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VOICE OF DESTINY

CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION
“LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER”

NEW YORK CITY

OCTOBER 25, 2023, 7:00PM

NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE

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CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION
“LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER”
NEW YORK CITY

Sonata for Solo Piano † Cameron Wentz

- I. *Prelude*
- II. *Aria*
- III. *Toccata*

Craig Ketter, *piano*

Im Schatten des Lichts Nina Siniakova

- 1. *Le temps filant* ††
- 2. *Im Schatten des Lichts* ‡

Nina Siniakova, *piano*

Three Teasdale Songs ‡ Thomas Parente

- 1. *The Mystery*
- 2. *I Am Not Yours*
- 3. *The Ghost*

Abby Brodnick, *soprano* Thomas Parente, *piano*

— INTERMISSION —

Pentachordal Etudes (selections) † Hubert Howe

N°3. *Largo*

N°4. *Larghetto*

Nina Siniakova, *piano*

Call of the Dance (selections) Debra Kaye

II. *a deafening silence - an elegy*

III. *Call of the Dance*

Carl Gutowski, *flute* Marcia Eckert, *piano*

The Voice of Destiny † Dana Dimitri Richardson

I. *Dramatically*

II. *Rubato*

III. *Dramatically*

Craig Ketter, *piano*

† World Premiere

†† U.S. Premiere

‡ New York Premiere

NYCC is a Presenter Partner with Composers Now. NYCC is grateful to Claudia Dumschat and the staff of the Church of the Transfiguration for their kind assistance with this concert.

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FOR A WINE & CHEESE RECEPTION

TEXTS

Three Teasdale Songs

music: Thomas Parente

texts: Sara Teasdale

1. *The Mystery*

Your eyes drink of me,
Love makes them shine,
Your eyes that lean
So close to mine.

We have long been lovers,
We know the range
Of each other's moods
And how they change;

But when we look
At each other so
Then we feel
How little we know;

The spirit eludes us,
Timid and free —
Can I ever know you
Or you know me?

2. *I Am Not Yours*

I am not yours, not lost in you,
Not lost, although I long to be
Lost as a candle lit at noon,
Lost as a snowflake in the sea.

You love me, and I find you still
A spirit beautiful and bright,
Yet I am I, who long to be
Lost as a light is lost in light.

Oh plunge me deep in love—put out
My senses, leave me deaf and blind,
Swept by the tempest of your love,
A taper in a rushing wind.

3. *The Ghost*

I went back to the clanging city,
I went back where my old loves stayed,
But my heart was full of my new love's glory,
My eyes were laughing and unafraid.

I met one who had loved me madly
And told his love for all to hear,
But we talked of a thousand things together,
The past was buried too deep to fear.

I met the other, whose love was given
With never a kiss and scarcely a word,
Oh, it was then the terror took me
Of words unuttered that breathed and stirred.

Oh, love that lives its life with laughter
Or love that lives its life with tears
Can die, but love that is never spoken
Goes like a ghost through the winding years....

I went back to the clanging city,
I went back where my old loves stayed,
My heart was full of my new love's glory,
But my eyes were suddenly afraid.

COMPOSERS

HUBERT HOWE was educated at Princeton University, where he studied with J. K. Randall, Godfrey Winham and Milton Babbitt, and from which he received the A.B., M.F.A. and Ph.D. degrees. He was one of the first researchers in computer music and became Professor of Music and Director of the Electronic Music studios at Queens College of the City University of New York. He also taught at the Juilliard School from 1974 to 1994. In 1988-89 he held the Endowed Chair in Music at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. From 1989 to 1998, 2001 to 2002, and Fall 2007, he was Director of the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College. He is a member of the Society of Composers, Inc., the American Composers Alliance, the International Computer Music Association, SEAMUS, the Long Island Composers Alliance, and the New York Composers Circle. In 2009, he founded the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival and he continues as its Director. Recordings of his computer music have been released by Capstone Records (*Overtone Music*, CPS-8678, *Filtered Music*, CPS-8719, and *Temperamental Music and Created Sounds*, CPS- 8771), Ravello Records (*Clusters*, RR 7817 and *Improvisation on the Undertone Series*, RR8043) and Centaur Records (*Harmonic and Inharmonic Fantasies*, CRC 3579).

