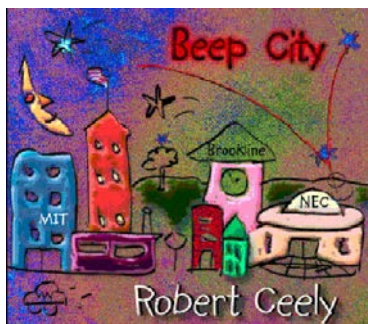




Dane Rudhyar
Eleanor Cory
Robert Ceely
John J. Becker
Beth Wiemann
Scott L. Miller
Lionel Nowak

Keith Kirchoff
Shen Wen
Christopher Oldfather
Daniel Colalillo



Program

Dane Rudhyar *Ecologue for Piano* (1934)
Keith Kirchoff

Eleanor Cory *Play Within a Play* (1997)
Christopher Oldfather

Robert Ceely *Seven Etudes for Piano* (2002)*
Shen Wen

- i. pianofortétude
- ii. black and whitétude
- iii. glassétude
- iv. tunétude
- v. groovétude
- vi. palmétude
- vii. impromptétude

INTERMISSION

John Becker *Four Modern Dances* (1938)
Keith Kirchoff

Beth Wiemann *Chimes and Misdemeanors* (2014)*
Christopher Oldfather

Scott L. Miller *Every Problem is a Nail* (2014)*
Keith Kirchoff

Lionel Nowak *Materialisms* (1949)
Daniel Colalillo

- i. Pentavariant
- ii. Void
- iii. Chromantic
- iv. Intermezzo
- v. Distroit

*NY premiere

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

(in concert order)

Dane Rudhyar (1895-1985) was born in Paris, France and studied briefly at the Paris Conservatoire. In 1913 Durand published his first short piano pieces and a small book on Claude Debussy. His career and studies were interrupted by the war, but he composed polytonal music for a radically avant garde “multimedia” performance, *Metachory*, featuring abstract, ritualistic dance. Rudhyar came to New York in 1916 for its performance at the Metropolitan Opera (Pierre Monteux, conductor) in April 1917—the very night America declared war on Germany. Rudhyar remained in America and reached California in 1920, here he wrote scenic music for the Hollywood Pilgrimage Play (1920–22) and won the \$1,000 W.A. Clark, Jr. prize offered for an orchestral work by the then-new Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. He made an intensive study of eastern philosophies and music in New York and California and was active in the founding and development of the International Composers Guild and the California New Music Society. In 1925 his *Surge of Fire* (for small orchestra and three pianos) was performed. Throughout the 1920s he wrote articles and books and gave lectures and recitals promoting “world music” (a term he coined at the time), a new approach to music, and the concepts of “dissonant harmony” and “syntonism.” His evocative music continues to speak to younger generations as it lives on. Rudhyar’s *Out of the Darkness* (1982) received its world premiere by the Cleveland Orchestra in 2013.

Rudhyar’s piano pieces from the 1920s and 30s (such as *Three Paeans*, *Crucifixion*, *Tetragrams*, and *Apotheosis*) noted by Carol Oja (Making Music Modern) were given spiritual or metaphysical titles. She calls the pieces, as well as their titles “dissonant aphorisms pronounced by a sage.” In 1928, John Becker described Rudhyar’s piano music in the South Bend News as “tremendously conceived and for me indescribably beautiful...” **Eclogue**, a “tone poem for piano”, was first composed in 1934 in New Mexico.

