

**The UB Department of Music
and
The Robert & Carol Morris Center for 21st Century Music
present**

Rated X: A Recital of Premieres

Program Notes

**David Felder
(2008)**

Rare Air

A number of short movements with a theatrical bent.

**Eric Moe
(2007)**

Grand Prismatic

Grand Prismatic is named after Yellowstone Park's Grand Prismatic Spring, one of the most striking of the wonders of nature in the park. The prismatic brightness of the colors of the spring is the result of thermopiles, microorganisms that only thrive in extreme environments (in this case, boiling water). The listener is invited to meditate on the similarities between thermopiles and other creators of breath-taking beauty who toil away in apparently hostile environments. The work was written for Jean Kopperud, one of the extraordinary musicians of our time, whose playing I have had the pleasure of hearing and admiring for several decades. I am grateful also to the Montana Artists Refuge, where the work was composed in the summer of 2007.

**Paolo Cavallone
(2008)**

(Dis)tensioni

In eight short movements, the work was completed in February 2008.
(Dis)tensioni is an oxymoron meaning both relaxation and tension.

**Steve Ricks
(2008)**

Amygala

Amygala is taken from the name of the area of the brain that deals with fear, aggression, and gut level thinking when the other systems have shut down. The work uses electronics and deals with extreme proportional juxtapositions, extreme juxtapositions of differing material/character in the opening four movements. The final movement has extremes of register and timbre. The idea of escaping tradition and escaping the formal constraints set out in the beginning of the piece are quite central to the work.

**James Primosch
(2008)**

Times like These

Only sketches so far.

Jason Eckardt
(2006)

Rendition

Rendition was the first work to be completed in 2006 and refers to the CIA instituted program wherein foreign nationals suspected of terrorist activity were detained, without legal process, and then covertly transported to countries where regulations for interrogation were less stringent than those imposed in the United States. Former CIA agent Baer describes renditions bleakly: “If you want a serious interrogation, you send a prisoner to Jordan. If you want them to be tortured, you send them to Syria. If you want someone to disappear—never to see them again—you send them to Egypt.”

Harvey Sollberger
(2008)

Nemesis

Sollberger is reflecting on the current situation in the Middle East. The title refers to the goddess of retribution who punishes human transgression of the natural, right order of things and the arrogance it causes. (Subtitle “Facilis descensus Averni” “The way to Hell is easy”) Completed in 2008.

Composer Biographies

David Felder has long been recognized as a leader in his generation of American composers. His works have been featured at many of the leading international festivals for new music including Holland, Huddersfield, Darmstadt, Ars Electronica, Brussels, ISCM, North American New Music, Geneva, Ravinia, Tanglewood, Aspen, Music Factory, Bourges, Vienna Modern, IRCAM Agora, Musique En Scenes, ISCM World Music Days, and many others, and earns continuing recognition through performance and commissioning programs by such organizations as the New York New Music Ensemble, BBC Orchestra, Arditti Quartet, American Composers Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, American Brass Quintet and Ensemble InterContemporain. Felder’s work has been broadly characterized by its highly energetic profile, through its frequent employment of technological extension and elaboration of musical materials and its lyrical qualities

Currently, Felder is Professor of Composition at SUNY, Buffalo, where he has held the Birge-Cary Chair in Composition since 1992, and has been Artistic Director of the “June in Buffalo” Festival from 1985 to the present. In 2006, he founded the “Center for 21st Century Music” at the University at Buffalo and assumed the Directorship in 2006.

Eric Moe (b. 1954) is a composer of what *The NY Times* calls "music of winning exuberance", has received numerous grants and awards for his work, including the Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a Guggenheim Fellowship; commissions from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the Barlow Endowment, and Meet-the-Composer USA; fellowships from the Wellesley Composer's Conference and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; and residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Bellagio, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Millay Colony, the Ragdale Foundation, the Montana Artists Refuge, and the American Dance Festival. All-Moe CDs may be found on the Albany, Koch, and Centaur labels, and (soon) on

Naxos. His recent "one-woman opera" *Tri-Stan* was hailed by *The New York Times* as "a tour-de-force" that "subversively inscribe[s] classical music into pop culture"; a CD is now available from Koch International Classics. A founding member of the San Francisco-based EARPLAY ensemble, he currently co-directs the *Music on the Edge* new music concert series in Pittsburgh. Moe was educated at the University of California at Berkeley (M.A., Ph.D.) and at Princeton University (A.B.) He is currently Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Pittsburgh and has held visiting professorships at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania. More information is available at his website, <www.ericmoe.net>.

