OFF ROAD
COMPOSITION GENERALS CONCERT

TUESDAY · APRIL 27th · 8:00PM
TAPLIN AUDITORIUM in FINE HALL

NEW WORKS BY:
RYAN BROWN
KONRAD KACZMAREK
MATT MARBLE
MICHELLE NAGAI

RESPONDING TO:
MORTON FELDMAN
BELA BARTOK
SCOTT WALKER
LAETITIA SONAMI

PERFORMANCES BY:
ACME STRING QUARTET
LAETITIA SONAMI
CAMERON BRITT
LAINIE FEFFERMAN

KATE CAMPBELL
MATT MARBLE
MICHELLE NAGAI
COMPOSITION GENERALS CONCERT
OFF ROAD

Music by Ryan Brown, Konrad Kaczmarek, Matt Marble, Michelle Nagai
and Béla Bartok, Morton Feldman, Laetitia Sonami, and Scott Walker

~THE PROGRAM~

A historical moment on a line between A & B
Laetitia Sonami

Laetitia Sonami, Lady's Glove

The Gentle Senses
Michelle Nagai

Michelle Nagai, MARtLET

String Quartet no. 2, II Allegro Molto Capriccioso
Béla Bartok
Bar Talk
Konrad Kaczmarek

ACME String Quartet
Yuki Numata and Benjamin Russell, violins -- Caitlin Lynch, viola
Clarice Jensen, cellist

~ Intermission ~

Piano and String Quartet (Excerpt)
watermark
Morton Feldman
Ryan Brown

ACME String Quartet
Kate Campbell, piano
ACME String Quartet  
Kate Campbell, piano  
Lainie Fefferman, voice and percussion  
Cameron Britt, percussion  
Matt Marble, voice and guitar

Please join us for a reception following the concert, on the 1st floor of the Campus Club, 5 Prospect Avenue.
A historical moment on a line between A and B
Laetitia Sonami

Laetitia Sonami will perform a short excerpt from her latest composition *A historical moment on a line between A and B*. This piece expands on Sonami’s continued exploration of collapsing sonic perspectives and the intrinsic impermanence of sound. Places and gestures are recalled to create invisible architectures of abstract and real sounds. The real-time control of these sonic structures is done with Sonami’s *Lady’s Glove*. Sonami has worked with the *Lady’s Glove* in various stages of development since 1991. Fitted with a vast array of sensors which track the slightest motion of the performer’s enigmatic dance, the *Lady’s Glove* has become a fine instrument which challenges notions of technology and virtuosity.

The Gentle Senses
Michelle Nagai

Suggested to me in a dream, the atmosphere of *The Gentle Senses* is one in which imagined, desired, and real world spaces are conflated. Shifting between these realities with little sense of hierarchy, the work floats through layers of sonic and emotional signification. Harmonic and motivic materials are presented and elaborated on, even as they outline a gradual move toward formal disorder and instability.

The instrument I am performing on, the MARtLET*, is a very large piece of bark culled from a downed tree on Prospect Road in Princeton. I have fitted the MARtLET with a number of tiny light sensors. Each sensor communicates with my sound processing software by way of a program called the Wekinator, developed by Princeton CS Grad Student Rebecca Feibrink. Tracing inflections of light and shadow across the surface of the MARtLET, the Wekinator software uses machine learning algorithms to make sense of my gestural control, injecting unpredictable variations and digressions into the composed sounds that underlie the work.

The Gentle Senses is created in response to the music of Laetitia Sonami and inspired initially by her early collaborations with Paul De Marinis using her custom-built *Lady’s Glove* controller. Sonami’s ability to create compelling sonic and formal ideas in real-time, while gracefully manipulating a delicate and complex electronic interface, is the aspect
of her work in which I’ve found the most encouragement and the greatest challenge to my own composing. It’s in the spirit of this challenge that I’ve built the MARtLET and composed the first of what I hope will be many works for it.

*MARtLET stands for Material Artifact, Reacting to Light, Emitting Tones. Big thanks to Jascha Narveson for helping sort that out! If you are interested in the extended explanation of where this name is coming from, you can ask me after the show ...