Eleanor Cory's work has been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts, Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, Fromm Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund, Alice M. Ditson Fund, Yale University, the MacDowell Colony, and the PSC-CUNY Research Foundation. Her latest solo CD was released on the Naxos label in October, 2015. Previous solo CDs are on the Albany, CRI, and Soundspells labels. Her music is published by C.F. Peters, APNM, Subito Music, and ACA. Performances and commissions include the New Jersey Symphony (Hugh Wolf), Hudson Valley Philharmonic (JoAnn Falletta), St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, New York New Music Ensemble, DaCapo Chamber Players, Atlantic String Quartet,

Cygnus Ensemble, League-ISCM, Momenta String Quartet, New York Virtuoso Singers, Singers, and soloists Elizabeth Farnum, Chris Finckel, Stephen Gosling, Curtis Macomber, Ursula Oppens, and Jayn Rosenfeld. Cory studied at Sarah Lawrence (BA), Harvard, (MAT), New England Conservatory (MM), and Columbia University (DMA) with Meyer Kupferman, Charles Wuorinen, Chou Wen-chung, and Bulent Arel. She has taught at Yale, Manhattan School of Music, Sarah Lawrence, CUNY: Brooklyn, Baruch and Kingsborough , and The New School. She is currently Chair of Composition at Mannes College of Music Prep Division.

The title of **“Play Within a Play”** for Solo Piano was inspired by the play within a play in Shakespeare's “Hamlet.” The reference is to the melodramatic atmosphere of the play rather than an attempt at any one-on-one musical references to its plot. There are two introductions, one very slow and improvisatory, the other, quite wildly dramatic. The music that follows is a Theme and Variations on a slow jazz chorale. The stark contrasts among the variations can be heard as references to some of the inner emotions in Hamlet's complex mind. Many thanks to Christopher Oldfather who has played the piece before and says he enjoys the sections with the scales, arpeggios, and other runs that move in and out of the piece.

Robert Ceely (1930-2015) was a composer and an educator. His compositions include solo, chamber, and orchestral music as well as music for tape and tape with instruments. He attended the New England Conservatory where he studied with Francis Cooke and completed further studies with Darius Milhaud and Leon Kirchner at Mills College, with Roger Sessions, and with Edward Cone and Milton Babbitt at Princeton University. From 1963-64, he composed music in the Electronic Music Studio in Milan as a guest of The Italian Government. His ballet “Beyond the Ghost Spectrum”, commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation with choreography by James Waring, was performed at Tanglewood with Michael Tilson Thomas conducting and the opera, “Automobile Graveyard”, after a play by Fernando Arrabal, was presented at the New England Conservatory in 1995. He received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ditson Fund, the Manon Jarroff dancers, the Massachusetts Arts Council, the Fromm Music Foundation and others. He taught at the Naval School of Music, The Lawrenceville School, Robert College in Istanbul, and for thirty-eight years at the New England Conservatory where he established and directed the Electronic Music Studio and taught composition. In 1995, he was honored with an Outstanding Alumni Award. He retired from teaching in 2003 and continued to devote his time and energy to composition. Notable quotes:

--"To me music is organized sound in time. Whether my music is instrumental, vocal, electronic or a combination, the impetus is the idea; the medium chosen is a result of the idea."

--“I applied to Mills College (and only Mills) because I wanted to study with Milhaud. I applied to Princeton (and only Princeton) because I wanted to study with Sessions. One should not study too long or with too many teachers.”

--“Composing is so hard that I feel I will never get to a point where it is easy.”

--“Boston in the Fall of 1950 was an exciting place especially for a country bumpkin. I lived around the corner from Symphony Hall, and within walking distance of five jazz clubs. Exciting chamber concerts were performed at MIT, which I attended with Leroy Parkins, Dick Twardzig, and others.”

John Becker (1886 – 1961) John J. Becker was the only Midwestern member of a group of ultramodernist American composers known as the “American Five” (Charles Ives, Henry Cowell, Carl Ruggles, and Wallingford Riegger). He was known for his use of difficult techniques of counterpoint and harmony. Becker’s most important works include *Symphonia Brevis* (1930-1931), *Abongo* (1932), *A Marriage with Space* (1935), and *Privilege and Privation* (1939). He was a pianist, a conductor, a writer on music, and a music administrator. Becker was born in Henderson, Kentucky, and began his formal musical education at the Cincinnati Conservatory, receiving his diploma in 1905. He then pursued graduate studies at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music in Milwaukee, where he earned a doctorate in composition in 1923. His composition teachers included Alexander von Fielitz, Carl Busch, and Wilhelm Middelschulte. In the early 1930s he was especially active as a conductor, giving midwestern premieres of works by his close friend Charles Ives.

