



*Dedicated to the creation
and performance of new music*

CLAUDIA DUMSCHAT
PERFORMS
NEW MUSIC FOR ORGAN

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

FEBRUARY 19, 2020 7:30 PM



THE NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE

FEBRUARY 19, 2020 7:30 PM

Huntington † Frederick Boyle

- I. *Prelude & Fugue*
- II. *Adagio*
- III. *Rondo*

Prelude & Toccata † Kevin McCarter

- I. *Prelude*
- II. *Toccata*

Sapphire Cantos, nos. I-IV Frank Retzel

- Canto I. Sapphire*
- Canto II. The Dream (Part I)*
- Canto III. Il Vento*
- Canto IV. Frozen Light*

— INTERMISSION —

Passacaglia & Toccata † Dary John Mizelle

- I. *Passacaglia: Largo, quarter note = M.M.40 —*
 - Andante, quarter note = M.M.77 —*
 - Poco più mosso, quarter note = M.M.90 —*
 - Adagio, quarter note = M.M.60 —*
 - Lento, quarter note = M.M.50*
- II. *Toccata: Adagio, quarter note = M.M.64 — Allegretto, freely*

Merry-Go-Round † Gayther Myers

Meditation No. 2: Chorale & Variations † . . . Timothy Lee Miller

I. *Chorale*

II. *Variation I*

III. *Variation II*

IV. *Variation III*

V. *Variation IV*

† World Premiere

Claudia Dumschat, *organ*

NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE DEDICATES
THIS CONCERT TO THE MEMORY
OF OUR DEAR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE
FRANK RETZEL

COMPOSERS NOW 2020 FESTIVAL

Composers Now empowers all living composers, celebrates the diversity of their voices and honors the significance of their contributions to society. Founded by NYCC member Tania León in 2010, Composers Now presents a broad spectrum of performances of living music, offers creative residency programs to composers and hosts thought provoking conversations between composers, performers and audiences through its *Dialogues* initiative. Learn more and view the full schedule of 2020 Festival events at composersnow.org

PLEASE JOIN US AFTER THE CONCERT
FOR A WINE & CHEESE RECEPTION

The New York Composers Circle would like to thank Claudia Dumschat and the staff of Church of the Transfiguration for their kind assistance with this concert.

FRANK RETZEL (1948-2018) enjoyed an accomplished career as a composer, conductor, performer and educator. He 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. He won numerous prizes including a first prize from New Music for Young Ensembles, Inc. In 1988, one of his works was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Music. Retzel's work has been commissioned by numerous ensembles and solo performers and performed to acclaim all over the world. In 1995, he was commissioned to compose the main opening and closing for the Mass with Pope John Paul II in New York City. On June 19, 2000, the music was used again at the Installation of the Archbishop Egan of New York at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City.

Frank Retzel composed more than 40 full-scale compositions for all mediums, many of which have been performed by major artists around the world. Several works have been commercially recorded—by the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Slovak Radio Orchestra, Tremont String Quartet, David Shuler and pianist Barry David Salwen. A sampling of other artists and ensembles that have performed Retzel's works include sopranos Elizabeth Farnum, Jacqueline Milena Thompson and Pamela Myers, pianists David Holzman, Justin Kolb, Craig Ketter and Christopher Oldfather, as well as Ralph Shapey's Contemporary Chamber Players, the North/South Consonance, and the League/ISCM.

His compositions are highly original with a wide range of expression; a range that spans those that are highly innovative and dramatic, and works of lyrical simplicity and charm. More recent compositions include *Tamarind* and *Night Neon: Images* for orchestra; song cycles *Daughter Of Dawn* and *Reflections*; duets *Summer Songs*, *Mosaics*, *Lyric Set*, *Blue-Line Strophes*, *Portrait In Fantasy* for ensemble; and *Landscapes* for piano solo. His compositions are published by APNM (Association for the Promotion of New Music) and Seesaw Music, with BMI affiliation.

Frank Retzel's musical activity included work as an educator, scholar, performer and conductor. He has taught on several faculties and served as is Professor of Music at Fordham University and St. John's University, and as Organist, Music and Choral Director at the Church of Mary's Nativity in Flushing, New York. He has published numerous articles and book reviews on a wide range of musical subjects.