**Bar Talk**
*Konrad Kaczmarek*

My own music tends to focus on surface texture and slowly evolving soundscapes, often incorporating electronics and improvisation with loosely defined formal structures. I initially chose to respond to Bartok’s string quartets as this music, in stark contrast to my own, seemed to be meticulously planned out and deliberate. To my ear it embodied a sense of balance both on the larger compositional scale as well as on a more local motivic level. As I became more familiar with the music, I was also struck by the sense of kinetic energy and directedness that the individual phrases achieve. Whether the moments of arrival emerge out of prolonged development sections or seemingly jump out of nowhere, they nevertheless feel completely right in that specific moment. This is the main characteristic of these string quartets that I am responding to. My response is at times dark and mysterious, and at times light and playful, which could also describe most forms of bar talk. I hope you enjoy.

**watermark**
*Ryan Brown*

*watermark* is a response to Morton Feldman’s late pieces, especially his *Piano and String Quartet* (1985). I’ve always been really attracted to these works, though superficially most of my music sounds nothing like his. Even still, there’s an underlying sense of repetition and harmony to his late style that I resonate with and tried to amplify in *watermark*, while pushing myself towards a greater use of silence and subtle textures than I might otherwise use.
Rabbit & Moon: A Children’s Folk Mini-Opera
Matt Marble

Oh, rabbit of the moon,
What are you leaping for?
I shall leap, I shall leap too...
At the large full moon!

Traditional Japanese song

Houston: Among the large headlines concerning Apollo this morning there’s one asking that you watch for a lovely girl with a big rabbit. An ancient legend says a beautiful Chinese girl called Chang-o has been living there for 4000 years. It seems she was banished to the moon because she stole the pill for immortality from her husband. You might also look for her companion, a large Chinese rabbit, who is easy to spot since he is only standing on his hind feet in the shade of a cinnamon tree. The name of the rabbit is not recorded.

Collins: Okay, we’ll keep a close eye for the bunny girl.

— From the Apollo 11 crew just before landing on the moon

Rabbit & Moon is my response to singer/composer Scott Walker. Walker is known primarily for his melodramatic vocal style and his early orchestral pop hits in the 1960’s (“The Sun Ain’t Gonna Shine Anymore”, “30th Century Man”). However after shunning his pop status in the late 1970’s, he retreated to the studio, composing extended leider inspired by blues, avant-guard composition, electro-acoustic collage, and conceptual text-setting. In all his works I have been inspired by his melodic sensibility and orchestration style and, in his later works, his way of stretching a song into a captivatingly large scale. At the same time, his lyrics and music have a tendency to speak from the dark side (though they are rife with subtle humors) - for example his most recent album, The Drift, concerns itself with torture, psoriasis, and the 9/11 tragedy. While it wasn’t my interest to reframe his aesthetic in rainbow-ponied smiley-faces, I was lead to write a little opera about a bunny rabbit dreaming beneath the moon. It seemed a perfect response for me to speak from the side of innocence and play, aiming for the spirit-ears of a child (I hope there are some kids in the audience, both old and young).

Walker’s Manhattan, which is to be played tonight, is a later work (1995). As there is no available score for his works, I transcribed “Manhattan” by ear and re-arranged it for the ensemble tonight, to be representative of Walker’s later style. Spinning off of Manhattan’s
lyrical theme of slavery, I had recently watched Disney’s “Song of the South” and read the Brer Rabbit tales, as well as researching other cultural myths about rabbits and the moon. I wrote my own ‘Brer Rabbit’ tale, and set it to song with narration. And here we are. I have decided not to include the narrative or lyrics, so enjoy the piece as you hear it.

I want to thank the ACME string quartet, Cameron, Lainie, and Kate for all their hard work. Also thanks to Orland Nutt for the narration and to everyone at Princeton for their constructive feedback.

THE ARTISTS – THE COMPOSERS – THE PERFORMERS

Ryan Brown

Ryan Brown’s music has been called “modern composed music at its best: nimble, expressive, ear-turning, and strange in an accessible way, highly virtuosic but never pretentious” (Washington City Paper). His works have been performed by many excellent groups, performers, and presenters, including pianist Lisa Moore, California E.A.R. Unit, Gaudeamus Festival (Amsterdam), and the MATA Festival. Ryan has received an Emerging Composer Award from the Gerbode and Hewlett Foundations, and a Morton Gould Young Composer Award from ASCAP. Upcoming premieres and commissions include music for the Paul Dresher Ensemble and the Brooklyn Philharmonic’s chamber series, Music off the Walls, which he’ll also be co-curating. Visit his website at www.ryanbrownmusic.com.