Becker wrote seven symphonies, as well as concertos, orchestral suites, songs, music for dance and many religious choral works. In *Musicalia*, Henry Cowell explained that Becker “bases his style on the art of the great early vocal polyphonists of the Catholic Church - Palestrina, Vittoria, etc.”. Becker named many works “soundpieces”, a literal English translation of the word “sonatas”. From 1935 to 1941 he administered the Federal Music Project in Minnesota, and for a time was associate editor of the ***New Music Quarterly***, founded by Henry Cowell, whom he had first met in 1928. He returned to teaching at Barat College in Lake Forest, Illinois from 1943 until his retirement in 1957. (from writings of Don Gillespie and sources in the ACA Archives.)

Beth Wiemann was raised in Burlington, VT, studied composition and clarinet at Oberlin College and received her PhD in composition from Princeton University. Her works have been performed in New York, Boston, Houston, San Francisco, Washington DC, the Dartington Festival (UK), the "Spring in Havana 2000 Festival (Cuba), and elsewhere by the ensembles Continuum, Parnassus, Earplay, ALEA III, singers Paul Hillier, Susan Narucki and others. Her compositions have won

awards from the Orvis Foundation, Copland House, the Colorado New Music Festival, New York Treble Singers, American Women Composers, Marimolin and others as well as various arts councils. She now teaches clarinet, composition and theory at the University of Maine. A CD of Wiemann's music, **Why Performers Wear Black**, was released on Albany Records in 2004. Works of hers also appear currently on the Raviello, Capstone, innova and Americus record labels, and her music is available from American Composers Alliance in New York.

Chimes and Misdemeanors was written as a memoriam to Lee Hyla, so it's very appropriate to hear it on a concert in honor of another Boston composer (and colleague of Lee's), Robert Ceely. I knew Bob mainly as an interpreter of his music for clarinet, having performed a number of his solo works for the instrument from the 1980's on. I was very happy to see him and play for him before an ACA concert in New York 3 years ago. I remember that he was sorry he could not attend the concert itself, but was very enthusiastic about listening to his piece in preparation for the event. He will be missed, not just by performers of his music, but by his community of former students (which includes my husband, David Rakowski).

This piece uses the idea of "chiming" in sections of slow moving harmonies, and contrasts those sections with faster "misdemeanor" music. The later sections arpeggiate gestures from the piano's part into the electronic accompaniment and back, using similar harmonies from the elegiac opening phrases and spinning them into a more aggressive texture. The work was premiered by Michael Kirkendoll at the Cortona Sessions for New Music this past July.

Scott L. Miller's music has been described as 'inspir[ing] real hope optimism for the future of electroacoustic music.' (Simon Cummings, 5against4.com) and 'high adventure avant garde music of the best sort' (Classical-Modern Music Review). Known for his interactive electroacoustic chamber music and ecosystemic performance pieces, Miller is a Fulbright Scholar and has twice been named a McKnight Composer Fellow (2001, 2013). His music is recorded on New Focus Recordings, Panoramic, Innova, Eroica, CRS, rarescale and SEAMUS labels, and published by ACA (American Composers Alliance), Tetractys, and Jeanné. He is a Professor of Music at St. Cloud State University, and President of the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the U.S. www.scottlmiller.net

If the only tool you have is a hammer, ...

Every Problem is a Nail was commissioned by and written for pianist Keith Kirchoff. Supported in part by the American Composers Forum through the

2013 McKnight Composer Fellowship Program. When I was a student, more than a few professors attempted to teach me about the overtone series - and by extension, timbre - by holding a key down on a piano, and thwacking another key one or two octaves lower, saying "Hear that? Do you hear that?" I never heard it. But I do now, and so much more, with the aid of microphones and amplification. Frequencies between the keys and timbres often masked or ignored are revealed with these tools, further illuminated with the addition of digital signal processing.

