

NNM network for
NEW MUSIC

NNM MIX: 2008-2009 Season
Explorations in New Music and Art

presents

VISIONS OF AMERICA

featuring

The Network for New Music Ensemble

Linda Reichert, Artistic Director

Jan Krzywicki, conductor

Friday April 3, 2009, 8:00 PM
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
Historic Landmark Building
118 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA

Sunday April 5, 2009, 3:00 PM
Marshall Auditorium
Haverford College

PROGRAM

Six American Painters (2002)
For Ann Santen

John Harbison

- I. Bingham*
- II. Eakins*
- III. Heade*
- IV. Homer*
- V. Hoffman*
- VI. Diebenkorn*

Edward Schultz, flute/alto flute
Ghislaine Fleischman, violin
Alexander Petersen, viola
Michal Schmidt, cello

Unattainable Spaces (2009)
Inspired by *California Ten*, a painting by Ben Peterson

David Laganella

- I. Salvage*
- II. Asymmetrical Imitation*
- III. Balance*

The Network for New Music Ensemble
Jan Krzywicki, conductor

Paul R. Demers, clarinet
Marc Rovetti, violin
Alexander Petersen, viola
Thomas Kraines, cello
Barry Dove, percussion

INTERMISSION

PROGRAM, continued

*Concerto in Light and Shadow (2009)** Richard C. Brodhead
Echoes of Four American Artists

- I. Prelude, after Thomas Eakins' Arcadian Scene*
- II. Variations, after Willard Metcalf's The Twin Birches*
- III. Scherzo, after Morris Hall Pancoast's The Pennsy Train Shed*
- IV. Passacaglia, after James Abbott McNeil Whistler's The Thames*

The Network for New Music Ensemble
Jan Krzywicki, conductor

Edward Schultz, flute/piccolo/alto flute
Geoffrey Deemer, oboe/English horn
Daniel Goldman, Bb/Eb clarinets
Angela Anderson Smith, bassoon
Angela Cordell, horn
Christopher van Bergen, trumpet in C
Ghislaine Fleischman, violin
Marc Rovetti, violin
Alexandra Leem, viola
Thomas Kraines, cello
Anne Peterson, double bass
Harvey Price, percussion
Kimberly Rowe, harp
Linda Reichert, keyboard

** Network for New Music commission/world premiere*

PROGRAM NOTES

Six American Painters was commissioned by radio station WGUC Cincinnati in honor of Ann Santen, for performance by Cincinnati Symphony principal flutist Randall Bowman. Bowman gave the first performance on the Linton Music Series, April 14, 2002, with Timothy Lees, violin, Michael Strauss, viola, and Eric Kim, cello.

Each of the movements was begun as a musical description of six paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Eventually they ranged further and it seemed more helpful to name them for the painters rather than for the specific paintings.

I wanted to evoke the artists' afterimages, rather than any of the individual paintings. When you look at a picture, you take away with you a general impression, a mood or color, that dominates the details; in music, on the other hand, one is apt to remember the details, a tune or a harmony. I wanted these movements to be a perceivable whole, and act of seeing.

Most of my viewing was done at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Like many musicians, I've always felt that looking at art has been the least alert of the things I do. I hoped to develop my visual sense; I did a lot of research, and I spent many hours looking at paintings.

The movements tend toward brevity. I had two intentions: not too slow, and not too long.

I also made, for the oboist Peggy Pearson, a version of oboe and strings, replacing one of the movements, adapting others. She gave its first performance on the Winsor Music Series with Bayla Keyes, violin, May Ruth Ray, viola, and Rhonda Rider, cello.

~John Harbison, January 2003

Unattainable Spaces: Abstraction is important to me as a composer, and as I become more mature and competent at writing music I find that my compositions become almost completely divorced of sentiment. I am no longer looking to express emotion in my music but revel in the nuance of pitch and timbre.

