

Chicago Symphony Orchestra's

MUSICNOW

Missy Mazzoli Mead Composer-in-Residence

Monday, November 19, 2018, at 7:00
Harris Theater for Music and Dance at Millennium Park

Chicago's Own

Musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Alan Pierson Conductor

Weijing Wang Viola

Katinka Kleijn Cello



18

19

season

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Suzanne Farrin

Uscirmi di braccia (2010)¹

for viola and bass drum

Weijing Wang Viola

Suzanne Farrin on *Uscirmi di braccia*

The phrase *Uscirmi di braccia* (Leaving my arms), which comes from a sonnet by Petrarch, is a reference to the story of Apollo and Daphne. Daphne was the unlucky object of Apollo's infatuation (after a hit from Cupid's arrow). As Apollo nearly captures Daphne after a fierce chase, she transforms herself into a laurel tree in order to escape him. When I was

writing this piece, I imagined that the viola—having itself been transformed from a tree—is what Apollo is left holding as Daphne makes her exit.

The Daphne story has been a thread in the human story for millennia. Petrarch romanticizes Apollo's loss, but the sculpture by Bernini captures Daphne's terror and power. I prefer the Bernini, but the Petrarch text swims in my mind and, in the case of this musical work, disappears into the material of Schubert's "Nacht und Träume."

Morgan Krauss

destroy the middle (2013)²

for oboe, clarinet, and piano

Morgan Krauss on *destroy the middle*

Destroy the middle is my attempt to offer sonic material through minimal musical content and means. The work is concerned solely with the listener's

interpretation as it resonates with the individual. Please do not confuse the ambiguity in my words as pretentiousness, but rather as an opportunity to create your own unique experience . . . good, bad, or indifferent.

Drew Baker

Charon (2010)³

for clarinet (doubling bass clarinet), violin, and cello

Drew Baker on Charon

I aim to create pieces of music that immediately envelop and transport the listener. In much of my recent work, this visceral intensity is channeled through forms that slowly morph over time, allowing one to comfortably live within a musical texture while simultaneously sensing its transformation. There is a simplicity and directness to my music that often yields unexpected complexity.

The title *Charon* refers to the boatman who ferries dead souls across the river Acheron to the shores of hell. The music itself isn't intended to be expressly programmatic, but the otherworldly qualities brought about by the unison timbres of the clarinet, violin, and cello as well as the slowly ascending melodic patterns, provide subtle allusions to the title. Perhaps equally relevant is the manner in which the piece gradually and methodically morphs from the five-note pattern of the opening to a very different ending point.

Sky Macklay

Many Many Cadences (2014)⁴

for string quartet

Sky Macklay on Many Many Cadences

I wrote *Many Many Cadences* for Spektral Quartet, and the piece is featured on its Grammy-nominated 2016 album *Serious Business*. We first met at the Walden School when the quartet was ensemble-in-residence, and we soon found that

we were all pondering approaches to musical humor. In this piece, I stretch the listener's perception of cadences by recontextualizing these predictable chord progressions in very fast cells that are constantly changing key and register. These lonely, disjunctive ends of phrases eventually congeal and transform into new kinds of phrases and sound objects.

Daníel Bjarnason

Bow to string (2009, 2012)⁵

Sorrow Conquers Happiness
Blood to Bones
Air to Breath

for cello and ensemble

Katinka Kleijn Cello

Daníel Bjarnason on Bow to string

Bow to string was written for Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir. This piece not only evokes feelings of tension or tenderness, but also dares to signal them. The unapologetic and relentlessly direct harmonic progression grounding Sorrow Conquers Happiness and the

melody singing out in the concluding Air to Breath lay themselves bare, inviting the audience into the score by demonstrating an awareness of emotion without crossing over into irony. The violently percussive performance techniques and the moments of ghostly timbre or asynchronous attack are not there as commentary on the piece's emotional vocabulary, but as an extension thereof.

Composer Profiles



SUZANNE FARRIN is a composer who explores the interior worlds of instruments and the visceral potentialities of sound. Earlier works have concentrated on establishing an intensity and personal language through careful study of solo instruments along with

the interpretive personalities that come with them. Though they have now been played by many interpreters, the composer's works were expressly written for people close to her; that intimacy is a productive

space for her: it is as if exploring the very personal habits, sounds, and physicality of each musician brings her closer to a more universal experience. Her music has been featured at venues and festivals including the Gothenburg Art Biennial, Mostly Mozart Festival, Matrix, Alpenklassik, Music in Würzburg, BAM Next Wave, Theaterforum (Germany), Town Hall Seattle, Carnegie's Weill Hall, Symphony Space, Wigmore Hall, the Walker Art Center, Arts Center of the National University of San Martín (Argentina), the Stone, Spectrum, Subculture, Miller Theater, Merkin Hall, Wavehill, Lincoln Center, the Park Avenue Armory, and Joe's

Pub, among many others. In addition to composing, Farrin plays the ondes martenot.



