

Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 8:00pm
Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall
Princeton University, Princeton, NJ



Dan Trueman, Director
Michael Pratt, Resident Conductor

presents

VEIL: COMPOSITION GENERALS CONCERT

Viet Cuong, Alex Dowling, Amanda Feery, and Chris Rogerson responding to
Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, Morton Feldman, and Norwegian springar tunes

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CHRIS ROGERSON

Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello

Prelude
Sarabande
Capriccio
Minuet
Canto
Gigue

Brook Speltz, cello

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Cello Suite No. 1 in G major, BMV 1007

Prélude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuett I & II
Gigue

Brook Speltz, cello

I like to write “vertical” music: that is, I generally place a great deal of emphasis on the harmony in my work. Writing a solo cello piece poses several challenges to the way I usually compose, namely the charge to write more linearly. Bach, of course, masters these challenges in his six cello suites.

I composed this work with a dual approach. Throughout the piece, I attempt to either simulate or create the illusion of vertical harmony, or abandon it altogether. The *Prelude*, for instance, mirrors the approach of the *Prelude* of Bach’s *G Major Suite* in breaking chords into arpeggios. The *Minuet* is almost exclusively double, triple, and quadruple stops. Conversely, the *Canto*, contains no double stops at all, only the single line.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13, “Pathétique”

Adagio cantabile

Isabelle O’Connell, piano

ALEX DOWLING

Line Drawing

Mivos String Quartet
Olivia De Prato, violin
Joshua Modney, violin
Victor Lowrie, viola
Mariel Roberts, cello

In responding to the 2nd movement of Beethoven’s “Pathétique” sonata, I was looking to write a strong melody or theme that carries throughout the piece. The powerful sense of direction and cohesion that comes from Beethoven’s melody was of great inspiration to me and is an aspect that I have increasingly sought to bring into my music. Hopefully the resulting piece, though far more sparse and fractured, retains a similar spirit of direction and through-line.

—INTERMISSION—

MORTON FELDMAN

King of Denmark

Jason Treuting, percussion

VIET CUONG

Remarks on Colors

Eric Beach, percussion

Remarks on Colors seeks inspiration from note #156 of Ludwig Wittgenstein's larger collection, titled *Remarks on Color* (1950). The last phrase of this Wittgenstein excerpt informs the entire piece, as timpani and bass drum alter luminous colors created by various metallic percussion instruments. Also written as a response to Morton Feldman's *King of Denmark* (and Feldman's signature grid notation), *Remarks on Colors* explores a sound world where the performer has considerably more creative license than typically permitted by a composer. Additionally, my piece responds to Feldman's philosophy about percussion writing: that "maybe the clue to future percussion repertoire is a whole series of one-of-a-kind pieces ... and maybe that's the nature of the 'percussion' sound." Thank you to Jason Treuting and Eric Beach for their generous support of this project.

156. Ruge: "Black dirties." That means it takes the brightness out of a colour, but what does that mean? Black takes away the luminosity of a colour. But is that something logical or something psychological? There is such a thing as a luminous red, a luminous blue, etc., but no luminous black. Black is the darkest of the colours. We say "deep black" but not "deep white."

But a 'luminous red' does not mean a light red. A dark red can be luminous too. But a colour is luminous as a result of its context, in its context.

Grey, however, is not luminous.

But black seems to make a colour cloudy, but darkness doesn't. A ruby could thus keep getting darker without ever becoming cloudy; but if it became a blackish red, it would become cloudy. Now black is a surface colour. Darkness is not called a colour. In paintings darkness can also be depicted as black.

The difference between black and, say, a dark violet is similar to the difference between the sound of a bass drum and the sound of a kettle-drum. We say of the former that it is a noise not a tone. It is matt and absolutely black.

– Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Color* (1950)

TRADITIONAL

Norwegian springar tunes

Kivlemøyane I

Kivlemøyane II

Dan Trueman, hardanger fiddle

AMANDA FEERY

Three Sisters

Some Pig

Bluebottle's Farm

Mivos String Quartet

Three Sisters is a set of inelegant, drunk and disorderly dance tunes. They lie somewhere between the regular, motoric Irish jig beat branded onto the soles of my feet through Irish dancing lessons, and what I actually set out to respond to, a set of Norwegian springar dance tunes. The rhythm of the springar dances are uneven, with some beats unequal in length to others. This has not sat well with my own rhythmic pattern perception receptors, or whatever you could call them.

