

Lawrence University

Lux

Conservatory of Music Concert Programs

Conservatory of Music

1-18-2020 8:00 PM

Fifth House Ensemble, January 18, 2020

Lawrence University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://lux.lawrence.edu/concertprograms>



Part of the [Music Performance Commons](#)

© Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

This Concert Program is brought to you for free and open access by the Conservatory of Music at Lux. It has been accepted for inclusion in Conservatory of Music Concert Programs by an authorized administrator of Lux. For more information, please contact colette.brautigam@lawrence.edu.

New Music Series 2019–20



Fifth House Ensemble



LAWRENCE
UNIVERSITY
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

FIFTH HOUSE ENSEMBLE

Musicians

Melissa Ngan, flute
Herine Coetzee Koschak, cello
Katherine Petersen, piano

Saturday, January 18, 2020
Harper Hall, Music-Drama Center
8 p.m.

PROGRAM

Lipstick Jacob TV
(b. 1951)

in manus tuas Caroline Shaw
(b. 1982)

Soundings Dan Visconti
(b. 1982)

INTERMISSION

Ballade Kaija Saariaho
(b. 1952)

Vox Balaenae George Crumb
(b. 1929)

This engagement is supported by the Arts Midwest Touring Fund, a program of Arts Midwest that is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional contributions from the Wisconsin Arts Board and the Crane Group.



PROGRAM NOTES

JacobTV—*Lipstick*

Dutch avant-pop composer JacobTV has been a 5HE favorite for many years. A rock musician who went on to study composition and electronic music on the conservatory level, JacobTV is obsessed with American media and news, drawing his inspiration from all corners of our pop culture including infomercials, talk shows, commercial products, radio and nightly newscasts. *Lipstick*, a work that is part of his series of “boombox” pieces for solo instrument and ghetto blaster (as affectionately named by the composer), is a duo between the flute and a fixed electronic track that contains clips from a relationship therapist with a heavy French accent (“you are jumping all those hoops”), young and desperate lovers on an American talk show (“2 years ago, we”), and Billie Holiday speaking lyrics from her favorite song (“Skip that lipstick—and I know you cheat”). All along, the flute mimics the rhythms and pitches of the recorded speech, illustrating the excitement, frenetic energy, paranoia and resignation of young failed love.

—Melissa Ngan

Caroline Shaw—*in manus tuas*

in manus tuas is based on an earlier motet, in this case that of Thomas Tallis. While there are only a few slices of the piece that reflect exact harmonic changes in Tallis’ setting, the motion (or lack of) is intended to capture the sensation of a single moment of hearing the motet in the particular and remarkable space of Christ Church in New Haven, Conn.

in manus tuas was written in 2009 for cellist Hannah Collins, for a secular cello compline service held in the dark, candlelit nave.

—Caroline Shaw

Dan Visconti—*Soundings*

Soundings refers to the most fundamental properties of musical instruments and the very act of bringing sound to life, and this new trio likewise grows from primal sounds to a celebration of sound itself, a joyous and universal expression that explores the depths contained in the most simple and familiar sounds.

Seven short movements alternate between ensemble pieces and cadenzas for each of the trio members—virtuosic outbursts where

all three musicians produce sound by ganging up on one instrument and banging out a racket that could never be achieved by two hands unassisted. A series of auxiliary devices are explored as the instruments are probed and sounded in a series of offbeat episode involving rubber balloons, tuning pegs and ping-pong balls.

The inspiration behind all these shenanigans lies in the old folk tale of “Stone Soup,” which lies at the heart of Fifth House Ensemble’s work in community. These eyebrow-raising etudes are a celebration of the spirit of exploration and arts as service that inspired me to join Fifth House as composer and artistic director.

The work is graciously commissioned by Chamber Music America’s Classical Commissioning Program.

—Dan Visconti

Kaija Saariaho—*Ballade*

Saariaho writes:

“In this short piece I wanted to write music with a melody that grows out of the texture before descending into it again; a work that constantly shifts from a complex, multi-layered texture to concentrated single lines and back again.

Why *Ballade*? Manny asked specifically for a piece bearing this title, and I wrote it for him in July of 2005.”

Typically, a ballade is a piece of poetry or a piece of music that tells the story of a journey over time, with or without words. There have been many famous ballades written for the piano over the centuries; most notably the four Chopin *Ballades*, the four Brahms *Ballades*, and the Fauré *Ballade*. Chopin’s *Ballades* are generally thought of to exist as non-programmatic works, though they show a distinct story-telling characteristic in the way the music appears to have a plot. Brahms on the other hand, provides a distinct text that pairs with the first of his *Ballades*, and each of the subsequent ballades seems to evoke a particular mood, even without a programmatic element. Saariaho’s own description of the piece implies a very distant relationship with the origins of the ballade, however the text in and of itself tells the journey of a melody. This journey begins with a desperate plea and quickly falls into a path of deep, dark despair. As the melody descends, she explores the depths of the instrument, challenging the performer to fight against the ever-changing murmuring in the bass, giving the work an unsettling feeling. At moments the melody seems to break free of its murky constraints, only to get

dragged down into the depths again. With one last shriek at the end, the final pitch of the melody, is repeated in a frenzy, and is eventually dragged down the length of the piano to an abrupt close.

