

CASCADIA COMPOSERS AUTUMN 2009 CONCERT

PROGRAM

Piano Trio in C Major for Violin, Cello and Piano (Movement 1- Prelude)
John Paul, violin; John Hubbard, cello; Jeff Winslow, piano
Elizabeth Dyson

Variations on Constellations for solo piano
Scott Brazieal, Pianist
Jay Derderian

Inklings on the loose for flute and tape
Sydney Carlson, flute
Bonnie Miksch

Sonata for Solo Viola (Movement 2)
Joël Belgique, viola
Matthew Steele

Prelude IV for solo piano
Linda Barker, piano
Dan Brugh

..... intermission

A Quartet in Red, Black and Blue for string quartet and two singers (2009)
I. Capriccio; II. Autumn Moon; III. Blue (text by Nancy Wood); IV. Isolation-Dance-Invocation
Nancy Wood, soprano; Paul Safar, baritone
Lisa McWhorter; violin, Matthew Fuller, violin; Leslie Straka, viola; David Straka, cello
Paul Safar

Drift, sentence---burst for two channel playback
Arun Chandra

Darkness under Pines: Two Poems of David Axelrod for piano & soprano
I. Snowbound; II. From a Forest Soon to be Logged
Nancy Wood, soprano; Jeff Winslow, piano
John McKinnon

Stained Glass for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon and piano
Kathryn Hill, flute; Ann van Bever, oboe; Nanita McIlhattan, clarinet
David Crane, French horn; Margaret McIlhattan, bassoon; Jeff Winslow, piano
Jan Mittelstaedt

No audio and/or video recording, no flash photography and please turn off all electronic communication devices.

CASCADIA COMPOSERS

AUTUMN CONCERT 2009

Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church
Portland, Oregon

October 30, 2009



Cascadia Composers

Cascadia Composers is a new organization founded in June, 2008. Among our members are some of regions finest composers and musicians working in the western classical concert hall tradition. We formed in response to professional and artistic conditions present in the region.

Cascadia is an established chapter under the auspices of the National Association of Composers/USA (NACUSA). The chapter promotes the composition and performance of contemporary classical music by regional composers, stimulates national and international awareness of this music, and gathers composers to disseminate information pertinent to its members and the community.

Featured Composers

Elizabeth G. Blachly-Dyson

Elizabeth G. Blachly-Dyson is a molecular biologist who started writing music three years ago after several years of accompanying her son to his composition lessons. She has written a number of pieces for the Pacific Crest Youth Sinfonietta, and she plays the cello in that ensemble. She is studying composition with Dr. Robert Priest, cello with John Hubbard and piano with John Haek. She has a B.A. in Chemistry and English from Willamette University and a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Oregon.

Jay Derderian

Jay Derderian is a recent graduate of Portland State University where he studied composition with Dr. Bonnie Miksch and Dr. Brad Hansen. His music has been performed all over Oregon, parts of the United States, and in Europe. His music has been performed by the Portland State New Music Ensemble, Portland Classical Revolution, Portland New Music Society, and most recently Cascadia Composers and the College Music Society. He is currently pursuing a Masters of Science in Teaching at Portland State University.

Bonnie Miksch

Bonnie Miksch, a composer and performer whose music embraces multiple musical universes, creates both acoustic and electroacoustic works. She is passionate about music which moves beyond abstract relationships into the boundless realm of emotions and dreams. An avid consumer of musical possibilities, she strives to create coherent musical environments where diverse musical elements can coexist. Her computer music and vocal improvisations have been heard in Asia, Europe, Canada, and throughout the United States. Lately, she has been busy creating collaborative video works with husband Christopher Penrose. Every tendril, a wish, a recording of her electroacoustic music, will soon be released on North Pacific Music. On most days she can be heard whistling or singing in the halls at Portland State University where she teaches composition, theory, and computer music.

Matthew Steele

Four years into the tech support job, Matthew Steele decided to return to college and pursue his interest in music composition. After high school and up to that critical decision, he had hamfistedly put together a couple of soundtracks for unfinished video games and let his viola sit around, unloved. Now in his third year pursuing a BM with composition emphasis (studying with Bonnie Miksch), he feels his creative horizons have widened to include acoustic and electronic music for its own sake (in addition to his habitual incidental music for jumpman). Last year he was a finalist in PSU's composition competition. And he loves his viola again.

