world of classical music. An experienced orchestral musician, he performs regularly as Concertmaster of Blue Lake Festival Orchestra and has previously served as Concertmaster of Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia da Camera, and The Prairie Ensemble in Illinois, as well as Principal Second Violinist of Lansing Symphony in Michigan and Waterbury Symphony Orchestra in Connecticut. His college and pre-college students have won regional, state, and international competitions, and he has given masterclasses at universities and conservatories throughout the United States and internationally. He is a co-founder of the educational project "The Art of Orchestral Playing" at Glinka State Conservatory in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. He also serves on the advisory board at the Community Center for the Arts in Urbana, Illinois.



LEE

Praised by the *San Francisco Classical Voice* for playing "with maturity and panache," Dr. **Cora Swenson Lee** is a cellist and baroque cellist who performs actively around the United States. She holds a Doctorate of Music in Cello Performance and Bachelor's Degree in Cello Performance with highest distinction from the Eastman School of Music, as well as a

Master's Degree in Cello Performance from Boston University College of Fine Arts. A passionate educator, Dr. Swenson Lee is currently Instructional Assistant Professor of Cello at Illinois State University and the director of the Eastman Cello Institute. She has previously held appointments at Bucknell University, musiConnects, the Youth and Muse Festival, and the Hochstein School of Music and Dance. During her doctoral studies she served as a teaching assistant to Alan Harris and as a secondary lesson teacher at

the Eastman School of Music. Dr. Swenson Lee has also taught chamber music, orchestral sectionals, and graduate courses at the University of Rochester and Nazareth College. Dr. Swenson Lee's early music ensemble, Trio Speranza, concertizes around the United States each season, and in 2014 won the Presentation Prize at Early Music America's Baroque Performance Competition. During her time as cellist of the Boston Public Quartet, she was part of the Celebrity Series of Boston initiative Artists in Community, which brings free concerts and school presentations to several Boston communities. Dr. Swenson Lee performs regularly on concert series including King's Chapel Recitals, Emmanuel Music's Lindsey Chapel Series, the Eastman Cello Institute Faculty Recital series, Live from Hochstein Radio Broadcasts, and on the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series in Chicago. Dr. Swenson Lee has appeared with Emmanuel Music, Boston Baroque, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Handel and Haydn Society, and the New World Symphony. Highlights include performances at the San Francisco Early Music Society, Trinity Church Copley and Jordan Hall in Boston, Quigley Chapel and DePaul University in Chicago, the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, and Odori Park in Sapporo Japan. Dr. Swenson Lee has performed under the baton of notable conductors including David Zinman, Fabio Luisi, Leonard Slatkin, David Robertson, George Manahan, and Nicholas McGeegan. She has also had the opportunity to work with artists such as James Dunham, David Halen, John Mark Rozendaal, David Schradler, Rachel Barton Pine, Larry Combs, the Vermeer Quartet, the Ying Quartet, Pacifica Quartet, and members of the Vienna Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera Orchestras. Dr. Swenson Lee has studied under renowned teachers including Eastman School of Music Distinguished Professor Alan Harris, Chicago Symphony member Richard Hirschl, and long-time cellist of the Vermeer Quartet, Marc Johnson.



LEWIS

Violist **Katherine Lewis** enjoys a multi-faceted career as a teacher, and as a solo, chamber, and orchestral musician. Since 2006 she has taught courses on viola performance and technique, viola pedagogy, string pedagogy, and chamber music at Illinois State University where she is Professor of Viola and Interim Director/Master Teacher for the ISU

String Project. As a performer, she is a member of the ISU Faculty String Quartet, principal viola in the Peoria Symphony and Peoria Bach Festival Orchestras, and gives numerous solo performances each year throughout the United States. Dr. Lewis is active in the viola community at both a local and national level. She currently serves as past-president of the Illinois chapter of the American String Teacher's Association. Recently, she completed a three-year term as an elected member of the American Viola Society Executive Board, where she served as chair of the Education Committee, working to broaden educational offerings through media and programming. She also is the founder and director of "Redbird Viola Day" at Illinois State University and the festival director of the Chicago Viola Festival hosted by Midwest Young Artists Conservatory. Dr. Lewis is a recipient of several awards and grants for her teaching, research, and service including the ISU College of Fine Arts Outstanding Teaching Award, the ISU College of Fine Arts

Outstanding Researcher and Research Initiative Awards, and the ISU University Service Initiative Award. She has given recitals, presentations, and master classes at venues and conferences throughout the country and in Brazil. Additionally, she is the co-creator of the Viola Ensemble Database, which is currently housed on the website for the American Viola Society. Dr. Lewis holds degrees from Rice University (DMA), The Cleveland Institute of Music (MM), and Lawrence University (BM). Her primary teachers include Jeffrey Irvine, Karen Ritscher, James Dunham, and Matthew Michelic.



PHOTINOS

Multi-Grammy Award-winning cellist **Nick Photinos** is one of the most innovative and multifaceted cellists of our time. Apart from four Grammy wins, he has received Musical America's Ensemble of the Year Award, the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions, the inaugural Chamber Music America Visionary Award, the Naumburg Award, and the Concert

