

San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

Monday, December 3, 2001 at 8 pm

Center for the Arts Forum

VITALITY/USA

*Tonight's performances of Edmund Campion's
Domus Aurea and Josh Levine's Glimpses are
made possible in part by a generous grant from
The James Irvine Foundation.*

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Performers

Karol Bennet, soprano

Barbara Chaffe, Tod Brody, flutes

William Wohlmacher, clarinet

Julie Steinberg, Karen Rosenak, piano

William Winant, Scott Bleaken, percussion

Paul Binkley, guitar

Roy Malan, violin

Roxanne Jacobson, viola

Stephen Harrison, cello

Mary Chun, guest conductor

JOSH LEVINE

Glimpses (1986/88)

EDMUND CAMPION

Domus Aurea (2000)

Julie Steinberg, piano

William Winant, percussion

SCOTT LINDROTH

Light (1994)

Karol Bennett, soprano

— INTERMISSION —

JENNIFER HIGDON

rapid ♦ fire (1992)

Tod Brody, flute

DAVID DZUBAY

dancesing on a green bay (1999)

1. between green/ mountains
2. the/ sky/ was
3. grEEEn's d
4. All in green went my love riding
5. six
6. (sitting in a tree-)
7. in the rain-

Karol Bennett, soprano

JOSH LEVINE (B. 1959)

Born in Oregon, Josh Levine has studied composition at U. C. San Diego (principally with Brian Ferneyhough), the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris (with Guy Reibel), and the Musik-Akademie in Basel, Switzerland (with Balz Trümpy), where he also obtained a diploma in classical guitar with Konrad Ragossnig. During 1994-95, he studied composition and computing at the prestigious new music center IRCAM, in Paris. In 2000 he joined the faculty of San Francisco State University where he teaches composition, theory, and electronic music.

Levine's interest in electronics is apparent in a number of his works, including his prize-winning *Tel* (1985-87) and *Zwischenwelt* (1989-91), for percussion, small ensemble, and computer electronics. His *Belle du désert* (1995-99), which was premiered in revised form in Switzerland this summer, combines voice, percussion, and electronics in what he calls a "paean to love, a hymn to memory, a tribute to the enigmatic interplay of things that are clear and the still unknowable reasons for them." Levine's long-standing experience with musical technology may be in part responsible for his keen attention to timbral nuances. This fascination with sound does not, however, preclude contrapuntal thinking, as the composer points out: "I tend to work with materials (lines, more often than not, though sometimes also metamorphosing "objects") that evolve individually and are each carefully articulated in terms of rhythmic and melodic gesture supported by timbral differentiations." The result is what Levine calls a "polyphony of materials" that is fundamental to his compositional aesthetic.

An active guitarist, Levine has collaborated with the Basel ISCM Ensemble, the Ensemble Contrechamps (Geneva), and San Diego's SONOR Ensemble in such works as Ferneyhough's *Transit*, Mauricio Kagel's *Kantrimusik*, and Pierre Boulez's *Marteau sans maître*. A number of his own pieces make use of this performance expertise including *Downstream* (1991-92) for guitar and computer-

processed guitar sounds, "*in gleicher Weise umher*" (1989-91) for soprano, violin, guitar, and ensemble, and the work we will hear tonight, *Glimpses*, for flute, viola, and guitar.

Levine has received Weill and Gluck Fellowships from U. C. San Diego, a grant from the Fondation Patino and the Republic of Geneva, First Prize at the Bourges International Electroacoustic Music Competition for his tape piece *Tel*, and the Stipend Prize from Darmstadt's Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik for *Points of No Return* (Inflorescence I). His music has been commissioned by such groups as Ensemble Intercontemporain (Paris), Ensemble Contrechamps (Geneva), Pro Helvetia, and the Groupe de musique expérimentale (Bourges). He is currently at work on a chamber concerto for guitar entitled *Former Selves*, commissioned by Australia's ELISION ensemble and a string quartet for the Rümlingen Festival in Switzerland.

***Glimpses* (1986, rev. 1988)**

for flute, viola and guitar

As its title implies, *Glimpses* is a cluster of suggestive episodes combined to give an impression of the ephemeral. There are many ways of interpreting its alternation between rhapsody and pointilism. From a historical perspective, fleeting gestures reflect the poignant passage of time and a sense of nostalgia for things almost forgotten, as the composer himself observes: "There often emerges in my music a nostalgia for the traditionally 'beautiful' music that I neither want to write nor wish to deny, [the music] that always seems to appear in the form of solitary, trapped, dislocated, deforming remnants of melodies and romantic gestures." These words signal an interplay between spontaneous creativity and memory that resonates with the fact that many elements of the guitarist's gestures arose from the composer's own improvisations.