Featured Performers (in order of appearance)

John Paul chairs the music department at Marylhurst University, teaching composition and holding the Joseph Naumes Endowed Chair in Music. He studied with Stephen Clapp at the University of Texas and earned his doctorate in composition from Indiana University. He is a founding violinist with the Columbia Gorge Chamber Players.

John Hubbard is a graduate of the University of Southern California. He has performed with the Pasadena Symphony, and many LA ensembles, as well as with Portland Opera, OBT, and the Oregon Symphony. He teaches privately, and at CMC and Reed College. John is a former conductor of PYP's Young String Ensemble.

Jeff Winslow was born into a musical family in Salem, Oregon. Jeff Winslow's first serious compositional efforts were inspired by his discovery of Debussy and Mahler. But neither the pop nor academic music of the day had much appeal, nor did a teaching career. He studied music at the the University of California at Berkeley while pursuing his education in electronics engineering. Jeff is an active composer within the region.

Scott Brazieal — composer, pianist/multi keyboardist —is a San Francisco Conservatory of Music alum (1986) where he studied composition/theory with composer John Adams. He has played, recorded and toured with several experimental jazz and rock-groups, most notably: Cartoon, PFS, (Cuneiform Records) as well as 5uu's and Thinking Plague (Recommended Records/ReR). He is currently a music director for a NE Portland Lutheran church and has recently completed a solo release, "Songs From the Empire" due out this year.

Flutist, **Sydney Carlson**, resides in Portland, Oregon where she is Professor of Flute at Portland State University and a member of the Portland Opera Orchestra. She is also on the faculty of the American Festival for the Arts. Dr. Carlson holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music, where she was a student of Bonita Boyd and the DMA from the University of Houston, where she was privileged to study with Byron Hester. S he has also performed in the masterclasses of Julius Baker, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Robert Aitken, Samuel Baron, James Walker and Keith Underwood.

Joël Belgique is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the Cleveland Institute of Music, Joël Belgique has been an 8-year member of fEARnoMUSIC. He has performed at Italy's Spoleto Festival, Alaska's CrossSound Festival, Wyoming's Grand Teton Music Festival, and Michigan's Interlochen Center for Arts. In Portland, he is Principal Viola of the Oregon Symphony, has performed with the Oregon Symphony String Quartet, and with the faculty of Portland Summer Ensembles. He also is the Principal Viola and Orchestra Manager of the Astoria Music Festival and a frequent guest with the Portland-based band Pink Martini.

Lisa McWhorter, violin; **Matthew Fuller**; violin; **Leslie Strak**, viola; **David Straka**, cello perform with the Eugene Symphony and Oregon Mozart Players, among other groups, and teach at the University of Oregon School of Music.

Nancy Wood has spent her life studying the performing arts. Growing up in Minnesota, she started singing in the Lutheran church as a young child, and performed as a soloist, in ensembles, choirs and musical theater throughout college. She is also a United States Figure Skating Association Gold Medalist and she toured professionally with Holiday on Ice International.

Kathryn Hill began playing the flute in 5th grade and continued her studies post high school at the Hartt School of Music, University of Hartford in Hartford, Connecticut. She transferred to Rhode Island College where she earned a bachelors of science in nursing and then attended graduate school at Oregon Health Sciences University. She is a women's health care nurse practitioner with Providence Health and Services specializing in the field of urogynecology.

Ann van Bever plays oboe, oboe d'amore and English horn in the Portland Columbia Symphony, Bach Cantata Choir Orchestra, and Rose City Chamber Orchestra, and she freelances throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington. She also enjoys playing chamber music with Alder Street Sextet and Double Reed Divas. She is the administrator of the Celebration Works concert series at First Presbyterian Church of Portland and teaches a number of private oboe students. She holds a Master's degree in Oboe Performance from Southern Methodist University and a law degree from Marquette University Law School.

