Lipa Festival of Contemporary Music

Convergences

electronic sound    musical performance

Arthur Kreiger

Guest Artist

Thursday, October 23, 2008
7:30 pm
Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall
PROGRAM

Sonja Giles, bass flute

In Short Crystal Moments (1987)  Kreiger
(electronic tape)

The line we can’t cross (2008)  Kyong Mee Choi
Michael Giles, alto saxophone

(eight-channel electronic sound)

Occasional Demons (2005)  Kreiger
Bridget Leahy, timpani

INTERMESSION

Synchronisms No. 5 (1969)  Mario Davidovsky
Iowa State Percussion Ensemble
Barry Larkin, conductor

Sonic Contours (1952)  Vladimir Ussachevsky (1911-1990)
(electronic tape)

Voyage (1976)  Kreiger
(electronic tape)

Uncommon Bonds (1990)  Kreiger
Gregory Oakes, clarinet

This residency is funded, in part, by the Alvin Edgar Fund for the Performing Arts, a part of the Iowa State University Foundation
Notes on the Program

Piping Hot is concerned with the physical pleasures of elegant, raw sound. It is sound that not only soothes and challenges the ear, but touches the skin and embraces the body. The bass flute is perhaps the most intimate of instruments, and does not readily speak to a concert hall. The addition of amplification brings out to the audience the immediacy of this flute’s sensuous breath tones, and adds percussive presence to the lip pops, key slaps, whispered syllables and sung tones, all of which are asked of the performer. The fanciful sound world presented in the electronic portion is created using an integrated collection of devices from classical electronic music and newer computer music. Analog tape techniques and voltage-controlled synthesis are used alongside digital FM (frequency modulation) synthesis under the control of computer-based MIDI editors and mixers. The work was realized at the Electronic Music Center of Columbia University in the winter of 1996 and dedicated to Tara Helen O’Connor, who gave the world premiere in New York City in October 1996, at a concert sponsored by CYGNUS Ensemble.

In Short Crystal Moments is described by the composer as evoking "images of glass chimes shaking in the wind or the gentle rubbing of crystal." In his liner notes to Meeting Places, a 2003 compact disc recording of nine of Kreiger’s works on Albany Records, Perry Goldstein writes of In Short Crystal Moments:

… this delicate miniature [consisting] of almost ubiquitous sonorous tintinnabulations, encroached upon, however, by a more timbrally aggressive and dissonant music in registers below. These interloping sounds appear and disappear, before building up steam in the last third of the piece. A short coda, ulminating in a final gesture of ascending bell-like sounds, signals, finally, that 'all is well'.

Like Piping Hot, Kreiger created the electronic sound from a combination of newer and older generations of electronic devices, again at the Electronic Music Center at Columbia. In Short Crystal Moments was commissioned by the League of Composers-ISCM (International Society of Contemporary Music), which presented the work at Symphony Space in New York City on October 1, 1987.

The line we can’t cross represents the composer’s wish "to transcend lines or boundaries that we humans believe we cannot cross, due to any limitations or conflicts in our mind." The saxophone and electronic parts intermingle throughout the piece until the moment when the saxophone attempts to go beyond the repeated motivic line that symbolizes that line we can't cross. The composer adds that "Ultimately, the piece tries to show that it is our effort and attitude that dissolves the lines and boundaries between us."

Jeffrey Stadelman write of his composition Prostheseus:

In 1998 I wrote a set of four Monaural Text Studies, short electroacoustic pieces made for the sole purpose of posting them to the internet—which at that time in Buffalo had serious file-size and traffic flow limitations. Four years later I took one of these, Brother, and composed out a kind of motivic expansion, ending with a stereo work approximately eight times the length of the original. I named this piece Prostheseus, after a touching minor cybernetic character in Stanislaw Lem’s book, Mortal Engines. The eight-channel version was prepared in January 2007.
Kreiger writes of Occasional Demons:

The sometimes fast-paced rhythms driving this piece present the instrumentalist with an overtly physical performance experience. The battery contains only four timpani. The lowest drum tuned to its deepest sound infuses the opening volley with an overwhelming ferocity. Dead center strokes and ringing midway strokes play off the drumhead to contrast rapidly articulated gestures with explosions demanding longer decay time. Electronic sounds soon enter and add depth and diversity to the aural landscape. A wide variety of sampled noises undergoing multiple layers of digital transformation form the basic content of the stereo sound tracks. Synchronized passages of drum strokes and electronic attacks alter the perception of the timpani's familiar color. A crude, terrifying electronic scream punctuates the piece at different junctures. Fashioned on an early model ARP Synthesizer, the scream returns at the close of the composition presenting the soloist with a final challenge.

The electronic portion of Occasional Demons was realized at the Cummings Electronic and Digital Sound Studio of Connecticut College where it was completed in 2005. The piece is dedicated to Peter Jarvis and is included in his Twenty-First Century Timpani Anthology project with Calabrese Brothers Music, LLC.

