

Dr. Faustus presents:

HAMMERKLAVIER!

New works for piano and percussion

Friday, May 31st, 2013, 7:30 pm

Benzaquen Hall, at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music

PROGRAM

Spark.....Paul Kerekes

Categoriae.....Inés Thiebaut

Melanie Sehman, percussion

Mirna Lekić, piano

Intermission

In The Same Foam.....Elizabeth Adams

Zoetrope.....Dan Blake

Matthew Gold, percussion

Steven Beck, piano

Audio and Video Recording: Robert E. Anderson (www.andersonsoundrecording.com)

Original Art: Maia Cruz Palileo (www.maiacruzpalileo.com)

PROGRAM NOTES

Spark (Paul Kerekes):

The musical characteristics of my piece are derived from the alluring image of frenzied sparks flying. Two contrasting characteristics can be extracted from this imaginary picture: exciting shreds of light randomly dart in every direction, which is reflected in the outer sections of the piece, and surround an introspective middle where smoke slowly rises from remnants of flares.

Categoriae (Inés Thiebaut):

I've been stealing Aristotle's titles for my own pieces for quite some time, and thus cannot deny the philosopher's influence on me. *Categoriae* was at first planned to be a larger work, but as it unfolded I realized that because of the simplicity of its issues (unlike Aristotle's own work...) the piece had to be kept more contained. Imagine a dialogue between four characters: the pitched piano, the unpitched percussion, the unpitched (and undetermined) piano, and the pitched percussion - *Categoriae* is an enquiry of these relationships. The timbre similarities and disparities between these four characters are a major theme in this work, and I encourage the listeners to not listen through their eyes but instead let a sound start one place (the piano overtones, for example) and finish in another (the scraping of a gong) and follow it with their ears instead. Written for Mirna and Melanie, who present the work tonight, I take the opportunity here to thank them for all their time, effort, talent and understanding.

In The Same Foam (Elizabeth Adams):

I would love to hear about what you hear. Come say hello!

Zoetrope (Dan Blake):

This work began as a solo piano piece, finding a new life thanks to the Dr. Faustus series. Thanks also are due to Brooklyn-based percussionist and composer **Andrew Drury** for being a continual source of inspiration, and whose uniquely streamlined and innovative extended percussion techniques I've adopted throughout this work.

I have recently become fascinated by early animation techniques that predate film-based cameras, one of which is the Zoetrope. Translated from the Greek as "active turning," this type of animation exploits an optical illusion that occurs when a series of static images are placed on the interior of a wheel and spun, while the viewer watches the images through a small slit in an outer ring, leading to the perception of motion. For this piece, I imagined a situation, not possible in the visual domain, where one could see the zoetrope as both a series of static images *and* as a unified moving scene. This kind of "static motion" is a perspective that I believe is uniquely possible in music, and is something I have experienced particularly in my work in improvised music. Although this piece is not improvised, it does strive for a synergetic relationship between the players that is "actively turning" within a highly repetitious and static sound world.

ARTISTS BIOS

Elizabeth Adams' work posits acoustic phenomena as social metaphors. Her dissertation reads politically the work of four living composers: Georges Aperghis, Rick Burkhardt, Mark Enslin, and Elizabeth Hoffman. They, along with Joe Dubiel, Steve Blum, and Susan Parenti, have been her principal teachers. She organizes with the Orfeo Duo's What A Neighborhood series, the CUNY GC General Assembly, and The Free University. She teaches at The School for Designing a Society and at Xenharmonic Praxis Summer Camp. Her violin duo, CUSP, will be released on a vinyl album of experimental music entitled Index 0, in June.

American pianist **Steven Beck** continues to garner impressive acclaim for his performances and recordings worldwide. Praised by the *New Yorker* as “one of the city’s finest young pianists”, a recent New York concert by Mr. Beck was described as “exemplary” and “deeply satisfying” by Anthony Tommasini in the *New York Times*. Highlights of the 2012-13 season include the American premiere of a piano etude by Charles Wuorinen, recordings of Carter's late piano works for Bridge Records' Carter series, and an appearance as soloist on the New York Philharmonic's "Symphonic Sondheim" concert this spring. In addition, he again performed on the New York Philharmonic Ensembles series, and repeated his annual performance of Bach's “Goldberg Variations” on Christmas Eve at the Barge; this has become a New York institution.