Nanita McIlhattan, clarinet, is a consultant for nonprofits, focused on strategic operations, finance and structure. She is a lifelong musician and lover of ensemble music. For several years, Nanita has played clarinet at First Presbyterian Church with the Alder Street Players in a variety of ensembles. She plays bass clarinet in the Oregon Symphonic Band and is glad to retain a connection to the band room. Nanita's music is the product of the band rooms in Havre, Montana and St Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota.

David Crane, horn, had his early training with Earl Saxton and Ross Taylor of the San Francisco Symphony. He continued his studies with Waldemar Linder and Wendell Hoss in Los Angeles and Joseph Veleba in Vienna. He is a member of the Salem Chamber orchestra, the Northwest Horn Orchestra, the Alder Street Winds and is a substitute in many local area orchestras.

Margaret McShea, bassoon, grew up in Austin, Texas, where she received her degree in Bassoon Performance from the University of Texas. She moved to Oregon 16 years ago, with her trombonist husband. Together, they have a 10-year old son, and they are never moving again! She is Principal Bassoonist with the Vancouver Symphony, and also plays in the Columbia Symphony and the Newport Symphony. Margaret loves new compositions and, over the years, has been lucky enough to premier many new works for orchestra. Thanks to all the composers for writing new music!

*bright ribbons insisted,
but we thought otherwise,
old firs coordinates for
our lives, long memory,
balm against falling off*

*and loss. We speak of ambition,
of men in cities, in guarded
offices, who will never walk here,
who command the value of trees.
I would do as well to rake*

*my knuckles across bark, press
my face deep in the abundant
duff encircling roots, force myself
to gasp and sputter for air.
Because I'm a fool.*

*Because this canopy of sound
is maddening. Such joy, it seems,
persisting at the verge of its silence,
our faces upturned
in an amber rain of seeds.*

Stained Glass for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon and piano — **Jan Mittelstaedt**

Stained Glass was inspired by I Corinthians 13: 1, 11, and 12. It is a suite of four movements:

I. Gongs and Cymbals: *Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.* (I Corinthians 13: 1). The music opens with imitative counterpoint and the unfolding of a diminished seventh chord. Thus, an ordinary human conversation is introduced. Maybe one speaker is talking to another in a very sweet voice but is spreading malicious gossip about another (thus, the diminished seventh chord). After a transition by the horn, clarinet, and oboe, the music moves to a section of ba-

nality. Included are fragments of the Protestant hymn, Come ye Faithful, Raise the Strain. This music evolves into a blazing hootenanny with "wrong notes" and other strange elements. The idea here is that God is calling His creatures but instead of listening, they choose to speak without love. Thus, their voices become chaotic and meaningless. After a bit of relief, when the first motive calmly returns for a few bars, the tempo picks up and the key is obstructed. Here are more gongs, cymbals, and chaos. At the end of the movement, a single descending melodic line in a low register, played by the bassoon, is heard symbolizing the futility of acting without charity or love.

II. Childish Ways: *When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child but when I became a man, I put away childish things.* (I Corinthians 13: 11). This movement, a scherzo and a quodlibet, is polyphonic music formed by fancifully combining fragments of children's songs, both hymns and secular ditties. The listener will recognize parts of Jesus Loves Me, Praise Him, Praise Him all ye Little Children, London Bridge, and the children's chant, starting with a minor third (na, na, na, na, na). The contrasting middle section, a lullaby, is a reflection of Jesus as a baby as well as babies everywhere.

III. A Poor Reflection: *For now we see through a glass darkly...*(I Corinthians 13:12). The opening of the third movement features the woodwind quintet. The mood is misty and slightly depressed. Blue notes and lazy swing rhythms are featured.

