

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

COLLEGE OF MUSICAL ARTS PRESENTS

Faculty Composers Forum

Christopher Dietz

Mikel Kuehn

Elainie Lillios

Marilyn Shrude

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018

8:00 P.M.

BRYAN RECITAL HALL

MOORE MUSICAL ARTS CENTER

PROGRAM

- After Long Drought (2016)..... Elainie Lillios
Scott Deal, vibraphone
- Quiet Hearts: A Kaddish (2017)..... Marilyn Shrude
John Sampen, alto saxophone
- la fleur du ciel (2010)..... Christopher Dietz
Caroline Chin, violin
Reed Anderson, viola
Brian Snow, cello
- ...lilac shrieks and scarlet bellowings... (2010)..... Mikel Kuehn
image by Jean Detheux
music by Mikel Kuehn
Deborah Norin-Kuehn, pre-recorded voice

PROGRAM NOTES

After Long Drought (2016) for vibraphone and live, interactive electroacoustics takes its inspiration from a poem with the same title by Wally Swist:

The sky rips open
after days of grinding heat,
waves of meadow grass

shift in the blowing rain,
and floating on the breadth
of its extended wings,

as bright as a vision,
the great blue heron
strokes through the storm.

The percussionist's virtuosic foray through Swist's evocative work conjures images of an aggressive summer squall, with its torrential driving rain and gusting wind reflecting life's unpredictability and tumult. As the piece progresses, the storm fades into the background as our focus is directed to a peaceful calm discovered amidst the storm – a heron majestically gliding through the gale. *After Long Drought* was commissioned by Scott Deal. *After Long Drought* appears with the author's permission and is published in *Winding Paths Worn through Grass* (Chicago, IL: Virtual Artists Collective, 2012).

Quiet Hearts: A Kaddish (2017) for solo alto saxophone was written for Gail Levinsky and is dedicated to her parents, Roslyn Ruth and Herbert Levinsky, "for their unwavering love and support." The piece unfolds gently and plays upon some of the more idiomatic characteristics of Jewish music. It is meant to be prayerful, thus the sub-title, *A Kaddish*, which is part of almost every ritual in the faith. More specifically for this work it is a prayer of mourning, but also one of restrained exaltation and consolation.

La fleur du ciel is a reflection on the passage from Camus posted below.

"At the time, I often thought that if I had to live in the trunk of a dead tree, with nothing to do but look up at the sky flowering overhead, little by little I would have got used to it. I would have waited for birds to fly by or clouds to mingle, just as here I waited to see my lawyer's ties and just as, in another world, I used to wait patiently until Saturday to hold Marie's body in my arms."

Camus, Albert. *The Stranger*. Reissue ed. New York: Vintage, 1989. p.77.

"J'ai souvent pensé alors que si l'on m'avait fait vivre dans un tronc d'arbre sec, sans autre occupation que de regarder la fleur du ciel audessus de ma tête, je m'y serais peu à peu habitué. J'aurais attendu des passages d'oiseaux ou des rencontres de nuages comme j'attendais ici les curieuses cravates de mon avotcat et comme, dans un autre monde, je patientais jusqu'au samedi pour étreindre le corps de Marie."

Camus, Albert. *L'Etranger* (Collection Folio, 2). New ed. PARIS: Editions Gallimard, 1942. p.118.

...lilac shrieks and scarlet bellows... (2010) is a nine-minute visual and sonic interpretation of six related texts of E. E. Cummings that ruminate on themes of nature and the cycle of life. The film is in six linked sections, each focusing on one of Cumming's texts enhanced with images by Jean Dethuex and electroacoustic music by Mikel Kuehn. The sonic material is derived from manipulated environmental sounds and the recitation of Cummings texts by soprano Deborah Norin-Kuehn. The images were created first by Dethuex (in 2008) and were then set to music by Kuehn in 2009-10. The visual idea behind the work was to create a life in multiple parts, followed by a "recollection" of that life, as if at the moment of death.

BIOGRAPHIES

Acclaimed as one of the “contemporary masters of the medium” by MIT Press’s Computer Music Journal, electroacoustic composer **Elainie Lillios** creates works that reflect her fascination with listening, sound, space, time, immersion and anecdote. Her compositions include stereo, multi-channel, and Ambisonic fixed media works, instrument(s) with live interactive electronics, collaborative experimental audio/visual animations, and installations.

