

Iowa Composers at the
Opus Concert Café



Sunday, October 20, 2019
2:30 p.m.
Opus Concert Cafe

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Four Sketches

Michael Kimber

Heith Hanlon, flute; Catherine Moritz, violin;
Jessica Altfillisch, viola; James Ellis, cello

Reminiscences of Eurydice (*from* The Strained Cords of Orpheus)

Randy Wells

Christine Bellomy, clarinet; Catherine Moritz, violin; Jessica Altfillisch, viola;
James Ellis, cello; Abbie Brewer, piano; conducted by William Carson

wind (*from* One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji)

Robert Martin

63 breeze dancing across waters
64 kites
65 clanging in the wind
66 flags in the wind
67 Fuji overcast

Abbie Brewer, piano

Puirt-a-Beul

Brooke Joyce

Christine Bellomy, clarinet; Aren Van Houzen, trumpet

Mr. Raggity's Sublime Dance

Jerry Owen

Craig Hultgren, cello; Jessica Paul, piano

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The Diaries of Adam and Eve

Michael Daugherty

(text by Mark Twain, adapted by the composer)

I. Genesis
II. Eve's Lament
III. Eden
IV. Adam's Lament
V. Serpent
VI. Apple
VII. Wondrous Love

Katie Wolfe, violin; Volkan Orhon, bass
Narrators: Diana Nollen, *Eve*; Robert Nassif, *Adam*

* * * * *Fine* * * * *

The composers and their *program notes*

Michael Kimber, viola instructor at Coe College and composer-in-residence for Red Cedar Chamber Music, has performed around the world as violist with such esteemed ensembles as the Atlanta Virtuosi and the Kronos Quartet. He has received the American Viola Society's Founder's Award in recognition of his compositions for viola, many of which have been included in repertoire lists of renowned viola artist-teachers. Eminent Polish violist Marcin Murawski has recorded seven CDs of Kimber's music for Acte Préalable. In 2015, Kimber's *Vanishing Woods* was premiered at Carnegie Hall.

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Each of the Four Sketches is inspired by and intended to reflect the style and mood of a well-known painting. The first is inspired by Water Lilies (1906) by the French Impressionist painter Claude Monet (1840–1926). Its dream-like effect is achieved in part through techniques such as parallelism and whole-tone scales heard in music by the French Impressionist composer Claude Debussy (1862–1918), who completed his orchestral masterpiece La Mer in 1905.

The second, inspired by The Starry Night (1888) by Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), employs a swirling ostinato pattern in the violin and viola to reflect the swirling patterns in van Gogh's night sky. The flute's irregularly timed entrances set against an insistently recurring viola/cello punctuation are intended to suggest the agitation characteristic of the artist's nervous and unstable temperament.

The third is inspired by Composition 8 (1923) by Vassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), the founder of abstract art. This painting is from the same year that composer Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951) began applying his revolutionary twelve-tone system of musical composition. This musical sketch, a twelve-tone composition similar to the abstract musical style of Schoenberg's student Anton Webern (1883–1945), is also a palindrome. (Interestingly, Schoenberg himself also painted in an Expressionist style; and Kandinsky, also an accomplished musician, felt strong associations between color and musical sound.)

The fourth musical sketch, inspired by American Gothic (1930), the best-known work of Iowa painter Grant Wood (1892–1942), is a simple "fiddle tune" reflecting the rural setting of this and many other of Wood's works. If the very traditional musical style of this sketch seems out of place in this group of musical sketches, let it serve as a reminder of the widely and wonderfully contrasting artistic styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

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Equal parts radical and conservative, **Randy Wells** (b. 1992) traffics in a brand of Neo-Romanticism that revels in all things excessive whilst remaining wed to tonal practices, albeit unfaithfully. Besides obvious musical influences, Randy takes his inspiration from literature, science and his experience of synesthesia. He recently enjoyed the premiere of his first string quartet, *Lovers in the Winds of a Jealous God*. For information on commissions, complementary scores, and streaming audio, please visit www.randywellsmusic.com

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This piece uses the Orpheus myth as a framework for describing grief and alienation in romantic relationships. It is the realization that a relationship is dead coupled with the inability to let it go; the sense of something falling apart without a reason; two people trying desperately to resurrect something yet failing anyway.

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Robert J. Martin salutes the Iowa Composers Forum for its continued championing of Midwestern composers. Martin develops music projects based on images and metaphors from the world at large. His compositions often have image-based titles that give listeners a puzzle to solve or an idea to listen for. He studied with composer Herbert Brun and cybernetician Heinz von Foerster. He is currently working on a musical, The Musicians of Bremen.

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*Each of five titles of the movements of wind is intended to give you an image that describes some aspect of the movement that you can keep in mind as you listen. **Wind** is one of twenty sets of pieces from a larger work, **100 Views of Mt. Fuji: 100 pieces in 100 minutes—Homage to Hokusai**, in honor of Hokusai and his famous set of woodblock prints, 100 Views of Mt. Fuji. Although previously recorded and available on a CD from Ravello, this is the first public performance of **wind**.*

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Brooke Joyce's music has been described as “vividly pictorial” (San Francisco *Chronicle*) and “exceptionally gripping” (Los Angeles *Times*) and has been performed by soloists and ensembles around the world, including the Indianapolis Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the Brentano Quartet, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, and tenor James Gilchrist. Brooke is the Composer-in-Residence at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, past chair of the Iowa Composers Forum, and a founding faculty member of the International Music Festival of the Adriatic.

