

EMBLEMS Quintet

PROGRAM NOTES & BIOS

EMBLEMS (2016)

BRANDON SCOTT RUMSEY

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Although the majority of my works include winds in one way or another, Emblems is my first work for woodwind quintet. The piece was written for my friends, the Austin-, Chicago-, and NYC-based Trade Winds Quintet, who premiered Emblems in Arusha, Tanzania as part of a teaching and outreach project. Trade Winds Quintet's mission is "to empower individuals to express themselves by providing excellent and accessible workshops, performances, and collaborations that explore music as a tool for social change and the arts as a way of life." In four continuous movements, the music of Emblems is inspired by the members' radiant personalities, contagious joy, and dedication to social change through creativity. ■

BRANDON SCOTT RUMSEY's compositions have been performed at the New York Festival of Song, Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts Global Composition Seminar, in Arusha, Tanzania by the Trade Winds Quintet, Brevard Music Center (North Carolina), Bowdoin (Maine), Belvedere Chamber Music Festival (Tennessee), New Music on the Point (Vermont), Oregon Bach Festival Composer's Symposium, at North American Saxophone Alliance conferences, and by distinguished performers across the United States. Brandon has received honors from the American Composers Orchestra, National Federation of Music Clubs, American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), Luna Nova Music, and the University of Oregon School of Music. Beyond the concert hall, Brandon has composed for independent film and incidental music for contemporary plays and musicals. Brandon is a Graduate Student Instructor in Music Theory at the University of Michigan where he is a Doctor of Musical Arts Candidate in Composition and working toward a Graduate Certificate in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Studies.

INSTILLING HOPE (2014)

JABEZ CO (b. 1989)

soundcloud.com/jabezco

Someone close to me was going through a difficult time in his life. From day to day, nothing seemed to get better and all seemed lost. Through the hardship, I hoped for him to see the light at the end of the tunnel, to have hope. Hope is a desire for something to change. Yet, change can only occur once we reflect upon our past and upon the many choices we can make to improve circumstances. *Instilling Hope* serves to inspire reflection, while fostering a sense of optimism and faith. *Instilling Hope* is dedicated to Andrew McRobie. ■

JABEZ CO composes vivid music that speaks to a wide range of audiences, inspired by genres ranging from Gregorian chant to musical theater. His works are significantly influenced by his experience as an avid performer of concert pieces, new compositions, and stage music. Jabez writes concert and dramatic works, creating a fusion of classical and Broadway idioms in both genres. Jabez has recently been a winner of Mu Phi Epsilon's International Sterling Achievement Award, as well as a finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. He has also received awards from Bassoon Chamber Music's Composition Competition, The Other Competition, MPE's Original Composition Contest, and OFMC's Composer Contest. Jabez was a participant and intern of the Charlotte New Music Festival and has attended Fresh Inc. Festival and Accent Music Festival.

Jabez received his M.M. in Composition at the University of Louisville, where he studied composition with Steve Rouse. He received a B.M. in Music Education from Ohio Wesleyan University and studied composition with Clint Needham, Jennifer Jolley, and Jason Bahr. He has also participated in lessons and masterclasses with distinguished composers, including Louis Andriessen, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Dan Visconti, Stacy Garrop, Joel Hoffman, Christopher Theofanidis, and Joseph Schwantner. Jabez is currently pursuing a D.M. in Composition at Florida State University, where he serves as a Teaching Assistant in music theory and composition and as President of the FSU Society of Composers. Aside from composition, Jabez is passionate about his involvement in teaching and with musical theatre.

