

University of Minnesota Duluth
New Music Festival
Program One
April 24, 2003

Featuring

Zeitgeist

Heather Barringer and Patti Cudd, percussion;
Anatoly Larkin, piano; Pat O'Keefe, woodwinds, Yuri Merzhevsky, violin

Program

Ablauf Magnus Lindberg

Like Water Bun-Ching Lam

Intermission

Quartet Scott Lindroth

Two in a dream...dancing Justin Rubin

Wails Frederic Rzewski

Ablauf (1983) for clarinet and two bass drums is a fast-flowing and breath-taking work that is enhanced by the instrument's polyphonic potential but that nevertheless retains its burgeoning love of freedom.

Like Water consists of a series of short self-contained movements. It makes reference to images of water and its various manifestations such as ice, steam, and mist. I had in mind a few Chinese saying while I was composing Like Water: "Relations between gentlemen are plain like water." "Years flow by like water." "Love tender like water."

—Bun-Ching Lam

My first idea for **Quartet** was the tune played in unison by the ensemble towards the beginning of the piece. It is heard throughout in various guises. The original, highly syncopated melody becomes a long, arching lyrical theme later on. Towards the end, the theme reappears enveloped in virtuosic figuration. The odd rhythmic character of the piece grew out of manipulating the numbers of the magic square in Dürer's engraving, 'Melancholia,' though the musical result is about as far from melancholy as I can imagine. Quartet was commissioned by Zeitgeist, the California E.A.R. Unit, and Relâche through the Meet the Composer/Readers' Digest Consortium Commission program.

— Scott Lindroth

Two in a dream...dancing was composed in response to an actual dream wherein lovers who find themselves at a ball, not knowing what the occasion or even why they are there, simply begin to join the dance. The opening number, *Waltz*, begins with a music-box-like piano solo, which is played cyclically as the percussion gradually integrate into the texture, letting way to the persistently declamatory, yet ornate phrases of the sax that bring the movement to its most complex and expressive. The untitled second dance, consists of a relentless texture of percussive patterning which supports a sometimes soaring sax solo, with melodic fragments drawn from the closing figure from the *Waltz*. The static, yet energetic texture recedes, just as the first had accumulated, and dissolves into the last movement, the *Saraband*, which is dominated by the capricious, yet melancholy elongated phrases given to the sax.

—Justin Rubin

Wails, written in late 1984, was commissioned by Zeitgeist. It is scored for two percussionists (playing marimba and steel drum, plus a number of secondary instruments), reed-player (sopranino saxophone and bass clarinet), and pianist. Underlying the piece's structure is a basic six-second period, which recurs throughout in groups of seven. There are eighteen such groups organized in three sections of 9, 3, and 6 groups each, with a coda at the end. The music is meant to be a long lament for the dead in war, which culminates in a dance at the end (which may be partly improvised by the musicians), as though it were possible by means of music to make them come alive again. I had originally intended to write for an Oriental double-reed instrument, but chose instead the E-flat sopranino saxophone for its ability both to execute precisely notated chromatic melodies and to simulate at the same time the microtonal intonation characteristic of much Eastern music.

—Frederic Rzewski

After studying at the Sibelius Academy in his native Finland, **Magnus Lindberg** (b. 1958) studied privately with Gérard Grisey and Vinko Globokar in Paris and attended courses given by Franco Donatoni (Siena) and Brian Ferneyhough (Darmstadt). His first major work, *Quintetto dell'Estate* (1979), shows a depiction of drama through gesture that is still highly relevant to his work today. In the eighties, he co-founded Toimii - an ensemble dedicated to experimentation in composition - which became a laboratory for developing many of Lindberg's ideas. *Kraft* (1983-85), in essence a concerto for the members of Toimii and orchestra, sees the distillation of Lindberg's compositional ideas and together with *Ur* (1986) shows Lindberg exploring further the processing of conventional sound with electronic devices. In the 1990s, pieces such as *Marea* (1990) and *Coyote Blues* (1993) are less concerned with the use of electronics and show Lindberg putting a stronger emphasis on the harmonic structure of his music. Recent works include *Engine* (1996), a commission from the London Sinfonietta, *Arena II* (1996) for sinfonietta, and *Related Rocks* (1997), an IRCAM commission for electronics, 2 pianos and percussion.

Born in the Macao region of China in 1954, **Bun-Ching Lam** began studying piano at the age of seven and gave her first public solo recital at fifteen. In 1976, she received a B.A. degree in piano performance from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She then

accepted a scholarship from the University of California at San Diego, where she studied composition with Bernard Rands, Robert Erickson, Roger Reynolds, and Pauline Oliveros. Her compositions have been featured in music festivals around the world such as the Bang on a Can (New York), New Music America (Los Angeles), Tokyo Summer Festival, Pacific Sounding (Japan), Hong Kong Arts Festival, ISCM World Music Days (Hong Kong), Steirische Herbst (Austria), and the 24 Heures Communication (Belgium). Her current projects include the chamber opera, *Wenj*, supported by the International Collaborative Project of Meet the Composer, and commissions from Chamber Music America and the New Jersey Symphony.

Scott Lindroth (b. 1958) was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and raised in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. He studied composition with Joseph Schwantner and Samuel Adler at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and later with Jacob Druckman, Bernard Rands, and Martin Bresnick at the Yale School of Music in New Haven, Connecticut. Lindroth's music has been performed by many orchestras and ensembles in the United States and Europe, including the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic, as well as the Netherlands Wind Ensemble, Zeitgeist, the California E.A.R. Unit, and other chamber groups. Lindroth has received awards and fellowships from the American Academy in Rome, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, among others. Since 1990, Lindroth has lived in Durham, North Carolina, where he serves on the faculty of Duke University.

