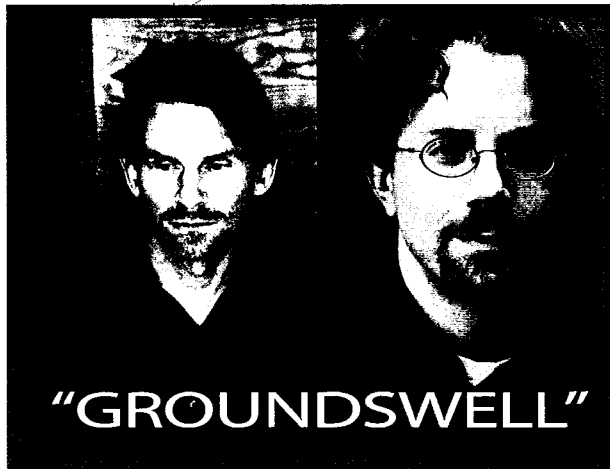


TAPLIN AUDITORIUM IN FINE HALL

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COMPOSERS ENSEMBLE

DEPARTMENT of MUSIC AT PRINCETON



Works by

STEVEN MACKKEY

DMITRI TYMOCZKO

SEAN McCLOWRY

MICHELLE NAGAI

KONRAD KACZMAREK

## THE PROGRAM

*Elements 1-8, plus 9*

Michelle Nagai

**Jane Rigler**, *bass flute and electronics*

*Bits and Pieces*

Konrad Kaczmarek

**Konrad Kaczmarek**, *piano and electronics*

*Beat Therapy II*

Dmtri Tymoczko

1. *Kachunk*
2. *The Mysterious Stranger*
3. *Sayonara*

**Tom Bergeron**, *trumpet* – **Alejandro Danilo Aviles**, *alto sax* – **Geoff Vidal**, *tenor sax*  
**Ken Thomson**, *bass clarinet* – **Michael O'Brien**, *bass guitar* – **James Johnston**, *synth*  
**Vladimir Katz**, *piano* – **David Skidmore**, *drums*

~intermission~

*Concerto for Double Bass and Chamber Ensemble*

Sean McClowry

- I. *Fast*
- II. *Slow*

**Sean McClowry**, *double bass*  
with the **AMERICAN MODERN ENSEMBLE**  
**Ena Shin**, *conductor*

*Groundswell*

Steven Mackey

1. *Approach by Sea*
2. *The Fertile Sea*
3. *Thin Air*
4. *Peak Experience*
5. *Over the Top* – 6. *Running Downhill* – 7. *Sailing Away*

**Hsin-Yun Huang**, *viola*  
with the **AMERICAN MODERN ENSEMBLE**  
**Steven Mackey**, *conductor*

**AMERICAN MODERN ENSEMBLE**

**Robin Zeh & Victoria Paterson**, *violins* – **Orlando Wells**, *viola* – **Robert Burkhart**, *'cello* –  
**Louis Levitt**, *bass* – **Benjamin Fingland**, *clarinet* – **Sarah Schram**, *oboe* – **Amie Margoles**, *horn* –  
**Blair McMillen**, *piano*

*Please join us for a reception downstairs following the concert*

## PROGRAM NOTES

### ***Elements 1-8, Plus 9***

*Michelle Nagai*

### ***Bits and Pieces* (2008/2009)**

*Konrad Kaczmarek*

This improvisatory piece uses a computer program I wrote to provide a solo performance with a constantly evolving rhythmic and pitched accompaniment. All of the sounds that make up this accompaniment come from various 'bit and pieces' of recorded audio that the program has captured during the performance.

### ***Beat Therapy II***

*Dmitri Tymoczko*

This piece combines a classical, through-composed idea of form with elements from jazz. There are solos in every movement, though not as many as there would be in a real jazz piece. I tried to avoid the head-solos-head formula; instead, solos are interspersed more unpredictably with composed sections. These three pieces are part of a longer, album-length project which will eventually involve 7-8 movements in all.