From a technical perspective, *Glimpses* represents an exploration of principles that have become extremely important to Levine's creative thought: controlling temporal flux and the evolution of the relationships between instrumentalists. These compositional "experiments" are rendered in musical moments that both spring

from and evoke images—real or fictional scenes, psychological states, physical movements, or even sounds. For the composer, these images provide musical kernels—a potent rhythm or melody, a particular texture or timbre—to be shaped, developed, and superimposed on one another. For the performers, this ever-changing stream of virtuosic gestures requires an astonishing degree of skill and concentration. And for listeners, *Glimpses* can become a fascinating aural journey corresponding to the motto whispered by the guitarist as the work draws to a close: “points of embarkation on a bankless river.”

Glimpses was first performed in 1988 by the composer together with Verena Bosshart (flute) and Barbara Maurer (viola) of the Ensemble Contrechamps.

EDMUND CAMPION (B. 1957)

A native of Dallas, Texas, Edmund Campion did his doctoral work in composition at Columbia University and attended the Paris Conservatory where he worked with composer Gérard Grisey. In 1993 he was selected to work at IRCAM and was later commissioned to write a large-scale piece for interactive electronics and midi-grand piano. The resulting *Natural Selection* received its premiere with the composer at the piano in 1996. After his return from Paris, Campion joined the composition faculty at U. C. Berkeley, where he is also Composer in Residence at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT).

As titles like *Natural Selection* might suggest, connections between music and the natural world are major themes in Campion’s oeuvre, which includes such works as *A Treasured Collection of Eddies* (1992) for sextet and *Corail (Coral)* for saxophone and live electronics, which had its world premiere last summer. In one of his most recent scores, *l’Autre* (commissioned by Radio France), he collaborates with poet John Campion to offer an artistic reflection of “the struggle between consciousness and the unconscious,” which culminates in “a modern fear of ‘the Other’ race and culture (embodied in a tragic utterance of the names of endangered peoples)

and gender.”

Many of Campion’s works explore the relationships between sound and space—explorations that combine cutting-edge technology with sheer imagination. In his ambitious cycle for instruments and quadrophonic tape *Quadrivium* (1995-98) premiered by David Milnes and EARPLAY, Campion surrounds his audience with sound sources, enveloping them in the piece and inviting a kind of listening that is multidimensional and ear-opening. In some cases, his sonic experiments have sprung from music for specific events in specific sites. For example, when working on *Flood Stage*, a collaborative project with John Campion and sculptor Terrisa J. Mabrey, the composer developed a framework of expanding and collapsing rhythmic phrases to meet the challenge of writing music that audience-participants could move in and out of through both time and space. Among his most recent multimedia works is the complete ballet *Playback*, commissioned by IRCAM and the Société des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques in collaboration with the choreographer François Raffinot. The piece we will hear tonight, *Domus Aurea*, involves a different sort of relationship between music and place—in this case, a sonic rumination on the “grotesque” inspired by the fantastic frescoes adorning the walls of Emperor Nero’s Roman villa.

Among Campion’s honors are the Rome Prize, the Nadia Boulanger Award, the Paul Fromm Award at Tanglewood, a Charles Ives Award given by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a Fulbright scholarship for study in France. This June, the TEMPO Festival at U. C. Berkeley devoted an entire concert to his music, including the newly commissioned *Sons et Lumières* for video projection, player piano, and eight channel tape. He is currently at work on a commission from the Centre National de Création Musicale for the MANCA Festival 2002.

Domus Aurea (2000) *for vibraphone and piano*

The composer writes: “Shortly after Nero’s death, this opulent and despised construction [‘Domus Aurea’ or ‘Golden House’] was

buried in dirt and rubble. The structure lay undisturbed for fifteen hundred years until excavations revealed the unusual and perfectly preserved frescoes that decorated the palace walls and ceilings. These bizarre ornamental drawings featured elaborate fantasies with symmetrical anatomical impossibilities, small beasts, human heads, and delicate, indeterminate vegetables merged into one unified decorative motif. Renaissance artists including Filippino Lippi, Pinturicchio, Perugino, Signorelli, and most importantly the Chief Architect and Prefect of Antiquities at the Vatican, Raphael, studied and copied these drawings. It was Raphael who used the motif in his decorations of the Vatican Loggia. The style came to be called 'grotesche' (referring to underground caves), a word that was later to evolve into the term 'grotesque'.

"As the evolution of the practice and meaning of the grotesque has moved through the centuries, it has left a profound mark on Western thought and art practice. Today, the 'grotesque' can be seen covering the buildings, cathedrals and palaces of all of Europe, even stretching as far as St. Basil's in Moscow. Present day understanding of the word grotesque has evolved into a very broad and complex subject.

