

The Ph.D./D.M.A. Programs in Music

May, 12, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall



An Evening of New Music with Contemporaneous

Chasing Light

- I. *Abandoned Places*
- II. *Under the Railway*
- III. *Silhouette*
- IV. *Shadow Play*

Whitney George

Point of No Return II

Hyun-Kyung Lee

Four Pieces

Jacob Sachs-Mishalanie

INTERMISSION

Couplets

- I. 30"
- II. 30"
- III. 60"
- IV. 22" (*envoi*)

Gregory Joseph Menillo

Glimpsing the Phoenix

- I. *Glimpsing*
- II. *The Phoenix*

Austin Shaddock

Divertimento

- I. *Prologue*
- II. *Song Without Words*
- III. *Scherzo*
- IV. *Rag*

David T. Bridges

Please switch off your cell phones and refrain from taking flash pictures.

Program Notes:

Chasing Light:

Chasing Light is a multi-movement work inspired by photography. In photography light is always one of the principle subjects, highlighting or diminishing the other focal points within the frame. This work aims to depict light as the main subject captured in different environments, each in a separate movement. The optional film meant to accompany the work shows each of these separate environments filmed in Brooklyn, New York which was a collaborative effort between the composer and film maker/photographer Brandon Blinderman.

Whitney George is a composer and conductor who specializes in the use of mixed media to blur the distinctions between concert performance, installation art, and theater. Utilizing a wide variety of material including literary texts, silent film, stock footage, and visual arts, George's compositions are characterized by an immersive theatricality that thrives on collaboration in all phases of the creative process. Her affinity for the macabre, the fantastic, and the bizarre frequently gives rise to musical programs that evoke the traditions of phantasmagoria and melodrama, challenging musicians to experiment liberally with their stage personae, and audiences to widen the scope of their attention. George holds an undergraduate degree from the California Institute of the Arts and a master's degree from the Brooklyn College Conservatory, and is currently pursuing her DMA in composition at the CUNY Graduate Center, where she has studied with David Del Tredici, David Olan, Bruce Saylor, and Tania León.

For more information, visit: www.whitneygeorge.com.

Point of No Return II:

My haven calls for me, and I wish for nothing more than to run to its arms. However, this cannot be so, for I have come too far and this dream shines brighter than the safety of home. Now I grit my teeth and persevere, for I am assured that my God is with me in this journey. This piece consists of two movements that are inspired by Psalm 142. This piece is continuation of “Seize the Point,” the “Point” being my goal as a composer.

Psalm 142

I cry aloud to the LORD;
I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy.
I pour out my complaint before him;
before him I tell my trouble.

When my spirit grows faint within me,
it is you who know my way.
In the path where I walk
men have hidden a snare for me.
Look to my right and see;
no one is concerned for me.
I have no figure;
no one cares for my life

I cry to you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the village."

Listen to my cry,
for I am in desperate need;
rescue me from those who pursue me,
for they are too strong for me.
Set me free from my prison
that I may praise your name.
Then the righteous will gather about me
because of your goodness to me.

Hyun-Kyung Lee is a composer, pianist, an arranger, and co-founder of Percussion Ensemble for disabled people (sponsored by Korea Ministry of Culture and Tourism). She has received numerous awards from distinguished Korean organizations, including: Contemporary Music Society in Seoul, Young Composers Work Shop Concert, ISCM Section Korea, Korea Times, Taegu Contemporary Music Festival of Young Musician's Society, the Interchange of International Youth and the Composition Scholarship at Kyungwon University and Grace Mission Foundation. Many Prominent Ensembles such as American Modern Ensemble, Vigil Ensemble, Mivos String Quartet, CME Ensemble, the Korea Wind Society Ensemble, Bang-Ta Percussion Ensemble, Les Beat Ensemble, and the ISCM section Korea have performed her works.

