

*The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players is pleased to  
announce that it has won a national  
ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous  
Programming for 2004-2005.*



### **Performers**

Tod Brody, flute  
William Wohlmacher, clarinet (Sørensen,  
Hosokawa, Maldonado)  
Peter Josheff, clarinet (Lim, Maldonado)  
Hall Goff, trombone  
Roy Malan, violin I (Lim, Sørensen)  
Susan Freier, violin II (Lim, Sørensen)  
Laura Albers, violin (Hosokawa)  
Benjamin Simon, viola  
Stephen Harrison, cello (Lim, Sørensen)  
Leighton Fong, cello (Hosokawa,  
Maldonado)  
Richard Worn, contrabass  
Julie Steinberg, piano  
Daniel Kennedy, percussion

*Lucille Chung's performance is made possible by a generous grant from the Ross  
McKee Foundation.*

*This performance of Bent Sorensen's The Lady and the Lark is made possible  
in part by a grant from the American-Scandinavian Foundation.*

*This concert is made possible in part by grants from Hitachi America Ltd. and  
the Hitachi Foundation.*

## **SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS**

David Milnes, Music Director

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Monday, 31 January 2005 8 pm  
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts - Forum

## **MIGRATIONS**

### **LIZA LIM**

*The Heart's Ear* (1997)

### **GYÖRGY LIGETI**

Piano Etudes, (1988-2001)

From Book 2	From Book 3
no. 10, Der Zauberlehrling	no. 15, White on White
no. 11, En Suspens	no. 16, Pour Irina
no. 13, L'escalier du diable	no. 17, A bout de souffle
	no. 18, Canon

Lucille Chung, piano

~ INTERMISSION ~

### **TOSHIO HOSOKAWA**

*Slow Dance* (1996, 2002)

### **BENT SØRENSEN**

*The Lady and the Lark* (1997)

in five movements  
United States premiere

Benjamin Simon, viola

### **JAVIER TORRES MALDONADO**

*Claroscuros* (2001)

United States premiere

I. Voz Oscura (Dark Voice)  
II. Antiphonic-Aurae (Antiphonies-Auras)

LIZA LIM (B. 1966)

In a 2001 lecture at the Sydney Opera House, Liza Lim commented that “as an Australian composer with a South-east Asian Chinese background, you could perhaps say that I straddle the East-West boundary of Australian musical identity politics in quite a different way.... I am aware that the ‘hyphenated identity,’ Asian-Australian, positions me quite differently in relation to acts of cultural borrowing. The relationships between notions of where I am and where I look towards are, I think, less stable, more contingent, more ambivalent.” Perhaps paradoxically, in Lim’s case this “ambivalence” yields compositions of striking power and certainty, grounded in the physicality of musical performance and the conviction that music is uniquely able to cross cultural boundaries.

Lim’s education was Australian; she earned degrees from the Universities of Melbourne and Queensland, Lim has studied with Richard Hames, Riccardo Formosa, and Ton de Leeuw. Yet her career is an international one and among her recent works is the large-scale orchestral piece *Ecstatic Architecture*, commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic for their inaugural season in the Walt Disney Concert Hall, designed by Frank Gehry. Taking inspiration from Gehry’s innovative “rhythmic curves,” Lim’s own work involves “curling, interweaving shapes” and an interplay between instruments and their surroundings that can be surprisingly literal in its conception. She envisioned “a moment of recognition” between the wood of each cello and the “wooden paneling of the ceiling,” a kinship between the metal of flutes and trumpets and the building’s exterior. A “roar of ear-splitting multiphonics” exalts the auditorium’s capacity to let sound “fill every crevice of the hall and enter the bodies of the listeners.”

Although uniquely tied to the setting of its 2004 premiere, many features of *Ecstatic Architecture* reflect long-standing preoccupations for Lim, especially in its imaginative treatment of the instrumental ensemble. Her 1993 piece *Koto*, for example, is a landmark work for

its gestural or “calligraphic” quality and its treatment of the eight performers as “a single instrument...as if they were the incredibly complex, subtle resonances of a gigantic gong.” *Koto* was created through an intense collaboration with Australia’s contemporary music ensemble ELISION that began in 1986 and continues to have an impact on her most important works, including both her operas, *Oresteia* and *Moon Spirit Feasting*. A collaborative approach also characterizes Lim’s impressive multimedia projects, which reached a culmination during the mid-1990s in a series of site-specific installations created with visual artist Domenico de Clario and extensive work with video artist Judith Wright that led to the installation *Sonorous Bodies* (1999), which was created for the Queensland Art Gallery’s Asia Pacific Triennial and has since traveled around the world.

Lim acknowledges influences that reach far beyond her Chinese-Australian upbringing. One of her first major works, *The Garden of Earthly Desire* (1988-89) took its inspiration from the paintings of Hieronymous Bosch; her duo for cello and clarinet *Inguz* (Fertility) draws on the modal theory and musical structures of India; other works have incorporated the writings of the Greek poetess Sappho, the novelist Italo Calvino, and (like the work on tonight’s program) the mystic poet Rumi. Nonetheless, in recent years she has been increasingly attracted to Chinese themes out of an awareness of her dual perspective as a cultural “insider” living “outside” the Chinese mainland. In her opera *YuP Ling Jié* (Moon Spirit Feasting), she evokes the world of street opera that combines ancient Chinese theater with “Malaysian Chinese vaudeville, Bangkok strip shows, Hong Kong martial arts movies, and street-side trance rituals.” More recently, she contributed music to accompany a French exhibit of Chinese archaeological treasures; the resulting *Machine for Contacting the Dead* (2001), for twenty-seven solo instruments, asked members of the Ensemble InterContemporain to form a constellation of “meta-instruments,” with one group characterized by the resonances of a Chinese gong, another employing the delicate performance effects typical for the *ch’in* or Chinese zither, and so forth. In every case, her reliance on ancient instruments or aesthetics is renewed by her attention to present-day resources, for, as she puts it, “Working against fixity and stagnation of identity in the in-between spaces of creative action, one finds an infinite momentum for creative renewal.”