Wearing the three hats of a composer, organist, and pianist, **Justin Rubin** (b.1971) maintains an active career in music on both sides of the performance stage. Initially educated under the tutelage of his father, he pursued formal training at the Manhattan School of Music Preparatory Division between 1986 and 1989, studying piano under Philip Kavin. He graduated from the State University of New York at Purchase in 1992 with the distinction of *Summa Cum Laude* where he studied composition and organ. Continuing at Purchase, Rubin graduated in 1994 with a Master of Fine Arts in composition. Following a 1994 Fulbright Scholarship to Denmark, Rubin was appointed Interim Choir Director and Organist at New York City's prestigious Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, where he also began composing numerous choral and ensemble pieces for liturgical and concert usage. It was during this time that he started to bring together the rigor of his academic compositional training and a writing style that could communicate with a diverse audience. This new tonal language was further developed during his three years in residence at the University of Arizona (1995-98) under the guidance of Daniel Asia while completing the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition. Since his appointment at UMD in 1998, he has continued to perform both in the US and in Europe and currently has over 400 compositions in his catalogue.

Frederic Rzewski attended Harvard College and Princeton University where he studied philosophy, Greek and music. Among his teachers in the latter area were Randall Thompson, Claudio Spies, Walter Piston and Milton Babbitt. Through friendships with Christian Wolff and David Behrman, and thanks to an early acquaintance with the work of John Cage, David Tudor, Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen, Rzewski

developed a strong interest in the composition and performance of experimental music. He was active as a pianist in Europe during the 1960s, and gained a wide reputation as an interpreter of new music.

Much of Rzewski's music is connected with what the composer describes as a 'commitment to social issues' and the *New Grove* terms his 'socialist political concerns' to be influenced by the philosophy of Herbert Marcuse. This preoccupation can be seen most clearly in works with texts, including *Coming Together/Attica*, in which a narrator reads from a prisoner's letter, but is also observable in such purely instrumental scores as *The People United Will Never Be Defeated!* (piano variations on a Chilean political song). "Works like *Coming Together/Attica*, *Jefferson*, and *Struggle*, tend," says the composer, "toward what might be called a structural realism, in which elements of folk music, jazz, and classical and experimental compositional techniques are often combined with texts expressing political content."

Founded in 1977, **Zeitgeist**'s mission is to enliven today's music and expand its public with performances that absorb, stimulate, and hearten. A family of musicians animated by a spirit of adventure and collaboration, Zeitgeist presents works of substance with passion and integrity, and strives to forge new links between musicians and music lovers through concerts, commissions, recordings, and dialogue with our audiences. Dedicated to contemporary music, in particular the music of the last twenty years, Zeitgeist has commissioned and performed music by both emerging composers and some of the finest established composers of our time including John Cage, Frederic Rzewski, Terry Riley, Eric Stokes, Harold Budd, La Monte Young, Annie Gosfield, Martin Bresnick, Mark Applebaum, Arthur Kreiger, Eleanor Hovda, Brent Michael Davids, Paul Dresner, Mary Ellen Childs and Janika Vandervelde. Zeitgeist has released four compact discs, including *She's a Phantom*, music of Harold Budd (New Albion Records); *Intuitive Leaps*, music of Terry Riley (Work Music London and Sony Music Entertainment); *A Decade*, music of Frederic Rzewski (O.O. Discs); and *Eric Stokes* (New World Records). We are currently awaiting the release of our newest CD, *If Tigers Were Clouds* (Innova recordings). Individual works we have recorded can also be heard on two other discs—*Earthworks*, featuring the music of Steve Heitzeg (Innova), and *Opere Della Musica Povera*, featuring the music of Martin Bresnick (CRI).

A non-profit organization incorporated in Minnesota, Zeitgeist receives generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts, COMPAS, the Target Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, Chamber Music America, Meet The Composer/Arts Endowment Commissioning Music/USA, The Bush Foundation, the Aaron Copland Fund, and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council and the Minnesota State Arts Board, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature.

Percussionist **Heather Barringer** joined Zeitgeist in 1990. In addition to performing and recording with Zeitgeist, she is a member of Mary Ellen Child's ensemble, Crash and has worked with many Twin Cities organizations, including Nautilus Music Theater Ensemble, The Dale Warland Singers, Guthrie Theater, and Ten Thousand Things Theater.

Anatoly Larkin was received his early music education in his native Russia and Scotland. In 2000 he graduated with a BMA in Piano Performance from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. In 2000 he moved to Minneapolis to pursue Piano Performance at the University of Minnesota, studying piano under Alexander Braginsky. Anatoly joined Zeitgeist in fall of 2002.

Patti Cudd has given concerts and the United States, China, Mexico, and Europe. She has commissioned a number of new pieces from the composers of her generation and has given close to one hundred premieres. Prior to joining Zeitgeist in 1999, she received a DMA in Contemporary Musical Studies at the University of California, San Diego. Patti teaches percussion and new music at UW-River Falls and is a Yamaha Performing Artist. received a Fulbright to study at the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music.

Woodwind player **Patrick O'Keefe** is a graduate of the New England Conservatory, Indiana University, and the University of California, San Diego. In San Diego, he performed regularly with the new music ensembles Sonor and Sirius. He has also appeared in concert with such notable improvisors as George Lewis, Wadada Leo Smith, and J.D. Parran. He is currently on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin, River Falls.