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NEW MUSIC FOR
VOICE AND ENSEMBLES

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH
NEW YORK CITY

FEBRUARY 27, 2018 7:30 PM

THE NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE

FEBRUARY 27, 2018 7:30 PM

*The Bird Lady** Timothy Lee Miller

I. *Mourning Dove, Watching Me*

II. *The Hummingbird*

Lauren Ishida, *soprano* Artie Dibble, *viola*

Christopher Sahar, *piano*

*Tabiji (Travels in Japan)** David Picton

I. *Kurobe Gorge*

II. *Mountain River Rapids*

III. *Gold Leaf Tea*

Craig Ketter, *piano*

*Dance Music in Seven Movements** Jacob Elkin

William Birkbeck, *clarinet* Ayana Ouchi, *clarinet*

Alex Yu, *clarinet* Tony Park, *bass clarinet*

Three Songs of Seamus Heaney Frank Retzel

I. *The Poplar*

II. *The Swing*

III. *St. Kevin and the Blackbird*

Jacqueline Milena Thompson, *soprano* Craig Ketter, *piano*

— INTERMISSION —

*String Quartet in Five Movements**† Andrey Komanetsky

Klang String Quartet

Gregor Kitzis, *violin* Katie Thomas, *violin*

Artie Dibble, *viola* Jillian Blythe, *cello*

*Brief Encounter*** Roger Blanc
Tony Park, *bass clarinet* Christopher Sahar, *piano*

*Ode to Hölderlin** Craig Slon
Jillian Blythe, *cello*

*Winona's Lesson*** Monroe Golden
Miolina Duo
Lynn Bechtold, *violin* Mioi Takeda, *violin*

*Stars Above and Earth Below*** Kevin McCarter
I. *Evening: New York*
II. *Leaves*
III. *Winter Dusk*
IV. *April*
Margaret O'Connell, *mezzo-soprano* Michael Laderman, *flute*
Artie Dibble, *viola*

* World Premiere

** New York Premiere

† Winner of the 11th Annual NYCC Composers' Competition

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FOR A WINE & CHEESE RECEPTION

The New York Composers Circle would like to thank the staff and personnel of the Advent Lutheran Church for their assistance with this concert.

The New York Composers Circle gratefully acknowledges support by a grant from the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University.

SONG TEXTS

The Bird Lady Timothy Lee Miller
poems by Linda Marcus & Julie I. Myers

I. *Mourning Dove, Watching Me*

On a high wire overhead,
against the sunset, a solitary silhouette.

I'd been walking all alone, from winter into spring.
Then one day you came along, with a whistle of wings.

Mourning dove, watching me
with your dark eyes of mystery.
You look down at me, I look up at you.
O mourning dove, are you lonely, too?

I've become acquainted with the cadence of your call:
plaintive, separated by a long, lonesome pause.

Mourning dove, watching me
with your dark eyes of mystery.
Whistling down you fly to a branch nearby.
O mourning dove, are you lonely, too?

Outside my window, in a nest,
as the day dawns, a song arises from my friend.

II. *The Hummingbird*

Hummingbird, oh, hummingbird, how much I delight
in your iridescent colors, in the fancy of your flight.
I love how you hover, sipping nectar from sweet flowers,
then in a flash, moving on - what speed and grace and power!

Hummingbird, oh, hummingbird, do you fly free in time?
You're a lovely gift of nature, a miracle sublime.

How delicate your tiny eggs; how dainty is your nest:
a skillful work with spider silk, a strong, soft place to rest.

There's a hum, oh, here you come:
flitting, fleeting, flying little clown.
Zippling here, zooming there,
forward, backward, even upside down!

Hummingbird, oh, hummingbird, you make my spirit sing.
You always mesmerize me with the wonder of your wings.
I'm captivated by your song. You're magic, simply magic in the air.
What a thrill to see your beauty, treasured jewel beyond compare!

Three Songs of Seamus Heaney Frank Retzel
poems by Seamus Heaney

I. The Poplar

Wind shakes the big poplar, quicksilvering
The whole tree in a single sweep.
What bright scale fell and left this needle quivering?
What loaded balances have come to grief?

II. The Swing

Fingertips just tipping you would send you
Every bit as far – once you got going –
As a big push in the back.
Sooner or later,
We all learned one by one to go sky high,
Backward and forward in the open shed,
Toeing and rowing and jack-knifing through air.

*

To start up by yourself, you hitched the rope
Against your backside and backed onto it

Until it tautened, then tiptoed and drove off
As hard as possible. You hurled a gathered thing
From the small of your own back into the air.
Your head swept low, you heard the whole shed creak.

*

We all learned one by one to go sky high.
Then townlands vanished into aerodromes,
Hiroshima made light of human bones,
Concorde's neb migrated toward the future.
So who were we to want to hang back there
In spite of all?

In spite of all, we sailed
Beyond ourselves and over and above
The rafters aching in our shoulderblades,
The give and take of branches in our arms.

III. *St. Kevin and the Blackbird*

And then there was St. Kevin and the blackbird.
The saint is kneeling, arms stretched out, inside
His cell, but the cell is narrow, so

One turned-up palm is out the window, stiff
As a crossbeam, when a blackbird lands
And lays in it and settles down to nest.

Kevin feels the warm eggs, the small breast, the tucked
Neat head and claws and, finding himself linked
Into the network of eternal life,

Is moved to pity: now he must hold his hand
Like a branch out in the sun and rain for weeks
Until the young are hatched and fledged and flown.

*

And since the whole thing's imagined anyhow,
Imagine being Kevin. Which is he?
Self-forgetful or in agony all the time

From the neck on out down through his hurting forearms?
Are his fingers sleeping? Does he still feel his knees?
Or has the shut-eyed blank of underearth

Crept up through him? Is there distance in his head?
Alone and mirrored clear in love's deep river,
'To labor and not to seek reward,' he prays

A prayer his body makes entirely
For he has forgotten self, forgotten bird
And on the riverbank forgotten the river's name.