—Katherine Petersen

George Crumb—*Vox Balaenae*

Inspired by recordings of humpback whale song, George Crumb traces the passage of earthly time using the eponymous creature as a sort of narrator. In the Vocalise (...for the beginning of time), we hear the flute setting a scene full of primordial pops and crackles. The piano quotes Strauss’ opening to “Also Sprach Zarathustra” as a fanfare to the birth of time. The Variations on Sea Time begin with the cello playing an ethereal theme in harmonics, assuming the timbre of the flute from the previous section but now in a more melodic and traditional way. Five variations trace the geologic periods of time, each becoming increasingly agitated and conflicted as the life forms become more complex. These give way to the Sea Nocturne (...for the end of time), which re-imagines the Sea Theme in an undulating, serene, underwater scape. One imagines the whale soaring through a vastness that is muted and peaceful in spite of the inherent chaos above the surface. The piece’s expansive treatment of time reminds us that even momentous historic events are mere blips in the grand continuum of evolution.

—Herine Coetzee Koschak

MUSICIAN BIOS

Melissa Ngan

A passionate advocate for chamber music, Melissa Ngan is a founding member of Fifth House Ensemble. A dynamic educator and coach, Melissa currently teaches a music entrepreneurship course at DePaul University, and has served as professor of flute at Carthage College. As Fifth House Ensemble’s Executive Director, Melissa drives the organization’s entrepreneurship programs, having created training programs for New England Conservatory, the Colburn School, Indiana University, the Eastman School of Music, TEDx Michigan Ave, and the Fresh Inc festival on arts entrepreneurship and creative programming. Her writing has been featured on the *Entrepreneur the Arts* blog and *Huffington Post*.

Having held positions with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and the Peninsula Music Festival, Melissa's performance activities have spanned South America, Europe, Russia and Japan. Previous award credits include First Prize at the National Flute Association's Orchestral Audition Competition. Melissa is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and Northwestern University, with principal teachers including Bonita Boyd and Walfrid Kujala. Melissa is not only a well-known flutist and educator—she also makes a mean spread of Brazilian food and a mouth-watering chocolate pecan bourbon pie.

Herine Coetzee Koschak

An avid conversationalist, cellist Herine Coetzee Koschak is on a lifelong quest to engage in meaningful and personal exchanges through music. Herine is a founding member of Fifth House Ensemble and is regularly heard on local and national radio stations and concert stages, as well as on the Cedille record label. As a passionate advocate of music education in underserved communities, Herine joined the faculty of the Merit School of Music in 2002 and served as Co-Director of the Suzuki-Alegre Strings Program and the String Department Chair from 2010–2014. She has appeared as a featured soloist with numerous orchestras including the National Repertory Orchestra, the Nittany Valley Symphony, and International Chamber Artists. Herine has held titled positions in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and the National Repertory Orchestra, and has also performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the renowned new music ensemble, Eighth Blackbird. An Indiana University alumna, her principal teachers were Janos Starker and Emilio Colon. She resides in Deerfield, Ill. with her husband and young son, with whom she shares a love of Nutella.

Katherine Petersen

Described as a “strong and exciting performer” who plays with “musical feeling and great technical skill” by the *New York Classical Review*, pianist Katherine Petersen enjoys a versatile career performing and educating young musicians locally and nationally. Always interested in the collaborative aspects of a pianist's career, Petersen is in demand for regular performances with local and national artists. She has held staff collaborative pianist positions at the Conservatory and Schulich School of Music of McGill University, Killington Music Festival, Bowdoin International Music Festival, and the Montreal Symphony's Standard Life Competition. As her true connection with performing has always been through chamber music, she founded a violin and piano chamber duo, Duo FAE, with

a longtime friend. Equally dedicated to the two facets of her career, Petersen has held teaching positions at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University, McGill Conservatory of Music, Merit School of Music, and is currently on faculty at the Music Institute of Chicago. Petersen is a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music and Schulich School of Music of McGill University where her principal teachers included Vivian Weilerstein, Stéphane Lemelin and Sara Laimon. In her free time, she is an avid cyclist and enjoys watching sci-fi movies.

About Fifth House Ensemble

Praised by the *New York Times* for its “conviction, authority, and finesse,” the Chicago-based Fifth House Ensemble (5HE) harnesses the collaborative spirit of chamber music to reach beyond the traditionally-perceived limits of classical music. The ensemble's artistic, educational and civic programs engage theater groups, video game designers, corporate innovators and folk bands to share stories as diverse as the communities it serves.

Performances in previous seasons include those at Texas Performing Arts, Civic Music Association (IA), Old Town School of Folk Music, WFMT Impromptu, Steppenwolf Theater, Rush Hour Concerts at St. James, National Sawdust (NY) and the Miller Theatre (NY).

In addition to the ensemble's work on the concert stage, 5HE reaches 17,000 students annually through its arts-integrated programming, and trains emerging artists nationwide as a curriculum design partner to higher education institutions and through its summer festival, **Fresh Inc.**

For more information, visit www.fifth-house.com.

Fifth House Ensemble is supported in part by the Alphawood Foundation, The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Steven R. Gerber Trust, the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events, Chamber Music America, the Northern Trust Charitable Trust, the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, New Music USA, the Paul R. Judy Center for Innovation & Research, and by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

NEW MUSIC SERIES 2019–20

Brooklyn Rider

Friday, October 4, 2019, 8 p.m.
Lawrence Memorial Chapel

Lawrence University New Music Ensemble presents

Ten Thousand Birds

Sunday, October 13, 2019, 2 p.m.
Main Hall Green

Fifth House Ensemble

Saturday, January 18, 2020, 8 p.m.
Harper Hall, Music Drama Center

Transient Canvas

Friday, April 10, 2020, 8 p.m.
Harper Hall, Music Drama Center

Ian Dicke

Wednesday, May 6, 2020, 8 p.m.
Harper Hall, Music Drama Center

go.lawrence.edu/newmusic1920