COMPOSER'S NOTE:

These *Pentachordal Etudes* continue the line of development that I began with my *Tetrachordal Etudes*, only the pieces are based on pentachords (five-note chords) rather than tetrachords. Each of the pieces are based on a group of pentachords that are related by basic operations like inversion and cycle-of-fifths equivalence, and then they are distributed around the keyboard in numerous ways. When all the combinations are taken into account, the F#'s, G#'s, A's and B's have a special prominence. Each individual piece is based on a single group of pentachords except for the third piece, which uses two. These are etudes, or studies, which develop numerous ways of presenting the same basic materials over and over. While the notes generally lie within the span of the hands, there are a few spots where the pianist has to keep melodic lines sustained in widely spaced octaves, requiring the use of the pedal. Some passages are written out on three staves to clarify these melodies. Lines run throughout the pieces in all octaves, but the harmonies are mainly pentachords. The etudes were composed in the summer of 2013.

The works of six-time Global Music Award winner **DEBRA KAYE** range from lyrical to grooving, experimental to coloristic, but above all, expressive and deeply felt. *Classical-Modern Music Review* praises her 2023 album, *Ikarus Among the Stars* (Navona) “...each work is a gem...this album affirms Ms. Kaye’s stature as a singular voice for today’s Modern scene.” Tonight’s performance of *Call of the Dance* will be played by the same artists who recently recorded it: flutist Carl Gutowski, who also commissioned the work, and my long-time friend and colleague, pianist Marcia Eckert.

Career highlights include residencies at the Millay Colony and Helene Wurlitzer Foundation; ASCAP Plus awards; grants from Mannes College, Meet the Composer and the Edward T. Cone Foundation, and commissions from the Howland Chamber Music Circle, Portland Youth Philharmonic, Community Music Center of Portland as well as individuals. Kaye’s music has been performed by acclaimed artists such as the Lincoln Trio, Daedalus Quartet and Naumberg-winning clarinetist, Charles Neidich. Her debut album *And So It Begins* (Ravello, 2014) was on Ted Gioia’s top 100 and described as “...inspirational, an album that will surely stand the test of time” (babysue.com).

COMPOSER’S NOTE:

a deafening silence is an elegy written for flutist Carl Gutowski in remembrance of his beloved older brother Paul who died of AIDS in 1985. The piano opens with a “hammer blow of fate” and the flute responds with a chilling *cri du coeur*. The piece ends in a song of remembrance, embracing the beautiful sadness of a life cut short. *a deafening silence* is the second movement of a three-movement suite (the first movement, *Fantasy*, was written as a wedding gift for Carl’s niece).

Call of the Dance, the third movement, re-examines earlier themes through the lens of time. An inner striving toward life stirs in a series of overlapping trills that emerge and recede, accelerating to become a celebratory dance, the dance of life.

Dr. **THOMAS J. PARENTE** is Professor Emeritus of Piano at Westminster Choir College of Rider University and composer in residence for the Unitarian Congregation of Montclair. His compositions include works for orchestra, solo and duo piano, piano trio, strings, string quartet, voice, chorus and band. His scores can be found at Subitomusic.com. A concert entirely devoted to his works was presented November 2019 at La Conservatoria de Musica located in Parana, Argentina with Parente as both pianist and conductor. The premieres of his choral works *October* and *Look Up at the Sky* were performed by the National Chorale at New York's David Geffen (formerly Avery Fisher) Hall in November of 2015. Two of his piano trios were performed in March, 2019 by the Hobart Trio in Princeton. *October* was performed again in November of 2022 by the

Berkshire Concert Choir. Last February, his climate-change-awareness song-cycle *Island Elegy and Aubade* was performed twice by Montclair State faculty member soprano Lori McCann and pianist Ryan Bridge in concerts which took place at Montclair State and the Boston Conservatory. Last April 13th his *Violin Sonata* was premiered by violinist Haig Hovsepian and pianist Nara Avetisyan in a concert presented by New York Composers Circle. Parente's *Hijinx for Strings* for string orchestra will be performed this January by the South Dakota Symphony orchestra under the direction of maestro Delta David Gier. (thomasparente.com)

COMPOSER'S NOTE:

In 2016, I learned that my former student, German soprano Katja Rothfuss, was to fly to the United States in order to join her musical family—all singers—in Pennsylvania for a recital. I immediately conceived of writing original music for her. To that end, I selected several poems for Katja to choose from. She immediately chose Sara Teasdale's *The Mystery* and *The Ghost* for the recital which took place in 2016. Along with the third song, *I Am Not Yours*, which was composed in 2018, they create a narrative that explores Teasdale's struggle to find a love partner who matched her spirit and intelligence.