Movement 1 (Kachunk) is supposed to be endearingly awkward, juxtaposing dissonant and aimless chords in the keyboards with more straightforward melodic lines in the horns; it's as if the wind players are determined to make the piece as normal as they can, given the drunken meandering of the keyboards. Movement 2 (The Mysterious Stranger) is supposed to be haunting and sad. It starts as a slow movement but breaks out into an uptempo swing by the end. Movement 3 (Sayonara) is the most funky of the three, and ends with a big chromatic conflagration.

### ***Concerto for Double Bass and Chamber Ensemble***

*Sean McClowry*

I have been meaning to write a bass concerto for a long time. I am excited to have my band, the American Modern Ensemble, backing me up in this performance. I had the particular players in mind while writing for the instruments and I was confident that if I

wrote something tricky, that these musicians could handle it with ease. It is by far the best group I have ever played with.

Thanks to the Music Department, and to Barbara in particular, for being cool about letting me do a big piece like this one. This piece is one of my dissertation requirements for the completion of the composition program.

Fun fact: This performance is the first public gig with my wife Ena, who is conducting. Despite having met in music school more than 10 years ago, we have not had an occasion to perform together outside of weddings for friends. (Don't get any ideas). Thanks to her for putting up with me while writing this piece (and in general).

### ***Groundswell***

*Steven Mackey*

The governing metaphor for Groundswell is an imaginary journey through various topographies from sea level to Alpine terrain and back again. The viola functions as a guide, controlling the pace, highlighting points of interest, leading the group around tricky corners, stepping forward with acts of heroism, and standing aside to allow the group to experience their own personal awe.

There is an unavoidable symmetry in such an adventure. Even if you take a different route on the way down from the way up you pass through the same ecosystems in reverse order. This symmetry suggested the form of the piece. There are seven movements and the middle movement, *Peak Experience*, is singular and stands alone. The other six movements are all part of symmetrically placed pairs: 1. *Approach by Sea* – 7. *Sailing Away*; 2. *The Fertile Sea* – 6. *Running Downhill*; 3. *Thin Air* – 5. *Over the Top*. The degree of contrast becomes progressively greater as you descend so that, even though derived from the same material, movements one and seven, diverge quite a bit from one another while movements two and four are less divergent and movements three and five are very similar.

My first thoughts about Groundswell were while hiking in the mountains near Aspen in the summer of 2006. The steep uphill climb in the oxygen poor altitude informed *Thin Air*, the third movement – it's full of expectation and a bit giddy. The stubborn beauty of the rocky landscape above the tree line suggested the austere, suspended fourth movement – *Peak Experience*. The adventure got me thinking about how the earth and our relationship to it changes at different altitudes.

My mind wanders easily to the mountains. I went to high school in South Lake Tahoe CA and was a professional freestyle skier back in the days of hot-dogging. Much if not most of my music is influenced by the rhythms of sliding down mountains but this is the first time I've consciously explored images from the earth that remains when the snow melts.

There were more meditations about earth and altitude later that same summer, while I was on my honeymoon in Italy. The first movement, *Approach by Sea*, is a short prelude that tries to capture the rush of bouncing along modest sea swells in our rented boat heading toward Monte Argentario, a rocky mountain that rises without warning out of the Mediterranean on the Tuscan coastline.

Driving around in our scooter (also rented) allowed us to appreciate the inland panoramas – repetitive patterns of cypress trees leading up to vineyards and olive groves nestled below medieval villages perched strategically on the hilltops. The second movement, *The Fertile Hillside*, is inspired equally by that landscape and the tuneful contours and dancing, undulating rhythms of spoken Italian.

Groundswell was written for my friend Hsin-Yun Huang whose sound is deep, warm and earthy and whose virtuosity and musicianship casts her comfortably into the role of guide.

– SM

## THE PERFORMERS

### AMERICAN MODERN ENSEMBLE

Robert Paterson, *Artistic Director*

Victoria Paterson, *Managing Director*

Hailed by the New York Times as having “a strong fan base and performers of high-quality,” exhibiting “exceptional energy and thoughtful programming” (MusicWeb International) and “consummate versatility” (Sequenza21), AMERICAN MODERN ENSEMBLE has quickly become a major force in the American new music scene.

