

## Program, May 18, 2019

The University at Buffalo's Creative Arts Initiative will present the boundarydefying voice-and-piano Hayley-Laufer Duo on Saturday, May 18, at 7 p.m. at the Burchfield-Penney Arts Center in a concert performance that features the world premieres of compositions from five revolutionary contributors. The premier works by current UB student composers Robert Azaretto and Ka-Shu (Kenneth) Tam, former UB student composer Matthew Chamberlain, Columbian composer Camilo Méndez and Canadian composer Anthony Tan explore the technical and expressive possibilities of the Lied genre, which sets poetry to classical music in the spirit of renowned composers such as Franz Schubert and Robert Schumann. The Hayley-Laufer performance is presented in partnership with the Burchfield-Penney Arts Center's "A Musical Feast" concert series. The concert is the culmination of the artists' spring 2019 CAI residency. Tickets can be purchased online through the Burchfield-Penney's website. Drawn to the new, the audacious and the complex, the Hayley-Laufer Duo challenges the boundaries of voice-and-piano composition by commissioning young artists while cultivating a core repertoire of 20th- and 21st-century masterworks. Their more than 10-year creative collaboration has taken them to North America, South America and Europe with a variety of groundbreaking programs that cover centuries of song repertoire with an emphasis on electrifying contemporary music. Soprano Dorothea Hayley, the artistic co-director of the Blueridge Chamber Music Festival, has been a soloist with the Vancouver Symphony, the Bourgas Symphony, the Allegra Chamber Orchestra and Capriccio Basel. A former visiting scholar at Harvard University's Radcliffe Institute and visiting faculty artist at the Afghanistan National Institute of Music, Hayley currently teaches voice at Vancouver Community College. "We're excited to premiere five new works on this program, three of them by current and former UB students," says Hayley. "Each of these composers has taken a novel approach to voice and piano writing." 2 Pianist Manuel Laufer, an enthusiastic proponent of new music, has presented world premieres at Merkin Hall, Le Poisson Rouge, Bang on a Can, June in Buffalo and Festival Atempo (Caracas and Paris). He served as collaborative pianist at the University of California, Irvine, and is currently a member of the adjunct faculty at NYU Steinhardt and the artist faculties of the BICMF and the NY Steinhardt Summer Piano Intensive. The duo's program is represents an astonishing display of variety. Azaretto's work creates a strangely mesmerizing sound world by taking a well-known Mahler song and reordering its pitch and rhythmic material, while Tam uses a broad palette of extended techniques to evoke the sounds and theatricality of a something similar to a modern Chinese opera. Tan, meantime, uses the Zen Buddhist Heart Sutra to explore the subjective perceptual experience of sound. Chamberlain derives pitch and rhythmic material algorithmically, and the Mendez composition turns the whole ensemble into a marvelous machine by having the duo play inside the piano with what seems like outlandish instruments, but actually produces a softly magical web of sounds. "It's a fun challenge to work together on a program like this, because each piece is a completely different answer to the question, 'What is the Lied duo?'" says Laufer. Each piece demands a new approach from us as performers. "We're not just a soprano and pianist playing traditional roles. We have to reinvent our process all the time." The CAI is a university-wide initiative dedicated to the creation and production of new work upholding the highest artistic standards of excellence and fostering a complementary atmosphere of creative investigation and engagement among students, faculty, visiting artists and the community. Through its artist-in-residence program and its innovative, interdisciplinary offerings for students, CAI is raising the profile

of UB and Buffalo in the world of artistic expression and revitalizing the initiative's proud tradition as a leader in contemporary art.

**Anthony Tan** is a Canadian composer, pianist, and electronic musician. His music draws influence from conceptual metaphors, timbre theory, an attention to the psychophysical experiences of sound, and a reflection on music's cultural context. He completed his Ph.D. from McGill University, and the *Meisterklasse* from the Hochschule für Musik Carl Maria von Weber, Dresden, Germany. Awards include a fellowship with the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University (RI'17), the audience and jury prize from the ECM+ Generation 2014 tour, Stipendiums from the SWR Experimental Studio, the 2011 Giga-Hertz Förder Prize, the International Competition for live-electronics of the Hamburg Klangwerkstage, and the Médaille d'or in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music. He is currently assistant professor of composition at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs.

*A Manual of Qualities* explores the notion of *Qualia*. Difficult to explain and subject to philosophical debate, qualia may be broadly defined as the subjective perceptual experience of phenomena. It represents the "what it is like" perceptions that we may experience. For example, what it is like to have the pain of a headache, or what it is like to experience the redness in a sunset. I tried to imagine what this might mean from a musical perspective - the experience of the sensation of tone, the experience of the sound of silence. The text of the work is taken from the Zen Buddhist *Heart Sutra*. This Mahayana Buddhist text explores the 'emptiness' or unchanging essence of phenomena.