Lim has received commissions from the Arditti String Quartet, Ensemble InterContemporain, Ensemble Modern, ELISION, Synergy Percussion, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the BBC and ABC Orchestras, among others. Radio Bremen and Westdeutscher Rundfunk have devoted concerts entirely to her music. In addition to winning an Australia Council Fellowship and an APRA-Australian Music Centre Classical Music Award for Best Composition, she has served as guest lecturer at the Darmstadt Summer Music Courses and Cornell University and has participated in the 2000 U. C. San Diego SEARCH symposium. Her ritual street opera *Moon Spirit Feasting*, which was premiered at the 2000 Adelaide Festival, has received four seasons of repeat performances at the Melbourne Festival, Berlin's Hebbel Theater, Zurich Theater Spektakel, and the Saitama Arts Center in Japan. She has recently won a Paul Lowin Award for *Ecstatic Architecture*, and in 2005, the Festival d'automne (Paris) will feature three of her newest works: *In the Shadow's Light*, written for the Kairos Quartet; *The Quickening*, for soprano Deborah Kayser and ch'in player Yang Chunwei; and *Mother Tongue*, a major work for soprano and ensemble commissioned jointly by the Ensemble InterContemporain, Elision, and Fest d'Automne. She is currently working on a piece co-commissioned by the Sydney Symphony, where she will be Composer-in-Residence from 2005-07 and on a commission for the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, supported by a grant from the Fromm Foundation.

### ***The Heart's Ear (1997)***

*for flute, clarinet, two violins, viola, and cello*

Commissioned by the Australia Ensemble, *The Heart's Ear* builds upon Arabic-Turkish-Islamic music. According to the composer, "Both the title of the work and the musical influences reflect a long-standing personal interest that I have in Sufi poetry and in particular, that of the 13th-century mystic poet, Jelaluddin Rumi. It begins with a very brief fragment of a Sufi melody as a way of evoking that gift-like quality of attention. To quote from another of Rumi's poems, the melody is 'like birdsong beginning inside an egg'—a beautiful image of something nascent, about to open out into a larger world. I've

thought of the piece as music that grows organically from this initial melody (the interior quality of a melody singing to itself) which 'pecks' its way out into a succession of musical spaces."

From the opening melodic evocation to the quiet coda with its violin incantation, the sonic spaces that Lim creates are shaped into a loosely sectional structure by gradual changes in the density of musical events. Like lines of poetry, each instrumental line has its own syntax but also interacts with those around it in a play of shifting allusions and alliances. Sometimes these relationships reflect a similarity in instrument family (strings or winds) or register (low or high range); sometimes the dialogues they suggest are harder to characterize. In every case, the performers are called upon to inflect their utterances with a compendium of performance nuances, suggesting a highly inflected speech whose mystic connotations address more than just the ear. As Lim has observed, Rumi's poems "often contain musical references, particularly the image of the relationship between a musician and their musical instrument as a metaphor for how human beings are vehicles through which spirit moves. He often describes the intimacy that a musician has with an instrument as an erotic relationship—a lover's relationship of many subtle touches, breaths and a dancing of the body."

## GYÖRGY LIGETI (B. 1923)

Of the composers on our concert program, Ligeti's career was most profoundly transformed by personal and stylistic migrations, which in his case were shaped by mid-twentieth-century upheavals in the politics of his native Hungary and of Europe at large. Unlike his father and brother, Ligeti survived the concentration camps of World War II. He and went to Budapest in 1945, where he studied with Ferenc Farkas and Sandor Veress among others, inheriting from them a love both for Bartók and for folk music. Though he wrote a great deal during these years, he disavowed many of these works as "prehistoric" and artificially isolated from what he later considered the modernist mainstream of Western Europe. Like Veress, he eventually chose to emigrate to the West rather than complying with the artistic demands of a socialist government. In the fall of 1956, as Hungarian intellectuals pushed for a more flexible communism whose priorities would be set in Budapest rather than Moscow, Ligeti was secretly studying music by such "bourgeois" composers as Arnold Schoenberg and Karlheinz Stockhausen. When Soviet tanks put an end to the attempted "revolution," the aftermath was terrifying for intellectuals with any liberal leanings, and Ligeti planned a dramatic escape—crossing into Austria on foot in the dead of winter—that would forever color perceptions of his character and career.

