

musique concrete and poetry (frequently his own), some of which has been published apart from its use in contemporary performance pieces and more traditional settings for singers.

Variations of a New Day (2009)

Robert Kyr

Variations for a New Day is a set of variations on the sacred harp tune, “Thou Great Mysterious God Unknown,” one of the only two-part harmonizations of a tune from this unique American choral repertoire. After a brief violin introduction, the two-part version is played by the ensemble in an arrangement that reveals its stark boldness, including a colorful use of parallel fifths (forbidden in European music, but abundant in the sacred harp hymns of the American South). The variations take the theme on a wild journey that traverses diverse musical terrains, often contrasting lyrical music with energetic dance-like pieces. This work was completed on Inaguration Day (January 20, 2009), a time during which the world was focused on ushering in a New Day filled with hope, which is reflected in the title. The set of variations also celebrates Oregon Statehood (the theme of this concert): may the state renew and creatively reinvent itself in a way that propels us beyond our current economic and environmental challenges.

Robert Kyr is a composer, writer and filmmaker. He has composed twelve symphonies, three violin concerti, three chamber symphonies, a variety of chamber works, and a large repertoire of vocal music for ensembles of all types. His most recent projects include: *Ah Nagasaki: Ashes into Light* for soloists, chorus and orchestra, about which he is making a feature-length documentary, and *Anthem for the Earth* for the Revalia Male Chamber Choir. He is currently the chair of the composition department at the University of Oregon School of Music and Dance, where he also directs the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium (www.iwagemusic.com), Music Today Festival, and the Vanguard Concert and Workshop Series. He can be contacted at rkyr@uoregon.edu.

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109th Season, 59th program



SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

Beall Concert Hall

8:00 p.m.

Tuesday evening

February 17, 2009

THE VANGUARD SERIES

presents

Home Grown: New Music from Oregon

featuring

FEAR NO MUSIC

Inés Volgar, violin

Joël Belgigue, viola

Mika Sunago, piano

Joel Bluestone, percussion

with guest artists

Tomas Svoboda, Evan Kuhlman, Nancy Ives,

the Agnieszka Laska Dancers and

Gavin Larsen from the Oregon Ballet Theater

O | UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

PROGRAM

Ever widening rings of being (2009)* Bonnie Miksch
(b. 1970)

for percussion and computer-realized recording
Joel Bluestone, percussion

Scena ed Aria (1997) John Peel
(b. 1946)

Inés Voglar, violin
Mika Sunago, piano

Jilted (2007) Robert McBride
(b. 1953)

Choreography* Paul Destrooper

Inés Voglar, violin
Mika Sunago, piano
Gavin Larsen, dancer

Excerpts from Tomas Svoboda
"Nine Etudes in Fugue Style", Vol. I (Op. 44) (b. 1939)

THREE ETUDES ON LOVE choreography: Agnieszka Laska

Etude No. 6 Adagio (4 voice)

Etude No. 7 Allegro Vivace - Czernogorsk (4 voice)

Etude No. 8 Andante (5 voice)

Tomas Svoboda, piano

Ela Kwasek, costumes

Dancers: Allegra Carlson, Michelle Rogers,
Kristine Anderson, Nick Cavanaugh, Richard Sokpor

INTERMISSION

Joycesketch II (1981) David Schiff
(b. 1945)

Joël Belgique, viola

“focused” and “rhythmically sharp-edged” (New York Times), as well as “compelling” (Los Angeles Times). In 2008, Francis received commissions from Metropolis Ensemble, the Jerome Foundation, the Wordless Music Series, The New York Choreographic Institute and Axiom Ensemble. His complete piano works will be released by pianist Vicky Chow on Tzadik Records in the fall of 2009. Francis holds both an M.M. and a D.M.A from the Juilliard School. www.ryananthonyfrancis.com

Cirque de Deux
Bob Priest

In your town for one night only, a bassoonist and cellist from D-Bob's sound circus come out to play . . .

