

University of Minnesota Duluth
Music Department

FIFTH ANNUAL NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL

Artistic Director: Justin Rubin

Guest Artists:

The Verdehr Trio

Walter Verdehr, Violin
Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr, Clarinet
Silvia Roederer, Piano

Program One (April 8, 2004)

A-Z of Contemporary Music

**Dash* (2001)

Jennifer Higdon

**Katachi-Katchi* (2002)

Robert Mann

**Rainwaves* (1997)

Joan Tower

Intermission

**V2R* (2003)

Krzyztof Knittel

**Tibetan Dance* (2001)

Bright Sheng

*Commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University

An acknowledged leader in the field of new music, the Verdehr Trio for thirty years has concentrated on molding and defining the personality of the violin-clarinet-piano trio. The Trio has created a large repertoire by commissioning over 160 new works from some of the world's most prominent and exciting composers--known and unknown, young and old, from this country and abroad. These efforts are entitled *The Making of a Medium* because, in a real sense, this is what has happened over the years.

A handful of earlier trios by Bartok, Stravinsky, Milhaud, Khachaturian, Berg and Ives showed the potential tonal and musical possibilities of this grouping. Now, with more than 170 works in this genre, the violin-clarinet-piano trio has become a viable chamber music medium whose substantial literature may be recognized together with other major mediums as the piano trio, woodwind and brass quintets and the piano quartet. To round out its repertoire with Classical and Romantic works, the Trio has rediscovered as well as transcribed 18th and 19th century pieces for inclusion in its concert programs.

The Verdehr Trio has performed throughout the world: in sixteen European countries, the former Soviet Union, in South and Central America as well as in Asia, Australia and in most of the United States. Among major concert halls where the Trio has appeared are Kennedy Center,

Lincoln Center, Library of Congress, Vienna's Brahmsaal, Sydney Opera House, London's Wigmore Hall, Auditorio de Madrid, Dvorak Hall in Prague, IRCAM Centre in Paris and Leningrad's Philharmonic Chamber Hall. The Trio has also played at various international festivals--the Spoleto Festival, Prague Spring Festival, the Vienna Spring Festival and the Grand Teton Music Festival. Recently the Trio received a Creative Programming Award from Chamber Music America.

In addition to trios, the group has also commissioned Trio Concertos from Buhr, David, Ott, Skrowaczewski and Wallace and performed these with Vienna's Tonkunstler Orchestra, the Honolulu Symphony, Prague Chamber Soloists, Vancouver CBC Orchestra, Grand Rapids and Flint, Michigan Orchestras as well as with the National Orchestra of Spain and the Grand Teton Festival Orchestra. Most recently, Double Concertos for violin and clarinet by James Niblock, William Wallace, Dinos Constantinides, and Paul Chihara have been completed and recorded.

To complement its commissioning efforts the Verdehr Trio has embarked upon a project of making CD recordings of the new works created for the Trio: *The Making of a Medium CD Series* on Crystal Records. A parallel project is *The Making of a Medium Video Series*, consisting of half-hour programs with interviews and discussions by both composers and performers as well as a complete performance of each work. Hosted by Martin Bookspan, these are available in a variety of video formats from the Instructional Media Center at Michigan State University. The series includes composers Leslie Bassett, Alan Hovhaness, Karel Husa, Thea Musgrave, Ned Rorem and Gunther Schuller. A second series hosted by Peter Schickele will include new trios from Alexander Arutiunian, William Bolcom, Libby Larsen, Philippe Manoury, Gian Carlo Menotti, Peter Sculthorpe, Peter Schickele and Joan Tower. A third project, *The Making of a Medium Publishing Music Series*, has recently been inaugurated in cooperation with the MSU Press to help disseminate the repertoire as well as information about the trio CD recordings and videos (www.msu.edu/unit/msupress).

The Verdehr Trio is in residence at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. An article about the Trio appears in the new Groves Dictionary of Music.

WALTER VERDEHR was born in Gottschee, Yugoslavia and received his first violin instruction at the Conservatory of Music in Graz, Austria. A student at the Juilliard School, he was the first violinist to receive the doctorate there and as a Fulbright Scholar, he studied at the Vienna Academy of Music. He has taught at the International Congress of Strings faculty and at Michigan State University where he is professor of music. He has made numerous appearances as soloist with orchestras (Houston Symphony, orchestras in Michigan, New York, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, California, Czechoslovakia and Turkey) and in solo and chamber music recitals in the U.S. and Europe. The *London Times* wrote that "his performances was sweeping and vigorous". The *Vienna Express* said that "he is a perfect violinist with beautiful blossoming tone and noble musicality." He has served on the juries for the Naumberg and Prague Spring International violin competitions and has made solo recordings for Golden Crest Records and NET-TV. He performs on the ex "Stephens-Verdehr" Stradivarius of 1690.

ELSA LUDEWIG-VERDEHR studied at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and at the Eastman School from which she received a Performer's Certificate and the DMA degree. She has performed, lectured and given master classes at numerous National and International Clarinet Congresses and

for several years was a participant in the Marlboro Music Festivals and touring groups. She has appeared frequently in the U.S., Canada and abroad as a recitalist, clinician and soloist with orchestras and as principal clarinetist of the Grand Teton Festival Orchestra. As a member of the Richards Wind Quintet, she played in more than half of the United States, Canada and at the White House. She was recently awarded a Distinguished Faculty Professorship at Michigan State University. She has solo recordings on Grenadilla and Mark labels. Her playing has been called "distinguished and musical" by the *NY Times*. The *Boston Globe* noted her "musical tone and elegant sense of phrasing" while the *Tribune* of Chicago wrote of her "virtuosity of a most compelling sort".

SILVIA ROEDERER was born in Argentina, but her musical training began in the U.S.A. After graduating from the Eastman School with high honors, she completed her doctoral degree as a student of John Perry at the University of Southern California. A winner of several important competitions, including the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition, she has also appeared as soloist with the Denver Symphony Orchestra and the Jacksonville (FL) Symphony Orchestra. Her Los Angeles debut was an acclaimed recital at the prestigious Ambassador Auditorium, where her "control, introspective poise, and elegantly pointed phrases" drew special praise from the Los Angeles Times. She recently performed for the Myra Hess Series in Chicago. As chamber musician, she has appeared in mainland China, in Austria, London, Paris and New York's Carnegie Hall. Currently Professor of Music at Western Michigan University, she lives in Kalamazoo with her husband and three children.