Artists Guild Grand Prize. Described as a "commanding soloist" (ClevelandClassical.com) whose "virtuoso cello playing is scintillating" (Chicago Classical Review) and "outstanding for his exquisite precision" (SFCV.org), Photinos has collaborated and toured with an astounding array of artists including rock/pop artists Björk, Wilco, Bryce Dessner, Bonnie "Prince" Billy, film composer Gustavo Santaolalla, classical artists Dawn Upshaw, Philip Glass, the Bang on a Can All-Stars, and jazz artists including Sheila Jordan, Laurence Hobgood, Zach Brock, and Matt Ulery. He has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras including the Cleveland, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Toronto, Utah, and Atlanta Symphonies, the last with whom he recorded Jennifer Higdon's *On a Wire*. He has performed across the globe including the Sydney Opera House, the Barbican in London, KBC Hall in Seoul, Carnegie Hall in New York City, Walt Disney Hall in Los Angeles, and Red Rocks Amphitheatre outside Denver. This season Photinos debuts in Sweden, at the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC, in a solo recital at the Winnipeg Gallery of Art, and at the inaugural Chosen Vale International Cello Seminar. He also performs across nine US states and returns as a soloist to the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival and the Bang on a Can Summer Festival, where he has taught since 2007. In 2019 he reached millions of listeners on "Live from Here" with Chris Thile and on Netflix's original movie *The Two Popes*. Photinos' numerous recordings span the Cedille, Nonesuch, New Amsterdam, Greenleaf, and Naxos labels. He recorded for Wilco on their Grammy-nominated album *The Whole Love*, and with Autumn Defense on their album *Once Around*. His debut solo album, *Petits Artéfacts*, deemed "a bold solo debut from one of the most notable artists in contemporary music today" by *PopMatters*, was released on the New Amsterdam label in August 2017. During Photinos' 24-year tenure as the founding cellist and co-Artistic Director of Eighth Blackbird, he performed over 1000 concerts and premiered hundreds of new works, including Steve Reich's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Double Sextet* and works by Andy Akiho, Michael Gordon, Amy Beth Kirsten, David Lang, David T. Little, Nico Muhly, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, Julia Wolfe, and Pamela Z. Eighth Blackbird held multi-year residency positions at the Curtis Institute of Music, the University of

Chicago, and at the University of Richmond. Photinos is a graduate of Northwestern University, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He lives in the Chicago area with his daughter and wife, with whom he is co-Artistic Director of Chamber Music at Bethany, a concert series bringing world-class instrumental and vocal chamber music to Chicago's north side.



Vietnamese-American pianist **Tuyen Tonnu** has graced the world's stages with solo and chamber music concerts in the U.S. as well as Asia and Europe. As a champion of new music, Tonnu's performances have garnered praise for their powerful and insightful interpretations. Her collaborations have included premieres and works by Hans Otte, Tristan

Murail, Sheila Silver, Libby Larsen, Jeffrey Mumford, Adrienne Elisha, Martha Horst, Lukas Ligeti, and Steven Rosenhaus, among others. For the past two decades, she has been the foremost interpreter of the piano music of the late Egyptian American composer Halim El-Dabh, presenting the premiere performances of many of his works. El-Dabh's first piano concerto was composed for and dedicated to her. In 2001, Tonnu was one of ten musicians selected from the U.S. to perform in Alexandria, Egypt for the inauguration of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Other notable performances include collaborations with the Escher String Quartet and the Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players, the world premiere of Martha Horst's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra, and the U.S. premiere of Roque Cordero's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Texas Christian University Symphony Orchestra. In 2020, Tonnu's solo commercial album *Roque Cordero: The Complete Works for Piano Solo* was released on the American/British label Albany Record. The CD has received rave reviews in *Fanfare: The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* and in the *American Record Guide*. Dr. Tonnu is Associate Professor of Piano at Illinois State University. Her teachers included James Avery, Margaret Baxtresser, Thomas Hecht, Daniel Shapiro, and Christina Dahl.



A multi-faceted performer with unique communicative abilities, **MingHuan Xu** has performed extensively as a concerto soloist, duo-recitalist and chamber musician throughout five continents. Ms. Xu's latest recital and chamber music performances have brought her to prominent American venues including Carnegie-Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall,

Symphony Space, the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. Her Carnegie Hall debut was featured on *Voice of America*, a weekly television show viewed by millions of people in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. In 2010 she performed recitals and taught master classes in China at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music, the Sichuan Conservatory of Music, and the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. Her South American debut in 2006 brought her to the Festival Musica Nova in Brazil and the Festival Encuentros in Argentina. Her numerous performances have included live radio broadcasts on National

Public Radio (NPR), WFMT (Chicago) and CBC (Canada) Radio. Recent festival and concert series appearances also include Chamber Music North (MI), the Colours of Music Festival (ON), Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts (Chicago), Hawaii's Ebb & Flow Arts Concert Series, the Kitchen-Waterloo Chamber Music Society, the Mammoth Lakes Music Festival (CA), the SoundaXis Festival (ON), the X-Avant Festival (ON), and the Walla Walla Chamber Music Festival (WA). She has performed with such chamber musicians as Colin Carr, Eugene Drucker, Ilya Kaler, Ani Kavafian, the Pacific String Quartet and the St. Petersburg String Quartet. She also tours extensively and internationally as a part of Duo Diorama (with her husband, pianist Winston Choi) and as a member of Pivot Chamber Soloists. As a dedicated champion of contemporary music Ms. Xu believes fervently in the importance and relevance of the music of our times. She has closely collaborated with William Bolcom, John Corigliano, Gunther Schuller and Bright Sheng on performances of their music. She was recently awarded a Classical Commissioning Grant from Chamber Music America for a new work by Huang Ruo. She has also commissioned and premiered over 40 works by composers such as Marcos Balter, Burton Beerman, George Flynn, M. William Karlins, Felipe Lara, Jacques Lenot, John Melby, Robert Morris, Daniel Weymouth, Amy Williams, Jay Alan Yim, and Mischa Zupko. She is a member of Chicago-based Ensemble Dal Niente, one of the most original and important new music groups active today. Other new music series and groups she has appeared with include Contempo, Eighth Blackbird, MusicNOW and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble. At the age of 18, she made her New York debut as a soloist with the New York Youth Symphony Orchestra, and since then has soloed with orchestras such as the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra, the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, the Manchester Symphony Orchestra, the Midland-Odesa Symphony Orchestra, the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra, the Kamloops Symphony Orchestra, the Oak Ridge Symphony Orchestra, and the Peninsula Music Festival Orchestra. Her recent guest concertmaster stints include the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra, the Richmond Symphony in Virginia, the Peninsula Music Festival Orchestra in Wisconsin, and the Wintergreen Festival Orchestra. At the age of six, Ms. Xu made her recital debut in Beijing and at the age of eleven she won the 1st Prize at the Beijing Young Artists Competition. Her many competition successes also include being winner of Artists International Presentations Auditions, grand prize winner of the International Young Artist Competition of Midland-Odesa, and finalist of the Concert Artist Guild competition in New York. Ms. Xu's studies were at the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music, the Interlochen Arts Academy, Northwestern University and Stony Brook University. Ms. Xu is now an Artist-Faculty member at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts. She also coaches chamber music for the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Xu plays on a 1758 Nicolas Gagliano violin.