Sara Teasdale wrote these poems during the first two decades of the 20th century, a time when women were demanding equal recognition and rights. The composition was thus informed by this sociological tumult and the poet's personal struggles. The set of the three songs was published in 2019 by Subito.

The music of **DANA DIMITRI RICHARDSON** has been broadcast over more than 70 radio stations in the U.S. and Greece including WNYC and ERT in Athens where he spent three years teaching music theory. After earning a Ph.D. in Theory and Composition from New York University in 2001, he taught at Fredonia College and New York University. In 2009 his article *Syntonality: A New System of Harmony* was published in the first issue of the SCI online theory journal. Hardcore music theorists can access the monograph at his website: www.dana-richardson.org. His music can be found on his YouTube channel and is regularly performed in New York City as well as abroad, including in Sofia, Athens, Perugia, Rome and Assisi.

COMPOSER'S NOTE:

The Voice of Destiny is a work for piano solo. The piece is built around the “destiny” theme that appears in the first movement and which is further developed in the third and final movement.

NINA SINIAKOVA is a musician of a diverse cultural background and broad interests. Her music explores eternal subjects of beauty, love, life and

death. Her colleagues describe her style as “unique and refined” (Mark Hagerty), making Ms Siniakova “one of the most interesting composers of her generation” (Krzysztof Meyer). Her interests in musical genres span music written in styles ranging from contemporary classical to minimalism, jazz, easy listening and music for children.

Siniakova is the recipient of numerous national and international awards, including a Grant from the New York State Council on the Arts; First Prize and People’s Choice Award at the Andrey Petrov Symphonic Music competition in St. Petersburg, Russia (for her *Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra*); a stipend from DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) as well as from the Exploring the Metropolis program in New York City; and many others. She has released four albums featuring her music and the music of her colleague-composers.

Her international career has brought her to such diverse stages as Carnegie Weill Recital Hall and Symphony Space, New York; Harvard University; Beethoven House, Bonn; Academy of Music, Philadelphia; performances with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic and Belarus State Philharmonic; and Zink jazz bar in New York. This Fall includes premieres and piano recitals in Philadelphia, New York and Dartmouth, New Hampshire as well as Antwerp, Belgium and Delft, Netherlands.

Siniakova resides with her husband and four children in Havertown, Pennsylvania. A Doctor of Musical Arts, she received her education at Minsk Glinka Music College, St. Petersburg State Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory and Hochschule für Musik und Tanz, Cologne. She speaks six languages. In addition she has studied acting professionally. Aside from being active as a musician, she is a highly successful sales representative at Cunningham Piano Company in Philadelphia. www.ninasiniakova.com.

COMPOSER’S NOTE:

Le temps filant (Elusive Time) and *Im Schatten des Lichts (In the Shadow of Light)* are two takes on my sense of reality and the flow of time. Beauty of time, its glow, easily changes to its aggressive rush and push. Is there an escape from this never ending cycle? Do we need an escape? Perhaps the Shadow of Light is the final destination of the fascinating time quest.

Dr. **CAMERON WENTZ** is a composer, educator, and church musician currently based in New York City. A native of York County, Pennsylvania, he has studied at Westminster Choir College, Peabody Conservatory, Kings College London and the University of Maryland. He currently serves as the Associate Director of Music at The Reformed Church in Bronxville, New York and teaches ear training for The National Children’s Chorus.

COMPOSER’S NOTE:

The first movement of the *Sonata for Solo Piano* is based on the expansion and diminution of intervals, expanding out to the octave and

ending with seconds. The second movement is both angular and lyrical, thus titled “aria.” It makes much use of grace notes and clusters that saturate the texture over time. The final movement alternates between the Sarabande-inspired figure that opens the movement and faster toccata sections which were also chorale-inspired.

