



*Dedicated to the creation
and performance of new music*

**SECOND CONCERT OF
NEW MUSIC FOR
ORGAN**

**THE NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE
CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION
“LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER”
1 EAST 29TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021

6:00 PM

THE NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE

PRESENTS

SECOND CONCERT OF NEW MUSIC FOR ORGAN

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Rabbi Schmuley Rides the Cyclone to Heaven † Robert Cohen

Pandemia † Thomas Parente

Passacaglia, Toccata, and Fugue † Dary John Mizelle

INTERMISSION

Prelude for Organ † Hubert S. Howe

Three Hymn Preludes for Organ David See

- I. *Fugue on "St. Anne and Ellacombe"* (not performed tonight)
- II. *Little Brown Church (In The Vale)* ††
- III. *There's A Song In The Air*

Claudia Dumschat, organ

† World Premiere †† New York Premiere

The New York Composers Circle wishes to thank the staff and personnel of the "Little Church Around the Corner" for their assistance with this concert.

NYCC Staff for this concert:

David Mecionis, producer
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Timothy Miller, publicity & concert programs

CLAUDIA DUMSCHAT has a distinguished career both as an organist and conductor and has performed concerts throughout the United States and Europe. She received her Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Alec Wyton, Frederick Swann, McNeil Robinson, John Walker and Dennis Keene. Since 1999 She has been Organist and Choirmaster at Church of the Transfiguration, where she conducts the Choir of Men & Boys, the oldest such choir in America. She also founded the Transfiguration Camerata, Girls Choir and Cherub Choir there, and she has served as Artistic Director and Conductor of the Arnold Schwartz Memorial Concert Series, which has produced over fifty concerts since its inception in 2004.



Her repertoire includes orchestral and choral music, chamber music, oratorios, and operas. The Brooklyn Discovery wrote: “This concert would have surely not been possible without the special genius of Claudia Dumschat,” and that she “was truly the Maestro Supreme, conjuring up all the power and majesty of this great work.” In a New York Times review of an all-Bach concert, her playing was described as “brilliantly assertive.” In a review of her recording, *A Baroque Trilogy: Works by Bach, Brühns, and Buxtehude*, the website bach-cantata.com wrote: “Dr. Dumschat is a wonderful Baroque performing artist. She misses none of the beauty of any of the eight works she performs, and her emotional depth and breadth are very impressive. When strength and power are called for, Dumschat fully delivers in resounding fashion. Another great attribute is her command of swirling rhythms which is so important for organ works; Dumschat conveys a mesmerizing quality.” The *Diapason*, a national organists' magazine, wrote that she “played as the composers may very well have intended it: straight from the heart.”

Dr. Dumschat has served on the Executive Board of the American Guild of Organists in both the Houston and New York Chapters. She is also a member of the Association of Anglican Musicians and a Council Member of the Episcopal Actors Guild.

THE COMPOSERS

ROBERT S. COHEN has written music for chorus, orchestra, chamber ensemble, dance and theatre and has been the recipient of numerous awards and commissions, including a New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowship, Hong Kong Children's Choir International Composition Competition, several commissions from the Philadelphia Boys Choir & Chorale, an American Music Center Grant, Meet the Composer Awards, New York Composer's Circle Award and several grants from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Bob has also received awards from the New England String Quartet, the Harrisburg Gay Men's Choir, the Chicago Ensemble, New Opera West, and Hong Kong Children's Choir. His works have been performed in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, Severance Hall, Berlin's Kammermusiksaal, the Kimmel Center, Symphony Space, Bargemusic, the Sofia Opera House, Melbourne Concert Hall, and the Beijing National Center for the Performing Arts. He is published by Potenza Music, Edition Peters, Hal Leonard, Shawnee Press, Pavane Publishing, Fred Bock Music, Lorenz Music Publishing, HoneyRock Music and J.W. Pepper.

He writes, "One day when I was searching for a musical idea for an organ piece, I came across a picture of a group of Orthodox Jews riding the famous Coney Island Cyclone roller coaster with their "payess" – the hair curls the Orthodox wear – flying in the wind. I loved the incongruity of the picture and in order to fully capture my idea, I decided to weave throughout the piece a number of traditional Jewish melodies ... see how many you recognize. The work would not have found its final form without the help from the estimable Claudia Dumschat who premieres it today."