As a pianist she has performed with the Korea Symphony Orchestra, Korea Wind Society Ensemble, con Tempo Ensemble, and CUNY Brooklyn College Percussion Ensemble. Born in Seoul, Korea, she received her B.A. and M.A. in music composition from Kyungwon University. She moved to New York in 2009 and studied at CUNY Brooklyn College, with Prof. Tania León and Ben Bierman, receiving her master's degree in composition. She is currently studying for her Ph.D degree at CUNY Graduate Center and teaching as an adjunct at the CUNY Brooklyn College.

For more information, visit: www.composersalliance.org/composers/lee.

Four Pieces:

For each of these pieces, I started with a trope from the many musical traditions that I've grown up with. These tropes range from something as general as a C major scale to more specific ideas like sidechain compression, a common technique in audio processing. I chose material with both personal and cultural meaning. These types of creative constraints are important to the organization of my music, but also bear much expressive significance. Many thanks to Contemporaneous for their work in interpreting and performing this music.

Originally from Utica, NY, **Jacob Sachs-Mishalanie** is a Brooklyn based composer, songwriter, electronic musician, drummer, and teacher. In recent projects, he is focused on balancing mechanical and natural elements. This has taken shape in many forms, including fully acoustic concert pieces like on tonight's program, a cassette tape of instrumental electronic beats released by Newlywed records, minimal pop songs backed by a band of drums, cellos, and synths, and performance pieces like "Counterpoint for Two Isolated Drumsets" and "Piece for Eight Microcassette Recorders." He is currently a PhD candidate in composition at the CUNY Graduate Center, where he studies with Jason Eckardt and Jeff Nichols.

For more information, visit: www.jsmishalanie.com.

Couplets:

Toward the end of his life the American poet William Carlos Williams became increasingly preoccupied with pacing his poetry according to a unique rhythmic concept he called the “variable foot.” Williams rejected fixed-foot prosody in favor of free verse very early in his career, but ultimately grew dissatisfied with unbridled flexibility as well, concluding that “so-called free verse could never truly be free.” He claimed that only a kind of “variable foot” could ensure both order and variation in a line, while most accurately capturing the variety of speech rhythms he heard in colloquial American English.

Although critics have questioned the validity of the "variable foot," many of Williams' later poems feature a remarkable rhythmic spontaneity while still maintaining a sense of metrical balance; they often do seem to straddle the boundary between free and measured verse. It is this delightful quality that has made a lasting impression on my ear and has informed much of my musical thinking in this particular piece. A certain Williamsian wit has also found its way into this music, and I have taken great care to achieve a similar clarity of language.

Gregory Joseph Menillo began composing at a very early age. Before graduating high-school his large-scale orchestral tryptic *Metamorphose eines Holz Milbe* was premiered by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, for which he was the youngest composer to be awarded the De Ruyter Medal by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. His controversial opera, *Straight Razor*, concerning the repressed sexuality of thirteenth-century scholastic philosopher William of Ockham, was completed in his first year of his study at the Conservatoire de Paris, under the private mentorship of the late Pierre Boulez, and was premiered the following year at the Vienna State Opera under the direction of his teacher. After returning from Europe, he attended Princeton University, where, in addition to music, he studied comparative literature and classics, while continuing to produce many large-scale works for various ensembles, including the Pulitzer-Prize winning *Chronos Esti Mei*, commissioned by the Juilliard String Quartet. He is currently studying composition and philosophy at the Graduate Center, under the tutelage of Jeff Nichols and Saul Kripke, respectively. His previous teachers have also included Bruce Saylor, Milton Babbitt, Elliott Carter, and he has attended repeated master classes with Philip Glass. His music has been recorded by both Bridge Records and Naxos, and he is published by Universal Edition.

Glimpsing the Phoenix:

Glimpsing the Phoenix is a two movement work for variations on the Pierrot ensemble instrumentation. The first movement sprouted from a short melody and the simplification of its initial harmonic material, and the second movement is an updated version of an older piece that's meant to evoke a bird spirit. Many thanks to Contemporaneous for their time, talents, and suggestions.

Austin Shadduck graduated from the University of Rochester with a B.A. in Music then relocated to Madison, Wisconsin to work as a Digital Sheet Music Specialist for Musicnotes.com. In Madison, a fascination with traditional Japanese culture led him to the shakuhachi, which he studies with Michael Chikuzen Gould. He returned to New York and earned his M.A. in Music Composition from Queens College under the guidance of Bruce Saylor. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the CUNY Graduate Center, composition studies with Tania León.