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Puirt-à-Beul (“mouth music”) was composed after hearing traditional Gaelic folk musicians perform at a music festival in Glasgow in 2013. Three traditional tunes (a strathspey, reel and jig) are used to generate melodic material. The work was written for Suzanne and Richard Tirk, and premiered by them at the 2017 International Clarinet Association ClarinetFest Conference.

Jerry M. Owen (b. 1944), is a charter member and past Chair of the Iowa Composers Forum, has been Composer-in-residence (2002-2005) with the Red Cedar Chamber Music, and the Cedar Rapids Symphony Orchestra (1984-1992). He has released nationally three compact disks of his own music and has works recorded by artists on several other CDs. Dr. Owen (Ph.D. composition, University of Iowa, '74) taught for 37 years at Coe College and is the Alma A. Turechek Emeritus Professor. He will celebrate his 75th birthday year with a concert of his piano music at Coe College on February 2, 2020, and with a concert of his flute and guitar music in Miller Beach IN, in May of 2020,.

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***Mr. Raggity's Sublime Dance** was commissioned in 2014 by the Murasaki Duo for a tour of colleges and universities in the eastern U.S. Owen was asked to create something “jazzy” for the tour to counterbalance an already weighty program. Mr. Raggity's (not Raggedy) dance is reflective of the influence that the art of Ragtime has had the art of Jazz, thus a sublime dance between the two arts.*

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Multiple GRAMMY Award-winning composer **Michael Daugherty** has achieved international recognition as one of the ten most performed American composers of concert music, according to the League of American Orchestras. His orchestral music, recorded by Naxos over the last two decades, has received six GRAMMY Awards, including Best Contemporary Classical Composition in 2011 for *Deus ex Machina* for piano and orchestra and in 2017 for *Tales of Hemingway* for cello and orchestra. Current commissions for 2020 include new orchestral works for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and the Omaha Symphony and a concerto for violinist Anne Akiko Meyer who will give the world premiere with the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center in 2021.

Michael Daugherty was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1954 and is the son of a dance-band drummer and the oldest of five brothers, all professional musicians. As a young man, Daugherty studied composition with many of the preeminent composers of the 20th century including Pierre Boulez at IRCAM in Paris (1979), Jacob Druckman, Earle Brown, Bernard Rands and Roger Reynolds at Yale (1980-82), and György Ligeti in Hamburg (1982-84). Daugherty was also an assistant to jazz arranger Gil Evans in New York from 1980-82. In 1991, Daugherty joined the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance as Professor of Composition, where he is a mentor to many of today's most talented young composers. He is also a frequent guest of professional orchestras, festivals, universities and conservatories around the world.

Daugherty's music is published by Peermusic Classical/Faber Music, Boosey & Hawkes and Michael Daugherty Music. For more information on Michael Daugherty and his music, see his publisher's websites.

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***The Diaries of Adam and Eve** (2016) for violin, double bass and optional narrators, was commissioned by Martha Walvoord and Jack Unzicker with funding provided by the University of Texas at Arlington. The world premiere took place in Irons Recital Hall on the campus of the University of Texas at Arlington on April 28, 2016 performed by Martha Walvoord, violin, and Jack Unzicker, double bass, with the optional narration provided by Karen Kenaston (Eve) and David Grogan (Adam).*

The Diaries of Adam and Eve is inspired by a novella of the same name by Mark Twain (1835-1910) published in 1906. Divided into seven movements, the music I have composed animates Twain's witty reimagining of the biblical tale of the first woman and man to inhabit the earth and the Garden of Eden.

The music also reflects the author's droll ruminations on the complex and contradictory dualities of man and woman, good and evil, and love and hate. There are also poignant musical moments: the diaries are believed to have been written by Twain as a posthumous love-letter to his beloved wife Olivia Landgon Clemens who died before him in 1904. The story ends with Adam lamenting upon Eve's death: "Wherever she was, there was Eden." Michael Daugherty

Acknowledgements

The Iowa Composers Forum gratefully acknowledges composer Michael Daugherty for his enthusiasm for this program and for the time and energy he has unselfishly contributed; our gratitude goes to Matt Driscoll, Artistic Director of the Durward Ensemble, and the ensemble's many fine performers; we thank Gazette columnist Diana Nollen and composer Rob Nassif for their playing the roles of Eve and Adam (respectively); we thank violinist Katherine Wolfe and bassist Volkan Orhon for lending their inestimable talents to this program; we thank cellist and Iowa Composers Forum Chair Craig Hultgren for his leadership and the Hultgren/Jessica Paul duo for their prolific performance skills; thanks go to Bill Carson for wielding the baton in the Randy Wells work; many thanks go to IPR's Jacqueline Halbloom and KCCCK's Dennis Green for the valuable on-air assistance in promoting this concert; we thank Orchestra Iowa's Ed Karr and Darron Carr for their production assistance and Alexis Dagit for her promotional talents; finally, we thank the members of the Iowa Composers Forum for providing us with this exciting new music. [Jerry Owen, Curator]