

AMERICAN COMPOSERS ALLIANCE

COMPOSERS NOW FESTIVAL 2013

Lunatics at Large



Hannah Fuerst, soprano
Laura Falzon, flute
Ben Ringer, clarinet
Arthur Moeller, violin
Jen Herman, viola
Michael Haas, cello
Manon Hutton-DeWys, piano

Guest Artists:
Jessika Kenney, soprano
Miranda Cuckson, violin
Steven Beck, piano

Tuesday, February 19, 2013 at 7:30pm
Symphony Space, Leonard Nimoy Thalia
2537 Broadway at 95th St. New York City

PROGRAM

ELEANOR CORY

Things Are

2011

Laura Falzon, flute; Manon Hutton-DeWys, piano

BRIAN FENNELLY

Sukhi!

1999

NY Premiere

Ben Ringer, clarinet; Arthur Moeller, violin;
Michael Haas, cello; Manon Hutton-DeWys, piano

RICHARD BROOKS

Circular Motions

2005

I. *Maelstrom*

II. *In the Eye of the storm*

III. *Whirlwind*

Laura Falzon, flute; Ben Ringer, clarinet;
Manon Hutton-DeWys, piano

JAN GILBERT

The Indigo Rooftop of the Night

2012

A setting of the Persian Poetry of Fatemeh Keshavarz

World Premiere

Jessika Kenney, Soprano; Laura Falzon, alto flute;
Jen Herman, viola; Michael Haas, cello

- - - INTERMISSION - - -

RICHARD CAMERON-WOLFE

Labyrinths

1990

A cycle of songs on poems of W. S. Merwin

NY Premiere

I. *Memory of the Loss of Wings*

II. *The Search*

III. *A Door*

Hannah Fuerst, soprano; Michael Haas, cello;
Steven Beck, piano

LOUIS KARCHIN

Rhapsody for violin and piano

2010

Miranda Cuckson, violin; Steven Beck, piano

TOM FLAHERTY

Scenes from Sarajevo

2003

Six poems of Beverly Lafontaine

NY Premiere

Hannah Fuerst, soprano; Jen Herman, viola;
Michael Haas, cello

- Please join us directly after the concert for a brief discussion with the composers.

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS



ELEANOR CORY'S work has been recognized by the Fromm Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, Mary Flagler Cary Trust, Alice M. Ditson Fund, Yale University, the MacDowell Colony, and the American Composers Alliance Recording Award. Performances and commissions of her work include the New Jersey Symphony (Hugh Wolf), Hudson Valley Philharmonic (JoAnn Falletta), Chamber Symphony of Princeton, Colonial Symphony, St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, New York New Music Ensemble, DaCapo Chamber Players, Speculum Musicae, and soloists Ursula Oppens, Curtis Macomber, Margaret Kampmeier, Christopher Oldfather, Elizabeth Farnum, Gregory Fulkerson, Jayn Rosenfeld, Sue Ann Kahn, Patricia Spencer, and many others. She studied at Sarah Lawrence (BA) Harvard (MAT), New England Conservatory (MM), and Columbia (DMA). Her teachers include Charles Wuorinen, Chou Wen-chung, Bülent Arel and Meyer Kupferman.

THINGS ARE for flute and piano (2011) was commissioned for a Milton Babbitt memorial recording project sponsored by the journal Perspectives of New Music. The origins of the piece began at a concert at Merkin Hall. My piece was on the first half, Babbitt's piece on the second. During an intermission panel, he said that the chords in my piece sounded like Bill Evans. I didn't know at the time that he had a great interest in jazz. His complement took me back to my days as a suburban kid listening to jazz in smoked-filled New York jazz clubs. We both knew the words to all the standards. In essence, he gave me "permission" to claim the music that had been in my ears for years. I began to realize that the chords of bebop jazz were often revoicings of Schoenberg and Stravinsky chords with different spacing and rhythms. *Things Are* moves between two worlds. The piece starts out in a style that is abstract in the way much of Babbitt's music is, then moves through a more "romantic," climactic section after which the jazz standard *All the Things You Are* enters, first harmonically, and then in the flute soaring above the piano. The ending summarizes some of the gestures and harmonies of the piece in a slow coda, as my sadness grew remembering my discussions with Milton Babbitt.