Kate Campbell

Kate Campbell performs frequently as a soloist and chamber musician specializing in late 20th century and contemporary works. She has worked with many leading composers, including Steve Reich, Terry Riley, and David Lang, as well as premiering many works by emerging composers. She has had the pleasure of performing with members of Bang on a Can All-Stars, SIGNAL, and eighth blackbird. Recent projects include a bi-coastal tour and residency with her chamber group REDSHIFT, performing for the Bang on a Can Summer Festival and Switchboard Music Festival, and recording for New Amsterdam Records. Kate is also the co-director of New Keys, an ongoing concert series in the San Francisco Bay Area showcasing new and adventurous works for the piano.
Lainie Fefferman

Lainie Fefferman is a third year graduate student in the Princeton composition program. For more information, go to: http://www.lainiefefferman.com.

Clarice Jensen

Cellist Clarice Jensen completed her bachelor’s and master’s degrees at The Juilliard School, as a student of Joel Krosnick. She began studying cello at the age of three and piano when she was five in her hometown of Independence, Missouri. While firmly rooted in classical performance, Ms. Jensen is also an enthusiastic advocate for the performance of new music. She is the artistic director of ACME, the American Contemporary Music Ensemble, a group dedicated to the outstanding performance of contemporary classical music. Recent and upcoming ACME performances include a residency at The Whitney Museum of American Art throughout the month of June 2008, and concerts at The Noguchi Museum, Le Poisson Rouge, and Miller Theatre. ACME has performed previously at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Cornelia Street Café, and a variety of gallery spaces. The New York Times has written that ACME plays “electrifyingly,” and Time Out New York reports, “polished and playful, its programs are a broad-minded mix of rigor and eclecticism,” and, “the ACME roster has consistently featured some of New York’s brightest, busiest players . . . And Jensen has earned a sterling reputation for her fresh, inclusive mix of minimalists, maximalists, eclectics and newcomers.”

Konrad Kaczmarek

Konrad Kaczmarek received a B.A. in music from Yale University, a MMus in electronic music composition from University of London, Goldsmiths, and is currently in the composition program at Princeton. He has held teaching positions at Yale University, The New School University, and Harvestworks Studio in New York. His freelance programming and performing have taken him to the Kunsthernes Hus in Olso, Norway (2009), The New Zealand International Arts Festival (2008), The 2008 Whitney Biennial Performance Series, the Next Wave festival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (2006), “Works and Process” at the Guggenheim (2006), and The Strings of Autumn Festival at the Estate Theater in Prague (2006). His own work has been performed at the Stanley Glasser Electronic Music Studio in London, the Sonorities Festival at Queens University in Belfast, The SoundBytes Festival in Halifax NS, The Tank and The Chelsea Art Museum in New York, Brooklyn
College, The Extensible Toy Piano Project at Clark University and University of Albany, and the Princeton Composer’s Ensemble. He has been awarded residencies at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, The Banff Centre in Canada, and STEIM in The Netherlands.

Caitlin Lynch

Caitlin Lynch has been described as a performer for whom the term “‘gifted’ hardly does justice” (The Oregonian). An avid soloist, chamber, and orchestral musician, Ms. Lynch has had major concert engagements in fourteen countries on five continents. She has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras, whose tours have featured her concerti performances across North America and Europe. Ms. Lynch is currently a full fellowship recipient at The Juilliard School, pursuing a Master of Music degree under the tutelage of Heidi Castleman and Robert Vernon. A graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, she previously studied with Jeffrey Irvine and Lynne Ramsey, in addition to Charles Noble of her native Oregon. She also studied with Jean Sulem, as an exchange student at the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris. This Spring, Ms. Lynch will travel to Israel with Itzhak Perlman and members of the Perlman Music Program for a residency in collaboration with the Jerusalem Music Centre. cml@juilliard.edu.

Matt Marble

Matt Marble (b. 1979) is a composer, visual artist, and writer. He has composed for film, theatre, dance, c.d., stereo diffusion, multimedia performance, and live ensembles. His visual art and scores have been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona and the Jersey City Museum; his writings have been published in Open Space Magazine and Foarm Magazine. He is currently beginning work on an album of songs, as well as newly scored music for what i’m saying is born from the weather; a project with choreographer Rebecca Davis to be performed at Judson Church in November of 2010. contact: memarble@gmail.com

Michelle Nagai

Composer Michelle Nagai studies music composition in the graduate program at Princeton University. She creates site-specific musical performances, compositions, installations, radio broadcasts, dances and other interactions that address the human state in relationship
to its setting. She is a founding member of the American Society for Acoustic Ecology and holds a teaching certificate from the Deep Listening Institute.