Within a few months of his arrival in the West, Ligeti was already working with electronics at the forefront of new music research in Cologne—for a while he even lived in Stockhausen's apartment. Two tape pieces, *Glissandi* (1957) and *Artikulation* (1958), illustrate his experiments with layering and distortion—experiments that he soon carried into the realm of non-electronic orchestral music in the works that made him internationally famous: *Apparitions* (1958-59) and *Atmospheres* (1961). In these pieces, melody and rhythm are blurred beyond recognition through the creation of "sound complexes" or "clusters" made up of many independent but overlapping musical lines. The intensity of these clusters waxes and wanes, but their precise pitches and rhythms remain obscure and often cannot be captured in normal music notation. As Ligeti remarked in a 1978 inter-

view, "My idea was that instead of tension-resolution, dissonance-consonance, and other such pairs of opposition in traditional tonal music, I would contrast 'mistiness' with passages of 'clearing up.' 'Mistiness' usually means a contrapuntal texture, a micropolyphonic cobweb technique." Ligeti transferred his "micropolyphony" to a vocal medium with impressive effect in his famous *Lux Aeterna* (1966) for sixteen soloists and chorus—a work made famous by its appearance in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

After making a name for himself in the avant-garde during the sixties, however, Ligeti gradually changed course, finding (or recovering) an appreciation for more conventional sounds and textures. As musicologist Paul Griffiths puts it, "all kinds of memories began to float on the surface: consonant chords, melodies that might suggest folk song (especially Hungarian folk song), pulsed rhythms." Perhaps, he was building on his works like his Second String Quartet (1968) which makes many allusions to music of the past. Perhaps he was exploring the similarities between the shapes of his micropolyphonic works and the compositional processes created by American 'minimalist' composers such as Terry Riley or Steve Reich, whose music he encountered while serving as a Visiting Professor at Stanford University in 1972. In any case, his music became much more eclectic in style and technique. The opera *Le Grand Macabre* (1974-77), recently performed by the San Francisco Opera, subsumes allusions to Monteverdi, Rossini, and Verdi together with traffic noises, Schumann, Offenbach, and so many other sources that Ligeti himself has referred to the opera as a kind of musical "flea market."

Since the mid-1970s, Ligeti has acknowledged a vast variety of influences, from the classic repertoire (Bach, Beethoven, Debussy, and especially Conlon Nancarrow's experiments with player piano music), to world music (African drumming, Balinese percussion music), to jazz (Thelonius Monk, Bill Evans), to fractal mathematics. With his two harpsichord works of 1978, *Passacaglia Ungherese* and *Hungarian Rock*, he even reconnected with elements of his pre-1956 existence: traditional forms and the asymmetrical rhythms of Hungarian folk music (as understood by a composer now familiar with jazz, Latin American music, and rock). These reincorporations of familiar sounds suggest not a retreat from the avant garde but a rebirth of

interest in conventionally communicative music. To quote Griffiths again, “Whereas once in Eastern Europe these [basic musical materials] were imposed...as elements of a state policy of ‘music for the people,’ now they come sounding from the ethnic music of the world. And the lesson Mr. Ligeti draws from this international chorus is salutary: not that we must return to some presumed tradition, but rather that the basic data of music can be taken up again and reinterpreted, in works that belong to no tradition except that of humanity in general.”

Since 1964, when *Apparitions* won him first prize at the ISCM Composition Competition in Rome and he was made a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, each decade has brought Ligeti new honors and new champions among the most prestigious of performing ensembles. He has been made a member of many distinguished societies—Berlin’s Akademie der Künste (1968), the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the International Society for New Music (1984), and the Ordre National des Arts et Lettres (1988). The titles of his many awards testify to his truly international acclaim: Koussevitzky Foundation Prize, Beethoven Prize (Bonn), first place at the International UNESCO Competition, the Bach Prize (Hamburg), the Ravel and Honegger Prizes (Paris), the Béla Bartók-Ditta Pasztory Prize, the Grawemeyer Award from the University of Louisville, the Austrian State Prize, Japan’s Praemium Imperiale, and the Ernst von Siemens Prize of Munich. After many productive years in Hamburg, Germany, Ligeti currently lives in Vienna.

## Piano Etudes (1988-2001)

### Book 3 and excerpts from Book 2

The ‘etude’ or ‘exercise’ has been a viable vehicle for concert pianists ever since the famous works of Chopin and Liszt. Yet few twentieth-century composers seem to have felt at home with the genre and its challenges, which often involve infusing repeated patterns with melodic interest and making a virtuosic virtue of regularity. Ligeti did not approach the etude until relatively late in his career, but since 1985 he has composed a total of eighteen magnificent ‘exercises,’

grouped into three Books of six, eight, and four pieces, respectively. Together they represent his very latest compositions, written two and in some cases even three decades after many of his best known works.

Few pianists have attempted, let alone mastered, the rhythmic intricacies of these magisterial etudes, and we are lucky to have one of their foremost exponents, Lucille Chung, performing for us tonight. Ligeti himself has observed that the intricate rhythms and flamboyant gestures of his keyboard collections respond to the player piano pieces of composer Conlon Nancarrow, the polyrhythms of Africa drumming (perhaps filtered through American minimalism), the etchings of Escher, and even the complexities of fractal mathematics. “Der Zauberlehrling” (The Sorcerer’s Apprentice), “En Suspens” (In Suspense), and “L’escalier du diable,” all drawn from Book 2, treat their audiences to three different kinds of exuberant and evocative display: the magical textures of “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice,” the gently rhapsodic “In Suspense” (dedicated to György Kurtág and meant to be played “with the elegance of swing”), and the series of giddy ascents that trace the vertiginous “Devil’s Staircase.”