BRIAN FENNELLY studied music composition and theory at Yale with Mel Powell, Donald Martino, Allen Forte, Gunther Schuller, and George Perle (M.Mus '65, Ph.D. '68). From 1968 to 1997 he was Professor of Music in the Faculty of Arts and Science at New York University, where he is now Professor Emeritus.

In addition to a Guggenheim fellowship, his awards include three fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, three composer grants from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund, two Koussevitsky Foundation commissions, and an award for lifetime achievement from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Major works include *In Wildness is the Preservation of the World*, *Fantasy Variations*, and *A Thoreau Symphony*, all for orchestra, choral settings of Shelley, Keats and Whitman, three string quartets, three brass quintets, two piano sonatas, and *Skyscapes I - IV* for mixed quintets. He is co-director of the Washington Square Contemporary Music Society, which he founded in 1976.

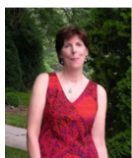
SUKHI! was composed in June 1999 for a celebration honoring the Korean composer Sukhi Kang on the occasion of his retirement from Seoul National University. The salient musical materials are the opening “cheer” (Suk-hi!), skittish figures tossed back and forth among the instruments, and the quiet solemn phrases introduced at the entry of the piano. These form a concise portrait of the composer, whom I have known and respected for over 35 years.



RICHARD BROOKS holds a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from the Crane School of Music, Potsdam College, a Master's in Composition from Binghamton University and a PhD in Composition from New York University. In December 2004 he retired from Nassau Community College where he taught for 30 years; for the last 22 years he served as department chairperson. From 1977 to 1982 he was Chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Society of University Composers (now the Society of Composers, Inc.). He is an active composer with over ninety works to his credit, including two full-length operas. His children's opera, *Rapunzel*, was most recently produced by the Cincinnati Opera, giving 65 performances.

CIRCULAR MOTIONS for flute, B-flat clarinet, and piano was a response to a suggestion from Esther Lamneck. We were caught in a blizzard at the Rochester airport in December 2003. She asked me if I'd ever written anything for this particular combination. She was performing with such an ensemble but was having trouble finding pieces. I decided to write this “surprise” for her. “Maelstrom” is defined by Merriam-Webster as “a strong often violent whirlpool.” I'm not sure why I picked this title. It may be that I was still remembering the blizzard conditions in Rochester. Musically, the work plays around with an interestingly symmetrical tone row and a small

portion of the Fibonacci series. After the first performance of *Maelstrom* in June 2005 I was persuaded that it was really the first movement in a larger work. So I added two more movements in the summer of 2005. I decided to continue the swirling metaphor. *In the Eye of the Strom* is focused around a short Fibonacci series: 1 2 3 5 and its reverse. Since the combined total of the series adds to eleven, I use the meter 11/8 for large sections. *Whirlwind* is pretty self-explanatory. Hopefully, it provides an exhilarating finale.



JAN GILBERT has been commissioned by Chanticleer, the Dale Warland Singers, Ars Nova Singers, LISTEN, the American Guild of Organists, St. Paul Civic Symphony, the University of Illinois Chamber Singers, the University of Maine Chamber Singers Hamline University A Cappella Singers, WomanVoice Choral Festival, and the United Nations Association International Choir of Houston. Gilbert's interest in experimental and non-western music has led her to create many works centering on cross-cultural themes, including choral works *Let that day be darkness* (set in Krio), *Nightchants* (Native American, African and Sanskrit poetry), *One Evening* (a setting in Tamil for South Indian dance and choir), and orchestral works *Nine in One* (a setting of a Hmong folktale) and *Khoj: the Search for Light* (a collaboration with Asian Indian story teller Gita Kar). Chanticleer features selections from *NightChants on Sound in Spirit* and *The Boy Whose Father was God*.

THE INDIGO ROOFTOP OF THE NIGHT is dedicated to soprano Jessika Kenney, who has been the featured vocalist on several CD's of classical Persian music with ney master Ostad Hossein Omoumi. This is the second work I have written celebrating Persian poetry. The first, *Songs of Transformation*, was written for choir and ney, and premiered by Professor Omoumi. In this new setting of the Persian contemporary poet and Rumi scholar Fatemeh Keshavarz, I am exploring writing in melodic modes (although not the exact *dastgahs* of Persian music, which follow complex musical form). In working with Persian poetry, I am searching for musical structures that convey the beauty of the Farsi language and the poet's expression of love.