MORGAN KRAUSS received her bachelor of music degree in composition at Columbia College Chicago in 2012 and is now continuing her studies as a doctoral student at Northwestern University. Her music is focused on the latent instability of seemingly fixed

gestures, where the interaction between the performer and the score creates yet a third entity, often guided by improvisation and the clashing of emotional opposites. Her recent accomplishments include two New Music USA grants, first prize at the 2013 Orkest de ereprijs YCM competition, and participation in the Young Composers Workshop in Curitiba (Brazil), along with performances at Gaudeamus Muziekweek, Darmstadt, Festival of the Lakes, soundSCAPE Festival, Colorfield Festival, Bowling Green New Music Festival, and NUNC! Krauss has collaborated with the University of Paraná Philharmonic Orchestra, contemporary vocal ensemble Voix de Stras', Axiom Brass Quintet, Constellation Men's Ensemble, ensemble cross.art, Ensemble Recherche, vers ensemble, Ensemble Linea, Myotis Kollektiv, International Contemporary Ensemble, Ensemble Gending, Spektral Quartet, Ensemble Dal Niente, Ensemble 61, Quince Contemporary Vocal Ensemble, Fonema Consort, MFCP, Chicago Composers Orchestra, and Volta Collective, among others.



DREW BAKER is a Chicago-based composer whose music explores the many sonic identities of conventional and novel instrumentations, often taking into account visual art and politics. Baker's music has been performed at festivals and concert series around the

world, including the Ear Taxi Festival, the Paris Autumn Festival, Works and Process at the Guggenheim Museum, Musica Nova Helsinki, Havana's Festival Leo Brouwer, the Cortona Sessions, and the Nief-Norf Festival. The A/B Duo, Chamber Cartel, Ensemble21, Ensemble Dal Niente, Ensemble Moto Perpetuo, Fonema Consort, the Group for Contemporary Music, h2 quartet, International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Post-Haste Reed Duo, Seraphic Fire, and the Talea Ensemble have all performed Baker's music. His piano music has been programmed extensively by renowned artists including Amy Briggs, Jenny Q Chai, and Lisa Kaplan. Marilyn Nonken recorded his complete piano works on New Focus Recordings in 2011. Baker earned a bachelor of music degree in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music, a master's in composition from Rice University, and a doctorate in composition from Northwestern University.



SKY MACKLAY explores bold contrasts, audible processes, humor, and the physicality of sound. Her works have been performed by ensembles such as International Contemporary Ensemble, Splinter Reeds, Wet Ink Ensemble, Mivos Quartet, Ensemble Dal Niente, Da Capo

Chamber Players, New York Virtuoso Singers, and Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne. She is a winner of the 2013 Leo Kaplan Award (the top prize of the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards) as well as the Ruth Anderson Prize from the International Alliance for Women in Music. She has been commissioned by the Fromm Foundation at Harvard University, Chamber Music America, Gaudeamus Muziekweek, and the Jerome Fund for New Music. She was a Composers and the Voice fellow with American Opera Projects in 2015–17, and her one-act opera, *The Surrogate*, recently premiered at the University of Illinois. As an oboist, she has performed at the MATA and Splice festivals and is a core member of the New York-based Ghost Ensemble. Originally from Minnesota, Macklay completed her doctorate in composition at Columbia University. An enthusiastic practitioner of creative music education, Macklay has been a faculty member at the Walden School Young Musicians Program for nine summers and is assistant professor of music at Valparaiso University in northwest Indiana.



Icelandic conductor, curator, and composer **DANÍEL BJARNASON** is currently composer-in-residence at the Muziekgebouw Eindhoven and was, until the end of 2017, artist-in-residence with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra. Bjarnason's recent commis-

sions include the piano trio *White Flags* for the Storioni Festival Muziekgebouw Eindhoven; a work for the Los Angeles Children's Choir; and *We Came in Peace* (for All Mankind), for twelve horns, commissioned by the Holland Festival. His latest orchestral work, a violin concerto co-commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Iceland Symphony Orchestra, saw its world premiere at the Hollywood Bowl with Gustavo Dudamel. As cocurator of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Reykjavik Festival, he presented an eclectic seventeen-day festival with numerous commissions, performances from artists of different genres, visual and digital arts exhibitions, and educational concerts. His music has been performed by conductors such as John Adams, Esa-Pekka Salonen, André de Ridder, and Osmo Vänskä. His versatility has also led to collaborations with a broad array of musicians outside the classical field, including Sigur Rós, Ben Frost, and Brian Eno. Bjarnason is a member of Bedroom Community and is published by Edition Peters.