In the words of New York Times critic Allan Kozinn, Mr. Beck is "an eloquent and persuasive performer of contemporary works"; he has worked with Elliott Carter, Pierre Boulez, Henri Dutilleux, Charles Wuorinen, George Crumb, George Perle, and Poul Ruders, and performed with ensembles such as Speculum Musicae, the Metropolis Ensemble, the New York New Music Ensemble, and the Da Capo Chamber Players. He is a member of the Tala Ensemble.

Since moving to New York in 2006, **Dan Blake** has become a leading figure in New York's creative music scene. He tours internationally with Grammy-winner Esperanza Spalding's, as well as the Grammy-nominated *Julian Lage Group*. Among his extensive discography is an appearance as a featured soloist on Anthony Braxton's 2010 *Trillium E* opera (New Braxton House), and on Esperanza Spalding's Grammy-winning *Radio Music Society* (Heads Up/Concord). His most recent release as leader, *The Aquarian Suite* (Brooklyn Jazz Underground Records) was listed by the *NYC Jazz Record*, *The San Jose Mercury News*, and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* as among the best recordings of 2011/2012, with the Boston Phoenix calling it “one of the most ridiculously satisfying discs we've heard in some time.”

As an improviser, Dan Blake has developed a unique voice that synthesizes many seemingly disparate approaches. In constant dialogue with his instrument, he moves freely between many different musical worlds, collaborating with diverse musicians such as Kenny Werner, Lukas Ligeti, Mary Halvorson, Hans Tammen, James Ilgenfritz, and many others.

Dan Blake's extended compositions have been recognized with support from The Jerome Fund, Meet the Composer, ASCAP, The John Lennon Songwriting Contest. Most recently, his award-winning work *First Beginnings* for tenor recorder and electronics received its premier in at the

2011 Electronic Music Foundation. In the 2013-2014 season, he will premier an evening-length multi-media work for string quartet and live animation at Roulette, which will culminate a yearlong commissioning grant he received to work with the highly acclaimed Mivos Quartet. Dan Blake holds a Ph.D. in composition from the Graduate Center, City University of New York, where he received the Baisley Powell Elebash Fund for an ongoing research project examining New York City's improvised music scene.

Matthew Gold is a New York based percussionist with a deep commitment to new music. A member of Talea Ensemble and the Talujon percussion group, and a former co-director of TimeTable Percussion, he performs regularly with Sequitur, the Argento Chamber Ensemble, Da Capo Chamber Players, New York New Music Ensemble, Either/Or, SEM Ensemble, and many others. Mr. Gold is an Artist Associate in percussion at Williams College where he directs the Williams Percussion Ensemble, I/O Ensemble, and I/O Fest, an annual new music festival. He performs regularly with the Mark Morris Dance Group, has been an artist-faculty member of the Institute and Festival for Contemporary Performance at Mannes College and a member of the resident ensemble at the Walden School's Young Musicians Program, and is joining the artistic faculty of the Wellesley Composers Conference in the summer of 2013.

Paul Kerekes was born in Huntington, New York. His music has been described as "striking...ecstatic...dramatic" (WQXR), "highly eloquent" (New Haven Advocate), and able to create "an almost tactile picture" (The New York Times). He has had the privilege of hearing his music performed by TwoSense, New Morse Code, American Composers Orchestra, Second Instrumental Unit, Stonewall Chorale, Mannes Preparatory Division Choir, Norfolk Contemporary Ensemble, cellist Nicholas Photinos, flutist Kelli Kathman, and saxophonist/composer Ed Rosenberg in such venues as (le) poisson rouge, The Dimenna Center, Symphony Space, Centre de musique Hindemith, Lefrak Hall, and Central Park.