From *The Spirit Level* (1996). Used with permission.

Stars Above and Earth Below Kevin McCarter
poems by Sara Teasdale

I. *Evening: New York*

Blue dust of evening over my city,
 Over the ocean of roofs and the tall towers
Where the window-lights, myriads and myriads,
 Bloom from the walls like climbing flowers.

II. *Leaves*

One by one, like leaves from a tree,
All my faiths have forsaken me;
But the stars above my head
Burn in white and delicate red,
And beneath my feet the earth
Brings the sturdy grass to birth.
I who was content to be
But a silken-singing tree,
But a rustle of delight
In the wistful heart of night —
I have lost the leaves that knew
Touch of rain and weight of dew.
Blinded by a leafy crown
I looked neither up nor down —

But the little leaves that die
Have left me room to see the sky;
Now for the first time I know
Stars above and earth below.

III. *Winter Dusk*

I watch the great clear twilight
 Veiling the ice-bowed trees;
Their branches tinkle faintly
 With crystal melodies.

The larches bend their silver
 Over the hush of snow;
One star is lighted in the west,
 Two in the zenith glow.

For a moment I have forgotten
 Wars and women who mourn —
I think of the mother who bore me
 And thank her that I was born.

IV. *April*

The roofs are shining from the rain,
 The sparrows twitter as they fly,
And with a windy April grace
 The little clouds go by.

Yet the back-yards are bare and brown
 With only one unchanging tree —
I could not be so sure of Spring
 Save that it sings in me.

—

I, III from *Flame and Shadow* (1920); II, IV from *Rivers to the Sea* (1915).

COMPOSERS

ROGER BLANC completed a Masters degree in Composition with teacher David Diamond at the Juilliard School, where he was an assistant teacher in Ear Training and Theory for five years. He has worked extensively in recording, having arranged, transcribed, composed, orchestrated, produced, or otherwise prepared/organized/supervised music for media including television (*Tonight Show*, *Saturday Night Live*, *David Letterman*, *Conan O'Brien*, *Sex and the City*), film (ca. 60 feature films including *Frida*, *The Untouchables*, *Wag The Dog*, *Fargo*, *Cadillac Records*), the recording industry (artists including Barbra Streisand, Miles Davis, Michael Jackson, John Lennon, Luciano Pavarotti, Sting, Phil Collins, Kelly Clarkson), and live performance (venues including Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall, The Metropolitan Museum, Madison Square Garden, the United Nations); events including the 2004 Democratic National Convention, the 2006 Super Bowl, the 2010 World Cup, and three 2014/2015 Jazz Foundation tributes to Don Rickles, Herbie Hancock, and Merry Clayton at the Apollo Theater in NYC. He has had concert music performed at venues including Alice Tully Hall, CAMI Hall, The Whitney Museum Sculpture Court, Thalia/Symphony Space, and Juilliard; at locations abroad including Italy, Romania, and Brazil; and by performers such as including Alex Foster, Chris Parker, and Mindy Kaufman. He serves on the boards of several music-related organizations, and performs regularly as a guitarist in various clubs around New York City.

He writes, “*Brief Encounter* was composed literally overnight in 1985 for pianist Brad Segal (my student at the time) and bass clarinetist Bohdan Hilash, simultaneous with my working days on recording sessions for the soundtrack of *A Chorus Line*, the movie. The piece was performed around Italy that summer by a student ensemble led by composer and pianist Dinu Ghezzo, and at a later date by students at a university in Pennsylvania. However this composer has yet to hear an actual performance of it himself.”

JACOB ELKIN is a trombonist, composer and arranger based in Brooklyn, New York. His electronic music has been featured in the Lüneburg New Electronic Music Festival 2015-16 and FIGMENT art installation NYC 2017. In September 2017, his atmospheric work *Dreamscape* was broadcast on *The Cutty Strange* radio segment on WGXC. Recent performances of his work also include Kyiv Contemporary Music Days Electroacoustic Festival in Kyiv, Ukraine, SHE LIVES Chamber Composition Workshop in Budapest, Hungary, and Festival Días de Música Electroacústica in Seia, Portugal. As a free-lance trombonist, Mr. Elkin is an advocate for new

music in both chamber and solo settings. In 2017, he performed as soloist for New York Composer's Circle, Make Music New York and the Variousound Sessions. Mr. Elkin has premiered works with Mimesis Ensemble, Contemporaneous, Mise-en Scene, NYMF, David Taylor and the New York Trombone Consort, and many others.

He writes, "*Dance Music in Seven Movements* is a set of short works using minimalist-inspired rhythmic processes of my own device. The work is pinioned together by sections of similar material in the 2nd, 4th and 6th movements."

MONROE GOLDEN is a composer from rural Alabama, now living in New York City, whose overtone-informed music has been called "delightfully disorienting," "lovely, sumptuous, yet arcane," and "irresistible..., full of wit and beauty." He has received an Individual Artist Fellowship from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, the AMTA/MTNA Commissioning Award, and commissions from solo performers and groups. His work *Incongruity, for piano and fixed media*, was the first-prize entry in the Chicago-based UnTwelve Competition. Beyond his own artistry, Mr. Golden has actively promoted the innovative arts in his resident community. A founding member and three-term President of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance, he has also led the Birmingham Art Association, Birmingham Improv Festival, Artburst performance series, and New Arts Stage — and implemented the inaugural Birmingham New Music Festival in 2014. He graduated from the University of Montevallo in Alabama and earned a doctorate in Music Composition from the University of Illinois, studying primarily with Ed Robertson, Ben Johnston, Sever Tipei, Herbert Brün, and Aurel Stroé. There are three complete audio releases of his music: *A Still Subtler Spirit* (Living Artist Recordings, 2003), *Alabama Places* (Innova Recordings, 2007), and *Incongruity* (self-published, 2011).