PERFORMERS

Hailed by *South Florida Classical Review* as “personable, pretty of voice [and] engaging,” soprano **ABBY BRODNICK** captivates audiences through her specialties in coloratura repertoire and musical theater. Currently receiving her Master of Music in Vocal Performance at Montclair State University, she studies under Beth Roberts. In January, Abby will perform as Sister Constance in the opera program’s production of Poulenc’s *Dialogues des Carmélites* directed by Malena Dayen. She received her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance with a musical theater minor at DePauw University, studying under Dr. André Campelo. There she received the 2022 Fitzpatrick Opera Award for her excellence in stage performance. Some of her favorite past roles include Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*, Barbarina and Susanna (cover) in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the Dew Fairy in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Pernille in *The Beautiful Bridegroom*, and Percy Talbott in *The Spitfire Grill*.

Abby is the most recent winner of the Camille Coloratura Awards Student Division competition. She was a finalist for the Sherrill Milnes Opera Idol Competition this past April, and attended the 2023 Savannah Voice Festival as a Study Grant Artist. Abby’s extensive work with oratorio and chamber music has led her to performances with VOCES8, Decoda, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. In December, she will make her debut as the soprano soloist in Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana* with the Cali School of Music. Abby is originally from Naperville, Illinois and resides in Montclair, New Jersey.

MARCIA ECKERT is active as piano soloist and collaborative artist and has appeared in the Mostly Mozart Festival as well as at Merkin, Alice Tully, and Weill concert halls in New York City and at London’s Leighton House. She has been referred to as “a pianist of impressive skill and sensitivity, the sort of keyboard collaborator that every instrumentalist dreams of” (Scott

Cantrell, *Albany Times-Union*). Ms Eckert has made a special focus of performing music by women composers as well as that of Charles Ives. Recordings include *Musique de Chambre* (music of Germaine Tailleferre with violinist Ruth Ehrlich and others) on Cambria Records, *Songs by Women* with soprano Susan Gonzalez, *20th-Century Music for Recorder and Piano* with Anita Randolfi, chamber music by Debra Kaye on her albums *And So It Begins* and *Ikarus*, and songs by Nailah Nombeko with soprano Sara Paar. At Hunter College, she was a 1998 recipient of the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching. She has been teaching at Mannes Prep since 1983 and maintains a large private studio in Manhattan. She is the founder and director of *Pianophoria!*, a summer piano intensive for adults, which began in 2004. Visit marciaeckert.com for more information.

CARL GUTOWSKI is a flutist based in the Hudson Valley and Cape Cod, who performs regularly in solo and chamber music settings. He is the 2022 first-prize winner of the National Flute Association competition. Highlight performances over the past few seasons include return engagements at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, and the Cape Cod Museum of Art.

He has commissioned and premiered works by composers Debra Kaye, Jonathan Russell, Richard Wilson and Mina Pariseau. Carl's performances have been featured on WQXR (N.Y.C.), WOMR (Provincetown), WMHT (Hudson Valley), WPRB (Princeton), and WRUU (Savannah). Carl is also the Concert Manager of the Howland Chamber Music Circle in Beacon, N.Y., presenting chamber music concerts by world renowned musicians in the historic Howland Cultural Center.

When Carl isn't making music, he is a software engineer with 30 years of experience developing software systems for air traffic control, publishing, education, e-commerce and finance. He is currently a Software Architect at SS&C Innovest. More info at carlgutowski.com.