The four etudes of Book 3 (1995-2001) were all commissioned by important musical institutions: the Aja Royal Conservatory, the Donaueschingen Festival, the BBC, and Radio France. Perhaps for this reason, or perhaps because they fall later in Ligeti’s evolving career, they are more introverted, steadier, and less descriptive (but no less difficult) than their earlier counterparts. Etudes 15 and 16, “White on White” and “Pour Irina” (For Irina), offer initial slow sections followed by “fingery” fast sections, recalling the age-old ‘Prelude and Toccata’ with which a keyboardist might greet a new instrument. In a way, “A bout de souffle” (Out of breath) and “Canon” reverse this process, but their closing chords barely attempt to contain the momentum built up by each etude’s ecstatic, *perpetuum mobile*.

## TOSHIO HOSOKAWA (B. 1955)

“My music is calligraphy,” writes Toshio Hosokawa, “painted onto the blank slate of time and space. Every single note has a shape, like...brush strokes...painted on the canvas of silence.” Hosokawa’s music, both gestural and communicative, embodies a unique fusion of influences that has made him one of the best-known Japanese composers after Toru Takemitsu.

A native of Hiroshima, Hosokawa traverses a truly global world of music; he now divides his time between Tokyo and Mainz. He studied piano and composition in Japan before moving to Germany in 1976, where he participated in the Darmstadt Summer Music Courses in 1980. Along with this grounding in contemporary music, he was fortunate to find teachers who encouraged him to explore traditional elements of Japanese music, particularly the diverse tone colors and melodic styles of the court music *gagaku*. In West Berlin, he worked primarily with the Korean-born political exile Isang Yun at the Hochschule der Künste in West Berlin; his teachers in Freiburg included Klaus Huber and Brian Ferneyhough.

“I lean strongly toward Europe,” Hosokawa observes, “but at the same time I feel bound to Japanese traditions and I create my music on the bases of Japan’s long cultural traditions. Here are my spiritual and psychic roots.” Many of the compositions in his catalog, including *Koto-uta* (1999, for voice and *koto*) feature Japanese instruments, and he has fostered collaborative relationships with such instrumentalists as Mayumi Miyata, master of the *sho* or Japanese mouth organ. Even works using western instruments tend to adopt and adapt elements of Japanese performance practice, including microtones, a variety of string plucking techniques, half-blown pitches on woodwind instruments, and a diverse pantheon of percussion. Not surprisingly, many of the pieces in Hosokawa’s catalogue with the strongest ties to Japan take their inspiration from his native city. In recent years he has added to a growing cycle of Hiroshima pieces that currently includes *Memory of the Sea* (Hiroshima Symphony), *Voiceless Voice in Hiroshima*

(1989, revised 2001, for soloists, narrators, chorus, tape, and orchestra), and a related, three-part *Hiroshima Requiem* with movements titled “Preludio ‘Night’” (1989, for orchestra), “Death and Resurrection” (1989, for narrators, soloists, orchestra, and choir), and “Dawn” (1992, for orchestra). While one might expect these works to convey the horrors of atomic destruction, Hosokawa has chosen instead to dwell on his own memories of the postwar city, in the midst of regeneration and unprecedented contact with western culture.

Hosokawa’s multicultural ties have perhaps made him particularly sensitive to the intricacies of languages and alphabets. In his choral work, *Ave Maria* (1991), one of his mostly explicitly ‘western’ works, he moves from unintelligible phonemes and syllables to the traditional Latin text, over a taped background meant to evoke human breath. In *New Seeds of Contemplation* (1986, revised 1995), he combines the stately sounds of a *gagaku* ensemble with the syllables of *shomyo* (Buddhist) chant, and his chamber opera, *Visions of Lear* has been praised for its variety of vocal declamation styles and the compelling connections Hosokawa draws between Shakespeare’s play and the life of a businessman in contemporary Japan.

Hosokawa’s honors reflect the internationality of his career, including prizes from the Valentino Bucchi competition, the centennial competition of the Berlin Philharmonic, the Arion Music Prize, the Composition Prize of the Young Generation in Europe, the Kyoto and Osaka Prizes, and the Musica Viva Prize. His music has been featured at festivals in Paris, Vienna, Venice, Munich, Salzburg, Helsinki, and dozens of other cities. From 1989 to 1998, Hosokawa served as Artistic Director of the annual Akiyoshidai International Contemporary Music Seminar in southern Japan. Since 1998, he has been Composer in Residence with the Tokyo Symphony, and in 2001 he was elected a member of the Berlin Akademie der Künste. Among his recent works are the opera *Hanjo*, which received its premiere at the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, and two scores for films directed by Kohei Oguri: *Shi no Toge* (Sting of Death) and *Nemuru Otoko* (Sleeping Man). Hosokawa visited California in 2003 when he was invited by U. C. San Diego’s Center for Research in Computing and the Arts to participate in a symposium devoted to artistic collaboration and cross-cultural fusion. In addition to giving a lecture on Noh opera and a seminar devoted to his new work *Voiceless Voice in*

*Hiroshima*, the composer also heard performances of three of his solo pieces—*Sen VI* for percussion, *Vertical Song I* for flute, and *Nacht Klänge* for piano—as well as the work we will hear tonight, *Slow Dance*.