"Geoffrey Harpham in 'On the Grotesque' says: 'the Grotesque is the central moment of a process on the path to emergent comprehension. The purgatorial stage of understanding during which the object appears as a jumble or distortion of other forms.' Thomas Mann in 'Meditations of a Nonpolitical Man' remarks that the grotesque is 'properly something more than the truth, something real in the extreme, not something arbitrary, false, absurd, and contrary to reality.'

"*Domus Aurea*...is inspired by a meditation on the larger meaning of the word 'grotesque' as well as by the design process found in the original *Domus Aurea*. I agree with Nabokov in 'Speak, Memory' where he says, 'I was always ready to sacrifice purity of form to the exigencies of fantastic content, causing form to bulge and burst like a sponge-bag containing a small, furious devil'."

Domus Aurea was written for Daniel Ciampolini of the Ensemble

Intercontemporain, who premiered the work at the Centre Pompidou in Paris last November.

SCOTT LINDROTH (B. 1958)

"I want my music to live in that nexus between mechanism and human gestures." This is a fitting aesthetic aim for a composer like Scott Lindroth. Equally at home writing for electronics and traditional instruments, he acknowledges musical influences from all sides of the technological divide—from jazz to funk, and from Debussy to minimalism. This creative flexibility is perhaps one of the factors causing Anthony Tommasini of the *New York Times* to describe Lindroth as "a composer who defies classification."

Lindroth completed his studies at Eastman and Yale with Joseph Schwantner, Samuel Adler, and Jacob Druckman. A number of his successful early pieces combine live performers and electronics. In *Syntax* (1985), for example, the solo keyboardist manipulates a pre-recorded sequence of repeating patterns while at the same time playing related material on his own. Many pleasing textures arise from this interplay between man and machine. The audience, too, is drawn into this interplay as they register changing perceptions of what emanates from the computer and what is controlled by the live performer. *Relations to Rigor* (1987) involves a similar kind of interaction between a live chamber ensemble and tape (generated at CalArts) in what critic Kyle Gann has called "an attempt to introduce a feeling of freedom into originally rigorous systems."

This same sense of spontaneity characterizes Lindroth's more recent works, including his *Duo for Violins* (1990), *Terza Rima* (1995) for oboe and electronics, the *String Quartet* (1997), and the work on tonight's program, *Light* (1993). According to the composer, these works represent "provisional answers" to such sweeping questions as: "Can the expressive gesture be mechanized, and what is gained or lost by doing so?" and "What does the musical past mean to me?" In the *Duo*, Lindroth blurs the lines between baroque-era figuration and the more contemporary rhythmic influences of Leoš

Janáček or Philip Glass. The *String Quartet* offers another site for mixing sounds of the recent and distant past as the composer grapples with “the weight of history” and the challenge of writing music that is both a personal departure and an imaginative engagement with stylistic conventions.

Lindroth’s efforts have won him Guggenheim and Revson Fellowships, and a Koussevitzky Commission in addition to support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Academy in Rome, and the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. His music has been performed by many prestigious ensembles including EARPLAY, California E.A.R. Unit, Dinosaur Annex, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group, as well as the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the Netherlands Wind Ensemble, and the Ciampi Quartet.

Since 1990, Lindroth has taught theory, composition, and electronic music at Duke University where, together with Stephen Jaffe, he also directs the contemporary concert series “Encounters with the Music of Our Time.” He is currently at work on a commission for the University of Michigan Wind Ensemble and a concert piece for Evan Ziporyn combining bass clarinet and electronics.

***Light* (1994)**

for mezzo-soprano, clarinet/bass clarinet, piano/celesta, xylophone/glockenspiel, violin and cello

Light takes its name and mood from texts by the twelfth-century abbess Hildegard von Bingen. The ecstatic gestures of her music and poetry—so different from most of her contemporaries—have found special resonance with many twentieth-century listeners, Lindroth among them. He writes: “Light is a setting of an excerpt from *Visions* by Hildegard von Bingen, which describes the manifestation of Christ emerging from the glow of fire and sapphire lights. The repetition of images of light and fire suggests an almost hallucinatory quality. I attempted to capture this in music that ranges from frenzied violence to simple diatonicism.” The result is a vocal line that Tommasini has called “arching and urgent” which

is enveloped by fiery instrumental flickerings that are at once mysterious and illuminating.