HUBERT S. 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 for 20 years. 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 Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College of the City University of New York. He has been a member of the American Composers Alliance since 1974 and has served as President from 2002 to 2011. He is a member of the New York Composers Circle and has served as Executive Director since 2013. In 2009, he founded the New

York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, and he continues as Director. Recordings of his computer music (Overtone Music, CPS-8678, Filtered Music, CPS-8719, and Temperamental Music and Created Sounds, CPS- 8771) have been released by Capstone Records, and Clusters has been released by Ravello Records.

He writes, "This work was written for a call for works from Claudia Dumschat, whom I know to be a very fine organist, and I felt sure of getting a good performance from her. I have never written for organ before, so there were many things I was initially unsure about; but I consulted many sources about the organ and decided to plunge ahead. The main problem with the organ is that sounds can only be sustained by holding down the fingers, and thus I tried to keep all the notes within the span of each hand. Sometimes the organist must hold down up to three keys with one hand, in combinations that are not what he or she may be accustomed to. I have always been interested in big sounds – not loud sounds but sounds containing many notes and interesting dissonances – and the organ is certainly capable of these. There are many passages that combine notes and chords in wide-ranging octaves."

DARY JOHN MIZELLE (born June 14, 1940, in Stillwater, Oklahoma) is an American composer of avant-garde classical and jazz music. Mizelle studied trombone (B.A. California State University, Sacramento) as well as composition (M.A. University of California, Davis, Ph.D. University of California, San Diego) and while at U.C. Davis participated in the New Music Ensemble, a pioneering free improvisation group that dispensed with scores. He was an original member of the group that founded SOURCE—music of the avant-garde magazine. His mentors include Larry Austin, Richard Swift, Jerome Rosen, Karlheinz Stockhausen, David Tudor, Roger Reynolds, Robert Erickson, Pauline Oliveros, and Kenneth Gaburo.

His music involves mastery of instrumental, electronic, and vocal resources as well as his own performance on several different instruments and voice. He works in many different genres and media. His SPANDA project consists of thirteen days of music with a coherent macrostructure, which includes music theater, opera, orchestra works, choral works, electronic music, chamber music, solo instrumental, and vocal music as well as combinations and integrations of all these.

A prolific composer with works in all media, he has composed over 600 compositions and more than forty jazz tunes. He refers to his music as "multidimensional" in scope and practices his musical art in multiple tuning systems ("macrotonality") and simultaneous tonal, modal, and atonal systems ("polytonality") as well as multiple rhythmic systems (systemic polyrhythm). His electronic music uses the techniques he refers to as "micro synthesis" (mixing of very short – less than fifty milliseconds – elements of different sonic energy components) and "isomorphic synthesis" (the compression of musical macrostructure to the level of waveforms) as well as more conventional techniques such as additive synthesis, granular synthesis and timbral transformation of acoustical sounds.

He has held academic appointments at University of South Florida, Oberlin Conservatory of Music where he was head of the Technology In Music And Related Arts (TIMARA) program, and State University of New York at Purchase where he was Chair of the Composition Program. He makes his home in Westchester County, New York.

He writes, “I composed *Passacaglia, Toccata, and Fugue* between November 2018 and January 2019. I was interested in using the organ as a means of composing timbres in a context of atonal contrapuntal content and traditional musical processes and forms. The *Passacaglia* opens with a bass line derived from an all-interval set followed by fourteen variations of increasingly complex counterpoint presented against the same bass line. It ends with dissonant chords and tone clusters. I composed the *Toccata* freely and virtuosically with internal canonic passages; it serves as either a finale or an introduction to the quasi-tonal *Fugue*.

THOMAS J. PARENTE is Professor Emeritus of Piano at Westminster Choir College and is Composer in Residence for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Montclair, NJ. He holds degrees in theory and composition both from the Manhattan School of Music and Rutgers University. His composition teachers have included Robert Moevs, Rolv Yttrehus, George Walker and Ludmila Ulehla among others. His compositional output is varied and includes works for singers, solo piano, piano duo, choir, strings, and piano trios. Several of his compositions have received notable performances. Prominent among these was a performance of his choral works by the National Chorale at David Geffen Hall in November of 2015 and, in a concert, renderings of two of his piano trios by the Hobart Trio. This concert took place in Princeton in March 2019. In November 2019 the Carmina Gaudii chorus of Parana, Argentina featured seven of his works in a concert which took place in that city's cathedral. In February 2019, the notable 115 voice Harmonium Choir of New Jersey, Premiered his Choral Work "I Am in Need Of Music".