He writes, "*Winona's Lesson* was written for Miolina Duo. The title refers to my mother (Winona) and her favorite shaped-note hymn *Murillo's Lesson*, which was especially popular in the Sand Mountain, Alabama community where she grew up. Contours of tune fragments are mapped to sections of the violin duo, serving as points of departure. Underlying this structure are quasi-waveforms comprising harmonics and open strings in a ratio of 2:3 between the instruments. The work is written in 7-limit just intonation, often making use of symmetrical otonal/utonal scales."

ANDREY KOMANETSKY was born in Moscow, Russia in 1965. He received a Bachelor's degree in piano performance, and Master's degree in composition from Manhattan School of Music. He is the first-prize winner of the 2005 International Composition Competition for Piano Trio (Austria). His winning work *Affinity to Movement* was designated by the judging panel

to be the compulsory piece, alongside a piano trio of Franz Schubert, for the participants in the piano trio category of the 6th International Competition “Franz Schubert und die Musik der Moderne” (Austria). It was performed in the Kammer-musiksaal, and the Stefaniensaal at the Graz Convention Center in Austria in February 2006. *Affinity to Movement* was also chosen to be published in the annual series SCI Journal of Music Scores. Mr. Komanetsky was a prizewinner in the 2001 Discover America Competition for New American Chamber Works (Chicago), with his *Piano Trio Nr. 1* premiered by the Chicago Ensemble. His *5 Preludes for Piano Trio* received a composition prize by the Anima Mundi piano trio from Australia and was performed in 2011 in Melbourne. His one act opera *Bobok* received the BMO Mainstage Award in the Contemporary American Festival Composers’ Competition in 2012 in Boston. *Bobok* was performed by the Thompson Street Opera Company in Louisville, Kentucky in 2013 and will be performed again in Chicago in March 2017. Mr. Komanetsky has had numerous collections of piano solo pieces published, distributed by the Willis Music Company (Kentucky), Hal Leonard International, and The FJH Music Company. He has been the judge of the Golden Key Music Festival International Piano Composition Competition since 2010. Mr. Komanetsky is also an active pianist, performing frequently in concerts in the Tri-State area. He is the music director, organist, and choir director at the Roman Catholic Church of Saint John in the Bronx. He has been on the music faculty of Amadeus Conservatory, Chappaqua, N.Y. since 2004, teaching piano, music theory and composition.

He writes, “This *String Quartet* is in five continuous movements. Although the music does not attempt to take on an avant-garde direction or to follow a particular musical trend, it does offer a myriad of dynamically expressive moments of various characters and dispositions. Harmonic direction is somewhat eclectic as it journeys through episodes of strong and rugged dissonances along with mild and tender diatonicism, as well as wandering through, in the fifth movement, the easily recognizable key of C minor. This is also my first attempt to write a composition that does not include a piano.”

KEVIN McCARTER writes music for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus, solo instruments, and voice. *Opening Ideas* was premiered by the Chicago Chamber Orchestra, recorded by the Kiev Philharmonic, and subsequently broadcast by a number of radio stations. Other works that have received substantial attention include *Blossoms and a Breeze*, played by several woodwind trios in the U.S. and Canada, and *Three Songs on Poems of Emily Dickinson*, sung on recitals in Paris, Vienna, and Rome in addition to programs in the U.S. Recent works include *From Far and Near*, premiered last April, and *Sketches from Nature*, which will be performed at Kansas State University in the spring.

He writes, “*Stars Above and Earth Below* is a setting of four poems by Sara Teasdale. The poems draw on images from several seasons of the year to develop several themes. The first simply paints an appreciative picture of New York at dusk. The second compares leaves falling from a tree to the shedding of old beliefs and the discovery of new views. The third savors the beauty of a winter scene that inspires gratitude for simply being alive, and the fourth celebrates the joy of Spring's arrival in nature and in the heart.”

TIMOTHY LEE MILLER (b. 1961) is an American composer and arranger writing contemporary concert music for chamber ensembles, orchestra, wind ensemble, and voice, as well as jazz music. He has also written for several small film and television projects, however, his primary focus is concert music. He has earned degrees from the University of Tennessee (BS, Music Ed, 1984), the University of Miami (MM, Media Writing and Production, 1990) and Vermont College of Fine Arts (MFA, Composition, 2013). His principle composition teachers have been John Anthony Lennon, James Progris, Tamar Diesendruck, Jonathan Bailey Holland, Andy Jaffe, John Fitz Rogers and Roger Zahab. Mr. Miller has received numerous commissions and awards, including several ASCAP awards. His works have been performed throughout the U.S. and Europe. His music is recorded on ERMMedia, PARMA Records and Phoenix Classics. In November 2015, Mr. Miller was part of the PARMA Recordings venture to Havana, Cuba to record several jazz works with musicians in Havana under the People to People humanitarian program. Two of his big band jazz pieces, *Hot Miami Nights* and *On an Autumn Day*, were recorded and released on the two-disc set *ABRAZO: The Havana Sessions* alongside music by the other seven composers. The CD to date has received worldwide critical acclaim and was in consideration for a Grammy nomination. The trip presented the opportunity for several composers to be among the first American composers to travel to Cuba since the U.S. government eased travel restrictions to the country.

He writes, “*The Bird Lady* is a setting of two poems by Pittsburgh-based lyricists Linda Marcus and Julie I. Meyers, with whom I have worked on a number of choral and art song projects. The two poems – *Mourning Dove* and *The Hummingbird* – concern a woman who is infatuated with the songs of birds. I was so taken with the songs that I decided to use them as the basis for a chamber opera about this young lady and her fascination with birds. After discussing my ideas with librettist Germaine Shames, she decided to write the story to the opera, which is of the same name. *Mourning Dove* is the opening song to the first act of the opera, and *The Hummingbird* is the opening song of the second act. The expected completion date of the opera is sometime in late 2018. Following is a brief synopsis of the story: An eccentric young woman known as the Bird Lady lives a life of timeless simplicity in a well-tended garden with only her

equally eccentric gardener for human company – until a brash young man determined to build his dream home buys the adjoining lot. When the Bird Lady and her new neighbor clash over the felling of a tree planted squarely on the property line, sparks fly.”