**Yuki Numata**

Yuki Numata is a violinist with “virtuosic and dexterous bravery,” according to the New York Times. Ms. Numata is rapidly gaining attention as a charismatic virtuoso, having performed as a soloist with the New World Symphony, the University of Buffalo’s Slee Sinfonietta, the Wordless Music Orchestra, the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra and the Eastman Philharmonia Orchestra. As a result of her avid interest in new music, she has had the opportunity to work closely with some of today’s foremost composers including Charles Wuorinen, Steve Reich, and John Zorn. Ms. Numata performs frequently with the American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME) which had its Carnegie Hall debut this past spring. Born in Vancouver, Canada, Ms. Numata holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of Michigan. Her principal teachers include Andrew Jennings, Zvi Zeitlin, and Gwen Thompson.

**Ben Russell**

Ben Russell is hailed as a dynamic performer and displays great talent in mastering both classical music and folk music of several cultures. As violinist, vocalist, and songwriter, he utilizes a vast repertoire of music to transport his audiences to a world of emotional creativity and sonic beauty. Ben is a founding member of the New York City based ensemble, the Bryant Park Quartet. This energetic and virtuosic string quartet tours throughout the country performing recitals, giving presentations, and coaching young artists in public schools and universities. The quartet received a Chamber Music America Residency Partnership Program grant in 2008 and is currently Artists in Residence at the Stony Brook Pre-College Division. Since 2008, Ben has been a member of the American Contemporary Music Ensemble. This ensemble performs a wide variety of contemporary music – from cutting edge works by living composers to avant-garde indie rock music. This broad spectrum allows the ensemble to perform in various venues such as Carnegie Hall and Le Poisson Rouge. In New York City, Ben collaborates with top-notch ensembles such as the Wordless Music Orchestra, the Mark Morris Dance Group, and the String Orchestra of New York City. For the past 4 years, Ben has held the position of Principal 2nd Violin in the Portland Symphony Orchestra in Maine.
Laetitia Sonami

Composer, performer, and sound installation artist Laetitia Sonami was born in France and settled in the United States in 1975 to pursue her interest in the emerging field of electronic music. She studied with Eliane Radigue, Joel Chadabe, Robert Ashley and David Behrman. Sonami’s work combines text, music and “found sound” from the world, in compositions which have been described as “performance novels”. Sonami’s sound installations combine audio and kinetic elements embedded in ubiquitous objects such as light bulbs, rubber gloves, bags and more recently toilet plungers. Awards include the Alpert Award in the Arts (2002), Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts Award (2000), the Civitella Ranieri Fellowship (2000), Studio Pass-Harvestworks residency (2001) and a Creative Work Fund award (2000) for a collaboration with Nick Bertoni and the Tinkers Workshop. Sonami lives in Oakland, California and is guest lecturer at the San Francisco Art Institute and the Milton Avery MFA program at Bard College.

Next Composers Ensemble Concert:
Tuesday, May 11
Works by MR Daniel, Andrea Mazzariello, Kate Neal and Jascha Narveson
Taplin Auditorium, 8:00 p.m.

Next Department of Music Events:
Thursday, April 29
Composition Colloquium, Brenda Hutchinson, composer/sound artist
Woolworth Center Room 102, 4:30 p.m.

Junior-Senior Concert
Featuring new works by music majors in the Classes of 2010 and 2011
Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall, 8:00 p.m.

If you would like to receive the department’s monthly event calendar by e-mail, please go to our web page at http://www.princeton.edu/music/
Princeton University Department of Music

Steven Mackey, chair
Ernest Clark, concert coordinator
Bryan Fitzwater, technical support specialist
Marilyn Ham, department manager
Cynthia Masterson, office assistant
Gregory Smith, academic programs manager
Jeffrey Snyder, technical director
Kyle Subramaniam, business manager
Alexandra Jerez-Fernandez, student usher
Andres Villalta, audio specialist
Joseph Vizzini, piano technician

Production Personnel

Christopher Gorzelnik, production supervisor
John Burton, production technician
Liz Lammer, production technician
Bill Pierce, production technician

Student Ushers

Daniel Jaffe, head usher
Yudai Chiba
Mike DiStefano
Martha Ferguson
Alexandra Jerez-Fernandez
Mengsi Li
Megan McPhee
Meghan Todt
Wensheen Tong
Lija Treibergs