

Cascadia Composers

Presents



for new music

Friday, November 20, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

Terwilliger Plaza Retirement Center

Portland, Oregon

Cascadia Composers ... a chapter of NACUSA

www.CascadiaComposers.org



Giving Thanks for New Music

Terwilliger Plaza: Friday
November 20, 7:30 PM

Rhapsody in f minor.....John De Runtz

John De Runtz

Playground Waltz.....David Bernstein

Eight Musical Landscapes for Piano.....David Bernstein

Music Box Lullaby and Ride the Western Wind

David Bernstein

It Takes Two.....Elizabeth Blachly-Dyson

Together We Can Move Mountains, Argument, Making Up

Dianne Davies

Six Short Pieces.....Cynthia Gerdes

Dianne Davies

Monkey Thoughts from Mood Suite.....Liz Nedela

Dianne Davies

Rebekah.....Daniel Brugh

Ice Fog.....Daniel Brugh

Daniel Brugh

Lied ohne Worte (lieber mit Ligeti).....Jeff Winslow

Jeff Winslow

Embarrassing Moments.....Jan Mittelstaedt

Lilin Chen, piano; Hsin Yi Lin, soprano

PROGRAM NOTES

RHAPSODY IN F MINOR, 2003, by **John De Runtz**, is a dramatic piece that contains a romantically melodic central section in D flat major that eventually works its way back to the opening measures of the work. The coda incorporates the D flat major motif as well, but with much greater passion.

PLAYGROUND WALTZ, by **David Bernstein**, is a short piano piece that was composed for my son to perform when he was six years of age. It includes lyrics, written by myself as well. I will play (but not sing) it through once and then do a quick variation on the melody.

MUSIC BOX LULLABY is a very simple melodic work that mostly explores the upper register of the piano. It is meant to be reminiscent of what a tinkling little music box might sound like.

RIDE THE WESTERN WIND is a fast and mostly loud piano composition that is meant to make the piano sound "big" because of the chords that are used as well as the dynamic level that is explored, particularly at the low end of the keyboard. It also plays with fast-paced changes of rhythm and meter which help to perpetuate the forward motion of the work.

IT TAKES TWO, by **Elizabeth Blachly Dyson**, is a suite of bitonal pieces, that is, one hand plays in one key while the other hand plays in a different key. Sometimes the keys switch between the two hands. The two keys represent two different people interacting with each other.

SIX SHORT PIECES (Cynthia Gerdes): You have a problem and you don't want to deal with it. This is *Reflection 1*. With *2. Bravado* you run away by creating a risky situation, you toy with fear. Then you feel sorry for yourself and feel *3. Stuck*. It's not long before you pretend nothing's important and just mindlessly *4. Play*. After that you may find yourself *5. Drifting* aimlessly from one thing to the next in avoidance. In the best case scenario you come to *6 Reflection 2* where some kind of resolution presents itself, could be a plan of action! One thing about these pieces, unlike the very human phenomena they represent, is that they are short.

MONKEY THOUGHTS, by **Liz Nedela**, is from *Mood Suite*, a set of pieces in which each is in a different style of composition depicting moods that most of us experience: Restless, Peaceful, Anger, Mood Swings (Monkey Thoughts), and Crazy Waltz (as we dance through life). **Monkey Thoughts** occur when our thoughts "jump around", like a monkey swinging limb to limb in a tree, which happens sometimes at night, interrupting our sleep. The music is based on a derived scale: D# E F# G Ab B C.

REBEKAH, by **Daniel Brugh**, was written for and dedicated to the composer's Aunt Rebecca when she bought a new piano. This piece is inspired by her spectacularly beautiful garden.

ICE FOG is a type of fog consisting of fine ice crystals suspended in the air. It occurs only in cold areas of the world, as water droplets suspended in the air can remain liquid down to -40°C (-40°F). **ICE FOG** is **Daniel Brugh's** Christmas arraignment of *Deck the Halls*.

LIED OHNE WORTE (lieber mit Ligeti) - Song without words (but with Ligeti instead) by **Jeff Winslow** - flows directly out of the German salon piece tradition of the 19th century. Common practice harmony, ABA song form, a coda to wrap up any loose ends... it's all there. A few less common harmonies from intervening centuries sneak in now and then, as well as a bit of a Ligeti etude and a Mahler symphony. There's a debt to Ligeti here and there in the fine structure as well. The number six seems to be prominent. The title's for sound as much as sense. I enjoyed crafting it all; I hope you enjoy hearing it at least as much. The work is dedicated to the composer Gary Noland, whose Seventh Species concerts have presented so much of my music, and whose own works' unabashed forays into common practice are an inspiration.