Artist Profiles



ALAN PIERSON is the artistic director and conductor of the acclaimed ensemble Alarm Will Sound and served as the artistic director and conductor of the Brooklyn Philharmonic for three years. Pierson has also appeared as a guest conductor with the Los Angeles

Philharmonic, the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra, the London Sinfonietta, the Steve Reich Ensemble, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Carnegie Hall's Ensemble ACJW, the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, the New World Symphony, and the Silk Road Project, among other ensembles. He is principal conductor of the Dublin-based Crash Ensemble, codirector of the Northwestern University Contemporary Music Ensemble, and has been a visiting faculty conductor at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and the Eastman School of Music. He regularly collaborates with major composers and performers, including Yo-Yo Ma, Steve Reich, Dawn Upshaw, Osvaldo Golijov, John Adams, Augusta Read Thomas, David Lang, Michael Gordon, Donnacha Dennehy, La Monte Young, and Iarla Ó Lionáird. Pierson received bachelor's degrees in physics and music from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a doctorate in conducting from the Eastman School of Music. He has recorded for Nonesuch Records, Cantaloupe Music, Sony Classical, and Sweetspot DVD.



WEIJING WANG joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in March 2012. She formerly served as acting associate principal viola for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra from 2009 to 2012. From 2007 to 2009, she was the youngest principal player ever in the history of the Phoenix Symphony. A native of Shanghai, China, Wang has received numerous awards, including the Robertson Award in the Primrose International Viola Competition, second prize in the Chicago National Viola Competition, gold medal in

the Shenyang National Viola Competition, and third prize in the Beijing National Viola Competition. An active chamber musician, Wang is a founding member of the Chicago Peridot String Quartet and also has collaborated with members of the Vermeer String Quartet, among other ensembles. Wang began violin studies at the age of four, and at seventeen started to play the viola. She was later admitted to the prestigious Shanghai Conservatory of Music without entrance auditions. Wang studied with Li-Kuo Chang at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University after she came to the United States in 2004.

Dutch cellist **KATINKA KLEIJN** performs across the fields of classical, experimental, contemporary, and improvisatory music as well as in solo, chamber, and orchestral capacities. She performed the world premieres of Dai Fujikura's Cello Concerto at Lincoln Center with the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) and Penderecki's *Triple Cello Concerto* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. She also has appeared as soloist with The Hague and Illinois philharmonics and the Chicago Sinfonietta; and presented solo multimedia shows at the Library of Congress in Washington (D.C.), Carolina Performing Arts Memorial Hall, and the Chicago Humanities Festival. Her collaboration with the performance art duo Industry of the Ordinary resulted in the work *Intelligence in the Human-Machine* by Daniel Dehaan, in which Kleijn performs a duet with her own brainwaves. Kleijn also is an active member of ICE. In 2017, she premiered *shadows of listening* by Marcos Balter as part of the CSO's MusicNOW series. Kleijn has collaborated with artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Jeremy Denk, Bill MacKay, and Du Yun; and performed at the Marlboro Music Festival. Her recordings include David Baker's Cello Concerto with the Chicago Sinfonietta and albums with progressive rock band District 97, duo Relax Your Ears, and singer/songwriter David Sylvian.



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PHOTOS BY MICHAEL RUBENSTEIN, TODD ROSENBERG

MusicNOW Ensemble

Musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and guests

Yuan-Qing Yu Violin^{3, 4, 5}

Simon Michal Violin^{4, 5}

Catherine Brubaker Viola^{4, 5}

Weijing Wang Solo Viola¹

Kenneth Olsen Cello^{3, 4, 5}

Katinka Kleijn Solo Cello⁵

Bradley Opland Bass⁵

Katherine Ventura Harp⁵

Jennifer Gunn Flute⁵

Andrew Nogal Oboe^{2, 5}

John Bruce Yeh Clarinet^{2, 3, 5}

Ben Roidl-Ward Bassoon and Contrabassoon⁵

David Griffin Horn⁵

David Inmon Trumpet⁵

Robinson Schulze Trombone⁵

Lucas Steidinger Trombone⁵

Cynthia Yeh Bass Drum¹ and Percussion⁵

Daniel Schlosberg Piano^{2, 5}