**CONCERT IV**

8 pm, March 29, 2023, Kemp Recital Hall

**RED NOTE STUDENT COMPOSITION WORKSHOP PREMIERES**

featuring

Utari Duo and Momenta Quartet

Neon	Siqi Wang (b. 1994)
A light dusting of snow	Dayton Hare (b. 1996)
Holds	Huijuan Ling (b. 1990)
AI Chatbots	Wenbin Lyu (b. 1994)
I. Thinking Like a Human Being (Turing Test)	
II. Future of the Composer	
III. Am I Cheating?	

**Utari Duo**

Haruka Fujii &amp; Rika Fujii, percussion

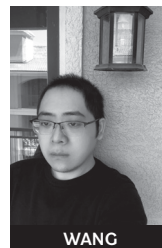
**INTERMISSION**

Sounds and Sweet Airs	Devin Cholodenko (b. 1988)
Three Dances	Yanchen Ye (b. 1992)
I. Dance of Ritual	
II. Dance of Expression	
III. Dance of Joy	
Why Wait?	Ethan Soledad (b. 1999)
The Little Things	Kian Ravaei (b. 1999)
I. I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose	
II. High From the Earth I Heard a Bird	
V. The Moon Was but a Chin of Gold	
VI. A Spider Sewed at Night	

**Momenta Quartet**Emilie-Anne Gendron and Alex Shiozaki, violins  
Stephanie Griffin, viola  
Michael Haas, cello**PROGRAM NOTES**

**Neon** was composed for the 2023 RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Workshop which is organized by the Illinois State University with featured guest composers, George Tsontakis and Melinda Wagner. Eight composers were selected to create new works for either Utari Duo or Momenta Quartet. I was assigned to write for Utari Duo, and I chose to compose a percussion duet for marimba and vibraphone. I titled this piece with neon, a chemical element that is the primary material of neon lighting. Blinking neon lights remind me of some of the bustling but narrow Japanese streets from many film scenes. Those neon signs always overlap with each other and hang over the buildings on both sides of the roads. When these lights become bright at night, even the sky over the street is dyed with dazzling and colorful lights by plenty of blinking neon signs. This street scene inspired me with a lively impression, and this piece, thus, focuses on creating dramatic and dazzling

musical characteristic to portray my imagination of bustling Japanese streets. – *Siqi Wang*



Born in a small town in Henan, China, **Siqi Wang** started to study music theory and composition in the second year of his high-school career. In 2014, Siqi received an offer from the Xinghai Conservatory of Music, located in Guangzhou, China. As an undergraduate, Siqi worked with the performance faculty from Xinghai Conservatory and performers from

Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra numerous times to rehearse, record, and perform his chamber music. During his last two years at Xinghai, Siqi was selected to attend masterclasses that were held by acclaimed composers from the United States and China, such as Dr. Dmitri Tymoczko, and Prof. Ye Xiaogang. Siqi has received his master's degree in music composition from the University of Missouri-Kansas

City Conservatory in 2021. In the same year, Siqi was accepted by the doctoral composition programs of UMKC Conservatory and McGill Schulich School of Music. He is currently pursuing a DMA degree and studying under Dr. Zhou Long, Dr. Chen Yi, and Dr. Yotam Haber at the UMKC Conservatory. Siqi was accepted and commissioned by music festivals like the SoundScape 2020 and 2023 RED NOTE New Music Festival. He is one of the recipients of the 2021 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards.

**A light dusting of snow** – I loved snow as a child. I loved the way it would blanket the landscape, masking shape and color beneath a white sheet of powder. I loved its sound, its crunch under my shoes, and I loved how it could mute the world and swallow ambient noise, could invite me to pay attention to the quietest of sounds, to listen to things verging on the inaudible.

This winter is the first in my adult life to have come and gone without any real snow to speak of. In the city where I live, we had merely a light, ephemeral dusting that melted away within a day. This atypical weather inspired me to reflect on the things I loved and missed about snow, and on the precious, private experiences we are collectively losing in our warming world. And so I've written a piece that attempts to capture the sonic elements of snow that fascinate me, a piece that invites you to listen closely and appreciate the weight of silences. Hopefully it might inspire you, in turn, to listen with new ears to the world of winter. – *Dayton Hare*



HARE

A Colorado native, **Dayton Hare** is a composer and writer who often draws inspiration from elements of the natural world around him. He is currently pursuing graduate studies at the Yale School of Music, and received bachelor's degrees in music composition and English from the University of Michigan, where he minored in French and completed an honors thesis

on the work of Samuel Beckett. He has been awarded fellowships from the National Orchestral Institute + Festival, the Conservatoire américain de Fontainebleau, and the Norfolk New Music Workshop, and participated in festivals such as New Music on the Point and highSCORE, among others. He is a current student of David Lang, and his previous primary teachers include Evan Chambers, Katherine Balch, Roshanne Etezady, Kristin Kuster, Bright Sheng, and Paul Schoenfeld. Dayton has also worked extensively as a journalist and served as the newsletter editor of the *Ann Arbor Observer* and the managing editor of the *Michigan Daily*, where was also the classical music columnist.