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS, words and music by Jan Mittelstaedt, musically describes some difficult situations in the composer's life: *Temper Tantrum*: This music was inspired by my son's temper tantrums. As Ted screamed and kicked the floor of a store, I overheard one woman say to another, "poor baby." *The Luncheon*: This vignette is based on a real life experience. However, I have greatly exaggerated the details. I was invited to have lunch with a friend who lived in Sands Point, the most exclusive part of Port Washington, Long Island, NY where I grew up. Her mother really did serve chicken. And, I did feel uncomfortable eating in a semi-formal setting with my friend and her mom. *Tongue Tied* was also inspired by a day in my past life. When visiting with my date's extended family, I felt extremely uncomfortable and didn't know what to say to them. After about 30 minutes, his aunt looked at me and said, "Don't you have a tongue?"

WORDS:

TEMPER TANTRUMS:

Temper tantrum, crying and screaming, my child is kicking the floor.
Staring shoppers offer opinions in Sacks Fifth Avenue store.
What a dilemma! Any decision will make me look unfit.
Nervous tension seeps through my body, I pray for her to quit.
Spanking and scolding are seen as abuse, ignoring is lack of control.
People are asking, "What IS the matter?" I'd like to crawl into a hole.
Humble lessons, I am learning: Do not judge another mom.
All are frazzled on the inside, even though they look so calm.

THE LUNCHEON

Emily Post, Emily Post, where were you when I needed you most?
A teenage girl from Long Island whose house was quite rundown
was invited, one day, to have luncheon in an upper class part of the town.
The houses were large and spacious with acres of land by the bay.
The driveways were long and private, through which servants arrived each day.
The luncheon was set on a table in a room overlooking the water.
The crystal was sparkling, the silver was clean as the guest was welcomed by mother and daughter.
"How should I eat a chicken leg," the poor teenager thought.
"Fingers are used for drumsticks." The girl became distraught.
She watched as her friend took a napkin and placed it on her lap.
By following the lead of her hostess, she was able to dodge a mishap.
Just give me some lunch from Kentucky, with French fries and a large coke,
and back home I'll soon be going to hang out with simple folk.
Emily Post, Emily Post, where were you when I needed you most?

TONGUE TIED

I know how it feels to be tongue tied.
I found myself one day in an awkward situation with little or nothing to say.
My hands were sweaty and clammy. My stomach was tied in a knot.
My heart was skipping and jumpy. And, my face was rosy and hot.
I felt so clumsy and stupid. She was confident, lovely and bright.
My brain seemed to turn into jelly as rational thought took flight.
In life there are awkward moments which we must learn to bear.
The test is to think about others, and show them that we care.

Composers' and Performers' Biographies

Dr. David Bernstein moved to the Portland, Oregon area in 2006, a move that he describes as being one of the best decisions of his life. Since coming to this region, he has helped to establish a group called *CASCADIA COMPOSERS* in which he is active as an organizer for new music concerts and — having composed music for a wide variety of mediums and venues, such as works for the theatre and musical theatre to music for dance, opera, orchestra, chorus, band and many varied chamber music ensembles — he continues his work as a freelance composer.

Elizabeth Blachly-Dyson is a molecular biologist who started writing music after accompanying her son to his composition lessons. She writes solo, chamber and orchestral music, with a special interest in music for strings. Her works have been performed by the Marylhurst Symphony, the Pacific Crest Youth Sinfonietta, the BRAVO Youth Orchestra of Portland, the Community Music Center Adult Orchestra (Portland, Oregon) and at concerts organized by Cascadia Composers. She is a member of the Crazy Jane Composers. She has adjudicated Composition Celebrations for the Oregon Music Teachers Association. Elizabeth teaches music theory at the Music and Arts Academy in Camas, Washington. She has studied composition with Dr. Robert Priest, Tomas Svoboda and Jonathan Newman, and is currently studying with Kenji Bunch.

Daniel Brugh, a hard-working member of the Cascadia Composers board, graduated from Interlochen Arts Academy and earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Oregon. Daniel teaches piano and music composition in the Beaverton area. In 2009, he was chosen as the OMTA Composer of the Year and in 2010, his composition was performed at the OMTA state convention. An extremely creative composer, Dan composes electronic music as well as acoustic choral, organ, piano, and chamber music works. His innovative concerts in the dark, organ performance, and concert featuring improvisation have added originality to Cascadias concert program. He has been chair of Cascadias *In Good Hands* concerts for a number of years.

Lilin Chen holds a doctorate in piano pedagogy from Indiana University, as well as master's degrees in piano performance from IU and piano accompanying from the University of Southern California, and a bachelor's degree in piano from National Taiwan Normal University. She has taught in universities and pre-college music programs in the United States and Taiwan. She was also a member of the Ars Nova Piano Trio, which toured Taiwan and the United States. In Indiana, she served as vice-president of the local branch of NFMC (National Federation of Music Clubs). After moving to Portland in 2011, Lilin now has her own piano studio, has taught at Reed College, and is currently chair of the Junior Bach Festival for the Tualatin Valley branch of OMTA (Oregon Music Teachers Association). She enjoys performing as a soloist and as a collaborative pianist.