DAVID PICTON graduated from Mannes College of Music in 1980 with a B.M. in composition. He has been commissioned by the Girl Scouts of America and Central Park Brass as well as by numerous individuals for songwriting and arranging work. He has written for small ensembles as well as for orchestras and choruses, and has had numerous performances of his original chamber works including several NYCC performances over recent years. He is also a jazz percussionist and pianist and in recent years has been performing his jazz compositions with the NYCC Jazz Quintet at the prestigious Zinc Bar in Greenwich Village. In addition he is a member of the composer/performer organization Eclectix which has recently performed several times at Zinc Bar. Mr. Picton has been performing regularly and teaching music in the New York City area for more than 35 years. He has also performed in California, Japan, England, and Africa with his own bands and with numerous other bands. Some other artists who have performed Mr. Picton's compositions include the late great jazz pianist John Hicks, as well as the fine oboist Keve Wilson with her Cabaret Oboe Trio. In the spring of 2016 Mr. Picton released a CD of his original contemporary classical chamber compositions. The CD is entitled *Into the Green* and is available on cdbaby.com, iTunes and Spotify. He also has two jazz CDs out, both of which can be found on cdbaby.com. His music has had radio airplay on WBAI in N.Y.C, WPKN in Bridgeport, Connecticut and Estonia National Radio in Estonia.

He writes, “*Tabiji* is a Japanese word which means 'journey', and indeed, it was while on a journey in Japan that I first conceived of these piano pieces. Since the trip was taken in Autumn, the magnificent foliage we beheld, particularly while in the mountains, made the journey seem extra magical and colorful.”

Born in Detroit, Michigan in 1948, **FRANK RETZEL** has had an accomplished career as a composer, conductor, performer and educator. With an early foundation of piano, organ, theory and composition, he studied further at Wayne State University with Ruth Shaw Wylie and at the University of Chicago with Ralph Shapey. He received his Ph.D. in 1978. Mr. Retzel has received numerous prizes, grants and commissions for his work. They include a prize from the League of Composers/International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM), fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Fulbright Commission and Mellon Foundation. His organ set *Horae* was nominated for a Pulitzer Award in 1988. *Tamarind* for orchestra was nominated in 2016. His compositions have been

commissioned by numerous ensembles and solo artists and performed to acclaim all over the world. Mr. Retzel has composed more than 60 full-scale compositions for all mediums, many of which have been performed by major artists around the world. A number of these works have been recorded. His compositions are highly original with a wide range of expression. The range spans those works that are highly innovative and dramatic, to compositions of lyrical simplicity and charm. Recent compositions include *Tamarind* and *Night Neon* for orchestra; song cycles *Daughter of Dawn*, *Reflections* and *Duets*; ensemble works *Blue-Line Strophes* and *Portrait in Fantasy*; and *Landscapes* for piano solo.

He writes, “After Heaney won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995, his next published book of poetry was *The Spirit Level* (1997). I was long a fan of Heaney. I loved the Irish spirit, the wonderful play of words, symbolism and beautiful realism so effortlessly displayed. I bought the volume and took it with me when we went away for the summer. So many of the poems hold great meaning for me. The three set here were texts that attracted me the most. They still do.”

CRAIG SLON is a New York-based composer of concert, electroacoustic and film music. He studied rhythm, harmony, counterpoint, composition and music ethnography at Sarah Lawrence College and received a BA in Liberal Arts. He has scored over 40 films, which have been screened at the Tous Courts Arx Festival, Toronto International Festival, Eksjo Animation Festival, Anchorage International Film Festival, San Francisco Independent Film Festival, Tribeca Film Festival, ADH Film Festival, Clermont-Ferrand Festival, Annecy Festival, Female Eye Film Festival, Euro Festival, Transitio, and IAAC. He won a Craft Award for Original Score from New York University and received a grant from Artlink (Scotland). He has investigated the resonant signatures of glass, metal, wood, plastic, rubber and ceramic materials in the context of electroacoustic music. His music has been performed in Spain, Denmark, Australia, Peru, United States, Mexico, England, Scotland, Germany and China. He is employed as a recording engineer by various New York-based ensembles.

He writes, “The piece is nostalgic, influenced by Hölderlin, with idiosyncratic use of the highest string on the cello and harmony, juxtaposed with traditional-sounding lines and other ideas.”

PERFORMERS

Born in the U.K., **WILLIAM BIRKBECK** completed his undergraduate degree majoring in clarinet at the Paris Conservatoire with parallel diplomas in conducting and composition. He has proven mastery of eclectic repertoires ranging from Mozart to Stockhausen. Recent soloist performances include the Mozart *Clarinet Concerto* at the 6,000-seat Caen Zenith arena with the Caen University Orchestra, Weber's *Clarinet Concerto No. 1* and *Concertino in E-flat major* with the Orchestre de Caen, and regular solo recitals at the Festival Aspects des Musiques d'Aujourd'hui in Caen, France. Also a keen orchestral musician, William has performed as principal clarinetist for such orchestras as the Morocco Philharmonic, the Palestine Youth Orchestra, and the Paris-based Ostinato Orchestra in the U.S.A., France, Germany, Israel, Morocco, and Jordan. William participated as a guest principle artist for a production of *Così fan tutte*, staged by the Opéra de Paris and a ballet production of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* in Paris with the Lionel Hoche Dance Company. Furthermore, he has performed the Mozart *Clarinet Quintet* and the Brahms *Clarinet Trio* at the Aubervilliers summer festival, as well as Berio's *Folk Songs* at the Festival Aspects. William's conducting activities have led him to work with several orchestras including the Evry Festival Orchestra; the Orchestre Debout project in Paris, with which professional musicians travelled from all over France to perform for the general public at the Place de la République in Paris; and he is assistant conductor to Charles Neidich at the Queens Chamber Orchestra in New York. He is currently preparing a Master's degree at Queens College, studying clarinet with Charles Neidich and conducting with Maurice Peress. Upcoming performances include conducting a multi-disciplinary collaborative performance at the Queens College Arts Festival, a recording of several up-and-coming contemporary composers in France, and several recitals in the south of France next season.