**Holds** are features of conducting technique corresponding to changes in musical time, such as interruptions, fermatas, tempo changes, and so on. While composing the present piece I have been reading about the conductor's performance of holds, and I started to realize that the essential question with this is never "how long to hold" but "how can we get back at it," or "how can we plunge back into tempo" after the hold. Or, "are we ever going to get back at it?" Thus, *Holds* explores different lengths of fermatas, and the performance of flow. I invite for performers' interpretations of how they can "get back at it" after these holds. The harmonic language of the duo is created from the parsimonious

movement of one pair of perfect fifths to another. *Holds* is written for Utari Duo to be played at the 2023 RED NOTE New Music Festival at Illinois State University, Normal, IL. – *Huijuan Ling*



LING

**Huijuan Ling** is a composer and keyboardist currently based in Durham, NC. She likes to draw her inspiration outside the boundaries of the wobbly concept of Western art music and enjoys the process of discovering and negotiating a sound world that feels authentic both to her and her collaborators. In 2022, her woodwind quintet *Toward a Rediscovery* won the first prize in the fifth International "New Vision" Composition Competition from the New York Dance & Arts Innovations; in 2021, she was awarded the William Klenz Prize in Composition from Duke University; in 2020, she was among the recipients of the Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; and in 2019, her harpsichord solo *Those Cold Winter Rains* won the third prize in the SIMM 2019 International Harpsichord Composition Competition. Her music has been performed and commissioned by ensembles such as the Cracow Golden Quintet, Ciompi Quartet, Yarn/Wire, Imani Winds, JACK Quartet, Line Upon Line Percussion, Patchwork Duo, and others. Huijuan is currently a PhD candidate in Composition at Duke University, studying composition with Stephen Jaffe and harpsichord/organ with Robert Parkins. She received her MM at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and her BM at Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

**AI Chatbots** – ChatGPT is a chatbot developed by OpenAI, and I used its generated program note to compose this piece:

*AI Chatbots* by composer Wenbin Lyu is a groundbreaking work for two percussionists on one marimba, clocking in at approximately eight minutes. This three-movement piece explores the relationship between humans and artificial intelligence through music, pushing the boundaries of what is possible in the world of percussion. Inspired by Alan Turing's famous experiment, the first movement explores the idea of determining a machine's ability to exhibit intelligent behavior equivalent to, or indistinguishable from, that of a human. This movement starts with an introspective and contemplative atmosphere, gradually building to a frantic and chaotic climax, questioning the boundary between human and machine. The second movement is a contemplation of the future of composing and the role of technology in shaping it. Featuring moments of stillness and reflection interspersed with explosive energy, this movement is a celebration of the limitless potential for innovation in music. As technology continues to advance, the role of the composer is constantly evolving. The final movement raises the question of whether the use of technology in composition is cheating, or simply a new tool in the composer's arsenal. Featuring fast and intricate rhythms, this movement challenges the performer's technical abilities while also musically representing the tension between tradition and progress. This composition, *Chatbots*, is a tribute to the power of technology to inspire and push the boundaries of artistic expression. Wenbin Lyu's imaginative use of timbre and texture, combined with the

virtuosity of the performers, creates a unique and captivating musical experience that will leave the audience in awe. This work is a true testament to the composer's talent and creativity and is a strong contender for a Pulitzer Prize. –  
Generated by ChatGPT, February 5, 2023

**Seed Text:**

Composer: Wenbin Lyu

Write me a music composition program note for marimba (two percussionists) that can win me a Pulitzer Prize, titled AI Chatbots, three movements, about eight minutes. Title of each movement: First movement, Thinking Like a Human Being (Turing Test); Second movement, Future of the Composers; Third movement, Am I Cheating?



LYU

**Wenbin Lyu** is a US-based Chinese composer and guitarist. The composition written by Wenbin Lyu combine contemporary western techniques with ancient oriental culture. He seeks inspiration from nature, science, and video games. Lyu has received fellowships from Tanglewood Music Center, Cabrillo Festival Composers Workshop, and Atlantic Center for the

Arts. Lyu's works have been performed at many events, including the SCI, RED NOTE, TUTTI, Alba, Cabrillo, and Tanglewood. As an electronic musician, his works have been featured at ICMC, NYCMEF, EMM, IRCAM, SEAMUS, and SPLICE. His music has been performed by Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Beijing Symphony, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, Fifth House Ensemble, Del Sol Quartet, icarus Quartet, Society for New Music, Capitol Quartet, Transient Canvas, and Hypercube. Lyu is the recipient of one ASCAP Young Composer Award and has twice received The American Prize.

**Sounds and Sweet Airs** for string quartet derives both inspiration and title from the famous passage appearing in Shakespeare's final play, *The Tempest*:

Be not afeard. The isle  
is full of noises, sounds,  
and sweet airs, that give  
delight and hurt not.  
Sometimes a thousand  
twangling instruments  
will hum about mine  
ears, and sometimes  
voices that, if I then  
had waked after long  
sleep will make me sleep  
again;

and then in dreaming the  
clouds methought would  
open and show riches  
ready to drop upon me,  
that when I waked I cried  
to dream again.

– Devin Cholodenko



CHOLODENKO

**Devin Cholodenko** is a composer from New York who writes mostly instrumental music falling within a tonal framework, with focus and intention. As an artist, Cholodenko is deeply interested in the introspection of time and memory and what that means in the experience of reality. Other inspirations come from literature, nature, cognition, extreme experiences, mythology, and personal identity. His music has been performed, read, and recorded across the United States and internationally by ensembles such as JACK Quartet, HUB New Music, Arx Duo, and Bent Frequency, and has been featured as part of Composers Now, Mizzou New Music Initiative, Charlotte New Music, the Rochester Fringe Festival, Nextet Contemporary Music Series, and The International Electro-Acoustic Music Festival in Brooklyn, among other events and festivals. His work has earned recognition by the American Viola Society, NewEar, The Society of Composers, Creatives Rebuild New York and other organizations in various calls, competitions, and grants. Cholodenko was the recipient of the 2021 Gerald Kemner Prize for his orchestral writing at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, where he is an alumnus, and has had his orchestral music performed as part of the Missouri Composer's Project. He has held residencies at Atlantic Center for the Arts and Kimmel Harding Nelson. He is currently a doctoral student at the University of Miami.

