Frank E. Taplin '37 Auditorium
in Fine Hall
Princeton University

ODYSSEYS

The Composers' Ensemble
at Princeton

Steven Mackey, Barbara White, and Michael Pratt, Directors

Tuesday, October 3, 2006
8:00 p.m.
THE PROGRAM

Platos Típicos
Visitación
La Serpiente Cósmica
To Make A Long Story Short
Barbara White, clarinet

Prelude for Lute in D Minor mv 999
Barbara White

Suite from Variations, Fixations, and Fantasies
after a Prelude by Bach
Variation I
Fixation I
Fantasy II
Andrew McKenna Lee, guitar

Music for Josh and Tawnya
Joshua Rubin, clarinet — Tawnya Popoff, viola

Hoop
Mosaik Two
Annaliesa Place, violin — Svatoslav Stoyanov, marimba

— intermission —

Sea Odyssey
Text by Colleen Plimier
Anne Hege, voice

Semi-Suite for guitar
Putative Prelude
Airless Air
Crooked Courante
Shameless Sarabande
Awkward Allemande
Partly Pavane
David Starobin, guitar
PROGRAM NOTES

Plato Tippico / Barbara White
To Make A Long Story Short

Plato Tippico: At a high altitude, short of breath and with an intransigent instrument in hand, I made a practice of playing just the few notes that would speak with the longest breaths I could muster. In the process, I was reminded of my friend Miguel Lara’s photographs, “Visitation” and “La Serpiente Cósmica” (you may have noticed them in my living room), which ended up informing the imagery of each movement. Speaking of my living room, the idea is to allow for flexibility and fluidity within the simple gestures that make up these structured improvisations, as well as to cultivate a certain intimacy and informality each time. Hence, Plato Tippico, or “local food.”

To Make A Long Story Short is based on a chant from the Santiago de Compostela repertoire, “Ad Sepulcrum Beati Iacobsi,” which I incorporated into an earlier piece, Small World. I found that the melody got a bit swallowed up in my setting and wanted to return to it and play with its surface features more. It’s another structured improvisation; there is a slow introduction, some riffing on cells from the chant, and then a presentation of the more or less unadulterated melody at the end.

Barbara White is a composer with a special interest in interdisciplinary collaboration, specifically in working with dance and video. She has performed her clarinet works with the Fromm foundation Contemporary Music Series at Harvard, the Florida International Festival of New Music, and the Seal Bay Festival, as well as on her first solo CD, When the Smoke Clears. A second CD, Apocryphal Stories, was released in 2004. In 1998, Barbara White joined the faculty of the Princeton University Music Department, where she is now Associate Professor.

Suite from Variations, Fixations, and Fantasies

Andrew McKenna Lee

Variations, Fixations, and Fantasies is a solo guitar piece based on J.S. Bach’s Prelude for Lute, BWV 999. This piece has always been a bit of a curiosity for me, as it is fairly famous in the guitar repertoire in spite of its relatively brief, 1.5 minute duration. Unlike most of Bach’s other preludes, which belong to dance suites or other collections of similar pieces, this one seems to be a solitary being, floating aimlessly amidst the vast expanse of Bach’s output. This latter condition is what drew me to the idea of creating a much larger work around it — I wanted to expound upon certain ideas inherent in the original work, as well as refract some of them through a more contemporary musical language. Many other composers have done similar works — Jacob Druckman’s piece Prisms comes to mind, as well as Leonardo Balada’s Transparencies of Chopin’s First Ballade, and many of the works of Alfred Schnittke. Ultimately, the work will consist of ten complimentary pieces, each in its own way based on the original Bach prelude. In its entirety, it will be organized in three sets, followed by a postlude — each set containing three different types of pieces. The Variations are the most closely associated with the original prelude, and use the bass line (in original, retrograde, and inverted forms respectively) as a point of departure over which the harmony and musical texture are re-worked and re-contextualized. The Fixations, living up to their name, dwell obsessively on one small aspect of the original prelude and attempt to spin out pieces which, in their enlargement of a single, microscopic idea, resemble something very unlike the original. Finally, the Fantasies, which are the most complex in form and the longest in duration, freely associate different elements of the prelude in somewhat more direct and remissive ways.

As of today’s date (08/31/06) the piece is still unfinished, and it will likely be some time before I have completed writing the work and longer still until I have learned to perform it. I have completed part of the piece, however, and am currently performing it as a suite. This suite contains the original prelude, the first variation, the first fixation, and what I believe will be the second fantasy when the work is finally completed. In the end, it will be roughly over a half hour in length.