JILLIAN BLYTHE is a dynamic and versatile New York-based cellist, sought after for her impassioned playing and ability to span multiple genres with ease. Ms. Blythe performs frequently as a soloist and chamber player, producing evening-length programs that combine the aesthetics and repertoire of classical and new music, improvisation, and electronics. During the 2016-2017 season, Ms. Blythe was engaged as a full-time member of The Phoenix Symphony cello section, completed the Orchestral Performance program at the Manhattan School of Music, participated in the Avaloch Farm Music Institute Residency, and developed several new works for solo cello with electronics. Ms. Blythe co-founded the Aiana String

Quartet (2005-2012), which held residency positions at San Diego State University in 2010 and at University of Texas at Austin in 2011, and was awarded the Coleman-Barstow Prize at the Coleman International Chamber Music Competition in 2010. They also participated in The Banff Centre Chamber Music Residency, The Aspen Institute for Advanced Quartet Studies, and were featured at the Naxos NonClassical Showcase event at the 2012 South by Southwest Music Festival in Austin, Texas. In 2008 Ms. Blythe gave the world premiere of Thomas Sleeper's *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium and in 2011 she performed Shostakovich's *Cello Concerto No.1* as winner of the University of Texas Concerto Competition. Ms. Blythe is the artistic director for 'Love Every Note', a performance series founded in 2014 which advocates for a fully infused palette of immersive music, new and old alike. She is the 2016 recipient of the Whitcomb Foundation Scholarship and is a substitute with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, Ms. Blythe is a member of, and composer for, Trumpetcello, a classical-contemporary duo which explores and highlights new and improvised music. Ms. Blythe holds a BM (2009) and MM (2017) from the Manhattan School of Music and has studied with David Cole, David Geber, Joshua Gindele, and Alan Stepanky.

Juilliard-trained violist and violinist **ARTHUR DIBBLE** is enjoying a wonderful free-lance musician's life in New York City. Diverse styles of music have taken him all over the world, from touring with Barbra Streisand, Led Zeppelin, various string quartets and the St. Louis Symphony to right here at home on the major stages of New York City and the surrounding region with orchestras, chamber groups and Broadway stars. Arthur enjoys teaching and performing for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Midori Foundation in inner city schools. He is also the Director of Summertrios, a summer chamber music festival for amateur musicians. You can also often find him in recording studios during the day, Broadway show pits in the evenings, feeding his espresso obsession in a café, or ice skating with his high school-aged son and daughter.

Soprano **LAUREN ISHIDA** specializes in music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and recently made her Zankel Hall debut with the Eco Music Big Band, singing works by Marie Incontrera and Girolamo Deraco. As the vocalist half of Duo Moderne, she has performed dozens of premieres by composers from the U.S., Europe and Japan. Other recent highlights include concerts of the Handel operas *Giulio Cesare* (Cleopatra) for the Met Opera Guild, the title role of *Alcina* with the NY Opera Forum, and concerts with the period instrument band, Ensemble Leonarda. When not performing, Lauren works as the Director of Promotion for the Schott Music Corporation's N.Y. office, and is the Director of Music Programming for The Flea Theater in TriBeCa.

American pianist **CRAIG KETTER** is rapidly distinguishing himself as a leading pianist of his generation, performing as soloist and chamber musician throughout the world. Critically acclaimed for “transporting the listeners to extraordinary heights” and “into a world beyond time and space,” Mr. Ketter is known for playing with “powerhouse sonority combined with long-lined dulcet lyricism.” He has performed as soloist with the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra, the North Carolina Symphony, the Sacramento Philharmonic, the Oakland East Bay Symphony, the South Orange Symphony, the Garden State Philharmonic, the Raleigh Symphony, the Durham Symphony, the Rocky Ridge Music Festival Orchestra, and the American Festival for the Arts Orchestra. His solo concerts have taken him to Mexico, Argentina, Barbados, France, Germany and Japan, as well as across the United States and Canada. Mr. Ketter regularly joins forces with international singers and chamber groups. Venues include NPR's *Performance Today* series; *CBS Sunday Morning*; Sirius Satellite Radio; Carnegie Hall and Avery Fischer Hall in New York City; the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; Teatro La Huaca and Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City; the Savannah Music Festival in Savannah, Georgia; Bay Chamber Concerts in Rockport, Maine; Music in the Mountains in Colorado; and the Marilyn Horne Foundation. Musicians he has collaborated with include flutist Eugenia Zukerman, clarinetists Stephen Williamson, Ricardo Morales and Jon Manasse, cellists Robert deMaine and Eric Bartlett, violinists Kelly Hall-Tompkins and Roy Malan, and singers Deborah Voigt, Margaret Jane Wray, Cynthia Lawrence, Samuel Ramey, Paul Plishka, Ben Heppner, Cliff Forbis and Robert White. Mr. Ketter is currently on the piano faculty of New Jersey City University.