TURNNS (2000)

BELINDA REYNOLDS (b. 1967)
belindareynolds.com

Turns was commissioned by the California Professional Music Teachers Association and the Music Teachers National Association for its 2001 California State Convention. The work gets its title from the way the opening chords evolve into subsequent sections of the piece. For instance, one note may turn into the pivot point from which a new moment unfolds. Likewise, some melodic material turns into new chordal sections, thus giving a new perspective on the music. Special thanks goes to Esther Landau, Bruce Foster, and Yueh Chou of Citywinds for their invaluable input during the composing of this work. ■

BELINDA REYNOLDS now considers herself an 'adopted native' of California. She is an active composer, organizer, and teacher that focuses on bringing new music to a variety of audiences and communities. Ms Reynolds completed her Doctorate at Yale University with Jonathan Berger, Martin Bresnick, Jacob Druckman, and Tania León. She received her M.A. and B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley, where she studied principally with Andrew Imbrie and John Thow.

Belinda Reynolds' music has been performed by a number of organizations throughout North America and Europe, including: the Da Capo Players, New Music Consort, The New Millennium Ensemble, Essential Music, Earplay, Citywinds, Alternate Currents Performance

Ensemble, Fulcrumpoint (Chicago), Continuum Contemporary Music (Toronto), Artemis (Toronto), WIREWORKS (Germany), and The Albany Symphony's Dogs of Desire. Her music has been featured in such festivals and venues as the Spoleto 2000 Music Festival, Chicago Artists' Series, the Portugal New Music Festival, Wie Es Ihr Gefält, and the Aspen Music Festival. She has also been an Artist in Residence at Djerassi Colony, Banff Centre for the Arts, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, and the MacDowell Colony. Upcoming commissions include works for ELECTRA (Amsterdam), the Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble, and a guitar concerto for Sergio Puccini and the National Symphonic Orchestra in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Ms. Reynolds is also very active in music education. She has been a Meet-the-Composer-in-Residence for public schools and was the Music Director for the Bethwood Youth Orchestra in Woodbridge, CT. Additionally, she has taught and lectured at Dartmouth College and Yale University, among others. Ms. Reynolds is the Director of The Music Studio in San Francisco, a private studio that teaches in composition, piano, theory, musicianship, and computer music at all levels. Ms. Reynolds is also Composer in Residence with the San Francisco Conservatory's Outreach Program.

Belinda Reynolds has received awards from ASCAP, the International League of Women Composers, the NACUSA Young Composers Competition, and the CMTA Composition Competition, among others. Her work as a composer in music education has been acknowledged by the California Professional Music Teachers Association and the Connecticut Orff-Schulwerk Association.

SUITE (1953)

RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER (1901-1953)
wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruth_Crawford_Seeger

Ruth Crawford Seeger's 1952 Suite for Wind Quintet represents her return to composing concert music after nearly two decades of collecting folk songs, developing education methods, and participating in social activism. By 1934, the peak of Seeger's career, her music was published both for performance and in scholarly journals by leading theorists of the time. Thus, Seeger represents a rare case of a prolific woman composer with a public career who was noted at the time for her virtuosic craft above her gender, a significant notion given the rampant sexism toward women composers whose art went beyond the domestic realm during the 1920s and 30s. Full of masterfully-crafted ostinati and conversational melodies written in a loose 12-tone style, this quintet is a textbook of fresh timbral possibilities for the group. It is documented that Seeger expressed a desire for this playful work to represent the beginning of a new, prolific chapter in her composing work, however, she died only a year after its completion. (Note by Emblems Quintet) ■

RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER (1901-1953) is frequently considered the most significant American woman composer in this century. Joining Aaron Copland and Henry Cowell as a

key member of the 1920s musical avant-garde, she went on to study with modernist theorist and future husband Charles Seeger, writing her masterpiece, *String Quartet 1931*, not long after. But her legacy extends far beyond the cutting edge of modern music. Collaborating with poet Carl Sandburg on folk song arrangements in the twenties, and with the famous folk-song collectors John and Alan Lomax in the 1930s, she emerged as a central figure in the American folk music revival, issuing several important books of transcriptions and arrangements and pioneering the use of American folk songs in children's music education. Radicalized by the Depression, she spent much of the ensuing two decades working aggressively for social change with her husband and stepson, the folksinger Pete Seeger. (Biography by Judith Tick)