Dianne Davies is hungry for the stage. Her career includes teaching and performing polar opposites. Half of her time is spent on devouring brand new, fresh music by living local composers. Cascadia Composers have consumed her attention. Her performances consist of new music made personal and not for the faint of heart. Her current project is *Attachments & Detachments Tragedy to Triumph*. She also co-chairs the annual "In Good Hands" concert that connects living composers with young

John DeRuntz, pianist and composer, was one of seventy-two performers from eighteen countries who were invited to compete in the prestigious Van Cliburn Sixth International Piano Competition for Outstanding Amateurs in Fort Worth, Texas in May of 2011. It was publicly noted that John was the first person ever to audition with, and perform his own works in a Van Cliburn competition. After the preliminary round, Van shook John's hand and told him that he has written some wonderful music. To view his performance, as well as other pieces on You Tube, there are links in his website: <http://www.theunknowncomposer.com>. John has composed more than seventy classical, romantic, and impressionistic piano pieces, and fifty of them appear on four CD albums, *Soaring*, *Fantasia*, *Reverie*, and *Encore*.

Hsin Yi Lin, Soprano, a recipient of the Grand Prize winner of the 2012 Metropolitan International Vocal Competition and 2011 Chi Mei Arts Award, Ms. Lin has performed numerous roles including Despina (*Così fan tutte*), Constance (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), Emily (*Help, Help, The Globalinks*), Amor (*L'Égisto*), Ms. Wordsworth (*Albert Herring*), Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Alinda (*Giasone*). A champion of new music, Ms. Lin was the soprano soloist in the world premieres of Ross Bernhardt's *Wants-n-Tides* and Pin Hsin Lin's *As In A Dream*. Her oratorio engagements include Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, Haydn's *Missa Brevis*, Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and J. S. Bach's *Magnificat*. Ms. Lin received a doctorate from the U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, prior to which she received dual Masters Degrees in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy from New England Conservatory of Music. Before relocating to Portland, Ms. Lin was a Voice Professor at the Texas A&M University- Corpus Christi.

Jan Mittelstaedt, NCTM, holds a BS in education from Bucknell University, a BA in music from Marylhurst University, and a MM in composition from The University of Portland. Her composition mentor, for almost 25 years, is Dr. Walter B. Saul II, Fresno Pacific University. In 1993, Jan participated in the Ernest Bloch Composers Symposium, and in 1994, she was chosen Composer of the Year by the Oregon Music Teachers Association (OMTA). President of Cascadia Composers, NACUSA, Jan is a member of the OMTA piano syllabus adjudicating staff, adjudicates student compositions, is a program/workshop presenter for OMTA, and is chair of OMTA's Extended Study of Musicianship and Repertoire (ESMAR).

Liz Nedela, BA, MEd, MM, NCTM, teaches piano and composition in Vancouver WA. She strives to write music that is accessible to musicians and audiences of varied preferences: educational, avant garde, religious, instrumental and vocal. She uses a wide variety of styles creating solo, ensemble, orchestral and choral music. She is fond of experimental scales; modes and pentatonic; ethnic music; counterpoint; and the continued quest for melody in all styles of music. Many commissions have ensued from Chapters of MTNA, two art galleries, church music, and concert music. As the 2014 [WSMTA](#) Commissioned Composer of the Year, a piano duet resulted from an in-depth study of pentatonic scales, ranging from ancient to present day jazz influence.

Cynthia Stillman Gerdes writes chamber music inspired by the natural world, which includes the wild, the vagaries of human nature, as well as what goes on with the living characters she finds flying, swimming, and crawling in her own backyard. Her favorite part of life is to collaborate with fine musicians, poets, and artists with her music. Cynthia grew up in the northwest, has taught piano in her private studio as well as a twenty-year stint at Portland State University. She is past vice president of Cascadia Composers and is a founding member of Crazy Jane Composers. The CD of Solo and Chamber Music, which shows a wide variety of her work, was released in 2011.

Jeff Winslow, a fourth-generation Oregonian, studied music and electronics at U.C. Berkeley, getting serious about composition in the mid-90's as High Modernism finally relinquished its death grip on the world of art music. His work has been performed by fEARnoMUSIC, Portland Vocal Consort, and Resonance Ensemble, and also at Cascadia Composers, Seventh Species, Cherry Blossom Musical Arts, and Oregon Bach Festival concerts, as well as several other locations around the region, often with the composer at the piano. He is a founding member of Cascadia Composers, a chapter of NACUSA centered on the lower watershed of the Columbia River.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Perceptions of Sound: Saturday, January 30, 2016, 7:30 pm: First Christian Church in Eugene

Attachments and Detachments: February 28, 2016, 3:00 pm: PSU Lincoln Hall, room 75

Night, Too, Shall Be Beautiful: The Choral Arts Ensemble concert will include the music of Cascadia Composers: April 23, 7:30 pm and April 24, 3:00 pm at The Old Church, 1422 SW 11th, Portland

Cascadia Invokes the Muses: Cascadia Composers partner with **The Mousai:** May 22, 2:00 pm, First Presbyterian Church, 1200 SW Alder St., Portland (Preview concert – May 14, 2:00 pm, Valley Community Church).