## ***Slow Dance* (1996, revised 2002)**

*for flute/alto flute, clarinet, percussion, piano, violin, and cello*

In many ways, Hosokawa's sextet *Slow Dance* is a celebration of the two primary streams of influence on his music. The piece was commissioned by the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt for the fiftieth anniversary of the Darmstadt Summer Music Courses and dedicated to Robert HP PLATZ and the Ensemble Köln, who gave its premiere in 1996. Yet the piece displays the keen attention to performance nuance that characterizes *gagaku* and the performing practices of many Japanese instruments.

Rather than employing koto (zither), *shamisen* (Japanese lute), or *shakuhachi* (end-blown flute), Hosokawa calls for western instruments, but he also provides them with no less than fifty-three distinct symbols representing different types of articulation or extended performing techniques, all of which are entabulated at the beginning of the score. Flutist and clarinetist must execute multiphonics (producing more than one sound through unconventional fingering or blowing techniques), flutter-tonguing, slapping of the keys, and whistle tones; the percussionist is active with a variety of sticks and other implements; the pianist should strike and brush the strings (not just the keys), sometimes inhaling and exhaling on cue; and the string players respond to such directives as “play almost on the bridge more noise than sound” and “produce noise like wind.” While certain passages of *Slow Dance* are unified by the recurrence of a focal pitch, on the whole the piece creates the impression of continuously unfolding action—perhaps a ritual, perhaps a dance, but a dance addressed to minds and ears as well as bodies.

## **BENT SØRENSEN (B. 1958)**

Although Bent Sørensen's career has been closely identified with his home country of Denmark, his music suggests a reaching across Scandinavian borders and into those regions of the imagination that deal with things past. According to Andreas Beyer, an authority on Sørensen, “The composer plays on our understanding of time and our collective memory trail. One gets the feeling that one has heard his music before, only in another way and from another place. As an echo of something that was once real and present. The goddess of memory, Mnemosyne, is Sørensen's guiding star.”

Sørensen began his musical career at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen, studying composition with Ib Nørholm. His earliest works incorporated folk-like melodies, but with a series of string quartets—*Alman* (1983-84), *Adieu* (1986), and *Angels' Music* (1987-88)—he began to develop a more individual idiom, based on his gift for capturing visual images and fragmentary narratives in sound. With these successful chamber works under his belt, he traveled from Copenhagen to Aarhus, where he studied with his renowned countryman Per Nørgård from 1988-90, and since that time Sørensen has emerged as the leading Danish composer of his generation.

Much of Sørensen's music involves the quiet end of the dynamic spectrum and a variety of performance gestures ranging from the subtlest nuances of articulation to gentle thickets of polyphonic imitation to ornaments, microtonal inflections, and glissandi (slides). In *Tuchins* (1986, for pairs of cellos, trombones, and electric guitars), he achieves what he calls “a constantly shaking movement” through “trills that turn into very fast staccato movements, which glide in and out of each other all the time.” There is something systematic about his treatment of the continuum between staccato and legato, and about his exploration of the intervals slightly larger and slightly smaller than the ‘major’ and ‘minor’ thirds of the piano keyboard. Some commentators have even linked the intricacy of his music to the complexities of 20th-century twelve-tone writing, but Sørensen himself prefers to acknowledge the older influences of dreams, nature, and the visual arts, including the pointillism of Seurat, the Renaissance illuminations of Jean Fouquet of Tours, and the 18th-century engravings of Giovanni Battista Piranesi.

Although Sørensen's sounds are wholly modern, the composer shows a special fondness for established religious imagery and some of the favorite themes of nineteenth-century romanticism, as Beyer has observed. In addition to works based on Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalott* (1987, for solo viola) and Poe's *Masque of the Red Death* (1998, for solo piano), his pieces frequently explore fragments or ruins, absence and longing, and the inevitability of death and decline. In his choral work *Echoing Garden* (1990-92), for example, he has chosen texts from Shakespeare, Rilke, and Albert Cohen's novel *Belle du Seigneur* and placed them in a musical context laden with overlapping melodies and temporal distortions to suggest the intertwining of plants and the wistful sighs of unrequited love. Similar spirits haunt his Violin Concerto, *Sterbende Gärten* (Dying Garden) (1993), in which smooth unison melodies are gradually distorted as Sørensen imposes glissandi, echoes, and suspended notes to create a picturesque entropy.

The decaying garden finds a musical equivalent in one of Sørensen's favorite sound sources, bells, which make an obvious impact on *Birds and Bells* (1995, for trombone and chamber ensemble), but which also resonate in his sextet *Deserted Churchyards* (1990) and the more recent piano solo *Shadows of Silence* (2003-04). It seems likely that the wonderfully complex process of sound dispersal after a bell is struck will remain an important source of inspiration, for it unites Sørensen's preoccupations with beauty and decay. "When I compose music," he notes, "I actually work with something that is very beautiful, but I am always on the brink of breaking it down. The trick of it is. . . finding exactly the right time where there is a perfect balance between the pure and the beautiful on the one hand and on the other something violent, ugly, that is tearing this beauty away from the surface, so it is cracking or peeling off."

Sørensen's commissions have included works for Ensemble Modern, the London Sinfonietta, Norway's BIT-20 Ensemble, the Lerchenborg Festival, the Sonanza Ensemble, and the Arditti String Quartet, among others. In 1996, he won the Nordic Council Prize for *Sterbende Gärten*, which was commissioned by the Aarhus Symphony, but premiered by the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra with soloist Rebecca Hirsch during the Nordic Music Days. In 1998, he was appointed Honorary Composer in Association by the Esbjerg Ensemble. His recent works include the massive opera *Under the Sky* (2003), the result of a five-year collaboration with Danish playwright Peter Asmussen in response to a commission from the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen.