While I was composing *Three Dances*, I had three different occasions of dance in mind. The first movement, Dance of Ritual, represents traditions that bring people together in celebration, hope, healing, and reverence for Mother Nature. It symbolizes the social aspect of human life, where people connect with others, uphold social values, and fulfill responsibilities. In contrast, the Dance of Expression delves into the emotional and internal aspects of humanity. It invites us to introspect and connect with our true selves, exploring our sentiments and innermost thoughts. By considering both external and internal aspects of human experience, I was able to reflect on my own life experiences, desires, fears, happiness, as well as the harmonies and dissonances within and outside of me. Through the exploration of my true self, I gained a deeper understanding of who I am and what brings me fulfillment. This newfound self-awareness allowed me to confront my fears and desires, leading me to a path of personal growth and development. The act of creating music had become a form of self-expression that brought me immense satisfaction and happiness. In Dance of Joy, I infused the piece with a sense of joy and contentment that emanated from my own inner peace, conveying a sense of fulfillment that I hope listeners will experience as well. – Yanchen Ye



YE

Hailed by the *Seattle Times* as “[a] major triumph,” **Yanchen Ye** is an award-winning Chinese contemporary classical music composer. Ye’s orchestral works have been performed by world-class orchestras, including the MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Seattle Symphony, the National Ballet of China Orchestra, and the China National Centre

for the Performing Arts Orchestra. When Ye was only nineteen years old, his very first composition for orchestra won the national symphonic composition award from China’s Ministry of Culture. Since then, he has continued receiving world-wide recognition for his work by winning several major competitions including: the C.C. Prokofiev Composition Competition in Russia (2012), the China National Center for the Performing Arts’ (NCPA) Young Composer Programme Competition (2013), and the American Prize (2022). Ye has collaborated with world-leading conductors such as Kristjan Järvi, Chen Zuohuang, Zhang Yi, and Carolyn Kuan. Ye has also been commissioned to compose for the NCPA Orchestra and the Vale of Glamorgan Festival, U.K. Ye graduated magna cum laude from the Nizhny Novgorod State Conservatory with a Bachelor and Master’s degree in Composition, and New England Conservatory with a Master of Music in Composition. He is currently working towards his D.M.A in music composition at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**Why wait?** – This piece is a reflection on my journey of self-discovery. For the longest time, crippling self-doubt has been a huge hindrance to me realizing and achieving my goals. However, I am forever grateful for the wonderful teachers and friends that have invested in me and were able to help me see my true potential in all aspects of my life. The title “Why wait?” exemplifies this fiery determination instilled within me and my willingness to go above and beyond to see my ambitions come to fruition. – *Ethan Soledad*



SOLEADAD

Bold, dramatic, with an exquisite attention to detail, **Ethan Soledad** is a Filipino-American composer whose work aims to express emotions in their most raw form. An experienced singer, he incorporates drama in his work, emphasizing the importance of silence and one’s perception of time. Ethan’s music draws from a wide palette of compositional styles and

colors ranging from impressionism and neoclassicism to post-minimalism and the avant-garde. His musical style is marked by unapologetic expression, dynamic extremes, and the ability to do more with less but never shying away from doing more with more. His music has been performed and recognized by ensembles such as New York Youth Symphony (First Music Commission Honorable Mention), the Greater Miami Youth Symphony, Choral Arts Initiative, Fifth House Ensemble, Bent Frequency, the East Coast Contemporary Ensemble (ECCE), Fear No Music, Crossing Borders Music, True Concord Voices and Orchestra, The Choral Project, the Beo String Quartet, and the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of New York. He is a teacher at the Shepherd School of Music pre-college program, teaching music theory, composition, and aural skills to advanced high school students. Addition-

ally he is a young artist at DACAMERA Houston, engaging in outreach programs with Harris County elementary and middle schools. He graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in Music at Florida State University 2021 and is currently pursuing his Master of Music in Composition at Rice University studying under Shih-Hui Chen and Karim Al-Zand. His previous composition teachers include Liliya Ugay and Orlando Jacinto Garcia.

All seven titles which comprise *The Little Things* come from Emily Dickinson, who never fails to direct our attention toward nature’s easily overlooked wonders. Movements II, III, IV, and VI evoke various fauna, while I and V portray the sun and moon respectively. They are not musical responses to Dickinson’s poetry, but rather miniature tone poems inspired by the same details of nature. This truncated version, created expressly for the Momenta Quartet at the RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Workshop, contains four of the seven movements. – *Kian Ravaei*



RAVAEI

Whether composing piano preludes inspired by mythical creatures, flute melodies that mimic the songs of endangered birds, or a string quartet that draws from the Iranian music of his ancestral heritage, composer **Kian Ravaei** takes listeners on a spellbinding tour of humanity’s most deeply felt emotions. Ravaei has collaborated with performers and

ensembles such as Eliot Fisk, Bella Hristova, Salastina, and Juventas New Music Ensemble, and has served as a Copland House CULTIVATE Fellow and a Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Composer Teaching Artist Fellow. In recent months, Ravaei was featured on an episode of *Performance Today*, America’s most popular classical music radio program. His string quartet *Family Photos* has garnered numerous awards, including First Prize in the Spectrum Chamber Music Composition Competition, Second Prize in the instrumental chamber music division of the American Prize, and Honorable Mention in the Tribeca New Music Young Composer Competition. DJs know Ravaei as the go-to person for creating orchestral versions of dance songs, including Wooli & Codeko’s “Crazy feat. Casey Cook (Orchestral).” Ravaei counts celebrated composers Richard Danielpour, Derek Bermel, and Tarik O’Regan among his teachers. He is an alumnus of UCLA and the Curtis Institute of Music Young Artist Summer Program.

**PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 4 FOR UTARI DUO BIO**

**PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 4 FOR MOMENTA QUARTET BIO**

**CONCERT V**

8 pm, March 30, 2023, Center for the Performing Arts

## ISU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CONCERT CHOIR

Rossetti Nursery Rhymes (2002) George Tsontakis (b. 1951)  
 Absalom (2022) Adrian Wong (b. 1999)  
*Winner, RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Competition – Choral Category*  
 ISU Concert Choir  
 Mark Grizzard, conductor

**BRIEF INTERMISSION**

Hydrosphere (2022) Sam Wu (b. 1995)  
*Winner, RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Competition – Orchestral Category*

Concerto for Flute, Strings, and Percussion (1998) Melinda Wagner (b. 1957)  
 III. Quarter note = ca. 100  
 Kimberly McCoul Risinger, flute

Comet (2010) George Tsontakis  
 ISU Symphony Orchestra  
 Glenn Block, conductor

**PROGRAM NOTES**

*Rossetti Nursery Rhymes – Sonnets and Rhymes on Love and Aging* (1999) alternated three Shakespeare sonnets with three nursery rhymes by Christina Rossetti. My intention was to juxtapose three short, compactly powerful “observations” by Shakespeare with the even shorter and modest utterances of Rossetti — no less profound nor wise in their unpretentious brevity. Both the set of sonnets and rhymes were created to stand on their own as well, as two triptychs. The work was commissioned by the New York Virtuoso Singers and Harold Rosenbaum through a grant from the Mary Flagler Cary Trust and premiered in New York in 1999. – *G. Tsontakis*

Please see page 3 for **George Tsontakis’s** biography.

