2016/17 Season: WordMusic II

Poetry Through Music

32nd SEASON
26 February 2017
Settlement Music School
Mary Louise Curtis Branch
Philadelphia, PA
Poetry Through Music – Program
Six chamber works composed in response
to poetry by Susan Stewart

A Sudden Waking (2017)*+
Andrew Rudin

Kimberly Reighley – Flutes, Marc Rovetti – Violin,
Zachary Mowitz – Cello, Susan Nowicki – Piano

Figure to Ground (2017)*+
Eliza Brown
String Trio

Julia Li – Violin, Meng Wang – Viola, Zachary Mowitz – Cello

The Looming Sky (2017)*+
Ke-Chia Chen
For Piano Quartet
  I. Freely
  II. Rapid

Julia Li – Violin, Marvin Moon – Viola, John Koen – Cello, Susan Nowicki – Piano

-Intermission-

...because it is winter everywhere... (2016)*+
Gerald Levinson
For Alto Flute, Viola, Violincello, and Contrabass

Kimberly Reighley – Flute, Meng Wang – Viola, John Koen – Cello, Mary Javian – Bass
Too light, too light, like a sudden waking... (2016)*
Robert Capanna
For String Trio

Hirono Oka – Violin, Burchard Tang – Viola, John Koen – Cello

from quiet scripts (2017)*+
Benjamin Krause
For Violin, Viola, Cello, and Piano

Marc Rovetti – Violin, Marvin Moon – Viola,
Zachary Mowitz – Cello, Susan Nowicki – Piano

*NNM Commission  +World Premiere

A discussion with Susan Stewart, Linda Reichert and the composers will follow the concert.

Network for New Music Ensemble

Flute
Kimberly Reighley

Violin
Hirono Oka
Marc Rovetti
Julia Li

Viola
Burchard Tang
Marvin Moon

Cello
John Koen
Zachary Mowitz

Bass
Mary Javian

Piano
Susan Nowicki
About the Ensemble

With its adventurous and innovative programming and virtuoso performances, Network for New Music, under the leadership of Artistic Director Linda Reichert, is committed to breaking new ground in the field of contemporary classical music and building support for new music by engaging in artistic and institutional collaborations and educational activities.

Join Network this season as we continue our long-standing exploration of connections between poetry and music. Come hear the myriad ways composers use poetry—creating new poetry for their work, setting texts to music, and using poetry as an inspiration for purely instrumental chamber works. Featuring both newly-commissioned music by some of America’s most compelling composers, and newly-commissioned poetry by nationally-recognized poets, WordMusic II promises to offer a thrilling, multi-dimensional listening experience! For more information, visit NNM website at:


Poem from Hölderlin

At the request of the Network for New Music, I wrote this poem as an hommage to the writing of Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843), the German Romantic poet who was himself obsessed with the legacy of ancient Greece. Yet Hölderlin also looked to the seasons, the earth, the daylight, the constellations, the rivers and mountains of his immediate world, as a way of anchoring whatever reality he could find.

I built my poem around two quotes from his work: the first, “As from dark orchard leaves, from quiet scripts,” comes from one of his great late odes, “An die Deutschen” (To the Germans). The second comes from Hölderlin’s epistolary novel, Hyperion, from a letter by
Hyperion to his friend Bellarmin: “I dig my heart a grave so that it may rest; I spin a cocoon around myself because it is winter everywhere; I wrap myself up in blissful memories against the storm.” Hölderlin’s misery, like that of so many of the Romantics, was tied to his desire for transcendence. Even so, in the earthly world around him the “quiet scripts” continued, and continue.

Susan Stewart

Poem from Hölderlin
Susan Stewart

As from dark orchard leaves, from quiet scripts
where each shape sends its tendril reaching--
circle and line, the swaddled bud, the petiole sprung, an envelope tendered.

By a window, the infant
turns, rooting
toward the breast,
    sun-lit,
the mother humming.
(Those far things, sources
of power and
regret, cliffs and waves,
continue
at a distance.)
    Here you’ll find
a name scrawled in the bark--
last words, left to chance
and strangers. There,
the black ant, burdened
by a crumb, and the weight
of her lacquered armor,
crossing—climbing,
switching, doubling
back—gnarl and crevice
and cul de sac.