RICHARD CAMERON-WOLFE (pianist, composer, lecturer) studied with Bernhard Heiden, Iannis Xenakis, and John Eaton, and his mentors included Dane Rudhyar, Noel Farrand, and the painter Robert Kostka. After teaching at Purchase College-SUNY for 24 years, he left the academic world in 2002 to focus on composing and performing – often in Eastern Europe. Recently, in Riga, Latvia, as part of the city's "White Nights" Festival, he created and directed the 90-minute multi-media event "Portal: Black Hole". He has recently led

music workshops in Kiev for choreographers and dancers. Before returning to the USA, he worked in collaboration with the Kharkov Guitar Quartet, collaborating on the creation of a sacred cantata, *Breathless*, to be premiered in the spring of 2013, at the Zhitomir Festival. He is planning an interdisciplinary workshop (June 2013 in Riga) titled “Fiasco: creativity in uncharted territory” and a composer-pianist profile concert in Siberia (Novosibirsk, November 2013). His piano CD, “Paris X: Musica Obscura of Dane Rudhyar and Erik Satie” was released in 2003 on the Furious Artisans label.

In 1977, I discovered the poetry of W. S. Merwin, attracted by the title of his 1973 collection, “Writings to an Unfinished Accompaniment.” Commissioned to write a song cycle for a tenor and his pianist wife soon thereafter, I selected three poems from this volume, including a ‘cello in the texture – functioning as either an ‘objective observer’ or a ‘compassionate mediator’. The central image of **LABYRINTHS** is that of a portal, opening into --- a life lost? --- a life regained? --- a life discovered?



Described by The New Yorker as a composer of “fearless eloquence,” **LOUIS KARCHIN** has been honored with performances of his music throughout the United States, Europe and the Far East. His *Chamber Symphony* was presented in August 2011 on Tanglewood’s Festival of Contemporary Music in Seiji Ozawa Hall (with the composer conducting), and his first opera, *Romulus*, released by Naxos Records in 2011, has garnered notable press attention internationally. Mr. Karchin is currently at work on a second opera, to be showcased later this season both by the Fort Worth Opera, and the Center for Contemporary Opera in NYC. The recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship for 2011-12, Mr. Karchin was honored in May of 2012 with the inaugural Andrew Imbrie Award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. A frequent conductor of new music, Mr. Karchin co-founded the Orchestra of the League of Composers, and with them has conducted world or New York premieres by Elliott Carter, Missy Mazzoli, David Rakowski, and Shulamit Ran, among many others. He is Professor of Music at New York University.

My **RHAPSODY FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO** (2006, revised 2010) takes its title from its initial creative impulse: to compose a work of restless quality, with a constant ebb and flow. Added into this mix are some sudden periodic changes of character. Overall, there is a fast-slow-fast form, but underlying this is also a progression from atonality to tonality and back. The other important element of the piece is its conception as chamber music, where the violin and piano are of relatively equal importance, working in partnership, rather than either instrument exhibiting a virtuoso display.



TOM FLAHERTY has received grants, prizes, awards, and residencies from the NEA, NEH, American Music Center, the Pasadena Arts Council, the Massachusetts Council for the Arts and Humanities, the Delius Society, the University of Southern California, "Meet the Composer", and Yaddo. He earned degrees at Brandeis University, S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, and the University of Southern California; his primary teachers in composition include Martin Boykan, Bülent Arel, Robert Linn, and Frederick Lesemann. He studied cello with Timothy Eddy and Bernard Greenhouse. A founding member of the Almont Ensemble, he currently holds the John P. and Magdalena R. Dexter Professorship in Music and is Director of the Electronic Studio at Pomona College. He is an active cellist in the Los Angeles area. His music has been performed by: Volti and Earplay in San Francisco; Dinosaur Annex in Boston; Speculum Musicae, and Odyssey Chamber Players in New York; Concorde in Dublin; Gallery Players in Toronto; Xtet and Ensemble GREEN in Los Angeles; and by many solo artists. His recordings are on Bridge, Albany, Klavier, SEAMUS, Capstone, and Advance labels. Recent commissions include *Delusional Paths* for Volti, *A Heckuva Job* for guitarist David Starobin, *When Time Was Young* for Lucy Shelton, *Moments of Inertia* for Dinosaur Annex, *Looking for Answers* for the Mojave Trio and *Gleeful Variants* and *Shepard's Pi* for Genevieve Feiwen Lee.

