FLUX QUARTET

The Composers' Ensemble at Princeton

Steven Mackey and Michael Pratt, Directors

Tuesday, May 1, 2007
8:00 p.m.
THE PROGRAM

String Quartet #1
Anne Hege

*a prayer, i can’t express*  
Sean McCowry, bass  
Sean McCowry

Dream Cuisine  
Wonjung Kim and Emily Eagen, sopranos  
Abigail Fischer, mezzo-soprano  
Jeremy Lydic, Peter Sciscioli, and George Wright, baritones  
Steven Beck and Eric Huebner, keyboards  
Nathan Davis, percussion  
Clay Greensberg, conductor

—— intermission ——

Chasm  
Wonjung Kim, soprano  
Tia Vincent-Clark, vocalist  
Lisa R. Coons

Fragments & Rumors  
Wonjung Kim and Emily Eagen, sopranos  
Abigail Fischer, mezzo-soprano  
Betsey Biggs

Flux Quartet  
Tom Chiu and Conrad Harris, violins  
Max Mandel, viola — Dave Eggar, violoncello  
special guest Gregory Hesselink, violoncello
Anne Hoge
Passion Quartet #1
was written while I was commuting to
and from school. I'm a biographer and
as well as an attorney, and I often
traveling around this time, which
left little time for composition. The
content of this piece is based on the
lives and experiences of the
characters in the novel. I wanted to
express the range of emotions and
profound experiences that they
endure, and to convey the complexity
of human relationships.

Sean McCallow
Player, I can\
express
you.

Sean McCallow is a composer and a
double bassist. Prior to his studies at
Yale School of Music, he was a
freelance bassist and a full-time
member of the American orchestra in
Europe and the orchestra of the
Contemporary Music Group. He
remains active as a freelance
bassist, and he is a frequent guest
singer at the Intersection in New York.

The Cell solo for Dan Ormston is
passionate but delicate. I often
write music that is passionate and
filled with emotion, but I also
value subtlety and nuance.

Linda Tilbery and Mukesh are
musicians with a lot of experience
in playing with orchestras and
ballets. Their style is very
influential, and I enjoy working
with them to create music that
resonates with their unique
performances.

The poem is surrounded by a series of
appropriated "mashings" that set the tone
and guide the reader through the text.
John Supko
Dream Cantate
contains a setting of the text
written by John Supko, a composer
and musicologist. The text is
structured in a way that explores
the theme of dreams and
imagination. The piece is meant to
transport the listener into a world
of dreams and possibilities.

The quotation from "Ode to Joy" in
"The Cry of the Goose" by John
Supko is a powerful and
emotional piece. The quotation
reflects the theme of joy and
freedom, which is central to the
piece.
lime-miso vinaigrette
cilantro soy
crowded with Islands;
Colorado lamb and
tangy salsa verde
two dozen white weazils' tails,
some few drops of rain and very smokey
a less rule-bound brandywine tequila
three Frenchmen in a canoe
Six Lettuce Towers observed
on the highest pinecones
forks of the Jefferson chat masala,
house smoked carpaccio powder
with Japanese green mango salad
we had the trumpet sounded, and fired
but he did not join us, the evening's
growing influence
of a black root; a kind of Liquorish
social fabric, crotchetted wontons
sustaining the loss
of two very large bear skins
Not to strike those nations we had taken
by five hundred
distners five nights a week
fork tender violiolo
and a shot of Australian port
wasabi mayonaisse
Plains of the Missouri, a coarse
paste of pumpkin polenta, a sake or dry sherry
Cajun to Asian
to deliver
the pungency of the east
sufficiently copious Chinese cabbage and
radichio
the maple and Elm
noodles have buded
and cotton and arrow chive
flowers
con amaretti cookies
the valley white puddling we all esteem
the greatest delicacy of the forest
the birt hills, down the lolo trails
the lower part of the Cave, gusto
the same sleeping crepe.

John Supko (b. 1980, NY) has studied
music at the Levine School of Music in
Washington, D.C.; at the Indiana University
Jacobs School of Music, at the Ecole Normale
de Musique and the Schola Cantorum in
Paris, France; and at Princeton University,
where he is currently a Ph.D. candidate.
He is the recipient of numerous prizes and
grants, including the BMI Student Composer
Award, the ASCAP Morton Gould Young
Composers Award, the Grand Prize of the
National Young Composers Competition,
a Fulbright Grant, a Meet the Composer
Grant and, most recently, a 2007-2008
Georges Lurcy Fellowship. His work has
been published in collaborative editions
with the poet Philippe Denis by Collection
Memoires and, most recently, by Harpo &
Recent projects include Littonal, a work for
flutes, percussion and 5.1 surround sound
tape, which will be given a performance at
Princeton by the duo JUE EAST on 15 May
2007.