Andrew McKenna Lee, a native of Charleston, SC, began musical studies on the guitar at age twelve and soon after went on to pursue composition. In recent years, his music has been performed by such ensembles as the Bentroso String Quartet, The American String Quartet, ensemble ereiipis, Taluion, the New Jersey Symphony, Kroumata, Proteus, Janus, and eighth blackbird. His works have been presented at many festivals, including the International Music Festival of Torroella de Montgrí, Spain, International Gaudeamus Work of the Netherlands, the Stockholm Arts and Sciences Festival, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival. His music has also been heard on WNYC’s New Sounds series with host Jonathan Schaefer and featured in a segment of New Hampshire Public Television’s weekly broadcast, New Hampshire Outlook. After completing his undergraduate work in composition at Carnegie Mellon University in 1997, Andrew went on to obtain his Master’s degree in 2000 from the Manhattan School of Music. He has received awards and fellowships from the New York Youth Symphony, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, the South Carolina Arts Council, The Aspen Music Festival, Yaddo, the MacDowell Colony, ASCAP, and the American Music Center. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in composition at Princeton University.

Music for Josh and Tawnya

Alan S. Tormey

Community Nurse Ian Fielding’s summer holiday was ending with a bigger shock than she had ever thought possible, and whatever good the holiday had done her seemed instantly to drain away. The call had come in the very early morning while she had been getting dressed. There had been that instant thrill of apprehension — early calls were often bad.

The savvier among you should have no trouble in ascertaining the dedicatees of Music for Josh and Tawnya, a work whose title was suggested by the delicate Feldmanesque character of the music. The
whole story involves a small bar and a large glass of vodka, but involves old friends, new friends, and an interminably long wait for the subway.

Alan Tormey's music has been described as both "disconcerting" and "avant." Anthony Doerr, author of The Shell Collector and About Grace states "it's absolutely cool and unnerving, and nothing like I expected." Alan's work has been internationally featured by, among others, eighth blackbird, Ensemble Intercontemporain, James Avery, The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, CCM/MA, Meet the Composer, Synergy, and the Tarab Cello Ensemble. He holds degrees in music from Oberlin Conservatory and the University of California at Berkeley and is presently a doctoral candidate in music composition at Princeton University. He would like to buy the world a Coke, but usually just drinks the store brand.

Sea Odyssey  
Anne Hege

Sea Odyssey is comprised of four poems written by Colleen Plimier. This work, scored for spoken and sung voice and tape, explores what it means to travel and come to determine ones own path. Inspired by the text, Sea Odyssey describes the relationship between an individual and the idea of fate, the balance of power between our destiny and any one of us.

Sea Odyssey  
Poetry by Colleen Plimier

Your Sea Journey
begins low and hard.
You prefer the plain nut
to the quartered breath of sheep.
There are ten thousand sheep.
You feel nothing not the poor goat's eye.
Not his one and flexible yellow eye.
The low motion the sailing.
You will not see the sky-lastedness of herring
greenness of soap.
Your sea journey will hold
less an eye than a stern
drainage of rain.
Your Further Sea Journey
brings two-hinged fear.
There is not an oat grown no clearing.

The yellow-blind day bears a standard motion.
You sail a boat with a lepped-off name.
Your Sunken Journey
pulls you down.
You fall below
and feel for your things.
You cannot find
your incurable sureness of breathing
your wise and colorful stones.
You cannot find the ground-up sea.
Your Next Sea Journey
is under water where you wear yourself out.
Now guess your weight in weeds.
How do you weigh?
Like a telephone cable.
What's your leg a bottle.
What's a new way
like anyway.

Anne Hege, born in Oakland, CA,
began her musical studies singing with the Piedmont Children’s Choir. Her studies continued in high school with her participation in the Oakland Youth Chorus's touring ensemble, Vocal Motion. While performing in Vocal Motion, she was highly influenced by collaborators with composer/performers Linda Tillers, Keith Terry and their work with folk and world music. In 1998, Hege received her Bachelor degree from Wesleyan University with honors in music and was awarded the Gwen Livingston Pekora Prize for music composition. Hege continued her composition studies at Mills College studying with Fred Frith, Chris Brown, and Pauline Oliveros. In 2003, she received her MA in Composition and was awarded the Elizabeth Mills Crothers Prize for excellence of graduate composition in music. Hege has composed choral works for the Albany Community Chorus, Piedmont Children’s Choir, Voce e Tempore, and Ninos y Jovenes Cantores de la Escuela Nacional de Musica in UNAM. She regularly performs original works and art songs in her performance duo "Sidecar." Hege has recently begun her doctoral studies in music composition at Princeton University.

Semi-Suite  
Paul Lansky

The suite was written for David Storobin, who has played and recorded individual movements and is now performing the entire suite prior to recording it. Writing for guitar is something I had no idea I could do until David urged me to try. Then I remembered that classical guitar was my first instrument and gave it a whirl. The titles of the individual movements indicate a foggy awareness of the characters of baroque dances.