The audience will notice that Lindroth has specified a triangular stage arrangement in which the performers occupy separate areas. At the composer’s discretion, however, the musicians move about on the stage, visually dividing and re-dividing the ensemble into different component groups. More specifically, Lindroth notes, “The mezzo-soprano alternately acts as another instrument (singing vocalise) or assumes a solo position when singing the text. With each new configuration of the ensemble, the music abruptly changes character, thus contributing to a growing sense of disorientation.”

This visual and sonic disorientation is in fact fundamental to Lindroth’s conception of the piece and its revelatory power. In a recent interview for *Sequenza/21*, he discusses the link between revelation and disorientation not just in reference to *Light*, but as a metaphor for the entire compositional process: “What really appeals to me is the sense of revelation coming out of a confusion. You don’t achieve revelation through a step-by-step linear process. It just happens. What was at one moment a swirl of confusing details suddenly becomes clear and self-evident. That is what composing is for me these days.” In *Light*, the sudden clarity to which Lindroth refers, is made manifest in the work’s final moments, which reinterpret the opening of the piece in “an extended resolution of the energy that has accumulated, ending with the solo violin playing an unadorned version of a theme that has run through the entire work.”

Light was commissioned by Corn Palace Productions for Present Music with funds from the Jerome Foundation.

Text of *Light*:

Then I saw a most splendid light, the whole of which burnt in a most beautiful shining fire. And in that light was the figure of a man of a sapphire color. And that most splendid light pours over the whole of that shining fire, and the shining fire pours over all that splendid light. But that splendid light

pours forth all that shining fire and the splendid shining light of the fire and the whole of the figure of the man, making one light existing in one strength and one power. I heard that living light saying to me, “This is the meaning of the mysteries of God, that it may be understood what the fullness may be, who by that most wonderful strength planted all the rivers of the world.” For if the Lord is wanting in his own strength, what then would his work be? Certainly vain, for in a perfect work is seen who was its maker. I see this most splendid light which is without beginning and to whom nothing can be wanting. And in that figure of a man of a sapphire color is declared the Son before all time, incarnate in the world, in time.

—Hildegard von Bingen

JENNIFER HIGDON (B. 1962)

Respected composer, virtuoso performer, and dynamic conductor—it would be an understatement to call Jennifer Higdon a well rounded musician. Her extensive training has earned her degrees from the University of Pennsylvania, Bowling Green, and the Curtis Institute under a constellation of prestigious teachers including George Crumb, David Loeb, James Primrosch, Jay Reise, Ned Rorem, Marilyn Shrude, and Richard Wernick (composition), Judith Bentley and Jan Vinci (flute), and Robert Spano (conducting).

Higdon has put this experience to prolific use in works for all manner of ensembles, involving both instruments and voices. Not surprisingly given her performance expertise, many of her compositions feature the flute and use both conventional and unusual or “extended” performance techniques. Her flute quartet *Steeley Pause* (1988) sports passages that flutist Claudia Anderson has described as “dazzling,” “driving,” “brilliant and powerful.” Similarly, in *running the edge* (1996), for two flutes and percussive piano, Higdon pushes all three instruments to their limits in a stunning dialogue meant to reflect “high energy, the power of women, love of the flute, the possibilities of going beyond the expected.” The work on

tonight’s program, *rapid ♦fire* (1992), shares many of these sonic traits.

The vibrant energy of Higdon’s chamber pieces also spills over into her compositions for larger forces. After a recent Bay Area performance, reviewer Thomas Goss praised the “triumphant shout” and “orchestral jamming” of her *Fanfare Ritmico* (1999), observing that “the piece seemed to celebrate the excellence of the players, doling out virtuosic, engaging riffs and solos.” This exuberance also colors her orchestral work *Shine*, commissioned in 1995 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Oregon Symphony and the late composer Morton Gould. Awarded Best New Piece in *USA Today’s* classical category, *Shine* offers proof that, in one reviewer’s words, even a short piece from Higdon oeuvre can contain “all of the zest and energy of life.”

Higdon has received Guggenheim and Pew Fellowships as well as two prizes from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, awards from the International League of Women Composers, Composers Inc., the University of Delaware New Music Competition, NACUSA, and ASCAP, and numerous other honors. Among the varied groups who have commissioned her work are the Philadelphia and Minnesota Orchestras, the Atlanta Symphony, the Lark String Quartet, the Cypress String Quartet, the Verdehr Trio, the Network for New Music, and the National Flute Association.