**Camilo Méndez** is a composer of acoustic concert music. He conceives his works as compositional cycles; series of pieces orbiting around the same musical ideas, but written for different instrumental combinations. He completed a Doctorate and a Master's in advanced composition at the Royal College of Music in London. He has also studied privately with Rebecca Saunders and Pierluigi Billone. In 2017, Méndez was the Rieman and Baketel Fellow for Music at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

His music has been performed by ensembles and soloists who specialize in contemporary concert music and has been featured in such international festivals as Festival Internacional Cervantino, the International Summer Course for New Music Darmstadt, June in Buffalo, Klasik Keyifler, the Mallorca Saxophone Festival, and Next Generation Donaueschingen. In 2009, he was awarded the Colombian national prize in composition for his work *Tropical Textures VI*. He has held residencies at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and Willapa Bay AiR.

Dr. Camilo Méndez joined the Department of Music at HKBU as Assistant Professor in 2018.

### ***Uslar/Gorong***

In *Archipelago Sierpinski*, I intend to epitomize compositional processes that I have employed in previous cycles (*BURSZTYN* and *Spatio-Temporal Cartographies*). The works are inspired by the combination of the name of a writer that I admire and a place that interests me, in this case Venezuelan writer Arturo Uslar Pietri and Gorong archipelago in Southeast Asia. In this cycle, I also seek to explore in more depth the possibilities of non-linear or fragmented structures. Each work consists of fragments ('islands') that can be navigated in many different ways ('structural archipelagos'), hence the overall design of the

cycle is a collection of collections or a 'collection of archipelagos.'

Uslar/Gorong was composed in collaboration with Dorothea Hayley and Manuel Laufer and it is dedicated to them. This project was possible thanks to the support of the Visiting Scholar Program of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

**Roberto Azaretto** was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He is currently finishing a PhD in Music Composition at SUNY Buffalo, where he studied with David Felder and Jeff Stadelman.

This work, *Verfremdungen M (2)*, the third in a group of pieces dealing with transformations of pre-existing music by other composers, is based on the first song from the voice and piano version of Gustav Mahler's 1904 cycle *Kindertotenlieder*, "Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n". Every note of the original has been preserved, but their order has been altered following a system that rearranged both the song's measures and their internal disposition according to factors such as number of events and pitch content, and an independent but related system for durations. It is, in a certain sense, composition as analysis

**Ka-Shu (Kenneth) TAM**, based in Hong Kong, draws most of his music inspiration from the daily auditory experience in his home city. His music is characterized by its complex timbre and its complicated emotion.

Tam's works have been performed and have received radio broadcast all over the world, including the USA, Australia, Greece, Mexico, Croatia, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea. He is also a keen participant in various international events such as the International Composers' Rostrum, the International Computer Music Conference, the Asian Composers League Conference, and more. His works cover a wide range of genres, ranging from music for traditional forces to multimedia creations. Tam is currently pursuing his PhD in Music Composition in the University at Buffalo. He completed his Bachelor in Hong Kong Baptist University and his Master in University of Missouri-Kansas City. His major composition teachers include David Felder, Cort Lippe, James Mobberley, Zhou Long, Chen Yi, Paul Rudy, Christopher Keyes and Christopher Coleman

*Phoenix Hairpin* is one of the ancient Chinese tunes that dates back more than a thousand years. Poets at that time would write lyrics to tunes. The tune has been long lost, but the rhythmic contour, the rhymes and the pulses of the tune are preserved through the lyrics. This result in a unique literature type, the lyric poetry, in the classical Chinese poetry world.

Among all lyrics of Phoenix Hairpin, the poet Lu You's (1125-1210) edition is most well-known due to its extreme romanticism and intense emotions. Lu was considered one of the most important poets at his time. He had written over ten thousand poems throughout his life. In his young age, Lu married his cousin Tang Wan, who was very talented in literature as well. They were deeply in love. However, since the Chinese society at that time pursued the Confucius philosophy, the fact that Tang could not give birth to a child was considered as a sin of the family. Lu's mom was dismayed. She ordered Lu to divorce Tang and he was extremely sad. Several years later, Tang remarried. One day, during a festival, Lu met Tang and her new husband. Lu recalled all the happy moments with Tang and he asked Tang's husband for the permission to talk with Tang. Lu then wrote the lyric "Phoenix Hairpin" for Tang to express his sorrow

within the years without her. In this piece, Lu's edition of Phoenix Hairpin is structured in a quasi-theatrical way. Performers have absolute freedom to express their understanding of the poem through the indeterminate music elements. The role of piano is not of a typical accompaniment. It acts similarly as "film music" in terms of creating a supportive timbral atmosphere to the lines of the poetry. An interesting fact lies in the title. The title "Phoenix Hairpin I" suggests that there will be a next episode named as "Phoenix Hairpin II". After Tang saw Lu's Phoenix Hairpin, she burst into tears. She replied Lu with her own Phoenix Hairpin lyrics. Her lyric was even more heartbreaking, stating that the world had decided to play an unfair game on both of them. No human could withstand the power of fate. Let the past go by and nobody could go back in time. But that is another story in the next piece.