I set out to solve the springar rhythm riddle, but in the end I composed rhythms I perceive the springar dances to embody, and embraced the confusion along the way. I was also interested in the melodies of the dances, and the hardanger fiddle tuning. The melodies of the springar tunes come from somewhere vocal. They seem like they were once sung and singable, but they traverse into a realm of unsingability through both the rhythm of the dance, with its almost obsessive repetitions, and the emergent harmonies and tuning of the fiddle. I wanted to latch onto these melodic and harmonic moments, like scrolling through a waveform and time-stretching a microsecond.

The springar dances being performed this evening come from a set of dances called *Kivlemøyane* or *Systerslätt*, which pertain to a myth about three pagan sisters who were turned to stone by an angry minister because of their racket out in the fields ... so I named the two dances after the musical alter egos of my two sisters. I would like to say a big thanks to Dan Trueman for playing the springar tunes so beautifully and to Mivos String Quartet for taking on the response!

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

Viet Cuong (b. 1990) is a young composer who has had works performed across the United States, Canada, South Africa, Singapore, and Japan. He has appeared at the Aspen Music Festival, International Double Reed Society Conference, Gamper Festival of Contemporary Music, US Navy Band International Saxophone Symposium, Midwest Clinic, GAMMA-UT Conference, and multiple CBDNA conferences, among others. He is a winner of the ASCAP Morton Gould Award, Walter Beeler Memorial Prize from Ithaca College, Dolce Suono Ensemble Young Composers Competition, Atlantic Coast Conference Band Directors Association Grant, Peabody Alumni Award, Gustav Klemm Award, Prix d'Été Competition, and National Band Association Young Composer Mentor Project. Additionally, he received honorable mentions in the 2013 Harvey Gaul Composition Competition and the 2010 and 2012 ASCAP/CBDNA Frederick Fennell Prizes. Viet has held artist residencies at Yaddo, Ucross, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts, and was a scholarship student at the Aspen and Bowdoin music festivals. He will be a fellow at the Copland House's CULTIVATE workshop this summer. Viet is currently a Naumburg and Roger Sessions Doctoral Fellow at Princeton University. He holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied with Kevin Puts and Oscar Bettison.

Alex Dowling makes music for real and imaginary instruments. He has worked with groups such as the Irish RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Crash Ensemble, and orkest de ereprijs, and his music has been featured at festivals including Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival, U.S.A. and the International Young Composers' Meeting, Netherlands.

Amanda Feery works with acoustic, electronic, and improvised music. Through her music-making she has worked with inspiring teachers and peers in the realms of composition, improvisation, theatre, and film. Her work has been performed by Con Tempo String Quartet, Dither Quartet, Lisa Moore, Quince Contemporary Vocal Ensemble and Orkest de Ereprijs. She has participated as a composition fellow at Ostrava Days Festival, Bang on a Can Summer Festival, and the International Young Composers Meeting.

Hailed as a "confident, fully-grown composing talent" (*The Washington Post*), **Chris Rogerson's** music has been praised for its "virtuosic exuberance," and "haunting beauty" (*The New York Times*). He has received commissions and performances from the Kansas City Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the New World Symphony, the Grand Rapids Symphony, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, the New York Youth Symphony, the

Brentano Quartet, and the JACK Quartet, and his music has been performed in venues including Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, the Kennedy Center, and Symphony Center in Chicago. Recently, Chris was honored with a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He has also won awards from ASCAP, BMI, the Theodore Presser Foundation, the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts, the National Association for Music Education, the New York Art Ensemble, and the Aspen Music Festival (Jacob Druckman Award). Chris has been in residence at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and the Ucross Foundation. He has also been Composer-in-Residence for the Chamber Music Festival of Lexington, Young Composer-in-Residence at Music from Angel Fire, and a fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, the Cabrillo Festival, and the Norfolk New Music Workshop. Born in 1988, he studied at the Curtis Institute of Music and the Yale School of Music with Jennifer Higdon, Aaron Jay Kernis, and Martin Bresnick, and is currently a doctoral fellow at Princeton University. Chris is represented by Young Concert Artists, Inc.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