—Bob Priest

Originally from Los Angeles, **Bob Priest** is founder and artistic director of Marzena and the Free Marz String Trio. He received his Ph.D. at the University of Victoria, where he taught the world's first college course on the music of Jimi Hendrix. Priest studied classical guitar with Pepe Romero and composition with Olivier Messiaen, Robert Ward and Witold Lutoslawski. He was a two-year Fulbright scholar in Poland and has received grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the MacDowell Colony, among others. Priest currently teaches at Marylhurst University and helps goose-along the bottom line at Powell's Books as a part-time cashier.

Mama's Song (2007)
Jack Gabel

Choreography: Agnieszka Laska

Mama's Song was composed for Anna Laska, Agnieszka's mother, for her 75th anniversary. It was premiered at a family gathering in Kraków in 2007, and given its US premiere at the Polish Hall by Inés Voglar, at the May, 2008 ALD fundraiser. These series of concerts will present the official premiere of the choreographed work commissioned by fEARnoMUSIC.

— Jack Gabel

Jack T. Gabel is the resident composer and technical director for Agnieszka Laska Dancers and has written numerous concert hall works for many different combinations of instruments and voices, with and without electroacoustic accompaniments and/or enhancements. He also creates mixed-media works alone and with collaborators, using

Agnieszka Laska danced 25-plus years with Balet Form Nowoczesnych AGH—a top Polish modern dance company, touring Europe and North America. She also choreographed extensively for leading Polish theatre companies in award-winning productions across Europe and at festivals: Edinburgh and Avignon, etc. Launched in 2003, Agnieszka Laska Dancers is noted for its work with live music. The company performs regularly on the West Coast and has toured to festivals in Mexico and Poland.

Joycesketch II (1981)

David Schiff

I wrote *Joycesketch II* in 1981 for the great violist John Graham. In the early 1980s I was working on an opera (which I still hope to complete some day) based on James Joyce's early collection of short stories, "Dubliners" and I wrote three sketches in preparation. *Joycesketch II* mixes many of the kinds of music that Joyce refers to in his stories, especially Irish ballads and fiddle tunes, and I think it also conveys something of the humor and pathos found in these portraits of very ordinary people for whom music is one of the few sources of pleasure in life.

—David Schiff

David Schiff is R.P. Wollenberg Professor of Music at Reed College. He studied composition with John Corigliano and Ursula Mamlok at the Manhattan School of Music and with Elliott Carter at the Juilliard School. His recent works include the *Nonet*, premiered at Chamber Music Northwest in 2007 and *Mountains/Rivers*, premiered by Third Angle in 2008, and *Stomp* (re-lit), premiered by the American Composers Orchestra in New York in February 2009.

Litany (2006)

Ryan Anthony Francis

Litany (2006) is something of a *companioni* piece to *Consolations*, a work for solo piano I had completed two years earlier. The piece is essentially a fantasy built around several recurrent motifs that cycle through while continuously building momentum towards a climax, followed by a coda. The title was chosen as a reflection of both the rather meditative, searching character of the piece, as well as for the recurring chant-like material that is used throughout.

—Ryan Anthony Francis

Portland native **Ryan Anthony Francis**'s compositions have been met with audience and critical acclaim throughout the United States and Europe. His works have been variously described as "shimmering",

Litany (2006)

Ryan Anthony Francis
(b. 1981)

Nancy Ives, cello
Mika Sunago, piano

Cirque de Deux (2009)*

Bob Priest
(b. 1951)

Nancy Ives, cello
Evan Kuhlmann, bassoon/contrabassoon

Mama's Song (2007)

Jack Gabel
(b. 1949)

Choreography*

Agnieszka Laska

Inés Voglar, violin
Michelle Rogers, dancer

Variations for a New Day (2009)*

Robert Kyr
(b. 1952)

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* World Premiere

If you are in the company of a small child or someone who may inadvertently cause distractions, kindly sit near a rear exit and be prepared to leave in a timely fashion. Please respect our artists and your fellow concert goers. House management reserves the right to request exiting the Hall when appropriate.