*“When David heard that  
 Absalom was slain he  
 went up to his chamber  
 over the gate,  
 and wept, my son, my  
 son, O Absalom my son,  
 would God I had died for  
 thee!”*

**ABSALOM**

*adapted from Samuel II, ch. 14-18*

Absalom...

Let him turn to his house

Let him not see my face

Go in peace

Deal with him gently

My son

Would God I’d died for thee

**ROSSETTI NURSERY RHYMES**

I.

I dreamt I caught a little owl  
 And the bird was blue —  
 But you may hunt for ever  
 And not find such a one.  
 I dreamt I set a sunflower,  
 And red as blood it grew —  
 But such a sunflower never  
 Bloomed beneath the sun.

II.

Dead in the cold, a song-singing thrush,  
 Dead at the foot of a snowberry bush, —  
 Weave him a coffin of rush,  
 Dig him a grave where the soft mosses grow,  
 Raise him a tombstone of snow.

III.

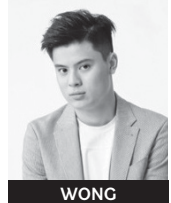
Love me, — I love you,  
 Love me, my baby;  
 Sing it high, sing it low,  
 Sing it as may be.

Mother’s arms under you,  
 Her eyes above you;  
 Sing it high, sing it low,  
 Love me, — I love you.

*Absalom’s* tragic story has often been encapsulated by this devastating, vivid line from Samuel II 18:33 — a heartbreaking culmination of all of King David’s errors in dealing with Amnon’s horrific, incestual rape of Tamar, Absalom’s sister. I wanted to trace that trajectory, trace their entire story,



and see how years of mistakes and interactions between David and Absalom led to this tragic moment. A timeless trio repeats Absalom's name over and over, while the rest of the text takes from moments when King David either orders a decree that affects Absalom or directly addresses Absalom, contextualizing and recontextualizing each utterance of his name. *Absalom* was commissioned by and dedicated with great admiration to NOËMA and its founder and Artistic Director Sanders Lau for their inaugural concert. – *Adrian Wong*



WONG

Born and raised in Hong Kong, **Adrian Wong** creates engaging and moving music full of imagery, drama, and unapologetic conviction. Adrian takes inspiration from a wide array of subjects, from the impending climate crisis to matters of identity and social justice, as well as life's smaller things, from the lullabies his mother sang to his favorite foods' tastes and textures.

Adrian's pieces have been performed or recorded by ensembles such as Alarm Will Sound, Cong Quartet, and the NOTUS Contemporary Vocal Ensemble. He has also been commissioned by Hub New Music, the Hong Kong Composers' Guild, and the Diocesan Choral Society, among others. He is a winner of the 2021 American Prize in Composition (shorter choral works - student division), and a participant of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra's Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Composers Scheme. He also won first prize in the Hong Kong New Generation 2019 Composition Competition. Adrian is currently pursuing an M.M. in music composition at the Curtis Institute of Music where he is the Milton L. Rock Composition Fellow, studying with Amy Beth Kirsten, Jonathan Bailey Holland, Nick DiBerardino, Richard Danielpour, and Steven Mackey.

*Hydrosphere* is inspired by the water cycle—a macroscopic, planetary process that shapes oceans and continents. Water is the source of life as we know it; its eternal cycle accompanies generations across the aeons. Despite its ubiquity, water is precious — we must protect Gaia's lifeblood. – *Sam Wu*



WU

**Sam Wu's** music deals with the beauty in blurred boundaries. Many of his works center around extra-musical themes: architecture and urban planning, climate science, and the search for exoplanets that harbor life. Selected for the American Composers Orchestra's EarShot readings and the Tasmanian Symphony's Australian Composers' School, winner of an ASCAP

Morton Gould Young Composer Award and First Prize at the Washington International Competition, Sam Wu also received Harvard's Robert Levin Prize and Juilliard's Palmer Dixon Prize. Sam's collaborations span five continents, most notably with the orchestras of Philadelphia, Minnesota, Sarasota, Melbourne, Tasmania, Shanghai, and Shenzhen, New York City Ballet, The Kennedy Center, National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing, Sydney International Piano Competition, the Lontano, Parker, Argus, ETHEL, and icarus Quartets, conductors Osmo Vänskä, Benjamin Northey, and Tan Dun, sheng virtuoso Wu Wei, and pipa

master Wu Man. Sam has been featured on the National Geographic Channel, *Business Insider*, *Harvard Crimson*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Asahi Shimbun*, *People's Daily*, CCTV, among others. From Melbourne, Australia, Sam holds an AB in Music and East Asian Studies from Harvard University, a MM in Composition from The Juilliard School, and pursues his DMA in Composition at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. His teachers include Tan Dun, Anthony Brandt, Pierre Jalbert, Chaya Czernowin, and Richard Beaudoin.