**Jonathan Harvey** was among the most prominent British exponents of the compositional attitude known as spectralism. His highly personal language often integrates electronic and acoustic sounds, and explores themes of spirituality and transcendence. The composer explains: "*Nachtlied* is based on a poem by Goethe and two meditations by Rudolf Steiner, initially a Goethe scholar of note. The Goethe poem is *Wandrer's Nachtlied*, familiar to musicians in Schubert's sublime 1822 setting. Goethe wrote it sitting under an oak or, in another account, in a hut on a hill outside Weimar which was subsequently to become the site of Buchenwald. The designers of the concentration camp reverently preserved the site. It is one of the most eerie places I have ever visited. From many years before that visit I could not dissociate the Schubert evocation of peace – written at the beginning of the nineteenth century – with a meditation on death. Only the visit seemed to explain what had unaccountably haunted my mind for so many years. The mystical poems of Steiner are answers to the fear and negativity of death, touching as they do on the light-filled colors of the 'next' world. According to Steiner we visit this luminous, life-giving region nightly in deep sleep. His first meditation picks up the theme of rest from the Goethe poem and describes the soul's night-journey to a light-filled cosmic ocean. The second meditation describes the journey back at dawn".

**Matthew Chamberlain** is a composer and conductor working in New Haven, Connecticut. His works have been performed by numerous ensembles in the US and Europe and he has conducted numerous performances of contemporary music, including more than 50 world premieres with ensembles ranging from the Slee Sinfonietta (US) and THReNSeMBle (Hungary) to the Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble and the Northern Ohio Youth Orchestra.

### ***Board Games.***

These three songs adapt texts from the TechCrunch article "Gift Guide: the 17 best board games for holiday family fun" by John Biggs, dated 11 December 2018. Each song describes an obscure board game, broadly sketching its rules and the character of its gameplay. The texts are silly and whimsical, and yet their insistent second person perspective gives us a delightful opportunity to take them seriously. So I have written some dreadfully serious music to set them. I hope you enjoy playing.

**Nicole Caruana**, performer/choreographer at [UANA DANS](#), was born in Clarence, New York, a community just outside of Buffalo, in 1996. Her parents enrolled her in local jazz classes to facilitate her blissful restlessness. She began her formal training at The Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College under the direction of Nelly van Bommel. To further her studies, she has attended San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, London

Contemporary Dance School, The American Dance Festival, Arts Umbrella Summer Dance Intensive, B12 Workshops, and has studied Gaga intensively in Tel Aviv. She has most recently performed the works of Ohad Naharin and Doug Varone. In 2016 she was in creative process for a new work by LeeSaar. The Company and an immersive theater production "All That I Can" by Punchdrunk company members. In 2017, UANA DANCE was established as Nicole's creative home and outlet to share choreographies at home and abroad. Her work "arba" was awarded first prize at The International Competition for Choreographers in Hannover, Germany. Since the company's inception, they have been invited to perform in Germany, Denmark, Spain, Greece, and New York. She is excited to be commissioned to create new works for Scapino Ballet in Rotterdam, and Canadian Contemporary Dance Theater in Toronto as part of their 2019 season.

### **Lyrics of songs**

**Phoenix Hairpin I** (2018)\* by Ka-Shu Tam

**Phoenix Hairpin** poem by Lu You 1155

#### **Translation: Xu Yuanchong**

Pink hands so fine,  
Gold-branded wine,  
Spring paints the willows green palace walls cannot confine.  
East wind unfair,  
Happy times rare.  
In my heart sad thoughts throng,  
We've been severed for years long.  
Wrong, wrong, wrong!  
Spring is as green,  
In vain she's lean,  
Her silk scarf soak'd with tears and red with stains unclean.  
Peach blossoms fall,  
Near deserted hall.  
Our oath is still there, lo,  
No word to her can go.  
No, no, no!

**Nachtlied** (1984) by Jonathan Harvey

## Wandrer's Nachtlied

Über allen Gipfeln

Ist Ruh',

In allen Wipfeln

Spürest du

Kaum einen Hauch;

Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.

Warte nur, balde

Ruhest du auch.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

## Wanderer's Night-Song

Over all the hill-tops

Is peace,

In all the tree-tops

You Trace

Scarcely a breath;

The birds are silent in the woods.

Only wait, soon

You too will rest

Translation: George and Mary Adams

## Verfremdungen M (2) by Roberto Azaretto

Verschränken - Versenken - verlosch - Unglück - Freudenlicht - Allgemein -  
Scheinet - Unglück - Lämplein - Geschah - Meinem - Sonne - Gescheh'n -  
Aufgeh'n - Allein - Nicht - Zelt - Ins - Nacht - Welt - Sie - Nacht - Will - Sie -  
Licht - Sonn' - Sei - Mußt - Sei - Mußt - Nur - Kein - Nun - Hell - Mir - Heil - Ein  
- Ew'ge - Dir - Die - Die - Die - Die - Der - So - Dem - In - Das - In - Als - Du

Original Text by Rückert which Mahler used:

Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n,

Als sei kein Unglück die Nacht geschehn!

Das Unglück geschah nur mir allein!

Die Sonne, sie scheint allgemein!

Du mußt nicht die Nacht in dir verschränken,

Mußt sie ins ew'ge Licht versenken!

Ein Lämplein verlosch in meinem Zelt!

Heil sei dem Freudenlicht der Welt!