Critically acclaimed for "transporting the listeners to extraordinary heights" and "into a world beyond time and space," pianist **CRAIG KETTER** is known for "playing with powerhouse sonority combined with long-lined, dulcet lyricism." Mr. Ketter has performed as soloist with the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra, the North Carolina Symphony, the Sacramento Philharmonic, the Oakland East Bay Symphony, the Raleigh Symphony, the Garden State Philharmonic, the Durham Symphony, the American Festival for the Arts Orchestra and others. His solo concerts have taken him to Mexico, Argentina, Barbados, France, Germany and Japan, as well as across the United States and Canada. Complementing his solo performances with collaborative ventures, Craig regularly joins forces with international singers

and chamber groups. Venues include NPR's "Performance Today" series, "CBS Sunday Morning," Sirius Satellite Radio, Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, La Huaca de Atlapa in Panama City, the Tanglewood Music Festival, Music in the Mountains in Colorado and The Marilyn Horne Foundation. He has collaborated with a long list of musicians, including Renee Fleming, Deborah Voigt, Cliff Forbis, Francisco Casanova, Eugenia Zukerman, Carol Wincenc, Stephen Williamson, Ricardo Morales, Robert deMaine, Eric Bartlett, Kelly Hall-Tompkins and Paul Huang, and has also performed with esteemed actress Claire Bloom.

Craig began piano studies at the age of seven, giving his first solo recital at the age of ten. He soon won top prizes in the Young Keyboard Artists Association International Piano Competition and the North Carolina Symphony Young Artists Competition. He later won first prizes in the Bartok-Kabalevsky-Prokofiev International Piano Competition, the Richardson Awards National Piano Competition, and was also awarded the Saunderson Award at the Coleman Chamber Music Competition in Los Angeles, California with the Meliora Winds.

Mr. Ketter received his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from the Eastman School of Music under the tutelage of Nelita True and Barry Snyder, where he also taught as Mr. Snyder's assistant. He continued post-graduate studies with Yoheved Kaplinsky of the Juilliard School. He has presented master classes throughout the U.S. and Argentina, and has served as a guest professor and adjudicator in several institutions and venues. Craig has been a faculty member of the Rocky Ridge Music Festival in Colorado and has served as Chair of the Piano Faculty at the American Festival for the Arts in Houston, Texas. He is currently on the faculty of New Jersey City University. He resides in Fair Lawn, New Jersey with his wife, Canadian soprano Valerie Gonzalez, and his two sons, Isaac and Daniel.

THOMAS PARENTE – bio in Composers section.

NINA SINIAKOVA – bio in Composers section.

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NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE

The **NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE** was founded by Jacob E. Goodman in the spring of 2002 as a composers collective holding monthly salons for members to share their music, receive critique and offer support. A year later, on May 4, 2003, NYCC produced its first public concert at Saint Peter's Church at Citigroup. We have since grown from 11 composer members to more than 50 and we have even added 30-plus performer members. We hold 10 public salons and an average of eight concerts per season. We proudly sponsor the John Eaton Memorial Competition for non-members, which awards a concert performance and free year's membership to the best entry or entries.

The avowed mission of NYCC is to support and accelerate the growth of the cultural fabric of New York and beyond via aiding the artistic development of composers and performers of new music. We facilitate the creation and public performance of new works of music and of related multidisciplinary arts, provide composers with a monthly forum to discuss new works and works-in-progress, and foster a cooperative interaction between composers and performers in the Greater New York community. Our objective is to give the public an understanding and appreciation of new music as a valuable major artistic and cultural experience. We provide members with extra-conservatory educational resources including seminars with senior colleagues, presentations by professionals and peer mentoring. We provide professional composers, emerging and established alike, with exposure to wide audiences through low-cost professional public performance opportunities and we encourage musicians to become more creatively adept and experienced in the performance of new music, all to foster a synergistic development involving composers, musical performers, theatrical arts and the public at large in furthering and advancing the future of the musical arts.

Each NYCC season takes shape as the compositions do. Our composers respond to an exclusive, members-only call-for-scores. Once pieces are submitted and vetted our programs are assembled by carefully fitting together the pieces by instrumentation, aesthetic considerations and synergistic possibilities. New music does not get much more "new" than this. The performers are hired from among the finest musicians in the New York metropolitan area. The result has been a series of innovative and unique concert programs spanning over 20 years, featuring music "hot off the press."

The 2023-2024 season marks our 21st anniversary of concerts, featuring eight hour-and-a-half programs totalling more than 50 new works of music, most of them premieres created through NYCC's facilitation. Concerts are also archived on our YouTube channel. We hope you enjoy this evening's presentation and that you will consider making a tax-deductible donation to our group and join us in our efforts to bring new music to a growing and diverse concert-going public.

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