## ***The Lady and the Lark* (1997)**

*for solo viola, flute/piccolo/alto flute, E-flat/A-clarinet, two violins, and cello*

Dedicated to Norway's Cikada Ensemble, Sørensen's *The Lady and the Lark*, bears a delicate relationship to other works in his oeuvre. According to the composer, "The title refers partly to my piece *The Lady of Shalott* for solo viola (to which the new piece is a rather belated 'big sister') and partly to the two 'lark-like' cadenzas which constitute the second and fourth movements." Like the "pseudo-nightingale cadenza" of his piece for trombone and ensemble, *Birds and Bells*, the birdsong of *The Lady and the Lark* is both naturalistic and fantastic—more stylized and less realistic than, for example, Olivier Messiaen's birdsong, but still able to evoke multiple, distinct species.

The composer calls this work "a 'mini'-viola concerto in five short movements," and both parts of his designation are apt. Each movement is indeed a magical miniature, and the violist is clearly the focus of attention, initiating the ethereal lyricism of the outer movements, participating in the bird calls of movements two and four, and waxing rhapsodic in the longest, central movement. Harmonics and double-stops, glissandi and woodblocks add their nuances to each chapter of the story—and it does seem to be a story, if a rather enigmatic one. As Anders Beyer writes, "Bent Sørensen's music is always about something, even though one cannot say exactly what. There are ardent lovers, sad processions on the way to the cemetery, mute women with upturned eyes of female saints. . . angel pictures, blurred images, outlines of the richness in detail of a time past. . . Music on the edge of silence."

## **JAVIER TORRES MALDONADO (B. 1968)**

In a 2001 interview, Javier Torres Maldonado observed, "No artist exists locked up in a crystal sphere, and this is a constant for the great artistic works of all periods. The content of a work, if it is profound, is the product of a consciousness that is always bound to philosophical ideas, social events, and traditions." Like the other composers on tonight's program, Torres Maldonado combines an awareness of his own heritage with



an openness to international influences and a commitment to seeking out new sounds.

Torres Maldonado was born in Chetumal, Mexico and studied at the Mexico National Conservatory and the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan. After completing his degree in 1996, he took advanced composition classes with Franco Donatoni and Azio Corghi at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, the Accademia Superiore di Musica “L. Perosi,” and the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome. He also studied at the Conservatory of Strasbourg with Ivan Fedele, whose piece *Maja*, for soprano and ensemble, was performed by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players earlier this season. In 2003, he earned a diploma from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory for his work in electronic music, and in 2004 he was one of ten composers asked to participate in the “Stage de Composition et Informatique Musicale” at the prestigious Parisian center for computer-music research, IRCAM.

Much of Torres Maldonado’s music, including the piece we will hear tonight, explores innovative ways of organizing time and space. For example, in his brief duo for flute and percussion, *Reflejo Espiral* (2000) he uses layered pulsation patterns and “metric modulation” (in which subdivisions of a steady pulse are regrouped to suggest a new meter) to create an aural analog to the distorting process of reflection. At times, the composer harnesses these abstract compositional concerns in the service of an overtly political or social message. One of his best known pieces, *Exabrupto* (1998), uses complicated polymeters and superimpositions in a tribute to the native Mexican victims of a massacre in Acteal, Chiapas. Commissioned by the University of Montreal and Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, it won the Musicians’ Prize after its premiere during their International Forum for Young Composers.

In 2002, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players performed his *Figuralmusik II*, the central panel in a triptych of works (1996-1998) that plays on patterns of visual and aural perception. According to the composer, the cycle “originates from the fascination that I have always felt for perceptive illusions, translated into impossible objects in physical reality, and, above all, for the results of the interlacing planes and perspectives used by Piranesi and Escher.” Expanding, contracting, and transforming a limited number of fundamental gestures, he changes the listener’s sense of perspective through a rapid juxtaposition of different temporal schemes—fluctuations in tempo and meter, but also changes in the relative density or scarcity of musical events.

Torres Maldonado has received an international array of honors including the Queen Maria Jose Prize of Geneva, Italy’s Alfredo Casella and CittB di Barletta Awards, and the Concours International “Ad Referendum II” of Canada. He won second prize in two successive Mozart Competitions in Salzburg (1997 and 2000) as well as a Mozart Medal from the governments of Austria and Mexico. In 2003, he received a commission from the Ensemble La Pluma de Hu for a work to be played at Syntono and Citéculture’s first symposium devoted to composer-performer collaboration, and in 2004 he was invited by the French Ensemble Aleph to be Composer-in-Residence at festivals in Normandy, Amsterdam, Dresden, and Paris. Torres Maldonado’s music has been played by the Divertimento Ensemble, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, and the Ex Novo Ensemble, among others, and he has received commissions from contemporary music festivals in Venice, Siena, New York, Strasbourg, and Erl (where the Tirolerfestspiele devoted two concerts to his music in 2000 and 2002). Among his most recent commissions are an orchestral piece for Gustav Kuhn and the Haydn Orchestra (to be premiered in Italy this April), and pieces for violinist Carlo Chiarappa (with bass clarinet solo and the Dynamis Ensemble), guitarist Pablo Márquez, and accordionist Germano Scurti (with electronics). Torres Maldonado was recently elected a member of the Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte of Mexico. He currently teaches electronic music composition at the Alessandria Conservatory in Italy and serves as the Artistic Director of the Dynamis Ensemble.