When asked to compose a work for this program, I knew I wanted to seek out a work of art that dealt in abstraction. After a tour of the museum, it didn't take me long to decide that Ben Peterson's *California Ten* would be the sole work for the inspiration of my new composition. I was in awe of the work's beauty with its strange proportions and angular symmetry while at same time laughing at the absurdity in the details of the rendering. His work constructs an abstract world out of materials that are common to ours. Going into the project, I was hoping to find a work that I admired by an artist from my generation and was even more excited when I found out Peterson was based locally.

I did not want to take the same voyage as Moussorgsky so my composition does not make any kind of literal reflection to the content in *California Ten*. Rather, Petersen's painting served as a companion while I composed *Unattainable Spaces* (I kept a print out on my desk that I download from an art gallery's web site). I would look to this ridiculously small version of *California Ten* on a daily basis as I worked. It served as a visual representation for the aesthetic qualities that I would like to achieve in my own music.

~David Laganella

PROGRAM NOTES, CONTINUED

Concerto in Light and Shadow was composed in 2007 and 2008 on commission from Network for New Music, with generous support from the Dietrich Foundation. It is dedicated to Dan Dietrich, whose support of music and the visual arts makes an enduring contribution to our cultural life, in Philadelphia and beyond, and whose friendship and encouragement through the years I treasure.

Each of the four movements of *Concerto in Light and Shadow* is a musical response to a late 19th century or early 20th century American work in the permanent collection of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. I have not attempted to make the Concerto a direct musical depiction of these visual works, though the listener may hear some passages in that way. Rather, I have sought to shape musical ideas and structures in response to various aspects of each painting - its composition, tonality, subject matter, and atmosphere - to create a musical work which can stand on its own, but which also illuminates, and is illuminated by, the works of these great American artists.

The first movement, based on Thomas Eakins' *Arcadian Scene* (c. 1883), is shaped around melodic fragments which grow from a slow-moving, often indistinct background - analogous to the figures which emerge from the dark, mysterious foliage in Eakin's picture. The melodic material becomes more animated and rhythmic in the second half - something suggested to me by the Pan-like figure with his wooden flute.

The subject matter and composition of Willard Metcalf's *The Twin Birches* (1908) led me to design the second movement of the Concerto around the concepts of pairing and intertwining. Two sets of variations are interlaced: the first is a set of short passages scored for harp and vibraphone, whose interweaving sounds create a composite melody; the second includes a pair of rather tonal variations with a romantic affect, a two-voice contrary motion canon, and a variation centered on a pair of mysterious bell-like sounds, scored for harp, celesta, and string harmonics.

Morris Hall Pancoast's *The Pennsy Train Shed* (c. 1917) is an urban painting, featuring trains, streets, automobiles, and the train shed itself, which dominates the picture. As I studied the painting, I thought about the sounds and rhythms of the city, and wondered about the places the trains visited. I composed a scherzo and crafted the music to travel, like the trains, through different "neighborhoods" - fast and dissonant, slow and lyrical, loud, soft, agitated, subdued - before racing off into the distance.

The *Scherzo* proceeds without pause into the final movement, based on James Abbott McNeill Whistler's *The Thames* (1876). This picture has both urban and non-urban aspects. London is seen, but from a distance, from across the Thames. To me, it is the river which defines and dominates everything else in the painting. My response was to use a venerable musical form, passacaglia, in which a recurring melodic line (a musical river) determines the events that occur around and against it. In one form or another, the passacaglia theme, first stated by chimes and French horn, is present throughout the movement -- sometimes prominent, sometimes hidden in the background, but always defining and shaping the larger musical landscape.