Elainie’s work has been recognized internationally and nationally through awards including a 2017-18 Grammy nomination for her flute trio *Summer Sketches* a 2016 Barlow Endowment Commission, and a 2013-14 Fulbright Scholar Award. She won First Prize in the Concours Internationale de Bourges, Areon Flutes International Composition Competition, Electroacoustic Piano International Competition, and Medea Electronique “Saxotronics” Competition, and Second Prize in the Destellos International Electroacoustic Competition. She has also received awards from the Concurso Internacional de Música Electroacústica de São Paulo, Concorso Internazionale Russolo, Pierre Schaeffer Competition, and La Muse en Circuit. She has received grants/commissions from INA/GRM, Réseaux, International Computer Music Association, La Muse en Circuit, NAISA, ASCAP/SEAMUS, LSU’s Center for Computation and Technology, Sonic Arts Research Centre, Ohio Arts Council, and National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts. She has been a special guest at the Groupe de Recherche Musicales, Rien à Voir, festival l’espace du son, June in Buffalo, and at other locations in the United States and abroad.

Reviews of Elainie’s debut solo electroacoustic compact disc *Entre Espaces* (Empreintes DIGITales) praise her work for being “... elegantly assembled, and immersive enough to stand the test of deep listening” and as “...a journey not to be missed.” Her fixed media and instrumental works also appear on Centaur, Innova, MSR Classics, Ravello Records, StudioPANaroma, La Muse en Circuit, New Adventures in Sound Art, SEAMUS, Irritable Hedgehog and Leonardo Music Journal.

Elainie serves a Director of Composition Activities for the SPLICE Institute (splice-music.org) and is Professor of Composition at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. elillios.com

The music of composer **Marilyn Shrude** is characterized by its warmth and lyricism, rich timbre, multi-layered constructions, and complex blend of tonality and atonality. The result is a bright, shimmering and delicately wrought sound world that is at once both powerful and fragile (Natvig – New Grove).

Shrude earned degrees from Alverno College and Northwestern University, and has served on the faculty of Bowling Green State University since 1977. Among her more prestigious honors are those from the Guggenheim Foundation, American Academy of Arts and Letters, Rockefeller Foundation, Chamber Music America/ASCAP, Meet the Composer, Sorel Foundation (Medallion Winner for Choral Music 2011), and the National Endowment for the Arts. She was the first woman to receive the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award for Orchestral Music and the Cleveland Arts Prize for Music. In 2014 she was given BGSU's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Active as a composer, pianist, teacher, and contemporary music advocate, Shrude has consistently promoted American music through her many years as founder and director of the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music (1987-99), as chair of the Department of Musicology/Composition/Theory at BGSU (1998-2011) and as coordinator of the doctoral program in contemporary music (2006-present). Together with saxophonist, John Sampen, she has premiered, recorded and presented hundreds of works by living composers both in the United States and abroad.

Christopher Dietz composes music inspired by a wide variety of sources, both real and conceptual. Poetry, sound as sculpture and color, how toddlers play, deep time and the cosmos, rhythm as geometry, religion and politics, animal behavior, and the music of others are a few of the subjects that have informed his musical imagination. A similarly diverse approach to the creation of each new piece has resulted in a collection of works distinct in their surface features yet bound together by a common vitality, nuanced palette, and a commitment to engaging with others. In recent years, his works have been premiered internationally and throughout the United States with ensembles ranging from Alarm Will Sound to L'Orchestre de la Francophonie. A complete list of affiliations as well as audio and video samples of his work is available on his website, www.christopher-dietz.com. Christopher holds a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan as well as degrees from the Manhattan School of Music and the University of Wisconsin. Before arriving at Bowling Green, he served on the faculty at Hillsdale College and the Oberlin Conservatory.

The music of American composer **Mikel Kuehn** (b. 1967) has been described as having “sensuous phrases... producing an effect of high abstraction turning into decadence,” by New York Times critic Paul Griffiths. A 2014 Guggenheim Fellow, he has received awards, grants, and residencies from ASCAP, BMI, the Banff Centre, the Barlow Endowment, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Composers, Inc. (Lee Ettelson Award), the Copland House (Copland Award), Eastman, the Fromm Foundation at Harvard, the League of Composers/ISCM, the MacDowell Colony, the Salvatore Martirano Memorial Composition Competition (honorable mention), the Ohio Arts Council (Individual Excellence Awards), the Luigi Russolo Competition (finalist), and Yaddo. His works have been commissioned by the Anubis Saxophone Quartet, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Ensemble 21, Ensemble Dal Niente, Flexible Music, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), violist John Graham, clarinetist Marianne Gythfeldt, cellist Craig Hultgren, guitarist Dan Lippel, Perspectives of New Music, pianist Marilyn Nonken, Selmer Paris, and the Spektral Quartet, among others. Kuehn is Professor of Creative Arts Excellence at Bowling Green State University and holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of North Texas. In November of 2016, New Focus Recordings released *Objet/Shadow*, a portrait CD of Kuehn’s music.

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