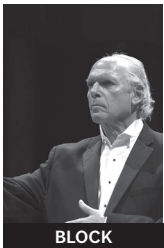
**Concerto for Flute, Strings, and Percussion** – It was during a rehearsal of my orchestral work, *Falling Angels*, in October 1995, that conductor and flutist Paul Lustig Dunkel first suggested that I compose a concerto for him. Delighted and honored to be given such a wonderful opportunity, I quickly agreed, and in the following year the Westchester Philharmonic commissioned the work in anticipation of its forthcoming 15th Anniversary celebration. Several concerns presented themselves at the outset. While the flute is an incredibly agile instrument, capable of producing its signature silvery pyrotechnics as well as tones of dark and mysterious liveliness, it does not cut the same kind of “heroic” figure as the concerto “heavy hitters,” the piano and the violin. Nor does it necessarily stand up, acoustically or spiritually, to huge orchestra forces, or comfortably carry off a certain brand of angst. For these reasons, I agreed with Maestro Dunkel to omit winds and brass from my plans, thus leaving me to “discover” the palette of colors used by Bartók in his landmark *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* (I added additional percussion to Bartók's forces). From the outset, I had a strong desire to compose a truly serious work for the flute. I wanted to include, of course, the virtuosic, rapid-fire passagework that sounds so good on the flute. However, I did not want the instrument to merely bob and float delicately atop the piece, but rather to participate fully in its compositional and formal rigor — not as a “hero” beating the odds, but as an artistic beacon, or navigator. I was not as interested in pushing the flute to its limits with extended techniques (there are no key slaps, multiphonics, or speaking into the instrument) as with exploring the performer's rich tone and command of musical line. Also, I wanted the accompanying ensemble to participate fully in the music; indeed the piece bears little resemblance to the *ritornello* forms of the 18th and 19th centuries. Nonetheless, the first movement does owe a doff of the cap to the spirit of Sonata Allegro form with strongly delineated first and second themes. The first, appearing initially as an angular, somewhat strident fanfare, recurs throughout— often against, or in answer to a plangent bass — or with the more sprightly “wind-up-toy” sound of xylophone and glockenspiel. The second more lyrical tune, a descending linear “sigh,” is first heard in fragments, then in longer, more coherent phrases. After the cadenza the “sigh” is allowed full breath, so to speak, in a dreamy episode cushioned by strings. A quick recapitulation and coda ends the movement. The lullaby tune that opens the second movement was composed to exploit the exceptional beauty of Paul Dunkel's lower register. I tried to create an intimate environment for the soloist by composing accompanying lines for various solo strings and string quartet. Often, the remaining players provide a backdrop or “scrim” in long pedal tones (I used the working title “Veils” for this movement). This movement is the most

impassioned of the three, yet it is also, paradoxically, the most reserved and private. The prominence of the piano and snare drum, coupled with its rondo-like form, sets the third movement apart from the others. Here the flute is truly light hearted! After a brief cadenza, the fanfare from Movement I briefly reappears, and the work merrily rushes to its noisy conclusion. – *M. Wagner*

Please see page 3 for **Melinda Wagner**'s biography.

**Comet** is a ten-minute work. In essence, a short "tone poem." The title came to me almost immediately after composing the musically "strophic," if not "rhyming" opening tune, which is formed by the call and responses of a four-note falling figure. As the work evolves, the opening tune fragments, abstracts, and appears to disintegrate until turning into strong and guttural pure energy. Parabolic *glissandi* adorn the tune and its evolution, and grow with the dynamism of the work's texture. I would like to thank my longtime friend, conductor Randall Fleischer, as well as the Anchorage Symphony and *Musica Nova* for the opportunity to compose *Comet* and visit Alaska. – *G. Tsontakis*

## PERFORMER NOTES



Dr. **Glenn Block** has served as the Director of Orchestras and Professor of Conducting at Illinois State University since 1990. From 1983 - 2007, he led the Kansas City Youth Symphony program to being one of the largest and most recognized youth symphony programs in the country. Prior to coming to Illinois in the fall of 1990, Dr. Block served for 15 years as Director of

Orchestras and Professor of Conducting at the Conservatory of Music of the University of Missouri - Kansas City and Music Director of the Kansas City Civic Orchestra. From 1972 - 1974, he was Music Director of the San Diego Chamber Orchestra and from 1968 - 1974; he served as Principal Double Bass of the San Diego Symphony and Opera Orchestras. Born in Brooklyn, Dr. Block was educated at the Eastman School of Music. He also received his Ph.D. from the University of California at San Diego. A frequent guest conductor, he has appeared in 42 states with all-state and professional orchestras in the United States, Europe, Asia, and South America. Dr. Block has served on the faculty of the National Music Camp at Interlochen as Resident Conductor of the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, and at the Interlochen Arts Academy as Visiting Conductor. In addition, he has served as Music Director of the Summer Festival Orchestra at the Rocky Ridge Music Center in Estes Park, Colorado. Dr. Block has been widely recognized as a teacher of conducting, performing master classes throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia and South America. An active researcher, he has been the recipient of numerous Illinois State University, University of Missouri and National Endowment of the Humanities grants that have resulted in critical editions of the orchestral music of Igor Stravinsky, Charles Ives and George Gershwin. In 1985, he was appointed Research Consultant to the Orchestra Library Information Service (OLIS) of the American Symphony Orchestra League, where responsibilities included the organization of critical sources and errata information for the orchestral