Successful for many years as a free lance composer, conductor, and performer, Higdon now teaches at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. She has also served as director of the University of Pennsylvania orchestra and wind ensemble, Visiting Assistant Professor of composition at Bard College, and Composer-in-Residence with the Music from Angel Fire Festival, the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, and the Yerba Buena Center (Continental Harmony Project). Among her newest works are a choral *Sanctus*, a quartet for bassoon, violin, cello, and piano entitled *Dark Wood*, the piano solo *Secret & Glass Gardens*, and *Wind Shear* for orchestral winds and horns.

rapid ♦fire (1992)

for solo flute

Jennifer Higdon's acclaimed *rapid ♦fire* unleashes a bravura monologue, or, as Cecilia Porter of the *Washington Post* put it, "a pungent soliloquy fueled by a nonstop barrage of flute effects that turned a musical instrument into a dynamo." Indeed Higdon's demands on the performer can be extreme, as her score makes clear: "At times the player is asked to actually read notation on several different levels: fingering at a certain speed, while tonguing at a different speed, while also altering the air pressure (speed)." On top of this, the flutist must negotiate with a host of special performance techniques—from trills and flutter tonguing to overblowing, glissandi, and unusual fingerings, making it a true showpiece for any performer.

But *rapid ♦fire* is not merely about virtuoso display. Higdon writes: "This work is about the violence of the cities, more specifically, the innocent young who are cut down in their homes and on the street. It is an expression of rage, of pain, and of disbelief; it is the fear and the terror; it is an inner city cry." Cries of pain and shudders of disbelief take shape in the flutist's inevitably effortful gestures—as the composer reminds us, this work "is supposed to be brutal and raucous." From the agitation of its opening to the shock and silence of its conclusion, *rapid ♦fire* offers a spectacle that is both virtuoso tour-de-force and social critique.

rapid ♦fire is dedicated to the memory of flutist Peter Brown, who commissioned the work.

DAVID DZUBAY (B. 1964)

The music of David Dzubay has won praise from critics around the country for its "infectious joy" and "vivid imagination." He was born in Minneapolis and raised in Oregon before studying composition and trumpet at Indiana University under such respected teachers as Donald Erb, Frederick Fox,

Eugene O'Brien, Lukas Foss, and Oliver Knussen. Formerly on the faculty at University of North Texas, Dzubay is currently a professor of composition at Indiana University, where he also directs the New Music Ensemble.

Dzubay's oeuvre is remarkable for its breadth of historical and cultural resonances, ranging from Bach to Berg to bebop. For example, a number of his pieces make intriguing use of compositional procedures drawn from medieval and Renaissance music-parody techniques in the *Threnody After Josquin's Mille regretz* (1987) and a cantus firmus drawn from the twelfth-century composer Perotin in *Last Dance* (1999). In his earlier work *Quatrain* (1994) commissioned for a concert honoring Indiana University and violinist Josef Gingold, Dzubay revives the time-honored technique of creating themes by "spelling" words and phrases using pitch names or solfege syllables. His *Symphony no. 1* (1996-97)—composed for James DePreist and the Oregon Symphony, the Louisville Orchestra, and the Oakland East Bay Symphony—places his interest in early music within a much broader sonic context. Here, in tribute to three musical mentors from his high school years, Dzubay's allusions to the dance music of Renaissance composer Johann Hermann Schein rub shoulders with harmonic progressions from Charlie Parker's *Donna Lee* and the rhythmic drumming characteristic of funk.

The first movement of the symphony also reveals another of Dzubay's artistic preferences in its title: "Rage, Rage," drawn from Dylan Thomas's famous poem "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night." Together with the poetry of E. E. Cummings, Thomas's texts have provided inspiration for several of the composer's pieces, including the song cycle we will hear tonight, *dancesing on a green bay*. *Chansons Innocentes* (1988), for chamber ensemble, offers a rather light-hearted engagement with Cummings's verse. By contrast, in *sun moon stars rain* (1995), Cummings's poems serve as a jumping off point for structures that are dramatic and mathematically proportioned.

Dzubay has received honors from the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Music Center, BMI, Indiana University, ASCAP,

Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Tanglewood, the Cincinnati Symphony, and the Barlow International Competition for Orchestra Music. The impressive list of groups who have commissioned his music includes the Fromm Music Foundation, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players, Oregon Symphony, National Repertory Orchestra, New York Youth Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Albany Symphony, Voices of Change, Chamber Music America, and the Saint Louis Brass Quintet. In 2000, Dzubay was selected for the Quad City Symphony Orchestra Association Commissioning Project, and his *Myaku* (1999) won the Walter Beeler Memorial Prize in 2001.