Mario Davidovsky's series of works entitled Synchronisms (1963-2007) aim "to integrate all levels of sound—both the electronic media and the conventional instrumental media—into one single coherent musical space," Synchronisms No. 5 (1969) combines the idioms of percussion instruments and electronics, the electronic sounds extending, reflecting, and in effect commenting upon those of the percussion instruments. In turn, listeners are stimulated by the electronic sounds to hear the percussion in greater sonic detail. The piece begins with percussion alone, combining non-pitched sounds with timpani, which Davidovsky describes as being used "to push pitches into the unpitched percussion instruments." When the electronics enter, these intensify an already rich timbral palette.

A landmark piece in the history of American electronic music, Vladimir Ussachevsky’s SonicContours (1952) transforms recorded piano sounds using techniques of tape manipulation, using the tape recorder itself as a creative musical instrument, and a medium for composition. In a 1981 interview with Robert Moog, Ussachevsky reflected upon this period:

The Columbia music department applied for money for a tape recorder in 1950, and received the grant in 1951. ... When the tape recorder—it was an Ampex 400—and microphone arrived, I immediately began to do a lot of recording. I recorded the concerts at Macmillan Theater, where many of the music department performances were staged. Then I began experimenting with recording piano tones. The tape recorder had a speed change switch, so I could double or halve the speed of the original tone. Shortly after that, I learned about tape feedback from (engineer) Peter Mauzey. The Ampex 400, Peter's own two boxes, plus a borrowed pair of earphones and a second recorder, were what I started with. There was no formal program, no research grant. I did experiments and then put a few simple pieces of music together, on my own time. I played my first composition at a Composer's Forum concert at Macmillan Theater on May 9, 1952.

Arthur Kreiger's Voyage (1976) explores a wide variety of sound provided by the Buchla synthesizer
Beginning almost exclusively with pitched sounds threaded into monophonic (but far from mono-timbral) lines, the less distinctly pitched element of glissando is introduced, and the music rides down this slippery slope of indistinct or unfixed pitches into a world of imaginative and beautifully crafted sound effects. At the three-minute mark, melodic materials give way almost completely to glissandi and extravagant sounds resembling glass shattering and tightly wound coils uncoiling, lower register growls and exotic machines revving up. Pitch and melody dramatically re-emerge (at 4:12), now happily interlaced with the kinds of fanciful glissandi and sound effects heard in the previous section.

**Uncommon Bonds** presents a tightly interlocking mosaic of clarinet and electronic sounds, showcasing the musical abilities of the clarinetist. Bathed in an ever-shifting backdrop of subtle electronic timbres, the soloist must project "a compelling pyrotechnical display often matching exactly the lively musical contours of taped gestures." The work was composed with the assistance of a 1990 Artist Fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Art, and is dedicated to Allen Blustine, who gave the premiere at a concert of The Guild of Composers in New York City in 1991.

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**Biographies**

**Arthur Kreiger**

“Although much of his music can be heard only as it issues, in whole or in part, from loudspeakers, its creative shaping source is immediately unmistakable, recognized as human and intensely personal. It is not music shaped by technological means, but music that demands technology for its fulfillment. While the music is so singularly Kreiger's, it is assuredly of its time, not only or even primarily because of the composer's mastery of sophisticated musical technology, but in the compositional modes that the music so urgently expresses. For it is learned music, in that it is aware and informed in its craft…”

So begins the citation accompanying the 1993 Brandeis University Creative Arts Medal in Music Composition. A composer for over 40 years, Arthur Kreiger's catalog contains pieces for orchestra, chorus, mixed chamber ensembles, solo instruments and the electronic medium. The sound world of the electronic medium, in particular, continues to fascination him. The compelling dazzle of the electronic palette whether speaking alone or in combination with more familiar acoustic instruments, holds out an overwhelming attraction for this composer.

Arthur Kreiger began his studies at the University of Connecticut and went on to complete his DMA with distinction at Columbia University. In addition to the above-mentioned Brandeis Award, the composer's honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Rome Prize as well as commissions from the Fromm and Koussevitzky Foundations and The National Endowment for the Arts. Kreiger's music appears on Odyssey, Spectrum, New World Records, Finnadar, CRI, Neuma, Capstone, SEAMUS and Context. His music is published by C. F Peters, the Association for the Promotion New Music, American Composers Editions and Calabrese Brothers Music.

Arthur Kreiger's most recent project is a CD presenting nine of his compositions. Entitled *Meeting Places*, the disc features highly acclaimed performances by the New York New Music
Ensemble and the Julliard Percussion Quartet. Each work in the collection contains an electronic component. The CD was released on Albany Records through the generous financial support of the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music. A recent review in Fanfare Magazine cites “music of tremendous craft, charm, and even beauty…Give it a listen.”