Born in Detroit, Michigan in 1948, Frank Retzel began his musical career at the age of six when he started to play piano, and soon after began composing. In a few years he extended his studies to organ and, by the age of 11, he was a

professional musician, serving as assistant organist at several churches. He studied piano and organ for several years with Noel Goemanne and Lode Van Dessel, with extensive musical studies at the prestigious Palestrina Institute. At age 16, he was principal organist and music director at a large parish in Michigan. Retzel, who studied privately and attended various musical institutes throughout his early years, received his bachelor's and master's degrees at Wayne State University (where he studied composition with Ruth Shaw Wylie). On a full scholarship grant, he pursued further graduate studies at the University of Chicago, receiving a Ph.D. in music in 1978. While at Chicago, he studied composition and conducting with Ralph Shapey. Retzel's wide variety of interests guided him in his study of numerous areas of music history and theory as well as composition and performance, with teaching at institutions such as the Catholic University of America, CUNY Brooklyn College and New York University.



New York Composers Circle would like to add that Frank Retzel joined us in 2006. We had the distinct pleasure of presenting in concert a number of his fine works, including *Landscapes for Piano*, performed by Craig Ketter, and *Daughter of The Dawn, A Bestiary*, and *Three Songs of Seamus Heaney* for soprano and piano, performed by members Jacqueline Milena Thompson and Craig Ketter. We were all deeply saddened at the news of Frank's passing. He was a genial and cordial man. Frank took music very seriously and had strong, confident opinions, yet he often sought and took opportunities to be quite funny and colorful. He made lasting impressions upon such statesmen as our own Raoul Pleskow and Richard Brooks, and the aforementioned performers Jacqueline and Craig who worked so frequently with him. These are by no means the only NYCC members to so fondly recall their time with him. Frank was a good friend and a true artist, he will be greatly missed.

CLAUDIA DUMSCHAT

Award-winning organist, music director and conductor, Dr. **CLAUDIA DUMSCHAT** is the Organist and Choirmaster at the Church of the Transfiguration (“The Little Church Around the Corner”), a national landmark in the heart of New York City with a rich liturgical and musical tradition. There she administers and conducts the professional Choir of Men and Boys (the oldest such choir in the country); the Girls Choir; Cherub Choir; and Camerata. She is also the Artistic Director of the popular public Concert Series at the church, which features local and international performers in an eclectic mix of recitals, music dramas, operas, and multi-disciplinary works combining music with dance, poetry, and the visual arts. Claudia has been a professional church organist and conductor since the age of 12, rising through various posts, most notably from Associate Organist at Columbia University’s St. Paul’s Chapel to Acting Director of Music at St. James Church in New York before assuming her current position in 1999. She has given organ recitals nationally and internationally and has also made recordings for radio, television, and CDs. She earned her Doctor of Musical Arts, Master of Music, and Bachelor of Music degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Fred Swann, John Walker, McNeil Robinson, Alec Wyton, and Dennis Keene, who wrote that she is “one of the most gifted and accomplished organists and choral conductors of her generation.” Claudia’s extensive organ and conducting repertoire ranges from medieval to contemporary music. As a champion of new music, Claudia collaborates with the New York Composers Circle as organist and conductor. She has also commissioned and premiered both secular operas and choral works. A passionate teacher, Claudia is committed to developing young voices in the classical choral tradition, and her choirs have performed with distinction in liturgical and popular settings, both here and abroad.

COMPOSERS

FREDERICK BOYLE earned degrees in music composition from California Institute of the Arts (BFA) and the New England Conservatory (MM). His composition teachers include Stephen Mosko, Morton Subotnick, Thomas McKinley, and Robert Cogan. Frederick also has a Master of Divinity degree from Drew University School of Theology and is a retired ordained minister in the United Methodist Church. Before becoming an ordained minister, Frederick composed music for television, radio, and modern dance, while also working as a freelance jazz and classical musician. His collaborations include WGBH in Boston, KPFK in Los Angeles, the Gus Solomon Dance Company in Los Angeles, and Dance Collective in Boston. Frederick retired from full-time parish ministry in 2015 to devote more time to composing and seeking performances of his work. He continues to serve as a Spiritual Director in New Jersey. His recent compositions selected for performance in 2016 include *Glass Labyrinth* for flute, clarinet, marimba and piano, performed by the Telos Trio in Rochester, N.Y.; *X-4* for chamber orchestra, presented at The Composers Concordance in New York City; *When There Was Not* for string orchestra and chorus, performed by The KLK Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in L'Viv, Ukraine; as well as three New York Composers Circle concert performances: *Hippolopolus* for solo cello, performed by Dave Eggar; *Gormon String Quartet*, performed by the Klang Quartet; and *Worship Trio*, performed by Angel Desai (soprano), Geoffrey Burselson (piano), and Anthony F. Morris (bass).