He has also attended notable programs such as MusicX, Yale's New Music Workshop in Norfolk, Connecticut, California Summer Music, the Young Artists Piano Program at Tanglewood, and Stony Brook Summer Music Festival. Additionally, he has participated in master classes both as a composer and pianist with Lisa Moore, Lisa Kaplan, Joel Hoffman, and Bright Sheng. In June 2012, Paul joined forces with 5 of New York City's top pianists to form Grand Band, whose debut was featured on Bang on a Can's annual marathon. Grand Band has been described by The New York Times as, "The Travelling Wilbury's of the city's new music piano scene." Paul is currently pursuing an M.M.A. at Yale School of Music studying with David Lang. He received his undergraduate degree from Queens College where he primarily studied with Bruce Saylor. Past teachers include Martin Bresnick, Christopher Theofanidis, Ezra Laderman, David Schober, Edward Smaldone, and Eleanor Cory. Website: www.paulkerekes.com

Mirna Lekić is a Bosnian-American pianist active as a recitalist, chamber musician and educator. Praised for her "intelligent and sincere pianism," (Examiner) "natural inventiveness and emotion," (Žena 21) and for "eliciting [music's] haunting poetry" (The New York Concert Review),

she has performed in the United States, Canada, and Europe, appearing in concert at New York's Carnegie-Weill Hall, Symphony Space, and World Trade Center, among others. Mirna plays a wide range of repertoire that reflects both her interests in the music of living composers, celebrated through premiere performances and commissions, and her study of early music practices, particularly works for fortepiano. A graduate of the Eastman School and the Mannes College of Music, she is currently a doctoral candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center. (www.mirnalekic.com). Tonight she extends a gracious thank you to Melanie, Ines, and Paul and to Dr. Faustus for making this wonderful collaboration possible.

Melanie Sehman is a percussionist living in Brooklyn, New York and specializing in contemporary music. She performs both locally and nationally as soloist, and with groups such as W4 New Music Collective, Eastman BroadBand, and Proper Glue percussion duo. Recent performances include chamber music at the Banff Centre for the Arts, the Bellingham Electronic Arts Festival, Tribeca Performing Arts Center, Indiana University, Issue Project Room, Princeton University, the Park Avenue Armory, Symphony Space, and the Americas Society. Dedicated to the performance of new music, Melanie has worked closely with composers such as John Luther Adams, Mark Applebaum, Julia Wolfe, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, Robert Morris, Cenk Ergun, Aaron Travers, Jacob Bancks and others. Melanie received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree and Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music (www.MelanieSehman.com)

Inés Thiebaut was raised in Madrid, Spain. She is currently a PhD in Composition candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center, where she has studied with Douglas Geers, Jeff Nichols and Jason Eckardt. Her other (ongoing) mentors are composers Fabián Panisello and Marcela Rodriguez. She is in the process of writing her dissertation on the acoustic music of Mario Davidovsky.

Her music has been performed, among others, by the Second Instrumental Unit (David Fulmer, director/conductor), the Mivos Quartet, and the Cygnus, SospiroWinds and Transit ensembles in New York; the Contemporary Youth Orchestra (Liza Grossman, director/conductor) in Cleveland; and internationally by percussionist Miquel Bernat, the Mexican ensemble Espirales, and by the internationally acclaimed percussion quartet Tambuco. Recent commissions include a flute and percussion piece by the Vigil ensemble in New York, and a marimba and electronics piece for percussionist Jonathan Singer. For more information, please visit www.inesthiebaut.com

ABOUT DR. FAUSTUS

Founded in 2008 by composers **Inés Thiebaut** and **André Brégégère**, joined in 2013 by **Daniel Colson**, Dr. Faustus has since its inception commissioned over a dozen works by emerging composers. We presented these works to the public in established music venues such as Tenri Cultural Institute, DiMenna Center For Classical Music, or WMP Recital Hall, in collaboration with outstanding New York City-based performers, including David Fulmer (Second Instrumental Unit), Alex Lipowski (Talea Ensemble), David Friend (TRANSIT) and Steven Beck.

Dr. Faustus is committed to promoting contemporary music that displays a strong artistic vision, is thoughtfully engaged with current trends in art music, and is rooted in an exploratory outlook. Such music is essential to the long-term advancement of art music in general. Being generally non-commercial in nature, it also needs a great deal of assistance for its survival. As a composer-run organization, we strongly believe that we are in the best position to foster such artistic endeavors: we understand firsthand why the composer's voice is worth hearing. For more information on past, present, and future projects, please visit www.drfaustus.org

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