Paolo Cavallone (b. 1975) Italian composer currently living in USA. His compositions published by RAI Trade and Domani Musica are regularly broadcast by radio stations such as RAI (the Italian broadcasting corporation) and Radio Capodistria. His music, which *Musikbox* magazine has called "fascinating and complex," has drawn the attention of critics in Italy and abroad. His pieces have been released on CDs published by *Domani Musica* and *Suono Sonda* and performed in America and Europe, including Rome's Auditorium, Los Angeles' "Dilijan music series," Siena's Accademia Chigiana, Festival "June in Buffalo" among others.

Steven Ricks (b. 1969) received his early musical training as a trombonist in Mesa, AZ. He holds degrees in composition from Brigham Young University (B.M.), the University of Illinois (M.M.), and the University of Utah (Ph.D.), and he received the Certificate of Advanced Musical Study from King's College London in 2000. His May 2008 Bridge Records release, *Mild Violence*, includes six recent works, with performances by the New York New Music Ensemble, Talujon Percussion Quartet, violinist Curtis Macomber, and flutist Carlton Vickers. He is currently a member of the Barlow Endowment Board of Advisors, and an Associate Professor of Music Theory and Composition at Brigham Young University where he directs the electronic music studio.

When honoring **James Primosch** with its Goddard Lieberson Fellowship, the American Academy of Arts and Letters noted that "A rare economy of means and a strain of religious mysticism distinguish the music of James Primosch... through articulate, transparent textures, he creates a wide range of musical emotion." A student of George Crumb and Mario Davidovsky, Primosch has had works performed by such ensembles as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Collage, the New York New Music Ensemble, and the Twenty-First Century Consort. Dawn Upshaw included a song by Primosch in her Carnegie Hall recital debut. Commissioned works by Primosch have been premiered by the Chicago Symphony, Speculum Musicae, and pianist Lambert Orkis. He is currently at work on a second Chicago Symphony commission.

Jason Eckardt (b. 1971) played guitar in jazz and metal bands until, upon first hearing the music of Webern, he immediately devoted himself to composition. Since then, his music has been influenced by his interests in perceptual complexity, the physical and psychological dimensions of performance, and self-organizing processes in the natural world. He has been recognized through commissions and awards from Carnegie Hall, Tanglewood, the Guggenheim, Rockefeller, Koussevitzky, and Fromm Foundations, the Guggenheim Museum, the ISCM, Deutschen Musikrat, and percussionist Evelyn Glennie. Eckardt's music has been performed at major festivals and recorded on the CRI, Helicon, Metier, Capstone, and Mode labels. An active promoter of new music, Eckardt is a co-founder and the Executive Director of

Ensemble 21, the contemporary music group. He lives in New York at teaches at Brooklyn College.

Harvey Sollberger is a composer, conductor and flutist with over 140 published recordings and CDs documenting his musical activities. He was a co-founder of the Group for Contemporary Music, which he performed with and helped lead for many years. He has also led new music ensembles at the Manhattan School of Music, Indiana University and the University of California, San Diego, at which latter institution he is currently Distinguished Professor Emeritus. His current projects include completing a Koussevitzky Commission for the New York New Music Ensemble; traveling and recording with guitarist Paul Bowman in their ensemble Three for Two - which will next perform at the Nuovi Spazi Festival in Rome in October, 2008; composing a flute and guitar work for Rome called *Gazzadolphylloni*; translating into English the autobiography of Severino Gazzelloni; and clearing brush and laying plans for a 30-acre sound installation ("Shady Acres") in the woods of Northeast Iowa.