***dancesing in a green bay* (1999)**

*for soprano, flute, clarinet, violin,
cello, piano and percussion*

Dzubay's song cycle *dancesing in a green bay* brings together his love for the poetry of Dylan Thomas and E. E. Cummings. While its title paraphrases a line from Thomas's famous "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night," the song texts themselves are drawn from Cummings. As Dzubay points out, the poems share references to the words from the title ("dance," "sing," "green"), and all but one of them have "outside, natural (green) settings." According to the composer, the seven settings "complement and contrast each other, as shown by suggestions to the performers for each movement's character: orgiastic, pastoral, hiccupy, brave, playful, twitter-joy, and tenderly."

Each of the seven songs is self-sufficient, but they are arranged symmetrically around the central fourth song "All in green went my love riding." By far the longest of the cycle (and the most conventional in text construction), this poem preserves and balances two of the typical spheres of the traditional ballad: love and the hunt. Dzubay characterizes these two worlds distinctly: the first emerges through self-consciously archaic utterances, with impersonal descriptions of the lover's ride built over an ostinato in the manner of a passacaglia or chaconne. The second takes shape in a variety of energetic musical gestures reminiscent of hunting horns or reflective of the joy of the chase until these two worlds collide in the

song's final, climactic statement.

Surrounding this centerpiece are movements in contrasting moods. The third and fifth songs are essentially lighthearted—"grEEn's d" is marked by disjunct vocal and instrumental lines that aptly reflect the performance direction "hiccupy," and "six" evokes a disembodied dance (complete with ghostly, whispered counting from the ensemble). The second and sixth songs are more meditative: "the/sky/ was" offers an atmospheric reverie on colorful clouds, under which the slightly menacing mechanical connotations of a locomotive are quickly redeemed as a setting for violets. In "(sitting in a tree-)," isolated, atomistic gestures depict the poet's deep appreciation of minutiae signaled by such lines as "o small you," "o little i," and "dance little joy." The outer movements of the cycle frame the whole in a slightly more dramatic fashion. The first song, "between green mountains," joins an exuberant reveling in the natural world with the "indivisible grace of dancing." The final movement, "in the rain," celebrates the beloved's "dancesong soul" in a moving declaration of true love confined within the utter stillness of poetic contemplation.

The present cycle is part of a larger project that Dzubay hopes will include three additional song collections, each deriving its title from Thomas's "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night": "Singing the Sun," "Blazing Eyes/Blinding Sight," and "Fierce Tears," the last of which will actually include Thomas's poem among its texts.

dancesing in a green bay received its first performance in 1999 from Voices of Change (Christine Schadeberg, soprano) with the composer conducting. The work was awarded the Wayne Peterson Composition Prize from San Francisco State University in 2000, and tonight the Contemporary Music Players give its West Coast premiere.

The performance of David Dzubay's dancesing in a green bay is made possible in part by a grant from Wayne Peterson in joint sponsorship with San Francisco State University.

Featured Performers

Hailed for her “sumptuous sound, wrenching poignancy and faultless musicianship” (*New York Times*), soprano **Karol Bennett** has been heard worldwide in lieder, oratorio, opera, and new music. Her honors include the Pro Musicis International Award, a fellowship from the Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College, an Artistic Ambassadorship, a Recitalist Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a Copland Recording Grant for work with the Metamorphosen Ensemble.

Bennett has been praised as an extremely gifted and versatile exponent of contemporary music. Her extensive repertoire includes world premieres by Anthony Brandt, Peter Child, Arthur Gottschalk, Jonathan Harvey, Hans Werner Henze, Earl Kim, Robert Kyr, Tod Machover, John McDonald, Christopher Theofanidis, Arlene Zallman, and many others. She also sings works by Milton Babbitt, Eve Beglarian, Mario Davidovsky, Robert Didomenica, John Harbison, Kaija Saariaho, Gunther Schuller, Joseph Schwantner, and other established and emerging composers. Her recorded voice is a centerpiece of Tod Machover’s *Brain Opera*, premiered at New York’s Lincoln Center, subsequently presented around the world, and now on permanent exhibition in Vienna. Ensembles with whom she has appeared include, in addition to the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, New York New Music Ensemble, Da Camera of Houston, the Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra X, Syzygy-New Music, the Houston Composers’ Alliance, Dinosaur Annex, Boston Musica Viva, Griffin Music Ensemble, Collage New Music, and Extension Works. Bennett has also been active in recent operatic productions (she played Mélisande in Russia’s first professional production of *Pélleas et Mélisande*), as an oratorio soloist, and as a recitalist around the world.

In 1990-91, Bennett was Artist-in-Residence at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since then, she has been in residence at Amherst College, the University of California (Berkeley and Davis), San Francisco State, and the University of Oregon. In addition, she has given master classes in Russia, Mexico, Korea,

Taiwan, Mongolia, and at many universities in the United States. Most recently, she served on the faculty of Boston University, until moving to Houston with her husband and children in the fall of 1998.