In addition to this, Dr. Parente is the author of "The Positive Pianist: How Flow Can Bring Passion to Practice and Performance" (Oxford University Press, 2015), "The Evolving Class Pianist: Lead Sheet Edition", (Linus, 2019), and several method books for piano entitle "Awaken Your Passion for the Piano" (CreateSpace, 2013). He has given book presentations for several music conservatories most notably the Royal Conservatory of Music in Madrid, Spain, and The New England Conservatory. In March 2019 he conducted a presentation for the piano department of La Universidad Catolica, Buenos Aires. Dr. Parente is a frequent Dalcroze eurhythmics clinician and in this capacity has presented workshops both nationally and internationally.

He writes, “*Pandemia*, a three-part fugue, originated as the second movement to my recently published piano sonata (subitomusic.com). I drew upon the spiky quality of the virus to inspire the subject. My intention was to create a stark unrelenting atmosphere of despair which, you may recall, was covid's legacy during the worst months of the pandemic.”

DAVID SEE has worked variously as piano teacher, organist, composer, arranger, keyboardist for the Symphony of the Mountains (Kingsport TN) as well as collaborative pianist for singers, instrumentalists, and musical theater productions. The Symphony of the Mountains premiered his Piano Concerto in 2001 with Gary Hammond of Hunter College. Other compositions of note include a series of Theme and Variations for cello and piano, Scrapbook Suite for chamber ensemble, a sax quartet, arrangements of jazz standards for flute and piano, several pedagogical works, and a series of two-piano pieces usually, if not always, performed with wife Lynn. He was adjunct professor of composition and staff accompanist at Middle Tennessee State University from 2005 to 2014. Now residing in New York City, he is currently a freelance pianist and is also a baritone in The Choral Composer/Conductor Collective (aka "C4"). He holds a Bachelor of Music from Oberlin College.

He writes, "The *Three Hymn Preludes* were written at widely different times. I was about to describe as "largely forgotten" the American song "Little Brown Church" (or "The Church in the Vale"), written in the 1850s by William Pitts. A simple internet search, though, pulls up many recordings old and new, including a recent one by a vocal quartet from Africa. I knew it from a 78 RPM acetate disk, now long gone, that my family had, dating from close to the turn of the previous century. The song is not a proper hymn, although like a lot of other religiously themed parlor songs it found its way into Sunday school and gospel hymn collections. My nostalgia-tinged, if gently ironic, fantasia on the tune was written in 1990 on my first long-term organ position.

"By contrast, there was no wistful memory driving the cheerfully tightly-wound toccata version of "There's a Song in the Air." I just found it a catchy tune from the "Epiphany" section of the Methodist Hymnal, though it is not, I think, very widely known. It was written in 1872 by Josiah Holland."

The New York Composers Circle

Now in its nineteenth year, the New York Composers Circle is an artistic and educational organization of composers and performers dedicated to new music, whose mission is to promote public awareness and appreciation of contemporary music through concerts, salons, and other events in the New York metropolitan area. The NYCC assists composers in the creation of new concert works of all genres, arranges for their performance, and offers its resources toward the development and education of new audiences for new music.

Inspired by a workshop at the American Music Center, Jacob E. Goodman founded the New York Composers Circle in the spring of 2002 as an association of composers meeting regularly to play their music for one another. It soon became apparent that we had the artistry and commitment to present our music before an audience. In May 2003, the NYCC produced its first public concert at Saint Peter's Church, featuring Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Del Tredici along with eleven of the NYCC's original members. This well-attended concert was favorably reviewed in the *New Music Connoisseur*.

For its members, the New York Composers Circle offers a variety of opportunities for presenting for feedback works in progress at monthly salons which are also open to the public, performing completed works in concerts, and fostering collaboration and development, both artistic and professional, with other composer and performer members. The NYCC also offers an annual composition competition for non-member composers, with the winning works being performed on one of its regular series concerts. For the sophisticated concert-going public, the NYCC offers as many as eight concerts a year of its members' works, including jazz concerts and at least two non-series concerts of special performances, all which are curated by a jury of members headed by Program Committee Chair, Linda Marcel. And for members of the public who have not yet been exposed to much contemporary concert music, the NYCC sponsors an outreach program, in which we send composers and performers out to various institutions, including high schools and senior centers, to perform music of the 20th and 21st centuries accompanied by talks about the music.

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If you enjoyed tonight's concert and would like to help us in our efforts to build new audiences for new music, please consider becoming a Friend of the New York Composers Circle by contributing today.

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