Based in New York City, AME was formed in 2005 to celebrate and showcase the widest possible repertoire written by American composers, especially chamber works written by

living composers. In its first four seasons, AME has presented twelve concerts featuring performances of works by sixty-five living American composers, using a world-class ensemble that includes some of the finest instrumentalists and vocalists in North America.

As part of its dedication to education and outreach programs that expose communities to American music and its creators, AME offers public discussions with several featured composers at each concert, conducts an annual composition competition for young composers, and regularly features world and local premieres in its programming. AME's debut recording, *Powerhouse Pianists*, was released in February 2008.

[www.americanmodernensemble.org](http://www.americanmodernensemble.org)

### ALEJANDRO DANILO AVILES

**Alejandro Danilo Aviles** is a Cuban American who graduated from the Manhattan School of Music. In 2003 the “Alejandro Aviles Latin Jazz Quartet” was selected by the “Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts” and “Jazz at Lincoln Center” to represent the United States as “Jazz Ambassadors”. Touring as a guest artist and clinician, Alejandro visited universities and schools throughout Central and South America. Now living in NYC, Alejandro continues to work as a leader, professor, and free lancer, performing around the world.

### TOM BERGERON

**Tom Bergeron** has performed across North America, Europe, and Asia with orchestras, chamber groups, jazz groups, show bands, as a soloist, and can be heard on the Naxos and Koch record labels. He is Director of Brass Chamber Music and Studio Teacher of Trumpet at Williams College and Bennington College and Assistant Director of the Jazz Ensemble at Yale University. Mr. Bergeron holds a B.A. in Business Management from The Isenberg School at the University of Massachusetts and an M.M. and A.D. in Trumpet Performance from the Yale School of Music. Mr. Bergeron plays principal trumpet with the Berkshire Symphony, second trumpet with Opera North, and plays regularly with the Vermont Symphony and Springfield Symphony. Mr. Bergeron has appeared as a soloist

with the Hartford Symphony, has recorded with the Albany Symphony and Schola Cantorum, and has performed with The Smothers Brothers, Arlo Guthrie, The Triton Brass Quintet, Albany's Dogs of Desire, the I/O Ensemble, Orchestra New England, the New Hampshire Symphony, The New Haven Symphony, The Yale Philharmonia, and Emmanuel Music in Boston. In 2009, Tom commissioned and premiered a Trumpet Concerto by Jay Wadley, "Upon Awakening, Still Burning" for trumpet, winds, and live electronics. He plays lead and solo trumpet for Carnival Cruise Lines and Norwegian Cruise Lines seasonally, is a composer, arranger, and manager for Pearl City, a contemporary jazz group, and plays with salsa bands Mikata, Sonido Unidad, Agua Por Chocolate, and the pop group The Prescription.

### **HSIN-YUN HUANG**

Violist **Hsin-Yun Huang**, recognized as one of the leading violists of her generation, came to international prominence in 1993 when she was winner of the top prize of the ARD International Music Competition in Munich and the Bunkamura Orchard Hall Award. In 1988, Ms. Huang was the youngest-ever Gold Medalist of the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition on the Isle of Man. These and other honors have propelled a career as soloist and chamber musician on stages of major concert halls throughout North America, Europe, and the Far East. Solo performances have included concerto appearances with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra in Munich, the Zagreb Soloists in Paris, the Tokyo Philharmonic in Tokyo, the Berlin Radio Symphony, the Russian State Philharmonic, and the Naumburg Orchestra in New York City's Central Park.

Ms. Huang has recently embarked on a series of major commissioning projects for solo viola and chamber ensemble. In July 2006 she premiered a new work from Houston-based Taiwanese composer Shih-Hui Chen, *Shu Shon Key* (Remembrance) with the Broyhill Chamber Ensemble at An Appalachian Summer Festival in North Carolina. The work was co-commissioned by the festival along with Chinese Performing Arts, which presented the work at Boston's Jordan Hall in January 2007, and Da Camera of Houston, which presented a performance later that season. Steven Mackey's *Groundswell* received its premiere at the Aspen Music Festival in the summer of 2007. Subsequent performances have included presentations by the Fulcrum Point New Music Project in Chicago and the La Jolla Summerfest.