Tod Brody teaches flute and chamber music at the University of California, Davis, where he also performs with the faculty Wind Quintet and the Empyrean Ensemble. A former soloist and member of the Sacramento Symphony, Brody appears frequently with EARPLAY and in such ensembles as the San Francisco Opera and Ballet orchestras. He first performed with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1997.

Julie Steinberg, pianist, holds a doctorate in music from Stanford University with a specialty in Twentieth Century Music. She has performed contemporary music extensively, both as a soloist and a chamber musician. She won high praise for her outstanding performances of music by Olivier Messiaen and John Cage on the Bay Area Pianists series. As assisting artist, she has performed in master classes with Jean-Pierre Rampal and Mstislav Rostropovich, and has been a soloist with the Oakland Symphony Sound Spectrum, the San Francisco Symphony’s Mostly Mozart Festival and the Berkeley Symphony. Since 1984, she has commissioned, premiered, and recorded numerous contemporary works with her own ensemble, the acclaimed Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio. Steinberg first appeared with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1981 and has been a member of the core ensemble since 1989. She is currently on the faculty of Mills College in Oakland.

William Winant has collaborated with a diverse range of musicians, including John Cage, Iannis Xenakis, Frederic Rzewski, Anthony Braxton, Alvin Curran, Terry Riley, Cecil Taylor, Steve Reich and Musicians, Yo-Yo Ma, and the Kronos Quartet. Most recently, he has recorded and toured with Mr. Bungle (Disco Volante on Warner Bros. Records), as well as with John Zorn, Oingo Boingo, and Thurston Moore (of Sonic Youth). He has made over one hundred recordings, covering a wide variety of genres, including his recording of Lou Harrison’s *La*

Koro Sutro (New Albion), which was the *New York Times* Critics Choice for best contemporary recording of 1988—the same year that he officially joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Winant has performed as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the direction of Pierre Boulez, the San Francisco Symphony, the Berkeley Symphony, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, as well as many major festivals and recitals throughout the world. He teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and is Artist-in-Residence at Mills College with the internationally recognized Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio, which has commissioned over twenty-five new works for violin, piano and percussion.

Guest Conductor

Mary Chun is the Principal Conductor for the San Francisco-based new music ensemble EARPLAY and divides her career between the opera and contemporary music worlds. Her international conducting credits include the Canadian and European premieres of John Adams' earthquake opera, *I was looking at the Ceiling and then I saw the Sky* with the Finnish new music ensemble AVANTI! in addition to concerts and tours throughout Europe and eastern Europe. She has also worked with composer Tan Dun supervising the musical preparation for the Peter Sellars production of *Peony Pavilion*, and most recently conducted the world premiere of Carla Lucero's *Wuornos*, an opera based on the life of Florida death row inmate Aileen Wuornos. Additionally, Ms. Chun is Music Director/Conductor for the Ballet San Joaquin in Stockton, California and has appeared as guest conductor with the Hawaii Opera Theater, Pacific Repertory Opera, West Bay Opera and was Music Director/Conductor for the Texas Shakespeare Festival where she directed the world premiere of Mort Garson's *Revoco*. Her recording credits include music direction for two CDs of works by composer Peter Allen with members of the San Francisco Symphony and San Francisco Opera, and a CD in progress of new works blending western and middle eastern instruments by composer/musicologist Jim Berenholtz. She has been on the conducting staffs of notable opera companies in the United States and France including the Opera de Lyon where she was also Director of Musical Studies for Conductor Kent Nagano.

As a performer, Ms. Chun also plays the rare French keyboard instrument, the ondes martenot musicales. She has played the ondes with orchestras in the United States, including the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Houston Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony and the Berkeley Symphony.

The Ensemble

The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, now in its thirty-first year, is a leader among ensembles in the United States dedicated to contemporary chamber music. A six-time winner of the prestigious national ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music, SFCMP has performed over 940 new works, including 39 U.S. and 99 world premieres, and has brought sixty-one new pieces into the repertoire through its active commissioning efforts. The instrumentalists who make up the Players are recognized virtuosi in new music performance. Each season the Players performs a six-concert series at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. SFCMP has also toured widely throughout California, with performances on such concert series as San Francisco Performances, Cal Performances, the Stern Grove Festival, the Other Minds Festival, Los Angeles' Monday Evening Concerts, the Ojai Festival, and the Festival of New American Music in Sacramento. SFCMP made its European debut at the Cheltenham Festival of Music in 1986 and its East Coast debut at the Library of Congress in 2001. The ensemble has recorded seven albums of its own and contributed recordings to eight others. Its innovative education programs for students at San Francisco's School of the Arts and Lowell High School include performance/presentations and master classes.