Hop  
Paul Lansky

Hop was written for the Marimolin duo, Nancy Zeltman and Sharan Leventhal. I can’t remember why I called it Hop but the title now seems entirely appropriate, so I guess it makes sense.

Paul Lansky’s recent work includes a percussion quartet, a couple of computer pieces, some choral music and a piece for baritone, guitar and percussion.
THE ARTISTS

Clarinetist Joshua Rubin has been working as a chamber musician, orchestra musician, soloist and teacher in New York since 2000. He has worked closely with many prominent composers including Mario Davidovsky, George Crumb, Pauline Oliveros, Bright Sheng, Magnus Lindberg and David Lang. Performances this year include concert series at Cal Performances in Berkeley, California, at the Miller Theater and Merkin Concert Hall in New York, at Massachusets MoCA, at the Museum of Contemporary Art and on WFM! radio in Chicago, and in Morelia, Mexico. In August he appeared at the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center. Joshua will be featured on albums from the Bridge, NAXOS, and Cedille recording labels to be released in 2007. He is a founding member of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) and of the percussion and clarinet duo Ensemble Breethaar. He received degrees in Clarinet and Biology from Oberlin College and his Master's degree from the Mannes College of Music.

Canadian violinist Tawnya Popoff was a prizewinner in the 2000 Lionel Tétris International Viola Competition and enjoys a versatile career as a highly sought after chamber musician, soloist and teacher. She earned degrees at the University of British Columbia and Rice University and has served on the faculties of the Perlman Music Program at the University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse University, SUNY Buffalo, and the Bowdoin International Music Festival. Ms. Popoff is a founding member of the Adahaska String Trio, the Solo Quartet, is in residence with Chamber Dance Project and was a member of the Cassatt String Quartet until 2005 involved in commissioning and premiering dozens of new works and has recorded for the Koch International, New World, and Albany labels. Tawnya Popoff's viola was played by Boris Kroyt of the Budapest String Quartet. The instrument is generously loaned to her by courtesy of Mr. Kroyt's grandson.

Already a rising force in the new music genre, Mosaik Two debuted in the spring of 2006 at the Jazz and Classics Festival in Juneau, Alaska. Formed in 2005, violinist Annaliesse Place and percussionist Svetoslav Stoyanov fuse their unique musical backgrounds and experiences to form this avant-garde combination. Deeply committed to supporting and encouraging the music of living composers, they have already commissioned works by many composers of their generation including Sean Friar and Ian Moss. Recently, Mosaik Two performed at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival where they collaborated with composers Alejandro Vairo and Paul Lansky. Highlights from the 06-07 season include a tour throughout Holland, performances in Princeton and Baltimore, and a residency at the Peabody Conservatory. Annaliesse Place made her solo debut with the Heidelberg Symphony at age twelve and won grand prizes in the Marbury and Yale Gordon Competitions. Featured in the Cleveland Orchestra's first video concert with conductor Alan Gilbert, she was hailed by the Cleveland Plain Dealer as "the epitome of poise and intelligence." She has recorded Judah Adashek's Violin Concerto "Grace with the Peabody Symphony, which won an ASCAP award.

An active chamber musician, Ms. Place has appeared as violinist and violist at festivals including Sarasota, Yellow Barn, La Jolla Chamber Music Society, Juneau Jazz and Classics, Verbier Laguna Beach Chamber with Claude Frank and Olympic Music. A recent graduate of the Juillard School, she studied with Robert Mann. Other teachers have included Hrachia Hranchoos, Robert Lipsett and David Updegraff. She regularly performs with conductor less string orchestra, ecco, and the Momenta String Quartet.

Bulgarian born Svet Stoyanov, winner of the 2005 Concert Artist Guild International Competition, made his NYC debut at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. He premiered the Phillip Glass Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists and Orchestra, with fellow timpanist Jonathan Hass and the American Symphony Orchestra, led by Leon Botstein. Mr. Stoyanov's musical collaborations include projects with Pierre Boulez, Oliver Knussen, Elliot Carter, John Adams, Leon Fleisher, Donald Sutherland, Alejandro Vairo and others. His festival appearances span the United States and Europe, most notably Emilia Romagna, Ravinia Festival with Chicago Symphony, Madir in American with Seattle Symphony, Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, and The Percussive Arts Society International Conventions. Svet is a student of Robert van Wilie pursuing his Musical Studies degree at Yale University. He also holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Peabody Conservatory.
music of our time"; a Lincoln Center Avery Fisher Grant; and Peabody Conservatory's "Distinguished Alumni Award." Between 1993 and 2004, Starobin was the chairman of the guitar department at the Manhattan School of Music, where he holds the school's "Andres Segovia Chair." He previously headed guitar departments at Brooklyn College, Bennington College, The North Carolina School of the Arts, and the State University of New York at Purchase.