PROGRAM NOTES

Ever widening rings of being (2009)

Bonnie Miksch

The electronic part consists of roaming landscapes built from small samples of mostly-pitched metallic percussion. By using percussion to generate the electronic part, the landscapes reference the percussion part in timbre, but the gestures between parts serve widely different roles. You can think of the electronic part as the outward manifestations of the self, or the environment. The percussionist represents the inner manifestations of the self and executes concrete phrases that play upon and inhabit the electronic landscape. All of the components of the percussion part use pitched metal, and include the haunting sounds of the waterphone.

—Bonnie Miksch

Bonnie Miksch teaches composition, theory, and coordinates composition studies at Portland State University, and has held previous academic positions at Williams College, Colgate University, and Mercer University. Her compositions embrace multiple musical universes, creating both acoustic and electroacoustic works, which have been heard in Asia, Europe, Canada and throughout the United States.

Scena ed Aria (1997)

John Peel

The ‘conceit’ for *Scena ed Aria* arose during the Christmas holidays one year. I was listening to a recording of arrangements and transcriptions by the Viennese violinist, Fritz Kreisler. While listening to Kreisler, I was inspired to write a piece “as if” I were making an arrangement for violin and piano of a *scena* from a nineteenth-century opera. My *Scena* (from an imaginary opera) is in three sections: *Cavatina*, *Recitativo* and *Aria*.

—John Peel

After completing an undergraduate degree in French literature at the University of Texas, **John Peel** pursued graduate studies in music at Columbia University and Princeton University where his teachers included Milton Babbitt, Benjamin Boretz, J.K. Randall, Claudio Spies and Charles Wuorinen. Appointed Composer-in-Residence, Irene Gerlinger Swindells Professor of Music in 1990, Peel has created New Music at Willamette, a series of concerts, residencies and lectures dedicated to presenting the finest performers and composers of our time.

Jilted (2007)

Robert McBride

Paul Destrooper, choreographer

Jilted is a work for two musicians and one dancer, but it can be performed sans danse. I got the idea many years ago, imagining a solo ballerina having to bid farewell to the man she was about to marry, because she has been “jilted” by his death. My friendship with Oregon Ballet Theatre principal ballerina Gavin Larsen inspired me to get the piece written down, finally, in 2007.

—Robert McBride

Robert McBride is an award-winning announcer and producer at Portland’s All Classical FM as well as a part-time percussionist and composer. His recent premieres have included performances by the Portland Columbia Symphony Orchestra and the Portland Symphonic Girlchoir. As a percussionist he’s performed locally with guitarist Scott Kritzer and the Reed College Chamber Orchestra.

Paul Destrooper is the artistic director of Ballet Victoria, and brings more than two decades of international dance experience. He joined the Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company in 1993 upon graduation from the School’s Professional Division receiving the prestigious Prince Edward Award and the Arnold Spohr Scholarship, and was promoted to second soloist in 1997. He danced with Alberta Ballet for two seasons, and with Oregon Ballet Theater from 2003 until 2007; both as a principal dancer. Destrooper has worked closely with his past artistic directors beginning with John Meehan, William Whitener, Andre Lewis, Miko Nissen, Jean Grand-Maitre and Christopher Stowell.

Excerpts from *Nine Etudes in Fugue Style, Vol. I (Op. 44)* (1965)

Tomas Svoboda

THREE ETUDES OF LOVE

Agnieszka Laska, choreographer

Tomas Svoboda began composing his *Etudes in Fugue Style* in Frankfurt shortly after his family had escaped Czechoslovakia just before emigrating to the US in 1965. The first volume was completed several years later in Los Angeles, California. **Agnieszka Laska** says that in choreographing this work, she reflected primarily on the turbulence so common in relationships of deep love; not only those of passion, but of camaraderie and friendship.