A Very Special Thanks

*The Board, staff and musicians of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players extend their heartfelt thanks to long-time subscribers and donors **Victor and Esta Wolfram**, who have recently arranged a bequest to benefit the ensemble's future.*

Bequests can underwrite future concert performances, recordings, and educational programs, and help to commission new works.

Where to Find It

Joshua Levine's prize-winning *Tel* for electronic tape was recorded as part of the collection *Cultures Electroniques 2* (Harmonia Mundi, France).

Scott Lindroth's music is well represented on the *CD Human Gestures* (CRI), which features D'Anna Fortunato, Scott Wheeler, and the Dinosaur Annex in *Light*, together with the *String Quartet*, *Duo for Violins*, and *Terza Rima* expertly performed by the Ciompi Quartet, Veronica Macchia-Kadlubkiewicz, Curtis Macomber, and Libby van Cleve. CRI has also issued Lindroth's *Relations to Rigor*, conducted by the composer, on the first volume of "Bang on a Can Live." His rendering of *Syntax* for Synclavier may be found on Centaur's CDCM Computer Music Series.

A recording entitled *rapid ♦fire (I Virtuosi)* devoted to the compositions of **Jennifer Higdon** is available for order from Lawdon Press. The disc includes Higdon's own performance of the title work, *Steeley Pause* (with Pat Spencer, Jayne Rosenfield, and Stephanie Starin), her works for flute and piano (*Autumn Reflection*, *The Jeffrey Mode*, and *Lullaby*, with Hugh Sung at the keyboard), her *Viola Sonata* and the *String Quartet Voices*. Higdon is also featured on the disc *Lesbian American Composers* (CRI), where Claudia Anderson, Jill Felber and John Piirainen give a dazzling performance of *running the edge*. Her music is well represented on recordings devoted to flute music, including *Steeley Pause* on the disc *American Flute* (Centaur) and Patti Monson's rendering of *rapid ♦fire* on the CRI recording *Conspirare*. Upcoming releases include the Network for New Music performance of *wissahickon poeTrees* (Albany Records) and a recordings of *Deep in the Night* by the New York Concert Singers (New World Records).

David Dzubay's *dancesing in a green bay* will be recorded in 2002 by Voices of Change for release on a disc devoted to the composer's music (label yet to be determined) and supported by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music. Among his currently available recordings are the Alexander String Quartet's fine performance of *Threnody After Josquin's Mille regretz* on a program including music by Wayne Peterson, Marjorie Hess, and Robert Greenberg (Nova). I also recommend his *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, which receives an expert rendering on Centaur from Carter

Where to Find It

Enyeart, who worked closely with the composer in the work's early stages, with Adam Wodnicki at the piano. Dzubay's exciting orchestral score *Snake Alley* was recorded by the Louisville Orchestra under Leighton Smith (First Edition Recordings). The composer's acclaimed work for wind ensemble, *Myaku*, appears on a disc from Klavier Records. The Indiana University New Music Ensemble has issued recordings of two of Dzubay's works: *Labyrinth for 15 Instruments* and the *Piano Trio*, the latter on a disc containing works by several of his colleagues (Claude Baker, Jeffrey Hass, Eugene O'Brien, and Don Freund).

Karol Bennett's recording of Earl Kim's *Now and Then* and *Three Poems in French* (New World Records) has been featured in the *New York Times* and hailed by Gramophone for its "authoritative performances." Her recording of Tod Machover's *Flora* (Bridge) was selected as the Boston Globe's "New Music Recording of the Year: 1992." Her release of Jonathan Harvey's *From Silence* (Bridge) was praised by Gramophone as "strikingly agile and secure, powerfully convincing." Other releases include John Harbison's *Simple Daylight* (Archetypes Records) and a collection of twentieth-century sacred music with the Boston Cecilia (Newport Classics).

William Winant has made more than one hundred recordings, including music by Earle Brown, John Zorn, Pauline Oliveros, Luc Ferrari, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Danny Elfman (Batman Returns), Souxie and the Banshees, and the Thurston Moore Trio. Winant is a featured soloist in the Contemporary Music Players' recording of Lou Harrison's *The Perilous Chapel* (New Albion). He can also be heard with **Julie Steinberg** and violinist David Abel on *Set of Five* (New Albion), devoted to the music of Harrison, Hovhaness, Cowell, Cage, and Satoh. Julie Steinberg's solo work can be heard on her recording of John Cage's *Sonatas and Interludes* (Music and Art).

—Beth Levy

For more information about the **San Francisco Contemporary Music Players'** available recordings, please visit the website, www.sfcmp.org.

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