Ms. Huang was a member of the Borromeo String Quartet from 1994-2000. With the Quartet, she performed in such prominent venues as New York City's Alice Tully Hall, London's Wigmore Hall, Berlin's Philharmonie, and Japan's Casals Hall. In 1998 the Borromeo String Quartet was awarded the prestigious Cleveland Quartet Award, chosen by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center to be members of Chamber Music Society Two, and featured in a "Live from Lincoln Center" telecast. She has also collaborated extensively with the Brentano String Quartet, including the recording and performance of the complete Mozart string quintets, with the first set of recitals presented by Carnegie Hall in Zankel Hall. She performed George Benjamin's "Viola Viola" with violist Misha Amory for Carnegie Hall's "Making Music" series at Zankel Hall in 2007.

Hsin-Yun Huang came to England at the age of fourteen to study at the Yehudi Menuhin School with David Takeno. She continued her studies at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia with Michael Tree, where she earned her Bachelor of Music degree, and at the Juilliard School with Samuel Rhodes, where she earned a Master of Music degree. Currently residing in New York City, she is a dedicated teacher, serving on the faculties of The Juilliard School and the Mannes College of Music.

### **JANE RIGLER**

Flutist, composer and educator **Jane Rigler** performs nationally and internationally as a soloist in contemporary music festivals, as well as with ensembles, including Ensemble Plural, Either/Or, Ne(x)tworks, Ensemble Sospeso, and the Anthony Braxton 12tet. She is the author of *The Vocalization of the Flute* (which demonstrates new and ancient methods of singing-while-playing) and is known for innovations in flute performance, techniques and musical vocabulary. Rigler's compositions range from solo acoustic pieces to interactive electronic ensemble works, and her works have been heard in festivals, conference and radios around the world. Together with artist-programmer Zachary Seldess, she is designing and developing the Music Cre8tor (patent pending), an interactive, sensor-driven music composition program for young people with disabilities. Jane is a 2009 Japan/United States Commission Friendship Commission Fellowship winner, and will be working and researching in Japan for 5 months starting Fall of 2009. <http://www.janerigler.com>

## ENA SHIN

It has been only one year since **Ena Shin** conducted her first orchestra. Since then she has participated in master classes and seminars through the Conductors Guild and Bard College. In October, Shin was chosen as a conductor in the Tchaikovsky Festival at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music where she worked with Gustav Meier. She has made guest conducting appearances at Yale and Columbia Universities and most recently with the American Modern Ensemble at Princeton University. She has been graciously guided by Roger Nierenberg and Eugene Tzigane McDonough in addition to working with Kenneth Kiesler at two festivals last summer.

As a pianist she has performed at the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival, the United Nations General Assembly Hall, and has been a soloist with the Kalamazoo Symphony. She received a Bachelor of Music Degree in Piano Performance from Peabody Conservatory working with Robert McDonald. After performance related injuries, she pursued a Masters Degree in education with an emphasis in organization and leadership from Columbia University's Teachers College. Shin has been a faculty member at Hood College and the McDonough School in Maryland. She is currently a tenured-faculty member at the United Nations International School where she teaches classes in music history and appreciation, piano lessons, as well as coordinating the private lesson program and directing a chorus. She currently resides in Brooklyn, New York.

## DAVID SKIDMORE

**David Skidmore** is active as both a performer and composer of music for percussion. David is a member of the Ensemble ACJW in New York, Third Coast Percussion in Chicago, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, and Ensemble XII, an international collective of 12 percussionists. He is a dedicated advocate for the music of our time, having commissioned, premiered, and performed dozens of new works by many of the great composers of the 20th and 21st century.

For more information on David, please visit his website at **[davidskidmorepercussion.com](http://davidskidmorepercussion.com)**.