repertoire housed in a national database in Washington, D.C. He has served as a member of the national Board of Directors of the Conductors Guild of America, representing over 1,000 professional conductors, and the Board of Directors of the American Symphony Orchestra League. Foreign guest conducting appearances have included residencies at the Fountainebleau Conservatoire in France, and in Spain, Canada, Colombia, Estonia, Russia, Italy and South America in 2013 (Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay). Dr. Block led the Youth Symphony of Kansas City on four international tours to Spain (1992), Canada (1996), Italy (2000), Budapest/Vienna/Prague (2004) and three national tours to Chicago, St. Louis, and New York's Carnegie Hall. The Youth Symphony of Kansas City was invited by MENC to be the broadcast orchestra for the 1995 World's Largest Concert and to perform at the 1996 MENC annual convention. Beginning in 2012, he has annually toured extensively throughout South America with concerts in Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. In the summer of 2014, he returned to South America, and also guest conducted in Italy, with concerts in Pescara and in the mountains of Abruzzo. In the fall of 2015, he returned to Buenos Aires to make his conducting debut at the Teatro Colón, and a second trip to Argentina to conduct in Mar del Plata in November of 2015. In January, 2016, Dr. Block was on sabbatical for the entire second semester from Illinois State University, living and conducting in South America, researching El Sistema orchestra programs in South America, Italy, and Vietnam. He conducted additional concerts throughout South America, guest conducting and teaching conducting in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Italy, and Vietnam. During the month of July 2016, Dr. Block conducted four orchestras in Asunción, Paraguay: the Orquesta de los Recicladados Instrumentos de Cateura (Recycled Instruments Orchestra), Orquesta de la Policía Nacional, Camerata Miranda and OCMA, made up of the principal players of the OSCA (Orquesta Sinfónica de la Ciudad de Asunción). He was invited to serve as Principal Guest Conductor with the National Symphony of Vietnam in Ho Chi Minh City for the 2017 -2018 season. In June of 2017, Dr. Block returned to Argentina to guest-conduct the Orquesta Sinfónica de Salta, the National Youth Orchestra of Argentina on tour to Buenos Aires, the Filarmónica de Chascomus, and he was invited to lead the V. Internacional Seminario in Dirección Orquestal (Seminar in Orchestral Conducting) at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He returned to the Teatro Colón in November, 2017 to again lead the Academia Orquesta. He regularly guest conducts and leads conducting seminars throughout South America and Italy, in addition to his concerts in the United States. During the 2022-2023 season he will be conducting the orchestras of Posadas, San Juan, Mendoza in Argentina and the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, orchestras in Colombia, Paraguay, Brazil, and Italy.



Dr. **Mark Grizzard** conducts the auditioned choirs Concert Choir, Madrigal Singers, and Belle Voix. He also supervises the MM Choral Conducting program and teaches undergraduate courses in music theory and musicianship. Grizzard has served as a guest clinician for school choirs across the Midwest, presented seminars on music arranging and perfor-

mance for the National Association for Music Education and the Illinois Music Education Association, adjudicated Illinois High School Association organizational contests, and served on the board of the Illinois chapter of the American Choral Director's Association as Men's Choir Repertoire and Standards Chair. A prolific arranger, Grizzard's arrangements have been performed by the National Symphony Orchestra, the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, and vocal jazz ensemble Chapter 6, with whom Grizzard has produced four studio albums and received Best Jazz Album at the 2012 Contemporary Acappella Recording Awards (*Color By Number*, executive producer). He lives with his wife Leigh and their two children in Peoria, IL.



RISINGER

**Kimberly McCoul Risinger** is principal flutist in the Illinois Symphony and Chamber Orchestras and the Heartland Festival Orchestra. In addition, she performs in the Linden Flute and Guitar Duo and the Sonneries Woodwind Quintet. Risinger has given solo performances in most of the major concert halls in New York City, including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and Merkin Recital Hall. An advocate of contemporary music, Risinger has played concerts throughout the United States, Europe and Canada, often presenting world premieres of new works written for and dedicated to her. Risinger's two solo CD's (*Songs of My Nights—The Flute Music of David Maslanka*, and *Sonata Fantasy—Contemporary American Pieces for Flute and Piano*) are available on the CD Baby Record label and on the Albany Records label. Risinger is Professor of Flute at Illinois State University.

### ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY CONCERT CHOIR

Mark Grizzard, *conductor*

Maddie Adelman	Grant Dixon IV	Ashley Oros	Brayden Sefranek
Mackenzie J. Ahlman	Liam Duffy	Ellie Paschall	Joshua Sexton
Celie Arnett	Joshua Dunn	Ava Perrigo	Jackson Stawick
Julia Bell	Sophie Evans	La'akea Peverly	Austin Wanner
Rachel Burris	Anna Haage	Rhiannon Rannocho	Olivia Wexler
Olivia Crane	Lottie Heckman	Cole Rich	Raechel Zoellick
Joshua Dahmm	Luke Kirby	Isaac Richards	
Matt Davis	Justyn Olson	Guilherme Rodrigues	

### ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Glenn Block, *conductor*

<b>Violin 1</b>	<b>Cello</b>	<b>Oboe</b>	<b>Trumpet</b>
Satomi Radostits, concertmaster	Gita Srinivasan, principal	Elli Ji, principal	Symphony Orchestra
Maria Emmons	Joe Brackman	Melanie Castillo - English Horn	Seth Marshall, Principal
Colleen Loemker	Kahauri Brown-Givens	Emma Edwards	Ryan Valdivia
Gibson Swalley	Isabelle Boike	<b>Clarinet</b>	KT Freimuth
Hannah Appleyard	Paris Roake	Alec Jenkins, co-principal	<b>Trombone</b>
Anna Woods	Brandon Campos	Christian Rucinski, co-principal	Brett Harris, principal
<b>Violin 2</b>	Elliot Butler	Trent Nolin, clarinet & bass clarinet	Nathan Nigus
Antonia Tapias, principal	Brian Hershey	<b>Bassoon</b>	Lucas Dahmm
Blake Bowers	Jenny Komperda	Rosalie Truback,	Cole Richey, bass
Amanda Tauch	Peyton Miles	Nicholas Filano	<b>Tuba</b>
Lucia DePaz	Ian Crossland	Wes Smith	Micah Crouse
Daniel Blanc	Lauryn Albertini	<b>Horn</b>	<b>Percussion</b>
Alejandra Jaramillo	<b>Double Bass</b>	Scott Whitman, principal	Baryl Brandt, principal
<b>Viola</b>	Alyssa Trebat, principal	Lucy Harazin	Sara Eckert
Nick McKee, principal	John St. Cyr	Keziah Cobden	Braeden Forman
Carlos Leon	Alexandra Jennings	Lydia Cermak	David Norgaard
Shelby Fick	Laura Velez	Sam Fortuna	<b>Harp</b>
Trinity Howell	<b>Flute</b>	Noah Marney	Julia Kay Jamieson
Ulzhan Ydyryssova	Kirsten Townander, Principal		<b>Piano</b>
Ben Achammer	Rachel Nulf		Olesia Pupina
Zeph Mussman	Chelsea Davis		
	Maddie Hubbard		



WONSOOK KIM  
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS  
*Illinois State University*

× Lay left hand on keys, then press left hand down