IV. Face to Face: *...but then face to face...*(I Corinthians 13:12). The last movement opens with a spirited dance. I have used a bass line adapted from Djali – Djali, a folk song from Jakarta, Indonesia. The composer is unknown and there are many arrangements in Indonesia. I discovered this dance through my colleague, Annisa Djoewari, when I had the pleasure of accompanying her as she played this piece on the violin. The violin part was arranged by Nusjirwan Lesmana and the piano part by Mochtar Embut. The music was part of the repertoire requirement during the 1999-2000 school year level six examinations at Yayasan Pendidikan Musik School where Annisa Djoewari was a student. I particularly wanted to use the dance because of its high energy and rhythm. Throughout the movement, perfect fourths and tritones mingle and there are some chromatic mediant relationships and parallel fourths between instruments. Energetic and rhythmically changed fragments of a Kyrie also appear in the middle of this movement. I imagine that the feeling of unworthiness and the plea for mercy would accompany the emotion of joy when meeting God face to face. At the end of the piece, there is a slight pause followed by a soft imperfect plagal cadence. The idea here is that if one were to see

V. God face to face, there would be reverence and awe along with rejoicing.

Dan Brugh

Daniel Brugh is a composer and pianist, teaching in Beaverton. He has study Composition with Dr Saul and Dr Healey. A graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, Michigan, he holds a Bachelor's in Music from University of Oregon. He is the 2009/2010 composer of the year for the Oregon Music Teachers Association.

Paul Safar

Paul Safar is a composer/performer based in Eugene, Oregon. He enjoys teaching private piano lessons to children and adults in his home studio. His influences range from Beethoven to the Beatles and bebop and beyond. With Nancy Wood he co-founded Cherry Blossom Musical Arts, a non-profit performing arts group dedicated to new music and collaboration. He would like to thank the talented string players from Eugene for their work with him on this piece. They are all wonderful performers and educators. And last but not least a huge thanks goes to Nancy Wood for her constructive criticism, beautiful lyrics and voice and consistently kind support. Please feel free to discuss thoughts and reactions to the piece, its title etc. after the performance. Paul received a Bachelor of Music from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati and did graduate study at the University of Oregon.

Arun Chandra

I am a composer and a conductor at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. I work with undergraduate students interested in compositional experiments in music and theater, and the social context of contemporary artistic creation. In 2007--08, I received a Fulbright Fellowship to India, where I studied the combinatorial possibilities of North Indian melodic scales, and learned about the social context of artistic production in India. My composition "Side Sights" (2007) for four toy pianos was performed at the 2007 International Conference on Computer Music in Copenhagen, Denmark, where I also delivered a paper on my research in sound synthesis. In 2003, the Wesleyan University Press published my edition of "When Music Resists Meaning", consisting of articles and lectures of Herbert Brun, my primary composition teacher. I was Conductor of the Olympia Chamber Orchestra from 2000–04. As conductor I commissioned a number of new compositions for orchestra and performed works from the traditional repertory as well.

John McKinnon

John McKinnon is a professor of music at Eastern Oregon University. His musical compositions often reflect the "landscape" of Eastern Oregon, a rural combination of desert and mountains. An interest in the poetry of the region has resulted in collaborations with several poets, including David Axelrod, the voice in tonight's two songs. McKinnon is director of the Electronic Music Lab at Eastern Oregon University, teaches music theory and brass, and directs the African Drumming Ensemble, a group he founded in 2001.

Jan Mittelstaedt

Jan Mittelstaedt holds bachelor degrees in elementary education and music from Bucknell University and Marylhurst University and a MM in composition from The University of Portland. She studied composition with Sister Ann Cecil Daigle at Marylhurst and Dr. Walter B. Saul II at the University of Portland and Warner Pacific College. She continues to study with Dr. Saul. In 1993, Ms. Mittelstaedt participated in the Ernest Bloch Composers Symposium, and in 1994, she was chosen Composer of the Year by the Oregon Music Teachers Association (OMTA). She has also won ASCAP special awards since 1994, and her biography is included in Who's Who of American Women and Who's Who in America. A teacher of piano and composition, Jan Mittelstaedt has an active studio in Portland, Oregon. She adjudicates student compositions, is a program presenter for OMTA, is chair of OMTA's Composers' Forum, and is a member of the OMTA syllabus adjudicating staff.

Program Notes

Piano Trio in C Major for Violin, Cello and Piano (Movement 1- Prelude) — **Elizabeth Dyson**

Most of the music I've written has been for a youth string orchestra, but last spring when I took a counter-point class at Marylhurst, I found myself writing for (and playing) the piano more. I wrote the piano trio in order to bring together my string and piano writing. The "Prelude" was a vehicle for using up unwanted parallel fifths, similar to the way a cook makes a custard with the egg yolks that are left over after baking an angel food cake.