Arthur Kreiger and his wife Diane live in Connecticut on Moosup Pond. The composer is Sylvia Pasternack Marx Associate Professor at Connecticut College in New London.

**Kyong Mee Choi**, composer, organist, painter, and visual artist, received several prestigious awards including John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, Robert Helfs Prize, The First prize of ASCAP/SEAMUS commission award, The First place at the Birmingham Arts Music Alliance Concert Exchange program, The Second prize at VI Concurso Internacional de Música Electroacústica de São Paulo, Mention for Musique et d’Art Sonore Electroacoustiques de Bourges, Honorary Prize for the Musica Nova at Music of Czech Republic, Honorable Mention for the Luigi Russolo International Competition, Finalist for CEMJJKO Music in Brazil among others.

Her compositions have been recognized by the Concurso Internacional de Música Electroacústica de São Paulo, Australasian Computer Music Conference, Musica Contemporanea in Ecuador, Luigi Russolo International Electroacoustic Competition, Third Practice, International Computer Music Conference, Electroacoustic Musical Festival in Santiago de Chile, Spectrum Press, Merging Voices, Music Beyond Performance, EMM, SEAMUS, Bourges, NODUS, CMS, and MUSICA NOVA among others. Her music can be found at CIMESP (São Paulo, Brazil), SCI, EMS, ERM media, SEAMUS, Détonants Voyages (Studio Forum, France).

She is currently an Assistant Professor of Music Composition at Roosevelt University in Chicago where she teaches composition and electro-acoustic music. She writes for chamber, electro-acoustic, interactive, and multi-media work.

**Vladimir Ussachevsky** (1911-1990) was born to Russian parents in Manchuria, and emigrated to the United States in 1931. He received his musical education at Pomona College and the Eastman School of Music, completing a Ph.D. in 1939, and composed his early works in a neo-Romantic style for traditional instruments. He joined the faculty of Columbia University in 1947, and by 1951 began experimenting with electronic music in the form of "tape music" which altered recordings of traditional instruments by means of tape slicing, sound-on-sound recording, mixing, and speed-alteration. A limited amount of electronic signal processing such as filtering was also available to Ussachevsky to use in combination with the tape techniques. His first compositions for tape reflected the melding of traditional forms with the new types abstract compositional relationships suggested by this medium: *Transposition, Reverberation, Composition and Underwater Valse* (both 1951), *Sonic Contours* (1952), *A Poem of Cycles and Bells* (1954), *A Piece for Tape Recorder* (1955), and *Studies in Sound Plus* (1955). Ussachevsky also incorporated environmental and electronically generated sounds into his tape music, and later worked with computers to both generate and combine sounds. In 1959, together with Milton Babbitt, Otto Luening, and Roger Sessions, Ussachevsky founded the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center, out of which came many of the most important electronic music compositions of the following thirty years. Ussachevsky’s later years saw a return to composition for traditional acoustic instruments.

Born in 1934 in Mé danos, Buenos Aires, **Mario Davidovsky** began his musical studies at the age of seven, continued his education at the Collegium Musicum, and graduated from the Bartolomé Mitre School in Buenos Aires in 1952. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, director of the Koussevitzky Foundation at the Library of Congress, director of the Fromm Foundation at Harvard University, director of C.R.I., and founder and vice president of the Robert Miller Fund for Music. Fellowships have included the Koussevitzky Foundation Fellowship, the Williams Foundation Fellowship, the Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship, and the Walter Channing Cabot Fellowship. Davidovsky has received a Pulitzer Prize and awards from the Association
Wagneriana, the Asociación Amigos de la Música, BMI, Brandeis University, and the National Institute of Arts. Davidovsky has received numerous commissions, including those from the Fromm Foundation, the Juilliard String Quartet, the Koussevitzky Foundation, Yale University, the New York Chamber Soloists, Parnassus, the Universities of Pennsylvania and Chicago, the Philadelphia Orchestra, Speculum Musicæ, the San Francisco Symphony, MIT, the Naumburg Foundation, the Dorian Quintet, the Emerson Quartet, the New Music Consort, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and others. Davidovsky is the Fanny P. Mason Professor of Music, Emeritus, at Harvard University. He is the former Director of the Columbia/Princeton Electronic Music Center (1980 through 1994) and MacDowell Professor of Music at Columbia University.

The music of Jeffrey Stadelman—once described by a Los Angeles Times reviewer as “painterly …, deftly dispersed in time and glazed with a ‘dry wit’”—has been performed in the U.S and Europe by some of the leading groups active in contemporary music. This list of ensembles, including the New York New Music Ensemble, Boston Musica Viva, the California Ear Unit, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Het Trio, 175 East Ensemble, Earplay, the New World and Cassatt String Quartets, Slee Sinfonietta and the June in Buffalo and Wellesley Conference Players, among others, continues to grow as Stadelman's work attracts increasing attention in the U.S. and abroad. The composer serves as Associate Professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, where he teaches composition and contemporary music. Stadelman's music is published by APNM and BMG Ariola. Centaur Records released Pity Paid, a CD of the composer's chamber music, in September 2008.