### *Claroscuros* (2001)

*for clarinet/bass clarinet, bass clarinet, trombone, cello, contrabass*

Although *Claroscuros* does not require electronics for its performance, Torres Maldonado links its creation to his exposure to computers and the insights they yield into “complex sound spectra and their possible metamorphoses.” Noting that *Claroscuros* itself consists of a pair of potentially freestanding pieces, he writes, “The title refers to the constant search for contrast evident in the instrumental and formal character of the two pieces that make up the set. The first piece, *Voç Oscura* (Dark Voice), is characterized by the constant presence of fragments of a long melody that pass from one instrument to another (at

times perceivably, at times not); actually this melody is present in the entire piece, but in some sections it undergoes various manipulations that alter its temporal evolution. The predominating image corresponds to a voice that tries to sing through the instruments of the ensemble. But the allusions contained in this first part also include characteristic elements of certain Latin American music, almost dream-like allusions since their object is filtered down to its essential elements.”

Unlike *Voz Oscura*, in which computer-generated algorithms help turn a melody into a sequence of irregular fragments, the three sections of *Antiphonae-Aurae* (separated by scalar passagework), represent a gradual increase in musical continuity. This move from antiphonal dialogue to more cooperative progress takes place in a sonic framework full of unusual nuances. As the composer points out, “*Antiphonae-Aurae* demands considerable virtuosity of the performers, although absolutely without showing off, since during almost all the piece the five players must play at a dynamic level from pianississimo to piano, rarely reaching a mezzopiano as a maximum. All this, in a region that goes from the high to the very high register of each instrument and includes a considerable number of microtonal pitches or natural harmonics. . . The resulting sonority is without doubt highly individual.”

—Program notes by Beth Levy

## Pre-Concert Speaker

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**C**harles Boone, composer and lecturer, was born in Cleveland in 1939, and studied music in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Vienna. After arriving in the Bay Area in 1963, he was associated for many years with the Composers’ Forum and the Mills Performing Group. In 1971, he founded the BYOP (Bring Your Own Pillow) concert series, which later evolved into the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Mr. Boone’s own compositions have been performed by the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Oakland Symphony, the Mexican National Orchestra, and the Nouvel Orchestre Philharmonique of Paris. His works have been featured at the New Music America, Ojai, Cabrillo, Juilliard, Aspen, Avignon, Berlin and Music Today/Tokyo Festivals, and notable conductors and performers include Seiji Ozawa, Edo de Waart, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Phyllis Bryn-Julson. Mr. Boone has received a number of commissions, including three NEA grants. He has also lived as a composer-in-residence guest of the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD) in Berlin. He is currently a professor at the San Francisco Art Institute.

## Featured Performers

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**L**ucille Chung is an internationally renowned pianist who has been a featured soloist with such groups as the Montreal Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Moscow Virtuosi, the BBC National Orchestra, the Orquesta Sinfonica de Tenerife, and other orchestras around the globe. Her teachers have included Seymour Lipkin, Karlheinz Kämmerling, Lazar Berman, and Joaquín Achúcarro, and she has worked closely with composer and conductor Krzysztof Penderecki, among others. Chung has given recitals at London’s Wigmore Hall, the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Toronto’s Ford Centre for the Performing Arts, and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. Her solo playing has garnered honors from the Stravinsky International Piano Competition (1989), the Montreal International Music Competition, and the International Franz Liszt Competition, as well as an Outstanding Achievement Award from Canada’s Governor General, and an Honors Diploma from the

Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Italy. Praised for “combining vigor and suppleness with natural eloquence and elegance,” Chung has recorded award-winning CDs of music of Scriabin and all three Books of Ligeti’s Piano Etudes.

**B**enjamin Simon, viola, has performed for audiences around the world as a member of the Naumberg Award-winning New World String Quartet, the Stanford String Quartet, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. He has been principal violist of Buffalo Philharmonic and has played in the New Century and Los Angeles Chamber Orchestras, as well as the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonic Orchestras. Born in San Francisco, he is also an accomplished conductor, having studied locally with Denis DeCouteau and continuing at Yale College, Juilliard, and the Aspen Music Festival. He has taught at Harvard and Stanford Universities and is currently on the faculty at U. C. Berkeley, while also serving as Music Director of the Palo Alto and San Francisco Chamber Orchestras. He has recently appeared as viola soloist with the SFCO, led Berkeley’s Crowden School on their third European tour, and conducted members of the Berkeley Symphony in Han Krasa’s children’s opera *Brundibar* for the Jewish Music Festival.

**D**avid Milnes is a conductor of extraordinary breadth and long-standing commitment to contemporary music. In his early years, he studied not only piano and organ, but also clarinet, cello, and voice. Milnes received his undergraduate education in music at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1984, at age 27, he won the prestigious Exxon Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony. He remained as the Symphony’s Assistant Conductor and Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra until 1986, working closely with Edo de Waart and Herbert Blomstedt. Following study and collaboration with such renowned conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, Otto-Werner Müller, and Michael Tilson Thomas, he earned his doctorate in conducting from Yale University in 1989.