Robert Fittman grew up in a pre-sprawl
St. Louis suburb named Creve Coeur
(broken heart), flanked between Shell and
Mobil gas stations. He is the author
of 9 books of poetry: 3 of those books
constitute his ongoing poem Metropolis.
Metropolis 1-15 was awarded the Sun &
Moon New American Poetry Award (1997),
and Metropolis 16-29 (Coach House Books,
2002) received the Small Press Traffic
Book of the Year Award in 2003. Several
of his other books are collaborations with
visual artists, including most recently War,
the musical (Subpress, 2006) with Dirk
Rowntree. From 1986-1996, he was co-
curator of theSegue Reading Series, and
from 1991-2002 he was editor-publisher of
the literary journal Objet. Fittman has
been on the writing faculty at New York
University since 1989 in both the General
Studies Program and the Department of
English, and also the writing faculty at
the Milton Avery Graduate School of the
Arts, Bard College. He lives in New York
City with his wife, poet Kim Rosenfield and
their wondrous daughter, Coco.

Chasm
Lisa R. Coons

Chasm was not meant to be a political
piece or a piece describing the wrongs of
certain societies against women; it was not
considered as a piece that would ever change
minds or aspire to effect policy. This
piece was written as a means of expressing
my own confusion, guilt, and anger at the
knowledge that as I live my comfortable
life, women who were born a few thousand
miles away are forced to suffer these terrible
circumstances, are living as less than
humans, are being punished for not being
born men.

I read of women crippled and killed
by illegal abortions in Mexico, about
women who were raped, displaced, and
infected with AIDS in Darfur, and girls in
Pakistan villages who have been raped or
tortured to pay for their fathers' or their
brothers' crimes. I wrote this piece in the
desperate hope of finding an outlet for the
disgust, guilt, and pure repulsion I was
feeling — a chance to scream and mourn
the crimes against these women because I
could find no other way of expressing my
frustration. I wrote this piece because I felt
helpless and impotent and angry, and most
honestly (and selfishly) because I felt pure terror when I thought that this could have easily been my life, these could have been my stories, my suffering, and my scars, if chance had caused me to be born just a few thousand miles away from where I was. Many thanks to Huy, Wonjung, and the goddess screamer Tiia, for all of the time, expertise and energy that went into trying to make this piece happen.

Lisa R. Coons acquired a special affinity noise composition, found sounds and abstract art growing up around equipment and metalworking on a farm in northeast Missouri. She studied composition with Dr. James Mobberley and Dr. Chen Yi at the University of Missouri-Kansas City where she received a Masters degree. She is currently a graduate student at Princeton University. Lisa composes primarily for smaller chamber ensembles, and recently her work has begun to expand to include works for turntables, as well as pieces with her own percussion sculptures made from scrap metal and discarded machine parts.

Fragments & Rumors  Betsey Biggs

Fragments & Rumors is a series of eight short settings of fragments of Sappho’s poems, which are wonderfully translated by Willis Barnstone. I was struck by her spare, funny, and very human qualities of the texts, which were written so long ago (approximately 600 BC). The settings are purposefully simple so as not to overwhelm the poems. Barnstone’s translation was published by Green Integer Books in 1999, and is available at bookstores.

1. To Athis
I loved you, Athis, long ago when you were like a small child with no charm.

2. Shall I?
I don’t know what to do. I say yes — and then no.

3. Having Refused To Accept The Bitter With The Sweet
I don’t want honey or the honey bee.

4. To Eros
You burn me.

5. Heart
Don’t try to bend a crazed heart.

6. Return
I have flown to you like a child to her mother.

7. Sleep
The black sheep of night closes my eyes.

8. No Oblivion
Someone, I tell you, will remember us.

Betsey Biggs is an artist and composer working with sound, video, interactivity, installation and performance. Her work aims to catch glimpses of everyday transcendence, to engage the audience, and to explore the tension between spontaneity and form.

Betsey played in Stephen Scott’s Bowd Piano Ensemble and several rock bands, later studied with Pauline Oliveros and Fred Frith at Mills College, and is currently completing her Ph.D. at Princeton University, where she is researching the uses and meanings of sonic interaction in public art.