Pinch-waisted,
driven on, and trembling,
does she have a notion
of her own, or is it
only species
memory—so
fearless, so abstract?

*because it is winter everywhere,*

*I spin my cocoon
I dig my heart a grave*

Indifferent, a blossom
drifting, the knob swelling,
the leaf turned to
shadow: filigree, smudged.
The petiole now brittle in
the first cold nights.

The burden, relieved,
weighs all the more from the guilt
of its release.
Too light, too light, like a sudden
waking, the sun in your eyes:
you cannot see for it.

How long will we live
in this leaf-strewn place,
thinking we belong
to the sky

**SUSAN STEWART** is the Avalon Foundation University Professor in the Humanities: Professor of English. She also serves as Director of Princeton's Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts and
is a member of the associated faculty of the Department of Art and Archaeology. A poet and critic, she teaches the history of poetry, poetics, and issues in aesthetics. Her most recent books of criticism are The Poet's Freedom: A Notebook on Making, published last December by the University of Chicago Press; Poetry and the Fate of the Senses, which won the Christian Gauss Award for Literary Criticism in 2003 from Phi Beta Kappa and the Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism in 2004; and The Open Studio: Essays on Art and Aesthetics, a collection of her writings on contemporary art. Her most recent books of poetry are Red Rover, which appeared in 2012 in Italian translation from Jaca Books, Milan; Columbarium, which won the 2003 National Book Critics Circle award, and The Forest. Her translation, Love Lessons: Selected Poems of Alda Merini, appeared in 2009 with Princeton University Press and in 2012-2013 she will publish two co-translations with the University of Chicago Press: with her Princeton colleague Sara Teardo, Laudomia Bonanni's novel, The Reprisal; and, with Patrizio Ceccagnoli, the most recent two books of poetry by Milo De Angelis--Theme of Farewell and After-Poems. She also has translated Euripides' Andromache with Wesley Smith and the poetry and selected prose of the Scuola Romana painter Scipione with Brunella Antomarini. Her song cycle, "Songs for Adam," commissioned by the Chicago Symphony with music by the composer James Primosch, had its world premiere with baritone Brian Mulligan and the CSO, Sir Andrew Davis conducting, in October 2009.

A former MacArthur Fellow, Professor Stewart recently served as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. She was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2005 and in the Spring of 2009 she received an Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.
ANDREW RUDIN is a Texas-born composer of Swedish ancestry. His “Il Giuoco” was the first large-scale work for Moog Synthesizer. His synthesized music is heard in the sound-track of the film “Fellini: Satyricon” and his “Tragoedia” on Nonesuch Records was described by critic Alfred Frankenstein as “The best large-scale electronic work I have ever heard. In Andrew Rudin's hands the electronic idiom finally comes of age.” He has composed ballets for the Pennsylvania Ballet, Murray Louis, Dance Theatre Workshop, Louis Falco, Jeff Duncan, London Contemporary Dance Theatre, four collaborations with Alwin Nikolais, and on Broadway, music for Tennessee Williams’ “Outcry”. His opera “The Innocent” was produced in Philadelphia by Tito Capobianco in 1972. His music has been performed by pianists Lydia Artymiw, Marcantonio Barone, Beth Levin and Steven Beck, duo-pianists Stephanie & Saar, violinists Diane Monroe & Miranda Cuckson, violist Brett Deubner, percussionist Anthony Orlando, flutists Mimi Stillman and Patricia Spencer, cellists Sam Magill, Lloyd Smith, Eugene Moye, and Michal Schmidt, and clarinetist Ronald Reuben. Recent concertos for Violin, Viola, and Piano, available on Centaur and Innova labels, have brought him renewed recognition. He is the recipient of fellowships from Yaddo, MacDowell Colony, Ucross Foundation, and Virginia Center. His teachers have included George Rochberg, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Ralph Shapey, Kent Kennan, and Paul Pisk. He has served on the faculties of the Juilliard School and The University of the Arts, where he taught until 2001.