## KEN THOMSON

**Ken Thomson** (bass clarinet) is a Brooklyn-based clarinetist, saxophonist, and composer. In demand as a composer and freelancer in many settings, he moves quickly between genres and scenes, bringing a fiery intensity and emotional commitment to every musical situation. Called "the hardest-working saxophonist in new-music show business" by Time Out NY, he plays saxophone and writes for the punk/jazz band Gutbucket, with whom he has toured internationally to 19 countries and 32 states over nine years, and released CDs for Knitting Factory, Enja, NRW and Cantaloupe Records. In 2008, he debuted a new project called "Slow/Fast" of exclusively his long-form compositions. He is a member of the next-generation chamber orchestra Signal (conducted by Brad Lubman), performs with punk/cabaret band the World/Inferno Friendship Society; world-jazz group Fire in July, all-improvised No Net Trio, plays for kids in the Dirty Sock Funtime Band, and was a co-founder of punk/chamber composer-performer collective Anti-Social Music. He is on faculty at the Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival and Institute. As a composer, he has been commissioned by the American Composers Orchestra, Bang on a Can, True/False Film Festival, and others, and has received awards from ASCAP and Meet the Composer. He is a Conn-Selmer Artist, and endorses Sibelius software. [www.ktonline.net](http://www.ktonline.net)

## GEOFF VIDAL

**Geoff Vidal**, saxophonist and composer, grew up in Falmouth, MA, and was raised in the big band tradition of the '40s and '50s. At the age of 15, Geoff took his first steps as a young improviser, joining Stage Door Canteen, a talented local big band whose membership featured many of Cape Cod's most high-profile jazz musicians. Geoff was accepted into the prestigious sax studio of Lynn Klock at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in the fall of 1998, and in his freshman year was selected to play in the award winning UMASS Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Grammy award-winning composer, arranger, and master musician-Jeff Holmes. During his college career, Geoff received several awards including "Best Collegiate Soloist" in the Down Beat Student Music Awards (2001) and was a member of the critically acclaimed UMASS Studio Orchestra, four-time winners in Down Beat Magazine's Student Music Awards (1999-2002).

Since moving to New York in the winter of 2006, he has quickly united himself with some of the city's brightest and talented young jazz musicians playing at such venues as The Iridium, Sullivan Hall, The Highline Ballroom, Mercury Lounge, Smalls and Fat Cat. Geoff presently serves as Music Manager of Fat Cat Jazz and Billiards in the West Village, which has three shows nightly and boasts a very admirable rotation of some of the city's best musicians. In addition to leading his own group, The GV5, he performs and records regularly with the Fat Cat Big Band, Brother Josephus and the Love Revival Revolution Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Collective and many other sideman projects with his musical brethren. Geoff is currently slated to record his first record this summer under his own name, for an early 2010 release.

## THE COMPOSERS

**Konrad Kaczmarek** is a composer/musician/programmer working primarily in live audio processing and improvisation. His work has been performed at the Stanley Glasser Electronic Music Studio in London, the Sonorities Festival at Queens University in Belfast, The New Zealand International Arts Festival in Wellington, the Chelsea Art Museum in New York, Brooklyn College, The Extensible Toy Piano Project at Clark University and University of Albany, and at the Princeton Composer's Ensemble. He has been awarded residencies at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, The Banff Centre in Canada, STEIM in The Netherlands, the Sound Bytes festival in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and also received the Stanton Wheeler prize for jazz performance at Yale University.

**Steven Mackey** is a Professor of Music at Princeton University where he has been a member of the faculty since 1985. He teaches composition, theory, twentieth century music, and improvisation.

Composer and bassist, **Sean McCowry**, is finishing up his fourth year at Princeton. He currently resides in Brooklyn, NY, where he is active as a freelance musician. Aside from composing and performing classical music, Sean is also interested in recording and producing music. He has been known to talk at length about recording gear and mainstream pop music. If you get him going, you may be sorry.

Composer **Michelle Nagai** creates site-specific performances, installations, radio broadcasts, dances and other interactions that address the human state in relationship to its setting. Her work has been presented in the US, Canada and Europe with the support

of the American Composers Forum, the American Music Center, Eyebeam, Harvestworks, the Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Art, Nature and Dance, the Jerome and McKnight Foundations, Meet the Composer, New York State Council on the Arts and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She is a member of the free103point9 transmission artists roster, a certified "Deep Listener" and founding member of the American Society for Acoustic Ecology. Michelle is currently pursuing graduate studies in music composition at Princeton University.

**Dmitri Tymoczko** is a composer and music theorist who teaches at Princeton.