Violinist **GREGOR KITZIS** plays regularly with The Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall and is a founding member of The Ouluska Pass Chamber Music Festival in Saranac Lake, New York. He has performed early music on period instruments with The American Classical Orchestra and has premiered and recorded countless new works with many ensembles including Orchestra of Our Time and Collide-O-Scope. He has arranged, performed, and recorded with David Bowie, has been the string contractor for TV appearances with Enya and has performed with artists ranging from Anthony Braxton to John Cage. Gregor has played everything from solo and chamber music recitals to rock and tango in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall and the late CBGB's to *Saturday Night Live*, *Late Night with David Letterman* and new-music and jazz festivals throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. He plays an old Italian violin made in the 1690s by Giovanni Grancino. Of his performance of Nils Vigeland's *Ives Music*, *The New York Times* wrote "scratchier and more mistuned than even Ives would have found amusing." And in a later *New York Times* review: "The important violin solos were excellently projected by Gregor Kitzis, sometimes with whistling purity, always with vivid presence." More

recently, newmusicbox.org reviewed a solo performance with the Albany Symphony at Carnegie Hall in May of 2010, calling it “authentic, jaw-dropping fiddling.” *American Record Guide* reviewed the same performance, saying “Kitzis stole the show in his procession from one end of Carnegie Hall to another, his violin resonating brilliantly and vanishing with ghostly shivers in Carnegie’s remarkable acoustic.”

Flutist **MICHAEL LADERMAN** is a recitalist, freelancer, jazz musician, recording artist, and composer. He has performed in three NYCC jazz concerts at Zinc Bar; at Weill Recital Hall as an Artists International competition winner; three National Flute Association conventions; the 1995 New York Flute Club Flute Fair; the Settimana Musicale Senese at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Italy; twice at Merkin Concert Hall; at jazz festivals in New York with ZSound Collect band; and at three New York Flute Club concerts, one as a Young Artists competition winner. In a review of Matthew Fields' CD *Kabala* for soundstage.com, David Sherman wrote, "Michael Laderman flawlessly negotiates the lengthy programmatic work *Rooster's Court Ball* in a studio recording that is a pleasure to listen to." Mr. Laderman's flute teachers have included Samuel Baron, Keith Underwood, Sandra Miller, Julius Baker, Thomas Nyfenger, and Trudy Kane, plus he had master classes with Alain Marion, Philippe Pierlot, and Peter-Lukas Graf under a Javits Fellowship that also funded his last four years of graduate school at SUNY-Stony Brook, through a Doctor of Musical Arts degree. His article "The Power of Omnipotens" (*The Beethoven Journal*, Vol. 13/2 [Winter 1998]) addresses the structural, text-interpretive, and spiritual significance of the "Pater Omnipotens" section of the *Gloria* in the *Missa Solemnis*. Mr. Laderman also maintains a private flute studio. www.fluteperformer.com.

MIOLINA was formed in 2012 when artistic director/violinist **MIOI TAKEDA** decided to form a violin duo with longtime collaborator, violinist/composer **LYNN BECHTOLD**. To date, the duo has had successful performances in NYC at Brooklyn College, The Church of the Transfiguration, City Lore, Gallery MC, Greenwich House Music School, The Morbid Anatomy Museum, National Opera Center, NoMad Loft, Parsons School of Design, Queens Library, Rockwood Music Hall, Spectrum, St. Mark's Church, Tenri Cultural Institute, and Turtle Bay Music School. In addition, they've performed concerts at the Birmingham New Music Festival in Birmingham, A.L.; had concerts at Experimental Sound Studio in Chicago; at Monk Space in Los Angeles; at the Cité Internationale des Arts and l'Institut Finlandais in Paris, France; at Koendori Classics and Monten Hall in Tokyo, Japan; and at Corner Store Arts in Washington, D.C. In addition, they have performed on series and festivals such as Circuit Bridges, Composers Concordance, Electronic Music Midwest, JUMP, and

Soft Series. In July 2017, they had a productive residency at Avaloch Farm Music Institute, working with two different composers as part of Avaloch's New Music Initiative. To date, Miolina has premiered 27 duos. Both violinists are longtime advocates of new music, and perform with various new music groups, including the American Symphony Orchestra, Composers Concordance, Glass Farm Ensemble, North/South Consonance, SEM Ensemble, VIA, & Zentripetal. They are honored to have been chosen to join the New Music USA Impact Cohort in 2017. In addition, they are recipients of a 2017 grant from Japan Foundation NY, a 2015 grant from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, 2014 and 2016 grants from New York Women Composers, and a 2018 grant from the Queens Council on the Arts. Their self-titled debut album was released this month on Composers Concordance Records/Naxos. They are a 501(c)3 non-profit. miolinanyc.wixsite.com/miolina.

MARGARET O'CONNELL enjoys a versatile musical career in opera, contemporary music, musical theatre, oratorio, recordings, and film. In November of 2014, she was invited to make her Carnegie Hall debut in *The Oracle at Delphi: The Music of Dinos Constantinides*. She made her international debut in April 2013 as Giulietta in a concert of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Alkor Edition), preparing the role with only two days' notice. One month later, Ms. O'Connell appeared as the Alto Soloist with Mark Tucker in Claudio Monteverdi's *Marienvespers* with the Malapert Period Orchestra, as part of Berlin's Steglitzer Tage für Alte Musik. In 2014, Munich's Liederfreude concert series invited her to perform a program of Berg, Ravel, and Weill in recital. Operatic engagements include the title role in *Carmen*, Dulcinée in *Don Quichotte*, Nicklausse in *Tales of Hoffmann*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Florence in *Albert Herring*, and Flora in *La Traviata*, among others. Ms. O'Connell made her Merkin Hall debut in 2009 with the Russian Opera of New York's inaugural "Opera Under the Tsars" Festival, under the direction William Hobbs. Ms. O'Connell premiered the role of Ashley with Lauren Flanigan in *Best Friends*, a new opera by Deborah Drattell and Wendy Wasserstein. Other world-premiere roles include the Evil Stepmother in Josh Ollswang's *The Juniper Tree*, Grandmother in Waundell Saavedra's *Sweet Dreams*, and a Greek Elder in Michael Sirota's new musical adaptation of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* at New York's La MaMa Theatre. She created the role of Emily Dickinson in *I Dwell in Possibility* by Miriam Raiken-Kolb, which included eight songs composed especially for Margaret. Ms. O'Connell has many concert premieres to her credit including *Six Lyrics to Poems of Marilyn Hacker* by Tamara Cashour (NYCC) and *Sappho Songs* by Dinos Constantinides. Awarded a scholarship to participate in SongFest at Pepperdine University, she worked with composers John Harbison and James Primosch, and also premiered works by Eric Chasalow, Antonio DeFeo, Dorothy Chang, and Dan Crozier. Ms. O'Connell's premiere recording of *Traveling West*