www.composerRudin.com

The “dark orchard leaves” that open Stewart’s poem, and the “leaf-strewn place” which closes it, as well as the many allusions to plant growth —“tendril”, “petiole”, “blossom”—are formative images in my composition, which draws its title from the penultimate stanza
of the poem. It begins as a meditation on stasis and inertia, which gives way to tendril-like germination, only to fall back. Central episodes of a more narrative and lyrical nature lead, through the growing predominance of the piano, to an arrival which the poem describes as “the sun in your eyes: you cannot see for it.” The composition concludes with a quiet coda, suggesting again the stasis of the beginning, but in a more benign and accepting attitude. There is also an over-arching movement from darkness, through the shadowy colors of alto flute, muted strings, and low-register piano, toward light, as mutes are removed, the piano becomes more active and sparkling, and the alto flute is exchanged for its brighter relative, even as seeds in the earth seek the light of the sun.

Andrew Rudin

ELIZA BROWN is a composer of concert music, music-theater, and opera. Her work has been performed throughout the Americas and Europe by leading interpreters of new music, including Ensemble Dal Niente, Spektral Quartet, ensemble recherche, International Contemporary Ensemble, Network for New Music, Ensemble SurPlus, Quince Contemporary Vocal Ensemble, and Wild Rumpus New Music Collective. Her music can be heard on the Navona, ParlourTapes+, and FonoSax labels, among others.

Eliza’s work is frequently intertextual, entering into dialogues with existing pieces of music, historical styles, and other cultural artifacts. Her work is also frequently interdisciplinary, with a particular focus on integrating music and theater. These traits are exemplified in works such as Prospect and Refuge, a staged work for four female voices that explores how public spaces shape social experience, and CelloPiece, a work for amplified physical theater performer based on the movement patterns of cello playing.
Eliza is currently Assistant Professor of Music at DePauw University and Academic Dean of the Walden School Young Musicians Program. She holds a B.Mus. *summa cum laude* in composition from the University of Michigan and a D.M.A. in composition from Northwestern University.

*In Susan Stewart’s Poem from Hölderlin, I found a series of vivid vignettes depicting different kinds of repetitive and cyclic motion. Scaled from the tiny to the vast, these motions range from the back-and-forth flutter of a leaf in the breeze to the up-and-down crawl of an ant over tree bark to the broadening cycles of seasons, lives, and generations. In the poem’s shifts of temporal and physical scale, objects move between foreground and background as though seen through a zoom lens that is constantly adjusting its focus. Sometimes the leaf is the foreground figure, seen in abundant detail, and sometimes it recedes from focus, becoming part of the natural backdrop – the ground – on which the mother and child are painted, a distant piece of the tree traversed by the ant, one leaf among many decaying into the earth. Life, as I found it in this poem, moves in patterns and cycles and waves, whether we look at the smallest, most delicate living things or at the largest cycles of intergenerational time we can imagine. And of course, our own lives must follow the same cycle as the leaf’s: we too are changing from figure to – in the sense of the grave, this time – ground.*

*Eliza Brown*

**KE-CHIA CHEN**’s compositions are performed throughout the United States and Asia. Chen has collaborated with the Philadelphia Orchestra and music director Yannick Nézet-Séguin on several projects. She was commissioned to orchestrate ten hymns for the Philadelphia Orchestra’s performance during Pope Francis’s visit to Philadelphia in 2015. Collaborators of Chen include Teddy Abrams, music director of the Louisville Orchestra; Joshua Gersen, assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic; Lio Kuokman, assistant conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, violist Toby Appel, and Jennifer Montone,
principal horn of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Chen’s critically acclaimed *Broken Crystal*, winner of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra’s Marilyn K. Glick Young Composer Award, was hailed by the Indianapolis Star as a work “orchestrated with lavish self-confidence and a resourcefulness...made a coherent whole out of its pattern of abrupt contrasts, crowned by a stunningly accented ‘maestoso’ episode”. Chen has been a composer-in-residence for Concerts on the Slope, Ensemble 212, the Colorado College Summer Music Festival and the Music at Angel Fire. She also was a composer fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, the Pacific Music Festival, and the Bowdoin International Music Festival. Recent commissions include chamber music works for the Philadelphia Orchestra’s Sound All Around project, Network for New Music, Kent State University violist Jin Yu, and an orchestral work for the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan. Currently, Chen is on the Musical Studies faculty at the Curtis Institute of Music.