From 1994-2002, Milnes was Principal Guest Conductor of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and also guest conducted numerous orchestras across the United States. He has conducted at the Tanglewood, Aspen, and Monadnock Music Festivals, and has led operatic repertoire ranging from Mozart to Weill. He maintains a keen interest in jazz, which has led to appearances on jazz saxophone with Gene Krupa, Chuck Mangione, John Pizzarelli, and Billy Taylor. Milnes’s recording of John Anthony Lennon’s *Zingari* for Bridge Records was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1994.

In 1996, Milnes joined the music faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, where he directs its symphony orchestra and the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players. He first conducted the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1997, and joined the ensemble as Music Director in June, 2002.

**T**he **San Francisco Contemporary Music Players** (SFCMP), now in its 34<sup>th</sup> year, is a leader among America's most distinguished and successful chamber music organizations, performing, commissioning, and recording the music of today's composers. The group presents works written for both large and small chamber ensembles. SFCMP is a nine-time winner of the prestigious national ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music, having commissioned 66 pieces and performed over 1,000 new works, including 49 U.S. and 126 world premieres.

Each season the ensemble performs a subscription series at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. It 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 eight albums of its own and contributed to eight others. Its musical outreach programs have involved masterclasses, performance demonstrations, and an evening course for adults.

**E**xecutive Director **Adam Frey** obtained his B.A. in Music from Harvard University, and his M.B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley, with emphasis on marketing and planning. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1991 after six years with Sherman, Clay Co., then the nation's largest keyboard instrument retailer, where he was Vice President in charge of Merchandising. He serves on the Board of Governors of the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. Mr. Frey is also a writer; his work has been published in *The Mississippi Review*.

**D**irector of Operations and Marketing **Matt Schumaker** studied music at Dartmouth and at Princeton, where he received an MA in composition. While at Princeton, he coordinated concert production for the university's new music ensemble. He subsequently studied composition in Holland with Louis Andriessen. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' staff in September, 2004.

**D**evelopment Associate **Steven Heimerle** grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, and was trained as an architect at Iowa State University. His primary role during tenures with architectural firms in Chicago, Costa Mesa, Palo Alto and San Francisco was in marketing. Since 1995 he has worked for the Oakland and Berkeley symphonies, Shanti, The Friends of the SF Public Library, and the San Francisco Maritime Park Association—in marketing and development roles. Steve is a writer, photographer, collage artist and builder of handmade cards and books. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in March, 2004.

## Additional Listening and Reading

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Australia's Elision Ensemble and Ensemble Modern have recently released a CD devoted to works by Liza Lim including *The Heart's Ear*, *Street of Crocodiles*, *Voodoo Child*, *Inguç* (Fertility), *Koto*, and *The Alchemical Wedding* (ABC Classics). Other available recordings include the Elision Ensemble's rendering of *The Oresteia* and *Garden of Earthly Desire* (Ricordi) and a CD of chamber music performed by Zurich's Ensemble für Neuen Musik (HatArt).

All three Books of György Ligeti's Piano Etudes have been recorded by Lucille Chung on two CDs along with the composer's other piano works (Dynamic). The Horn Trio, which was most recently performed by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 2002, is played by members of the Ensemble InterContemporain (Erato) and on the Sony label as part of the ongoing recording project, the György Ligeti Edition, which compiles stellar performances of the composer's major works. There is limited English-language literature for those interested in reading about Ligeti's career. I would suggest either the second edition of Paul Griffiths's biography for The Contemporary Composers Series or Richard Toop's recent monograph for the Phaidon Twentieth-Century Composers series.

Among the fine recordings of music by Toshio Hosokawa are a CD on the Kairos label containing *Koto-uta*, *Voyage I*, the *Saxophone Concerto*, and *Distant Landscape II* and a disc devoted to performances of *Landscape I, II, V*, *Vertical Time Study III*, and *Fragments II* by members of Arditti String Quartet in collaboration with Mayumi Miyata, Kaoru Nakayama, Ichiro Naidura, and others (Disques Montaigne). *Memory of the Sea-Hiroshima Symphony* has been recorded by the Sapporo Symphony Orchestra under Tadaaki Otaka (Chandos) and Hosokawa's duo for cello and accordion, *Into the Depths of Time*, has been released on the Wergo, Col Legno, Bis, and ECM labels.

Bent Sørensen's *The Lady and the Lark* has been recorded by the Oslo Sinfonietta along with *The Lady of Shalott*, *Birds and Bells*, and other works (ECM). A fine selection of chamber and orchestral works have been released by the Esbuerg Ensemble and the Danish Radio

Symphony on three Da Capo CDs that include *Sterbende Gärten* and *Echoing Garden*; *Shadowland*, *Deserted Churchyards*, and other works; and the String Quartets *Alman*, *Adieu*, and *Angels' Music*.) Readers may also wish to consult the interviews and musical excerpts available at <<http://www.4komponister.dk/english>>.

The Nouvel Ensemble Moderne has recorded Javier Torres Maldonado's *Exabrupto* under the direction of Lorraine Vaillancourt (Amberola, UMMUS; FORUM 98). His fortepiano work *Orier* is represented on a CD containing works awarded Mozart Prizes during 1997-99 (Mozarteum in Salzburg, ORF-Radio Salzburg).

—Beth Levy