Variations on Constellations for solo piano — **Jay Derderian**

Variations on Constellations is a set of informal variations based on six constellations. The constellations used are Ursa Major (the Big Dipper), Aires, Cepheus, Cygnus, Cassiopeia, and Orion's Belt. Each of these constellations was superimposed onto a music staff and became the material to be developed. These particular constellations were chosen because of their unique contours and surprisingly melodic shapes. Each of these constellations undergoes a series of harmonic, stylistic, and notational variations over the course of approximately 10 minutes.

Inklings on the loose for flute and tape — **Bonnie Miksch**

Inklings on the loose for flute and computer-realized recording, is an optimistic piece inspired by the absurd amusements entertained in the delicious privacy of our own heads. To "free your mind," let those inspired inklings run amuck! (The mind is a playground, and I like to roam off-leash. Care to join me?)

Sonata for Solo Viola (Movement 2) — **Matthew Steele**

Sonata for Viola Alone began as an aimless hour of pizzicato on the living room sofa. The piece grew from regular feedback and attention, and had the good fortune to find a great violist to breathe life into it. The second movement bridges the stubborn first and sprightly third movements with a prolonged moment of introspection.

Prelude IV for solo piano — **Dan Brugh**

A Quartet in Red, Black and Blue for string quartet and two singers (2009) — **Paul Safar**

As stated in Munch's Journal: "at times you see with different eyes," thus, a composer "at times [hears] with different [ears.]" And so it is with this composition of "hearing" these paintings at a moment in time. Another moment might produce a different "hearing," or "expression." I've attempted to create an expression of these paintings and even have different possible interpretations within the expression through passages of structured improvisation, which in turn produce different experiences for the listener. So I've composed what I heard, to paraphrase Munch, at a moment in time.

drift, sentence --- burst for two channel playback (2005) — **Arun Chandra**

Finding myself in the position of having the significance of my actions determined by their relationship to the systems I inhabit, I investigate possibilities of creating those relationships in sound that determine the significance of their inhabiting events. As Kenneth Gaburo has written "The system determines the significance of its components, and the components determine the significance of their system."

The dialectical flip here is clearly articulated. The moment in time when one knows which is which slips away like a trout.

So which IS which?

I know what's what, and that's that, and so what, and so that. "So What?" bleats with a dismissive shrug at the system it renders inescapable, and "So that ... " points longingly at a tendril of possibility, rendering a potential possible.

So what ain't so that.

So?

Even in the bleak presence of the current moment, thirty-six tones to the octave, eleven minutes of sound, six streams of voices, two arms, two legs, a body, a face, and the longest journey begins with a ginger step --- one measly idea.

"So is that the best you can do?" SoWhat sighs, sowing a web on his eye.

The mereness of our steps is the uncatchable glimmer of our resistance.

Let the light of these glimmers (in our eyes and in our electric thighs) elude the corporate grimmers of current life---no so no mo.

---- Arun Chandra

Darkness under Pines: Two Poems of David Axelrod for piano & soprano — **John McKinnon**

SNOWBOUND

A lifetime ago, when the loss weighed less, oblivion seemed nearer and dying meant more than its does.

Our bodies seem not so much radiant, as our minds remain vehement at twilight, this lull at dead winter.

The air steel-blue and calm, the forest so still, we can hear our blood drum in our throats, can boast all we like

about how we stayed younger, stronger, how bitter others are about the cold that means nothing to us. The tired year

turns back, fitful, brimming with turmoil. We struck a bargain a long time ago: no difference between life, death.

We're inclined to add a question mark at the end, as though the two seem less interwoven now, and the border between

more than that tiny chip of ink. I confess, there's more courage in keeping than making a vow, and it's easier to

order a sequence with commas than assert that darkness lifts from wells of snow under pines to reveal

permanent heaven encircling us still.

FROM A FOREST SOON TO BE LOGGED

for Allen and Evelyn Holbrook

A frigid morning, clearing after snow, the stream over its banks, sunlight boundless as clusters of cones in pinetops.

Siskins drift through limbs, feast on generous seeds they praise in a thousand voices, undecieved about the doom of trees. Surveyors'