The composer writes, "I first began composing *Huntington* in 1988 after completing composition studies at the New England Conservatory in Boston. While there, I devoted a lot of time into learning the strict rules of 18th-century counterpoint to compliment my undergraduate focus on 20th-century composition techniques such as serial procedures, aleatoric processes, and graphic scores. *Huntington* sat on my uncompleted shelf until an invitation was sent to NYCC composers to submit a score for this evening's concert by Claudia Dumschat. Having heard Claudia's performance at the NYCC concert in February 2019, I could not resist pulling *Huntington* off of the shelf, completing what I had started a long time ago, and hearing how Claudia could bring it to life. The influences in the music are very apparent and I am grateful for the Conservatory on Huntington Avenue in Boston, and for this evening's performance. I should also note that the theme of each movement comes from Gregorian chants by the most famous composer of all time: anonymous."

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 *Come Along*, premiered by the Euclid Quartet at the Mostly Modern Festival in June, and *Songs of Day and Evening*, presented on a New York Composers Circle concert last year.

Prelude and Toccata is structured as two separate movements. The prelude is lyrical, built on two ideas—a broad phrase in sustained notes and a more active melody that elicits imitative gestures in its accompaniment. The toccata focuses on a lively oscillating figure. A short, contrasting middle section grows out of a lyrical idea that initially appears as a counterpart to the oscillating figure.

TIMOTHY LEE MILLER (b. 1961) is an American composer, arranger, orchestrator, and publisher writing contemporary concert music for chamber ensembles, orchestra, wind ensemble, and voice, as well as jazz, film, and video game music. He has earned degrees from the University of Tennessee, the University of Miami, and Vermont College of Fine Arts. His principle composition teachers have been John Anthony Lennon, James Progris, Tamar Diesendruck, Jonathan Bailey Holland, Andy Jaffe, John Fitz Rogers, and Roger Zahab. He has received numerous commissions and awards, including several ASCAP awards. His works have been performed throughout the U.S. and Europe. Most recently, on September 27, 2019 at the prestigious Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, his string trio *Carmina solis et lunae* was among several works featured as part of the *Musical Bridges* concert exchange program between NYCC and Russian composers. His music is distributed by Subito Music, Inc., and recordings are available on *ERMMedia*, Navona Records, Ansonica Records, and Phoenix Classics.

The composer writes, “*Meditation No. 2* was the second entry in a notebook of meditations written as morsels of inspiration, from which I draw upon occasionally to create larger works. The original *chorale* was written in January 1986 during an exploratory period of my writing career while I was still teaching high school band. The chorale springs from the walking bass line of the opening eight bars. I then flipped this bass line upside down and wrote the next eight bars of bass backwards so it is literally a retrograde-inversion of the first eight bars. After that, it was just voice leading to make the chorale sound good. Though it sat unused for many years, I felt it could work well as the subject of a chorale and variations for organ. In 2018 I wrote a set of three

short variations, each contributing an additional voice to the canonic form. *Variation I* is two voices, *Variation II* is three voices, and *Variation III* is four voices. The fourth variation comes from an arrangement of the chorale that I wrote for big band with an improvised solo in the middle. The written solo was contributed by my dear friend and mentor Andy Jaffe, a phenomenal jazz pianist, composer, and arranger. Although far less traditional than the previous three variations and the chorale itself, the final variation is a fun way to end the piece, as well as tonight's concert!"

DARY JOHN MIZELLE is an American composer of avant-garde classical and jazz music. He studied trombone at California State University, Sacramento where he earned a B.A. in performance. He earned a M.A. in composition from the University of California, Davis and a Ph.D. in composition from the University of California, San Diego. While at U.C. Davis, he participated in the New Music Ensemble, a pioneering free improvisation group that dispensed with scores. Mr. Mizelle 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. Mr. Mizelle works in many different genres and media. His *SPANDA* project consists of thirteen days of music with a coherent macrostructure, incorporating music theater, opera, orchestral 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 500 compositions and more than 40 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 ("polyatonicity"), as well as multiple rhythmic systems (systemic polyrhythm). He creates electronic music using multiple techniques, including "microsynthesis," the mixing of very short (less than 50 millisecond) elements of different sonic energy components; "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. Mr. Mizelle 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, N.Y.