“The Looming Sky” is a composition in two connected movements for violin, viola, cello and piano. After reading Susan Stewart’s Poem from Hölderlin, images of shadowy, dim and unclear scenes of nature became pictured in my mind. This imagery reminded me of a past trip to the Western United States where during my stay I was surrounded by nature...trees, flowers, weeds, rocks and unknown insects. When entering the enormity of this world of wild living things, a single human being seems very small. I couldn’t help but pay tremendous attention to the beings around me: the sound of birds chirping in the bushes, the distant winds blowing across open fields, and the smell of the decaying grass and insects from weeks ago.

These primitive surroundings led me to be in the state of mind full of uncertainty. I wondered how many different things are happening simultaneously at this moment in the world, both near and far? What would become of them as they develop in the next moment? In this work, The Looming Sky, I use the strings and piano to reflect this awe and wonderment through musical means.
Hopefully, we all can reflect and find similar experiences in our own unique and unpredictable adventures.

Ke-Chia Chen

GERALD LEVINSON, born in 1951 and raised in Connecticut, has been recognized as one of the major composers of his generation. In 1990, he received the Music Award (for lifetime achievement) of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which cited his “sensitive poetic spirit, imaginative treatment of texture and color,” and his “potent and very personal idiom which projects immediately to the listener.” Levinson’s principal teachers were George Crumb, George Rochberg, and Richard Wernick at the University of Pennsylvania; Ralph Shapey at the University of Chicago, and Olivier Messiaen, for whom he later served as translator and assistant, at the Paris Conservatory. He is the Jane Lang Professor of Music at Swarthmore College, where he has been on the faculty since 1977. He lived in Bali as a Luce Scholar 1979–80, composing and studying Balinese music, and returned there in 1982–83 as a Guggenheim Fellow.

Levinson has received numerous awards, from (among others) the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Pew Fellowship in the Arts (2007). He has served as a juror for the Rome Prize, the Copland Fund for Recorded Music, and the Pulitzer Prize.

His music has been widely performed in the US and Europe by major orchestras and ensembles, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Seattle, Indianapolis and Cincinnati Symphonies, the City of Birmingham (England) Symphony, the American Composers Orchestra, the London Sinfonietta, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Aspen and Tanglewood Festivals, and many others, led by such conductors as Hugh Wolff, Sir Simon Rattle, Christoph Eschenbach, Oliver
Knussen, Gunther Schuller, Gerard Schwarz, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and David Zinman. It is recorded on the CRI/New World, Albany, Innova, and other labels, and published by Theodore Presser Co.

This work, whose title cites a line from Hölderlin’s Hyperion as quoted in Susan Stewart’s new poem, is a free-form fantasia in which the alto flute most often acts as a soloist in opposition to, or supported by, the distinctively low-pitched string trio. At the beginning, the flute’s angular soliloquy (marked “intense, breathy tone, like a shakuhachi”) is punctuated and enhanced by pizzicati and fragmentary doublings by the strings, which then gradually begin to interpose contrasting ideas such as a staccato rhythmic figure, a slow wide-spaced melody in octaves, and a chorale-like development of elements from the flute’s solo. The ensemble briefly attempts to join together in a smoothly flowing passage of imitative modal counterpoint before fragmenting again in a jagged, polyrhythmic development of the preceding musics. This dissolves in a tenuously luminous passage in harmonics, followed by an epilogue revisiting all the main ideas once again in an uneasy effort to achieve calm and light, as this ensemble of low instruments reaches toward their highest registers.

Gerald Levinson

ROBERT CAPANNA has been an active composer in Philadelphia for many years. Originally a trombonist, he received his Bachelor and Masters of Music degrees in composition from the Philadelphia Music Academy where he studied with Joseph Castaldo and Theodore Antoniou. In 1974, he studied with Jacob Druckman as the Bruno Maderna Fellow in Composition at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood and was awarded the Koussevitsky Prize in composition. His works have been performed widely and in Philadelphia, and he has enjoyed a long collaboration with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and artists associated with them. He retired from Settlement Music School in 2009 after 28 years as its executive director. For many
years, he directed Settlement’s Contemporary Players and was responsible for preparing and conducting over 40 Philadelphia and world premiere performances. Mr. Capanna has also been active in many organizations that support music education and performance and is the recipient of several national and regional awards that recognize his service to the field.