A member of the ensemble Sō Percussion since 2007, **Eric Beach** has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Barbican Centre, and dozens of other venues around the world. Together with Sō he has worked closely with Steve Reich, David Lang, Paul Lansky, Steve Mackey, Dan Trueman, Bobby Previte, Fred Frith, Martin Bresnick, Bryce Dessner, Glenn Kotche, Matmos, Dan Deacon, Buke and Gase, Dave Douglas, Tristan Perich, Daniel Wohl, Cenk Ergün, Grey McMurray, and many others. As a composer, Eric has written music for Sō Percussion, Shen Wei Dance, Q2 Internet Radio, KT Niehoff/Lingo Dance, Make Music Winter, Bring to Light/Nuit Blanche New York, the 2x 'Fifth Wall' iPad app, and the Look and Listen Festival. Eric is Co-Director of the Sō Percussion Summer Institute as well as the percussion program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music. Studying with Robert van Sice, Eric received his Bachelor of Music and Graduate Performance Diploma at the Peabody Conservatory and his Master of Music at the Yale School of Music. He also received a Fulbright fellowship and pursued additional study with Bernhard Wulff in Freiburg, Germany.

The **Mivos Quartet**, “one of America’s most daring and ferocious new-music ensembles” (*The Chicago Reader*), is devoted to performing the works of contemporary composers, presenting new music to diverse audiences. Since the quartet’s beginnings in 2008 they have performed the works of emerging and established international composers who represent varied aesthetics of contemporary classical composition. Mivos is invested in commissioning and premiering new music for string quartet, particularly in a context of close collaboration with composers over extended time-periods. In the 2013–2014 season, Mivos has collaborated on new works with Sam Pluta (Lucerne Festival Commission), Dan Blake (Jerome Commission), Mark Barden (Wien Modern Festival Commission), Scott Wollschleger, and Patrick Higgins (ZS), and in early 2014 will develop new work with Richard Carrick (Fromm Commission), Eric Wubbels (CMA commission), Kate Soper, and poet/musician Saul Williams. Mivos is also committed to working with guest artists, exploring multi-media projects involving live video and electronics, creating original compositions and arrangements for the quartet, and performing improvised music. Mivos has appeared on concert series including Wien Modern (Vienna, Austria), Asphalt Festival (Düsseldorf, Germany), Concerti Aperitivo (Udine, Italy), HellHOT! New Music Festival (Hong Kong), Edgefest (Ann Arbor, MI), and Aldeburgh Music (UK), where Mivos was invited to work with the Arditti Quartet and Helmut Lachenmann. Mivos was one of five groups selected for the Young Ensembles Fellowship at the 2012 Darmstadt Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, where they were awarded a Fellowship Prize for Interpretation. They look forward to returning to Darmstadt in August 2014, where they will present a concert of new American compositions and

work closely with Clemens Gadenstätter and Helmut Lachenmann. More information about the Quartet is available at www.mivosquartet.com.

Described by *The New Yorker* as “the young Irish piano phenom,” pianist **Isabelle O’Connell** has performed across the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, France, Germany, Italy and Ireland. Her debut solo album, *RESERVOIR*, was released in 2010 to critical acclaim and features solo piano music by nine contemporary Irish composers. Isabelle is co-founder of GrandBand, New York’s new music piano sextet, described by the New York Times as: “six of the finest, busiest pianists active in New York’s contemporary-classical scene.” As a chamber musician, Isabelle often performs with the CRASH ensemble, appearing at the Canberra International Chamber Music Festival, Sydney Conservatoire, Kennedy Center, Le Poisson Rouge in New York and the Reich Effect Festival, Ireland. She has also played with Alarm Will Sound at Duke University and in Denver, Colorado, and with Ergodos ensemble at Issue Project Room in New York. She has performed with John Adams at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall, with Meredith Monk at the Bang on a Can Summer Festival, and with the New Zealand String Quartet at the Banff Centre for the Arts. Isabelle has a reputation for being a dynamic interpreter and energetic advocate of music by 20th- and 21st-century composers, regularly commissioning and premiering new works. In 2007, she was Co-Artistic Director of “New Music, New Ireland, New York,” a concert that showcased contemporary Irish composers at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall. Isabelle also has a particular interest in music involving extended piano techniques and is often invited to give masterclasses and workshops on the topic. Her performances have been broadcast on radio and television on both sides of the Atlantic, including WNYC, WQXR, WFMT Chicago, BBC3, RTE, TV3, and Lyric FM. For more information check out www.isabelleoconnell.com.