The composer writes, “I composed *Passacaglia and Toccata* between November 20 and December 26, 2018. I was interested in using the organ as a means of composing timbres in a context of atonal contrapuntal content and traditional musical 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 both a finale and an introduction to a quasi-tonal fugue yet to be completed.”

Composer **GAYTHER MYERS** writes, “For Pete's sake, I went off to college in the 'fifties! I'd rather talk about what's happening now. I have transcribed and am continuing to promote the work of Samuel Gottschall, an 18th-century cantor who wrote hundreds of pages of hitherto unpublished Hebrew liturgical music. To this end, I am attempting to setup a virtual choir over the internet. Anyone who understands building a phone app useful for this purpose, please contact me. I have another work scheduled for performance later this season, on May 11th here in Little Church. It is called *To the Child Poets of Terezin*, is scored for soprano and bassoon, and sets a selection of the poetry written by children in that transit camp. In rapidly-approaching July, my full-length play (without music) *Look for Me* will occupy the stage of Hudson Guild Theatre as part of this year's Summerfest.

“Believing as I do that organ concert-goers probably have the most conservative of ears, I have attempted to make this *Merry-Go-Round* ride a delight: no bumps, no jolts, no spikes.”

FRANK RETZEL (Please see the full bio at the beginning of the program.)

Sapphire Cantos, Nos. I-IV. (Unfortunately we did not receive a program note for this performance from Frank before he passed. We beg your forbearance with the following, put together from the producer's conversations with the composer, a partial past program note and conversations with Frank's wife, Kathy.) *Sapphire Cantos* (2007-2008) was never performed in full, to our knowledge. There was however one partial performance by David Shuler in February 2010 at St. Thomas More Church, New York City. The work is comprised of six distinct Cantos, the full plan as follows: *Canto I: Sapphire*; *Canto II: The Dream (Part I)*; *Canto III: Il Vento*; *Canto IV: Frozen Light*; *Canto V: The Dream (Part II)*; *Canto VI: The Stone (i. Monofonica; ii. Polifonica; iii. Monolitico)*. As the work is over 40 minutes in length, Frank's idea was to divide NYCC's presentation of it into two performances. He wished to have the second half performed first. Cantos V and VI (about half the total time) were performed by Claudia Dumschat at

last season's organ concert on February 12, 2019. It is no exaggeration to say that Frank was supremely delighted at the news that Claudia had been secured to play this piece. He had long admired both Claudia's fine musicianship and the beautiful sound of the C.B. Fisk tracker organ of Little Church Around the Corner. Of the inspiration behind this piece, Frank's favorite color was blue. He always liked to call his mother "beautiful blue eyes." He was particularly fascinated by the sapphire. When he learned that his wife admired the gem as well, he bought her several pieces of sapphire jewelry. Frank loved to look at the sky and the clouds. He would write pieces inspired by the sky, and the meadows, trees and rivers beneath it.

NEW YORK COMPOSERS CIRCLE

Now in its eighteenth 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, 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, NYCC offers the opportunity of a public performance to winners of its annual composers' competition. For the sophisticated concert-going public, NYCC offers as many as seven 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, 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, NYCC produced its first public concert at Saint Peter's Church, featuring Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Del Tredici along with eleven others of the group'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, 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 concerts as well as one evening of jazz. 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 March 2006, NYCC presented a joint concert with the performing ensemble ModernWorks, and 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, performed both here and in Italy, and, in December 2019, Trio Namaste from Perugia, Italy came to New York to perform a series of new works written for the occasion. In September 2012 we presented a concert under the auspices of the celebrated Bargemusic series "Here and Now". In 2014 we inaugurated our series of NYCC jazz concerts. Last season we worked with composers of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance (Alabama) in an exchange of home-city performances by members of each organization, and this season we initiated a series of *Musical Bridges* concerts with composers in Russia, in which their compositions are performed in New York by American musicians and ours are performed in Moscow by Russian ones.

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

Eleven seasons ago 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 NYCC, who introduces the performers and the music they are to 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). 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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Claudia Dumschat, <i>organ</i>	Maxine Neuman, <i>cello</i>	

New York Composers Circle
365 Bridge St., 12E
Brooklyn, NY 11201
newyorkcomposerscircle.org

Our next concert will take place at 7 PM on Tuesday, March 24, 2020
at Marc A. Scorca Hall, National Opera Center, 330 7th Ave., N.Y.C.
Please pick up a flier at the front or visit our website for more information.