**Performers**

**Sonia Giles**, Assistant Professor of Flute, earned the Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance from the University of Alabama where she was a student of Sheryl Cohen. Her Master of Music in Flute Performance is from the University of Iowa where she studied with Tadeu Coelho. She earned her doctorate in 2005 from the University of Minnesota. Dr. Giles has appeared as a recitalist, chamber musician, and educator at a variety of venues including the Kalingrad Symphony Orchestra (Russia), ISU Wind Ensemble, Ottumwa Symphony Orchestra, and the ISU Orchestra. At Iowa State, Sonja directs all flute activities, including studio class, Flute Ensemble, private flute lessons, and flute techniques class.

**Michael Giles**, a native Iowan, has studied with Matthew Sintchak, Ronald Tyree, John Rapson and Phil Mattson. He received his degrees (B.M., M.A.) from the University of Iowa. Michael is in high demand as a clinician and, as a performer, focuses on contemporary classical saxophone repertoire and creative jazz music. He stays active as an improviser and composer, working with eclectic mixes of personalities and instrumentation. He currently leads the classical saxophone studio, conducts one of the large jazz ensemble, coaches saxophone quartets, directs the small jazz ensembles program, and conducts the vocal jazz ensemble.

**Bridget Leahy** is currently a sophomore in Music Education at Iowa State University studying percussion with Dr. Barry Larkin. She was born in Wisconsin but attended and graduated from Sioux City East High School. Bridget has been involved in multiple performing ensembles from honor bands and orchestras to jazz ensembles and choirs. She has been a member of the Iowa All-State band and has marched with the Colts Drum and Bugle Corp. Bridget is currently a part of the Vic Firth Education team and is a percussion instructor for two high schools. Ms. Leahy's goal is to attend graduate school after completing her undergraduate degree.

**Barry Larkin**'s education includes a Bachelor of Music in Percussion Performance from Arizona State University, where he studied with Mervin Britton and Mark Sunkett; a Master of Arts in Theory and Composition from Stephen F. Austin, with Dan Beaty, and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Southern
An unusually thoughtful memorial fund has been established by the widow of an ISU professor who loved music. The fund honors the memory of C. Buell Lipa, a man whose interests and knowledge spanned centuries. Lipa was a professor emeritus of English. During more than thirty years on the Iowa State faculty, Lipa reflected his broad interests in his teaching and in his association with students and faculty. “What means most to me was his gentleness, a quality that informed everything he did and said,” wrote one student after Lipa’s death in 1978 at the age of 73.

The Lipa Festival is funded in part with support of the C. Buell Lipa Memorial for 20th Century Music, the Louise Moen Hamilton Fund for Excellence in Music, and the Alvin Edgar Fund for the Performing Arts - a part of the Iowa State University Foundation.

Donations to the C. Buell Lipa Memorial Fund may be directed to the Iowa State Foundation, Memorial Union, 2229 Lincoln Way, Ames, IA 50011-7164. Contributions are tax deductible.

Gregory Oakes holds a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University, a master's degree from DePaul University, and a doctorate from the University of Colorado. His teachers include Bil Jackson, Keith Lemmons, Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr, and John Bruce Yeh. He has been honored as a Tanglewood Music Festival Fellow, a Fulbright Scholar Finalist, and an Aspen Music Festival Fellow. Mr. Oakes has presented masterclasses at such institutions as Michigan State University, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, University of New Mexico, University of Colorado, and the Aspen Music Festival. He has previously taught at the University of Souther Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), Bemidji State University (Bemidji, MN) and Regis University (Denver, CO).

Festival Director

Christopher Hopkins is an assistant professor of music at Iowa State University of Science and Technology, where he teaches courses in composition and musical applications of technology. He is also on the faculty of the Human-Computer Interaction program and conducts research in the Virtual Reality Applications Center. His compositions have been performed at international festivals in Basel, Grenoble, Hong Kong, Honolulu, Melbourne, New York, Tanglewood, Toronto, Vienna, and Zurich, with broadcasts over the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Östereichischer Rundfunk, Radio Canada, WNYC, and Public Radio International. Dr. Hopkins also performs as a cellist, conductor, and violist da gamba. His artistic and research interests include dialectics of historical and contemporary styles in composition and performance practice, descriptive phonology of music, and an interdisciplinary project to map surface and tensile properties of 3-D virtual objects to sound synthesis.

C. Buell Lipa Festival of Contemporary Music

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