Lionel Nowak (1911–1995), pianist, composer, educator, was born in Cleveland, Ohio. He made his debut as pianist at the age of 4 and at 12 became the youngest pianist to solo with the Cleveland Orchestra. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where his teachers included Beryl Rubinstein (piano) and Rogers Sessions, Quincy Porter and Herbert Elwell (theory and composition). He also studied with Edwin Fischer in Berlin. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Institute in 1988.

From 1938 to 1942 Nowak was music director and composer-pianist for the Doris Humphrey–Charles Weidman Modern Dance Company in New York City. He wrote several large ballets for the company (and one for José Limón). In the mid-1940s he was on the music faculties of Converse College and Syracuse University and then settled permanently in Bennington, Vermont, where he taught at Bennington College for 45 years. He toured nationally for the Association of American Colleges' Arts Program (1946-1963); was staff pianist of the Bennington Composers Conference (1950–1963); and at various times served as Chairman of the Board, Music Director and Senior Composer of the Chamber Music Conference and Composers Forum of the East (1970s-1980s).

In addition to his Bennington College teaching, he was Director of Development and Dean of Faculty from 1972 to 1975. He served on the steering committee of the Yale Seminar on Music Education and was consultant for the Manhattanville Music Curriculum Project. He was a trustee of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences and President from 1975 to 1977. In 1980 he was awarded a citation by the Vermont Council on the Arts. Nowak composed over 150 works from solos and concertos to song cycles and chamber music. His works are available through the American Composers Alliance (BMI) (composers.com) and have been recorded on CRI, Goldencrest, Opus One, and on the independent label AN.

Materialisms (1949) is among the solo piano pieces Nowak composed in the years just following his time with Humphrey-Weidman. In a 1988 interview he said, "I learned a lot about composing through the modern dance, charting new waters for the then recent fresh approach to dance." He also spoke of the encouragement of Otto

Luening, whom he first met at the Bennington School of the Dance in 1938. *Materialisms* is also the first piece on the new double CD "Lionel Nowak: Music for Solo Piano 1942-1991" and in the new collected print edition of these 18 solo piano works, published by American Composers Alliance.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Described as a “virtuosic tour de force” whose playing is “energetic, precise, (and) sensitive,” pianist and composer **Keith Kirchoff** works towards promoting under-recognized composers and educating audiences of the importance of new and experimental music. An active lecturer who has presented in countries throughout the world, his recital programs focus on the integration of computers and modern electronics. He has performed throughout North America, Europe, and

the Pacific Southwest. A strong advocate for modern music, Kirchoff has premiered over 100 new works and commissioned over two dozen compositions. As part of his commitment to fostering new audiences for contemporary music, Kirchoff has appeared at colleges and universities across the United States as a lecture-recitalist. Kirchoff’s primary teachers include Dean Kramer, Stephen Drury, and Paul Wirth. He received his Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Oregon in 2003 graduating summa cum laude and then received his Master of Music degree at New England Conservatory in 2005. He has also studied composition with Michael Gandolfi and Jeffrey Stolet, and conducting with Richard Hoenich. He has played with orchestras throughout the U.S., performing a wide range of concerti, including the Boston premiere of Charles Ives’s Emerson Concerto and the world premiere of Matthew McConnell’s Concerto for Toy Piano. Kirchoff has won awards from the Steinway Society, MetLife Meet the Composer, the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, and was named the 2011 Distinguished Scholar by the SMSA. Specializing on works which combine interactive electro-acoustics with solo piano, Kirchoff’s Electro-Acoustic Piano Tour has been presented in eight countries, and the first album in the Electro-Acoustic Piano series was released in 2011 on Thinking outLOUD Records. He has also recorded on the New World, Zerx, Tantara, New Focus, and SEAMUS labels.