SCENES FROM SARAJEVO is based on six poems by Pasadena poet Beverly Lafontaine. In a world with instantaneous dissemination of words and pictures, the cruelty and hardships that humanity inflicts upon itself are commonplace, although the details vary from one time and place to the next. The siege of Sarajevo has its own unforgettable imagery that no one exposed to the media in the early 1990s can easily forget: innocent people crossing a city bridge sporadically shot by snipers. A cellist playing alone in a town square, in defiance of the shells exploding around him. The news of many long-missing men discovered alive (or sometimes dead) only by their appearance on the television. Bodies floating down the river through the center of town. Ms. Lafontaine's poems eloquently convey these scenes from various perspectives, often with an entirely unexpected intimacy and compassion. We see through the eyes of worried and grieving husbands, wives, children, and even a sniper. I have long been attracted to the folk music of the Balkan region, and this setting reflects that, with drones, the mild dissonance of conflicting modes, and changing meters. The harmonic language of Ravel's *Chansons Madécasses* was also in my mind, possibly because of its text. The ethnic tensions underlying the text of Ravel's piece are perhaps more suppressed, but their ultimate violent outcome is never in doubt. *Scenes from Sarajevo* is dedicated to Gwendolyn Lytle and Cynthia Fogg.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Hailed as "young, energetic, and finely polished" by The New York Times, **Lunatics at Large** is a dynamic New York City-based ensemble comprised of two winds, three strings, soprano voice, and piano. Formed in 2007, the group met at Mannes College of Music, where they collaborated on a year of intensive study and performance of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. Madly inspired by Schoenberg's masterpiece and free from curricular restraints, Lunatics at Large later conspired to set forth into the world, commissioning and championing works written for the "Pierrot" ensemble while exploring the sonic and harmonic diversity of modern chamber music repertoire. Through thematic, interdisciplinary performances in ensemble formations ranging from solo to the full septet and beyond, the group juxtaposes established masterpieces of the 20th century against more recent works, making it possible for the audience member to journey from Debussy to Berio to a young, emerging composer in one evening. Lunatics at Large thus encourages listeners to hear similarities between works written decades apart and to consider recent compositions within the context of the evolution of classical music since 1900.

Hannah Fuerst, soprano

Soprano Hannah Fuerst is delighted to appear again with the Lunatics at Large. Favorite operatic roles include Soeur Constance (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*), Cunegonde (*Candide*), and Barbarina (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, Aspen Opera Theater Center). A sought-after singer of new music, Ms. Fuerst has also been a guest of such distinguished groups as American Opera Projects, Cygnus Ensemble, and Mimesis. She premiered the role of Cassie in *The Theory of Everything* with the Encompass New Opera Theatre, and she enjoys frequent collaborations with composer Mohammed Fairouz. Ms. Fuerst holds Master's and Bachelor's degrees from the Manhattan School of Music and is on faculty at the Larchmont Music Academy.

Laura Falzon, flute

Flutist Laura Falzon has performed throughout the United States, Europe and Asia as a soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. Praised by the Musical Times magazine for her "versatile technique" and hailed by the Music & Musicians as "an excellent instrumentalist", Falzon has premiered numerous works written for her including works by Shirish Korde, Alvin Singleton, Theodore Wiprud, Halim-El-Dabh, Mohammed Fairouz, Dai Fujikura, Alice Shields, Bushra El-Turk & Charles Camilleri. The recipient of numerous awards and grants, she is a graduate of Columbia University, and studied flute with Sebastian Bell, Julius Baker, Susan Milan and Kim McCormick. She is a founding member and artistic director of Id-Dinja ensemble and ISSA Sonus ensemble and teaches at the City College of New York, and Columbia University's Teachers College.

Ben Ringer, clarinet

Ben Ringer has been a regular performer in New York since 2004. As a clarinetist he has played with ensembles including The New York Youth Symphony, The Chelsea Symphony, Ensemble 212, and *Alaria*, and is a founding member of *Lunatics at Large*. He studied clarinet and conducting at Mannes College: The New School for Music, where he serves as adjunct faculty. He also teaches at *Kidville*, and clarinet, guitar, piano, and music theory at Musipire Inc. As a conductor Ben has led orchestra performances at Carnegie Hall and Symphony Space, and will direct Sondheim's *Into The Woods* with the New Vision Players in April 2013. In his spare time he enjoys biking around Manhattan and savoring the flavors of his roommate's homemade chocolate chip cookies.