~Richard C. Brodhead

BIOGRAPHIES

Citing his most important influences as the Bach Cantatas, Stravinsky (whom he met in Santa Fe in 1963) and jazz, **John Harbison's** music is distinguished by its exceptional invention and deeply expressive range. He has written for every conceivable type of concert genre, ranging from the grand opera to the most intimate; pieces that embrace jazz along with the classical forms. His prolific, personal and greatly admired music written for the voice encompasses a catalogue of over 70 works including opera, choral, voice with orchestra and chamber/solo works. He is considered to be "original, varied, and absorbing – relatively easy for audiences to grasp and yet formal and complex enough to hold our interest through repeated hearings – his style boasts both lucidity and logic." (Fanfare) Harbison is also a gifted commentator on the art and craft of composition and was recognized in his student years as an outstanding poet (he wrote his own libretto for *Gatsby*). Today, he continues to convey, through the spoken word, the multiple meanings of contemporary composition.

Composer / electric guitarist **David Laganella** was born in 1974 in the suburbs of Philadelphia. He composes music that contrasts transparency and mass in a very resonant and purely chromatic harmonic language. Laganella's music has been performed by many leading ensembles; recent performances include The American Composers Orchestra, Da Capo Chamber Players, Symphony in C (winner of their annual composer competition), Flexible Music, Electric Kompany, Avian Music and by new-music pianist Marilyn Nonken. His music has been featured at diverse venues, from Tonic & Galapagos to Carnegie Hall and has been featured at John Zorn's New Rock Complexity Festival, the Philadelphia Fringe Festival and with the Bergslagen Chamber Symphony Festival (Sweden) where he served as the Composer in Residence.

Laganella has received honors from numerous organizations including ASCAP, Meet the Composer Fund, The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Orchestra Society of Philadelphia, The Society of Composers, and The American Composers Forum. He holds degrees in music composition from New York University and the University of Pennsylvania. Laganella also holds a Performance Certificate in electric guitar from Berklee College of Music. He is the author of the ground breaking book, *The Composers Guide to the Electric Guitar* (available from Mel Bay Publications), which is a manual addressing all performance practices and notational issues for the instrument.

David Laganella is the Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Now Annual Concert Series in Philadelphia and is Assistant Professor of Music at Wesley College.

Richard C. Brodhead was born in 1947 in Philadelphia, where he received his early musical training and heard his first compositions performed. He earned his Bachelor's degree at Yale University and his Master's degree in composition at the University of Pennsylvania, where his principal teacher was Richard Wernick.

Richard Brodhead's compositions include works for symphony orchestra; solo works for piano, cello, flute, recorder, guitar, and theorbo; vocal and choral music; and chamber music for a variety of ensembles. Recent works have been presented by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the Hartt School of Music, Network for New Music, the Temple/Peregrine Arts Atelier Concerts funded by the Philadelphia Music Project, New Sounds Live! at Merkin Hall, the Delaware Valley Philharmonic Orchestra, the International Horn Society, the Society of Composers, Inc., and Temple University. His music has been performed by such outstanding artists as cellist Scott Kluksdahl, the Lions Gate Trio, the Momenta Quartet, pianist Charles Abramovic, guitarist Allen Krantz, and lutenist Richard Stone, and has been heard on National Public Radio and on Philadelphia-area broadcasts.

Since 1986, Richard Brodhead has served on the composition faculty of Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance, where he also has served as Acting Dean and Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs.

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NNM MIX Explorations in New Music and Art RE-SOUNDING / Hidden City

Composer/performer Todd Reynolds explores the musical heritage of Philadelphia's legendary Royal Theater on South Street as the Network for New Music Ensemble performs live, with a film and video installation by visual artist Laurie Olinder and filmmaker Bill Morrison. Their performance celebrates the ragtime, vaudeville, jazz, and cinema history of this important landmark as part of Hidden City, a four-week festival opening May 30, 2009. The festival invites you to explore unknown parts of Philadelphia as local and international artists of all mediums take on the cultural memory of our city. Please visit www.hiddencityphila.org for more information.

Wednesday June 10, 2009 at 8 PM, and
Thursday June 11, 2009 at 8 PM
Royal Theater, 1524 South Street, Philadelphia

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