Christopher Oldfather has devoted himself to the performance of 20th-century music for more than thirty years. He has participated in innumerable world-première performances, in every possible combination of instruments, in cities all over America. He has been a member of Boston's Collage New Music since 1979, New York City's Parnassus since 1997, appears regularly in instrumentalists of all kinds in recitals throughout the United States. In 1986 he presented his recital début in Carnegie Recital Hall,

and since then he has pursued a career as a freelance musician. This work has taken him as far afield as Moscow and Tokyo, and he has worked on every sort of keyboard ever made, even including the Chromelodeon. He is widely known for his expertise on the harpsichord, and is one of the leading interpreters of twentieth-century works for that instrument. As a soloist he has appeared with the MET Chamber Players, the San Francisco Symphony, and Ensemble Modern in Frankfurt, Germany. His recording of Elliott Carter's violin-piano Duo with Robert Mann was nominated for two Grammy Awards. He has collaborated with the conductor Robert Craft, and can be heard on several of his recordings.



Pianist **Shen Wen**, a multifaceted performer, creator, thrives on making classical music fun and enjoyable for listeners. At age eight, Wen performed on Chinese national television and radio after winning the First Children's Piano Competition in Beijing, China. Since then, Wen has performed across the globe. She has concertized as soloist at Tchaikovsky Conservatory College, Shostakovich Conservatory, Rachmaninov Hall, Powell Symphony Hall, Tsinghua University, Central Academy of Fine Arts, and Great

Hall of People in China. Wen also continued to seize top prizes at various national and internal piano competitions. She is the First Prize winner of the Kingsville International Piano Competition, Corpus Christi International Piano Competition, St. Louis Presentation Society, and Hellam Young Artist Competition.

Wen is an avid New Music performer who has numerous pieces written and dedicated to her. At Jordan Hall in Boston she performed Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* without a conductor and worked with the late Milton Babbitt before performing *A Solo Requiem* for two pianos and soprano. Also at Jordan Hall, Wen premiered "Whitman 5 songs" for soprano and piano at the request of the composer, Robert Ceely. In 2013 she recorded and released Joseph Tyldesley's *Sonata for Native American Flute and Piano*; a piece which explored extended

technique on Native American flute through traditional western harmony and musical forms. Since moving to St. Louis in 2007, Wen has dedicated her time to teaching. Committed to introducing Chinese culture and music to St. Louis audiences, Wen is a founding member of the St. Louis Yangtze River Performing Arts Ensemble. Since the founding of this nonprofit organization in 2015, the Art Ensemble performers have collaborated with renowned Chinese artists and provided performance opportunities for Chinese performing arts companies in St. Louis.

Wen is a graduate of New England Conservatory where she studied with Wha Kyung Byun and worked with the composer Robert Ceely. She also studied with Jane Allen and attended the Preparatory School to the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China under the tutelage of Huisu Chen. Wen is a faculty member at the Saint Louis University and currently serves as the coordinator of keyboard studies.



Daniel Colalillo is a New York-based classical pianist. Daniel has been acknowledged by *The New York Times*, and has performed in numerous recitals at Carnegie Hall. Following his 2008 debut performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto no. 2 op. 18 in B flat major with the MK Symphony, Daniel has gone on to perform with the Purchase Symphony Orchestra. Daniel has given solo recitals at venues such as: Carnegie Hall, Bargemusic, Nicholas Roerich Museum, Spectrum, Steinway Hall, Princeton University, Drew University, CUNY Grad Center, and toured cities' such as Nashville, Toronto, and Montreal. Daniel's dedication to new

music has led him to many world premieres. While at Mannes he was selected to perform with MACE (Mannes American Composers Ensemble) directed by Lowell Liebermann. The MACE performances included works by Louis Karchin, Shulamit Ran, Lewis Spratlan, Ned Rorem, and the concert version premier of Tobias Picker's ballet score "Awakenings." Daniel also took this opportunity to work closely with Lowell Liebermann studying his piano works. Daniel graduated with his Masters in Piano Performance from Mannes College: The New School for Music where he studied with Thomas Sauer (Student of Jorge Bolet) and Eteri Andjaparidze (Prize Winner of Tchaikovsky Competition.) Daniel received a Bachelor of Music from Purchase: Conservatory of Music where he studied with Paul Ostrovsky (Student of Emil Gilels.) Daniel began playing piano at the late age of 15.

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