Austin's music has been premiered by Choro Down Neck, Washington Square Winds, American Modern Ensemble with Dance Theatre of Harlem, Mivos Quartet, Cygnus Ensemble, Lunatics at Large, Dynamic Motion String Quartet, Second Instrumental Unit, Binghamton High School Wind Ensemble, and numerous student performers. His works have been read by Queens College

Orchestra, University of Rochester Wind Symphony, and Eastman Jazz Ensemble. He is a recipient of the Queens College Discimus ut Serviamus Award (2010), Gabriel Fontrier Award (2011), and ASCAP Plus Award (2012). Austin is a member of ASCAP, and he self-publishes his works under Muraiki Music, an entity named for the breathy shakuhachi technique.

For more information, visit www.austinshaddock.com.

Divertimento:

Written for the Contemporaneous Ensemble, *Divertimento* consists of four light-hearted movements: the Prologue plays four motives off of each other in various ways, Song Without Words features the cello with a disjunct but lyrical melody, the rhythmic Scherzo reluctantly gives way to a middle trio section, and the piece ends with a jocular take on ragtime.

David T. Bridges is a New York City composer and clarinetist whose music is often driven by motivic transformations and unifies extended techniques with classic and narrative structures to provoke a visceral response. His music has been performed by ensembles including Ensemble Misen-en, MIVOS Quartet, Cadillac Moon Ensemble, and others. He is currently pursuing his PhD at the City University of New York, Graduate Center where he has studied with Bruce Saylor and Tania León. David has enjoyed working with Contemporaneous and would like to thank them for their performance tonight

To hear more of his music, visit www.soundcloud.com/DavidTBridges.

The GC Composers' Alliance

The GC Composers' Alliance is an organization dedicated to supporting the work of doctoral candidates in Music Composition at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). Founded and maintained by composers in the program, the Composers' Alliance presents regular concerts of new works and invites collaborations with performers and ensembles both from within CUNY and from New York's various, vibrant new music communities. The goal of the organization is thus to build bridges between composers, performers and audiences, while highlighting the musical activities of Graduate Center composers.

For more information, visit: www.composersalliance.com.

Contemporaneous

Fanny Wyrick-Flax, flute

Vicente Alexim, clarinet

Kate Dreyfuss, violin

Dylan Mattingly, cello

Paul Kerekes, piano

Sam Budish, percussion

David Bloom, conductor

Contemporaneous is an ensemble of 21 musicians whose mission is to bring to life the music of now. Recently recognized for a “ferocious, focused performance” (The New York Times) and for its “passionate drive...setting an extremely high bar for other ensembles to live up to” (I Care If You Listen), Contemporaneous performs and promotes the most exciting work of living composers through innovative concerts, commissions, recordings, and educational programs.

Based in New York City and active throughout the United States, Contemporaneous has performed over 80 concerts at a wide range of venues, including Lincoln Center, (le) poisson rouge, Merkin Concert Hall, the Park Avenue Armory, Baryshnikov Arts Center, and the Bang on a Can Marathon. The ensemble has worked with artists as diverse as David Byrne, Donnacha Dennehy, Andrew Norman, Dawn Upshaw, and Julia Wolfe.

Contemporaneous has premiered more than 60 works, many of them large-scale pieces by emerging composers. Through its commissions and readiness to play challenging music, the ensemble encourages composers to take risks and defy constraints. Contemporaneous' debut album, Stream of Stars — Music of Dylan Mattingly (Innova Recordings), has been featured on radio programs around the world, including WNYC's “New Sounds” and WRTI's “Now is the Time.”

Contemporaneous also leads participatory programs for students in the communities where the ensemble performs. These workshops are designed to instill a passion for new music and to convey the power of careful listening and meaningful expression through music. The ensemble has held residencies at Simon's Rock College, the University of New Orleans, Williams College and Bard College, where the group was founded in 2010. Read more at www.contemporaneous.org.