Too light, too light, like a sudden wakening... for String Trio is a single movement work of about nine minutes. It tries to capture that sense of waking in the bright light of morning, our awareness of our surroundings and ourselves sharpening even as our slumbers and our dreams fade.

Robert Capanna

BENJAMIN KRAUSE is a composer and a pianist whose work has been recognized by the Houston Symphony, the Presser Foundation, ASCAP, Da Camera of Houston, and The American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France. Frequently inspired by literature and poetry, Krause’s work just as often derives its impulse from the purely sonic image and a sense of musical energy. His piece Pathways, for chamber orchestra, was named the winner of the Houston Symphony’s inaugural Young Composer Competition and was described as “attractive...the composer craftily reconstituted orders of events to create a compelling dramatic arc. Krause’s excellent control of dissipating energy for the serene ending of the work was most impressive” (concertonet.com). Recently his music has been featured on concert tours of Brazil, Hawaii, California, and Oregon. Krause scored Timothy Lanzone’s feature film Travelling Salesman (2011, available on iTunes and Amazon Prime) which was an “Official Selection” at the 2012 New York International Film Festival, was named Best Picture at the 2012 Silicon Valley Film Festival and has since been shown at festivals in Korea, the United Kingdom, Germany, and across the United States. He currently serves as Visiting Professor of Music at Valparaiso University, where he
teaches theory, composition, jazz, and leads the VU New Music Ensemble. Recent and upcoming commissions include those from the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium, the Network for New Music of Philadelphia, and the Delgani String Quartet. He holds degrees from Rice University (DMA), the University of Oregon (M.M.) and Valparaiso University (B.M).

The title of the piece is taken from the first line of Susan Stewart’s poem, from Hölderlin: “As from dark orchard leaves, from quiet scripts.” The work consists of a number of organically-linked sections and passages that relate to certain evocative fragments from throughout the poem. In order, they are: “circle and line,” “those far things,” “cliffs and waves,” “gnarl and crevice,” “species memory,” and “too light, too light.” The piece can be perceived in three large phases: a first section played primarily by the string trio alone (“circle and line”); the entrance of the piano and the forceful turbulence that ensues (“those far things”; “cliffs and waves”; “gnarl and crevice”); and lastly, recollections of the opening material, this time with the ensemble as a whole (“species memory,” “too light, too light”). In this way, the musical work mirrors the cyclic structure of its poetic source, which, although it drifts freely from image to image, remains highly unified and coherent through a web of embedded associations.

Benjamin Krause
Acknowledgements

Network for New Music would like to thank the many people and institutions who help make our work possible, including: Philip Maneval and Miles Cohen of the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society; Ingrid Arauco, Nancy Merriam, and Haverford College; The Curtis Institute of Music; Kris Rudzinski and the Settlement Music School; Temple University; videographer Meg Sarachan; and the wonderful NNM Board, staff and volunteers.

In addition, NNM would like to thank the following for their support: the Daniel W. Dietrich II Foundation, William Penn Foundation, Independence Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund, Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia, The Presser Foundation, the Samuel S. Fels Fund, the Amphion Foundation, the Drumcliff Foundation, and the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. Network for New Music receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.
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Poetry Through Music Reprise
3/5/17 – 3pm
Delaware County Community College
Large Auditorium | Academic Building
901 S. Media Line Road Media, PA 19063

Germantown Poetry Project
We invite you to hear brand new poetry and music as part of a collaboration between: Germantown residents, Network Ensemble members, guest singers Maren Montalbano and Randall Scarlata, poets Frank Sherlock and Trapeta B. Mayson, and composers Eric Moe and Jay Fluellen. In partnership with the Joseph E. Coleman Northwest Regional Library, these programs are the culmination of months of workshops with artists and members of the Germantown community. Funded by The William Penn Foundation, as part of their New Audiences/New Places initiative.

4/8/17 – 2pm
Parkway Central Library - Montgomery Auditorium
1901 Vine Street Philadelphia, PA, 19103

4/9/17 – 3pm
Joseph E. Coleman NW Regional Library
68 West Chelten Avenue Philadelphia, PA, 19144

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