(North/South label) by Randall Snyder was praised by Fanfare Magazine. She has recorded the roles of Lady Thiang (*The King and I*) and Aldonza (*Man of La Mancha*) for Stage Stars Records, among others. In the musical theatre arena, Ms. O'Connell has appeared as Martha in *The Secret Garden* and the Singer/Fiddler Jones in *Spoon River Anthology*. Off-Broadway credits include Young Jennie in *Portrait of Jennie* (with Brent Barrett) and Gabriella Winterova in Michael Slade's play *Children of Terezin*. She appeared with Victor Cook in the Disney Channel musical film *Starlight*. Ms. O'Connell holds a MM in Solo Voice from McGill University and a BM in Violin and Voice Performance from Oberlin College Conservatory.

AYANA OUCHI is a New York-based clarinetist. She performs as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player. She moved to New York after she earned her BA from Osaka College of Music. She has studied with Charles Neidich and has completed her Music Performance Certificate program at Aaron Copland School of Music. Ms. Ouchi's other teachers include Koichi Honda, Nozomi Ueda, Hana Kim and Ayako Oshima. She won the first prize for the 33rd Azelea Rookie Competition in Japan, the first prize for the 18th Takatsuki Music Competition, and the Espoir prize for the 14th Osaka International Music Competition.

TONY PARK is a highly sought-after clarinetist based in Queens, N.Y. He has played extensively with ensemble *mise-en*, Le Petit Pépinot, Center for Contemporary Opera, Okanagan Symphony Orchestra, Mountain View International Festival of Song and Chamber Music, and the New York Wind Orchestra. Other collaborations include work with Jonathan Crow, Joseph Johnson, Rudolf Jensen, Christie Reside, Charles Neidich, Henrik Denerin, JD Parran, Michael Mossman, GADADU, Bunky Green, and Paul Cohen. Mr. Park holds a Master of Music from McGill University, where he studied with Dr. Simon Aldrich under full scholarship, and an Artist Diploma from CUNY Queens College, where he further honed his craft with the legendary soloist Charles Neidich. Aside from playing the clarinet, Mr. Park is also a passionate saxophonist, and in the cracks of his busy schedule, he is learning clarinet repair under the tutelage of Melanie Wong, the renowned head repair technician of Buffet Crampon New York City Show Room.

CHRISTOPHER SAHAR is a composer, pianist and organist active in the New York City metropolitan area. He holds a B.A. in Literature from Oberlin College and a M.A. in Music from Queens College/CUNY. He has works published by Editions Ferrum Musica based in London and has had premieres of his works in the United States and Greece. His works forge a synthesis of styles and are guided often by extra-musical narratives. Mr. Sahar serves as music director of Rutherford Congregational Church in Rutherford, N.J., and is board member of the Brooklyn Chapter of American

Guild of Organists, board member of the American Festival of Microtonal Music, and is active as a teacher of composition and piano. Outside of music, Mr. Sahar has been a recreational leader, secretary at Fortune 500 companies, and civically active as a former Peace Corp Volunteer in Central America and participant in federal Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts in 2012 for New York State.

Astonishing audiences with her musical vitality, violinist **KATIE THOMAS** brings incredible confidence, versatility, and artistry to her musical performances. Her performances attract both critical and professional praise, and reflect her adaptability as a soloist, chamber musician, and an orchestral leader. Ms. Thomas has collaborated with many prominent orchestras, including the Mimesis Ensemble, North Carolina Symphony, New York Concert Artist Symphony Orchestra, New York City Master Chorale, Youth Orchestra of the Americas, Distinguished Concerts International New York, and the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional in Santo Domingo. She has worked with luminary conductors such as Valery Gergiev, Kurt Masur, Carlos Miguel Prieto, John Rutter, and Philippe Entremont. Katie studied with Lucie Robert at the Manhattan School of Music where she attended on a merit scholarship and earned both Bachelors and Masters degrees. Her contributions while in school earned her the Hugo Kortschak Award for Outstanding Achievement in Chamber Music upon graduation. Her solo appearances with orchestras include the Blue Ridge Symphony Orchestra, I Solisti Chamber Orchestra, and the North State Chamber Orchestra, performing Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Vivaldi, and Mendelssohn. She has given solo recitals on three continents and has performed in major halls all around the world including Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium and Weill Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Avery Fischer Hall, and Château de Fontainebleau. Her work has been aired by live streaming and radio broadcast, via the internet and the national public radio station of the *The New York Times*, WQXR.