DARKER THAN BLUE (2014)

EMMA LOGAN (b. 1990)
emmalogan.com

Darker Than Blue is about creating texture and atmosphere. From the beginning, the main concept was to create a piece that traveled from light to dark through a series of chord progressions. The texture allows each instrument to weave in and out of each other with swelling dynamics and small motifs traveling throughout the ensemble. As the piece developed, I realized that the harmonic language was jazzy, triggered by the piano about half way through. After scouring the internet and miscellaneous poems, I stumbled across the line "darker than blue" and thought it a very fitting title for the piece. *Darker Than Blue* was written for the 2014 Fresh Inc Music Festival and the Fifth House Ensemble. ■

San Francisco-based composer Emma Logan (b. 1990) strives to write music that is emotionally compelling through the use of gesture, experimentation, and storytelling. Her piece *Short Stories* for solo guitar received an honorable mention in the 2016 MACRO Composers Competition. Emma's passion for contemporary music drives her to continue collaborating with fellow composers and performers to bring new music to life. Emma is co-founder of the Helia Music Collective, an organization dedicated to promoting women in music. Helia is collaborating with Siroko Duo for their first project, set for March 2017, featuring contemporary music written by women for flute duo. Emma is also a curator for San Francisco's Center for New Music and will present concerts for the 2017 and 2018 seasons. Aside from her creative endeavors, Emma is passionate about arts administration. She is currently the Digital Asset Coordinator at the San Francisco Symphony and the Administrative Assistant for the Switchboard Music Festival.

Upcoming collaborations include a song cycle commissioned by One Great City Duo and a piece for two flutes commissioned by Siroko Duo. Past collaborations include a song cycle commissioned by Ensemble for These Times, a piece for Areon Flutes presented by the Guerrilla Composers Guild, and new music for a few of Georges Méliès' famous short films. Emma's work has been performed around the United States, including Eugene, San Francisco, Chicago, Cincinnati, and Syracuse. She has participated in the Oregon Bach

Festival Composers Symposium with composer Robert Kyr, the Fresh Inc Music Festival with Fifth House Ensemble, and the Skaneateles Music Festival with composer Paul Moravec. Emma studied with David Garner at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (MM) and with Andrew Waggoner, Daniel S. Godfrey, and Nicholas Scherzinger at Syracuse University (BM).

MIRRORS (2010)

FINNUR KARLSSON (b. 1988)

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Mirrors was commissioned in 2010 by the Við Djúpið music festival in Ísafjörður, Iceland. The piece was premiered on the festival by the the wind quintet Nordic Chamber Soloists. ■

FINNUR KARLSSON graduated with a bachelor's degree in composition from the Iceland Academy of the Arts in the spring of 2012 and a masters degree from the Royal Danish Academy of Music in the spring of 2015. Finnur's main composition teachers have been Hans Abrahamsen, Úlfar Ingi Haraldsson, Atli Ingólfsson, Simon Løffler and Niels Rosing-Schow. Finnur is currently working on an advanced postgraduate diploma (Danish: Solistklassen) at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen.

Finnur's music has been performed by ensembles like the Albion Quartet (UK), Brák Baroque Band (IS), Copenhagen Phil (DK), Decoda (US), Elektra Ensemble (IS), Iceland Symphony Orchestra (IS), Siggí String Quartet (IS), Slowind (SLO), TAK (US) and Ventus (DK/NO). Finnur was the composer in residence at the Skálholt Summer Concerts music festival in 2015, and was nominated to the Icelandic Music Prize 2015 in the category "Work of the Year" for *Fold*; the piece commissioned by festival. Finnur's compositional voice has been described as "honest an sincere" and "captivatingly beautiful" (Fréttablaðið).

Finnur is, along with Bára Gísladóttir, Halldór Smáráson, Haukur Þór Harðarson and Petter Ekman, a member of the composer collective Errata.