A regular performer with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the San Diego Symphony, **Brook Speltz** has built an enthusiastic fan base across the United States. Mr. Speltz has received top prizes in numerous major competitions. He is the recent grand prizewinner of the prestigious Ima Hogg Competition, which led to his highly anticipated debut with the Houston Symphony. He has also claimed top prizes at the ASTA National Competition and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Bronislaw Kaper Awards. As a soloist, Mr. Speltz has performed concertos with the Curtis Institute of Music Chamber Orchestra, the Music Academy of the West Festival Orchestra, the Brentwood-Westwood Symphony, and the Mozart Orchestra of Laguna Beach, among others. He has appeared as recitalist throughout the country, including guest appearances at the Montecito Music Festival, Pacific Serenades, Pasadena Restoration Series, the New Music New Haven series, and the Idyllwild Arts Festival. He has performed at many of the most prestigious music festivals, including the Marlboro Music Festival, Music Academy of the West, and the Oregon Bach festivals. As a member of the Vuillaume String and Ares String quartets, Brook has been a

resident artist the BRAVO Vail Valley Music Festival and Music from Angel Fire. Born in Los Angeles, Brook graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music in 2009, following studies with Peter Wiley and Carter Brey. He is currently pursuing a diploma at the Juilliard School, studying with Joel Krosnick.

Jason Treuting has performed and recorded in venues as diverse as the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Walker Art Center, the Knitting Factory, the Andy Warhol Museum, Zankel Hall, Lincoln Center, DOM (Moscow) and Le National (Montreal). As a member of Sō Percussion, he has collaborated with artists and composers including Steve Reich, David Lang, John Zorn, Dan Trueman, tabla master Zakir Hussain, the electronic music duo Matmos, and choreographer Eliot Feld. In addition to his work with Sō, Jason performs improvised music with Simpl, a group with laptop artist/composer Cenk Ergün; Alligator Eats Fish with guitarist Grey McMurray; Little Farm, with guitarist/composer Steve Mackey; QQQ (a quartet consisting of hardanger fiddle, viola, guitar and drums); and Big Farm (a foursome led by Rinde Eckert and Steve Mackey). Jason also composes music. His many compositions for Sō Percussion include Sō’s third album, *Amid the Noise*, and contributions to *Imaginary City*, an evening length work that appeared on the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s 2009 Next Wave Festival. Recent commissions for other ensembles have included *Oblique Music for 4 Plus (Blank)*, a concerto for Sō Percussion and string orchestra for the League of Composers Orchestra; *Circus of One*, music for a video installation in collaboration with Alison Crocetta; and *Diorama*, an evening length collaboration with the French choreographers in Projet Situ. Jason is Co-Director of the Sō Percussion Summer Institute, an annual intensive course on the campus of Princeton University for college-aged percussionists. He is also Co-Director of a new percussion program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music, where Sō Percussion has been ensemble-in-residence since Fall 2011, and has taught percussion both in masterclass and privately at more than 80 conservatories and universities in the USA and internationally. Jason received his Bachelors in Music and the Performer’s Certificate from the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music where he studied percussion with John Beck and drum set and improvisation with Steve Gadd, Ralph Alessi, and Michael Cain. He received his Masters in Music along with an Artist Diploma from Yale University, where he studied percussion with Robert Van Sice. Jason has also traveled to Japan to study marimba with Keiko Abe and to Bali to study gamelan with Pac I Nyoman Suadin.

Dan Trueman is a composer, fiddler and electronic musician.