Soprano **JACQUELINE MILENA THOMPSON**, is following in the footsteps of the American singers of the Golden Age. A versatile performer, she has succeeded in a broad range of styles including opera, operetta, concert, and musical theater. A recipient of the Emerging Artists Award from the Business Committee for the Arts in New York City, she has sung throughout the United States. She has appeared as a soprano soloist in pops concerts with Indianapolis Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, and Utah Festival Opera, among others. On the operatic stage, Jacqueline has had much success singing all three heroines in Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffman* with Opera in the Heights, Adina in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* with Treasure Coast Opera, Musetta in *La bohème* with Metro Lyric Opera, Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Utah Festival Opera, Serpina in *La serva*

padrona with Palm Beach Opera under the direction of Maestro Anton Guadagno, and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* with the Lansing Opera Company, among others. Jacqueline has had the honor of premiering many new works with some of the area's finest composers, including Frank Retzel, Dana Richardson, Richard Brooks and Mavis Pan. On the lighter side, she has also performed with the Encores Series at City Center NYC in their productions of Loewes' *Music in the Air*, Gershwin's *Of Thee I Sing* and Irving Berlin's *Face the Music*. She also appears on the cast album for DRG as Laurey in *Oklahoma!* with the Brevard Music Festival in North Carolina.

ALEX YU is a versatile musician who embraces a career as a clarinetist, recorder player and conductor. He has given solo performances in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and the Grand Theatre in Hong Kong Cultural Centre, among others. Currently based in New York City, Yu has been featured in the 92nd Street Y Concert Series, Forte New York Chamber Music Series, Lex54 Concerts Series, Long Island Composers' Alliance Concerts, and the NYC Electroacoustic Music Festival. Mr. Yu holds degrees in clarinet performance from University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College, CUNY. His major teachers include Charles Neidich, Andrew Simon and Deborah Chodacki. Mr. Yu was twice awarded the Bernard van Zuiden Music Scholarship from the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society. He was the first-prize winner of the American Protégé International Romantic Music Competition, and has participated in major music festivals such as the Sarasota Music Festival and Orford Music Academy in Quebec, Canada. From 2012 to 2015, Mr. Yu was appointed as an adjunct faculty in clarinet at Queens College, CUNY. He is currently a DMA candidate in clarinet performance at the Graduate Center, City University of New York.

NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE

Now in its sixteenth year, the New York Composers Circle is a multifaceted artistic and educational organization of composers and performers, whose mission is to promote public awareness and appreciation of contemporary music through concerts, salons, and other events in the New York metropolitan area. For its members, the NYCC offers a variety of opportunities for testing works in progress at monthly salons open to the public, performing completed works in concert, and fostering collaboration and development, both artistic and professional. For composers who are not members, the NYCC offers the opportunity of a public performance to winners of its annual composers' competition. For the sophisticated concert-going public, the NYCC offers at least four concerts a year of works by members and others, curated by a jury headed by distinguished composer Tania León. And for members of the public who have not yet been exposed to much contemporary music, the NYCC sponsors an outreach program in which we send performers to various institutions including high schools and community centers, at no charge to the institution, to perform musical works of the 20th and 21st centuries.

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, along with the music of other composers, to a larger 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*.

Under the continued leadership of Debra Kaye, John de Clef Piñeiro, Richard Brooks, and currently Hubert Howe, the NYCC's membership has quintupled since its inception, and the number of its concerts has grown from one each season to its current calendar of seven concert presentations during the 2017-18 season. At the same time, our roster of performers has grown to include many of the world's leading instrumental and vocal artists specializing in new music.

This "valuable group" (*The New York Times*) continues to expand its programs. Informal readings of new pieces allow composers to "test fly" their works with some of New York's finest professional and advanced student musicians. Such events, along with our monthly music salons and collaborations with other groups and institutions, support the creation and

presentation of new music through the various stages of its development. In the 2004-05 season, award-winning composer Ezra Laderman joined members of the NYCC in its spring concert. In addition to its own two concerts, in March 2006 the NYCC presented a joint concert with the performing ensemble ModernWorks; during the following season we collaborated with New York University in our first concert at NYU's Frederick Loewe Theatre; in March 2010 we collaborated with the Italian "No Borders" Quartet in presenting a program of works by American and Italian composers that was performed both here and in Italy; in September 2012 we presented a concert under the auspices of the celebrated Bargemusic series "Here and Now"; and in 2014 we inaugurated a series of NYCC jazz concerts.

In the summer of 2007, the NYCC held the first of its annual composers' competitions, open only to non-members. In January of 2015, following the death of our beloved honorary member John Eaton, the competition was renamed the John Eaton Memorial Competition.

Nine seasons ago the NYCC launched a new outreach initiative — the New York Composers Circle's Community Encores program. We send professional performers to institutions throughout New York City such as schools and community centers, at no cost to the institution, with the aim of acquainting previously untapped audiences with concert music of the 20th and 21st centuries. Each concert is emceed by a member of the NYCC, who introduces the performers and the music they play. The first concert in this series, featuring pianist/composer Nataliya Medvedovskaya with commentary by John de Clef Piñeiro, took place to great audience acclaim on February 24, 2009 at the Hebrew Home in Riverdale, New York. To date, we have presented 23 such outreach concerts at public high schools (Bronx H.S. of Science, Stuyvesant, and Hunter College H.S.) and at additional community centers (Lenox Hill Neighborhood House at Saint Peter's Church and JASA, as well as two outreach concerts, by Eugene Marlow's Heritage Ensemble, at Lighthouse International); several more are planned for this season. A recent Community Encores concert at Stuyvesant High School featuring soprano Sofia Dimitrova and pianist Catherine Miller garnered a rapt audience of 350 students, whose probing questions were fielded by the performers and by composer Richard Russell, who acted as emcee.

These free outreach concerts are presented under the sponsorship of NYCC contributors, and the list of schools and community centers is expanding. See the next page for how you can become a sponsor of this important project, which is bringing new music to new audiences.

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If you would like to help us in our efforts to build new audiences for new music, please become a Friend of the New York Composers Circle and send us your contribution.

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Contact

New York Composers Circle
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NewYorkComposersCircle.org

Our next concert will take place at 7:30 PM on Monday, March 19, 2018
at National Opera Center, Scorca Hall, 330 7th Avenue, New York City.
Please pick up a flier in the lobby or visit our website for more information.