Her collaborators have included Evidence, So Percussion, Tarab Cello ensemble and filmmakers Amy Harrison and Jennie Livingston, and her work has been seen and heard at Issue Project Room, Experimental Intermedia, City Without Walls, MASSMoCA, the Berkeley Art Museum, and the Sundance Film Festival. Upcoming projects include a series of ‘sound performance’ single-channel videos, a large sound installation for the NIME Festival at New York University, and a series of site-specific mp3 soundwalks. For more info, please visit www.betseybiggs.org.
The Flux Quartet

"One of the most fearless and important new-music ensembles in San Francisco Chronicle" who has brought a new renaissance to quartet music. (Kyle Gann, The Village Voice) the FLUX Quartet has performed to rave reviews at many music centers around the world. It has appeared at Da Camera of Houston, Miller Theater, the Walker Art Center, the Library of Congress, and Carnegie Hall's When Morty Met John Festival. It has also recently made two rare debuts, in Ireland at the Samuel Beckett Centenary Festival, and in San Francisco with the Morrison Series, which invited the quartet back as special guests for its 50th anniversary gala concert. FLUX's numerous radio credits include NPR's All Things Considered, WNYC's New Sounds and Soundcheck, and WFMU's Stoic Hit Parade. Its growing discography includes recordings by composers Martin Bresnick, Annie Gosfield, and bagpipe virtuoso Matthew Welch. Highlights of the upcoming season include the debut appearance at Walt Disney Hall in Los Angeles, residencies at Morris Dancing and the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and the Interpretations Series, a leading series in New York City for innovative music of living performers and composers.

FLUX's experiences worldwide with a vivid repertoire balanced between notable pianists as well as visionaries of tomorrow. From "classics" by Conlon Nancarrow, Giacinto Scelsi, and Xenakis, to new works by Leroy Jenkins, Elliott Sharp, Welch, and John Zorn, FLUX brings to all of its performances a "boundless, uninhibited energy." (New York Times)

The quartet avidly seeks out collaborative relationships with genre-transcending artists such as Ornette Coleman, Joan La Barbara, Philip Glass, "(Joshua Hudson, San Francisco Chronicle)". He was born in 1978 and is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where his teachers were Seymour Lipkin, Peter Serkin, and Bruce Brubaker. Mr. Beck made his debut with the National Symphony Orchestra, and has toured Japan as soloist with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. Other orchestras with which he has appeared include the New Zealand Festival Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, and the Virginia Symphony. Mr. Beck has performed as soloist and chamber musician at the Kennedy Center, Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, Miller Theater, Steinway Hall, and Tonic, as well as on WNYC; summer appearances have been at the Aspen Music Festival, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, the Woodstock Mozart Festival, and the Wellesley Composers' Conference.

He is an Artist Presenter and regular performer at Birmingham, and performs frequently as a musician with the Mark Morris Dance Group. He has worked with Lexus, Elliott Carter, Henri Dutilleux, and George Perle, and has appeared with ensembles such as Spectrum Music, the Manhattan String Quartet, the Pacifica String Quartet, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia orchestra, the New York New Ross, The New Yorker. The recording of this monumental work can be found on Mode Records at mode.com.

For more information, please visit www.fluxquartet.com.

Steven Beck, piano, is "... one of the city's most admired young pianists..." (The New Yorker, 29th. June 2005). He was born in 1978 and is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where his teachers were Seymour Lipkin, Peter Serkin, and Bruce Brubaker. Mr. Beck made his debut with the National Symphony Orchestra, and has toured Japan as soloist with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. Other orchestras with which he has appeared include the New Zealand Festival Orchestra (under David Robertson) and the Sequent, the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, and the Virginia Symphony.

Nathan Davis, percussion, is an activist for new music as a composer and percussionist. He is a cofounder of the Free Music Society, an avant-garde 'cello and percussion duo Odd Appetite and of the mixed sextet Non Sequitur. He performs regularly with the International Contemporary Ensemble. He also plays new and traditional Balinese music with Gamelan Galak-Tika and recently made his solo debut at Carnegie Hall. Other engagements have brought him to Istanbul, Turkey, to Bali Jiulliard Ensemble (under David Robertson) and the Sequent, the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, and the Virginia Symphony.

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Nathan Davis' piece Dining Bell was a winner of the 2003 ISCM Composers Competition, and Cropwreier is featured on NPR's Art of the States, heard in over 50 countries. His music has been performed in the U.S., the Netherlands, at the World Saxophone Congress in Montreal, and at the Festival de la Musica Electroacoustica in Cuba, and he was commissioned to write a piece for "Capulli Dance Mind". He has worked with STAP, Elliott Carter, Henri Dutilleux, and George Perle, and has appeared with ensembles such as Spectrum Music, the Manhattan String Quartet, the Pacifica String Quartet, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia orchestra, the New York New Ross, The New Yorker. The recording of this monumental work can be found on Mode Records at mode.com.

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