Arthur Moeller, violin

Arthur Moeller's career enthusiastically embraces old and new music. He has appeared as soloist with the Pittsburgh Youth, Westmoreland, and Johnstown Symphonies, has toured Europe and China as a member of small and large orchestras, and has performed chamber music in Alice Tully Hall, the Sculpture Garden at MoMA, and Jordan Hall in Boston. Originally from Pittsburgh, Arthur studied at the Juilliard School under Naoko Tanaka, Choliang Lin, and Ronald Copes, and continues to live in New York City.

Jen Herman, viola

Violist Jen Herman has performed with the Flint, Lansing, Midland, Spoleto Festival USA, Princeton, Symphony in C, New Haven, and Glens Falls Symphony Orchestras, and is the principal violist of Chelsea Opera and the Medomak Conductor's Retreat. As a chamber musician, Ms. Herman has performed in venues such as Carnegie's Weill Hall, Detroit's Orchestra Hall, MoMA's sculpture garden, and is a founding member of *Lunatics at Large*. A passionate teacher, Ms. Herman is a teaching artist for the Brooklyn Philharmonic and Mango's Place, and recently opened up the Clinton Hill Music Studio to serve her Brooklyn community.

Michael Haas, cello

Michael Haas has established himself as an accomplished and exciting young cellist in New York and abroad. The New York Times recently described his playing as "refined and attractive." As a member of the Momena Quartet, he regularly premieres new works for string quartet, including two Koussevitzky Foundation commissions. Michael has also appeared performing chamber music at Alice Tully Hall, the Kennedy Center, and as a guest at the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society collaborating with esteemed artists such as Claude Frank, Ida Kavafian, Steven Tenenbom, and Lowell Liebermann. Michael holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School studying with David Soyer, Peter Wiley, Joel Krosnick, and Darrett Adkins. He has recently performed at the Yellow Barn, Tanglewood, and Taos Music Festivals.

Manon Hutton-DeWys, piano

Praised in *Musical America* for her “sensitive dynamic shadings and subtle use of rubato,” Manon Hutton-DeWys has performed in some of classical music's best-known venues, including Carnegie Hall's Weill and Zankel Halls, the Salle Cortot in Paris, Symphony Space, and Bargemusic. Hutton-DeWys has appeared as a soloist with the American Symphony Orchestra and the Bard College Orchestra. She holds degrees from Mannes College, Bard College, and Simon's Rock College. She is a doctoral student at the City University of New York Graduate Center and studies with Thomas Sauer. Hutton-DeWys teaches at Greenwich House Music School and serves on the executive board of the Piano Teachers Congress of New York.

GUEST PERFORMERS**Jessika Kenney, voice**

Jessika Kenney is a Seattle-based vocalist and composer known for her experimental recording collaborations, particularly with composer/violist Eyvind Kang, and for devotion to the living practice of traditional vocal arts. She has studied and performed Classical Persian radif and poetry with Ostad Hossein Omoumi since 2004 and is a student of the Persian language. Kenney is also an avid performer of Central Javanese *sindhenan* in the US and Indonesia since 1997, and has a Bachelor's degree in Music from Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle where she teaches Voice.

Miranda Cuckson, violin

Miranda Cuckson is highly acclaimed for performing a wide range of repertoire. She is one of the most active and foremost interpreters of contemporary music. Her CD of Luigi Nono's "la lontananza nostalgica utopica futura" was named a Best Recording of 2012 by The New York Times. She has also recorded concerti by Korngold and Ponce, and music by Shapey, Martino, Finney and Hersch. She recently performed Piston's Concerto with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. She founded Nunc and teaches violin at Mannes College. Miranda performs at such venues as the Berlin Philharmonie, 92nd St Y, and the Marlboro, Bard, Bodensee, and Lincoln Center festivals.

Steven Beck, piano

Praised by The New Yorker as “one of the city's finest young pianists”, Steven Beck continues to garner international acclaim for his performances and recordings. Anthony Tommasini of The New York Times described one of Beck's recent concerts as “exemplary” and “deeply satisfying.” Other highlights include works by Wuorinen on the Guggenheim's "Works and Process" series, Messiaen's "Concert a Quatre" with the Aspen Festival Orchestra, and performances at Darmstadt and Vienna with the Talea Ensemble. He will also present his tenth annual performances of Bach's “Goldberg Variations” on Christmas Eve and “Brandenburg Concertos” on New Year's Eve.



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