



10.01.22 | REFLECTIONS

Jennifer Montbach, Artistic Director
Edward M. Pickman Concert Hall
Longy School of Music of Bard College

Occasions

- I. Birthday Card for Y.N.K.
- II. G.S. In Memoriam
- III. Birthday Card for M.A.T.
- IV. 'Get Well' Card for John and Rosie
- V. JH80: Fanfare and Canon

Peter Child
(b. 1953)

Gabriela Diaz, violin
Noriko Futagami, viola

Collision Etudes

- I. City Landscape (Joan Mitchell)
- II. Rainbow (Alma Thomas)
- III. My World is Not Flat (Margarete Bagshaw)

Alyssa Morris
(b. 1984)

Jennifer Montbach, oboe

Mirrors

Sarah Brady, flute
Rhonda Rider, cello

Kaija Saariaho
(b. 1952)

INTERMISSION

Quintet in D major

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Intermezzo
- III. Andantino
- IV. Finale

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Gabriela Díaz, violin
Eran Egozy, clarinet
Anne Howarth, horn
Rhonda Rider, cello
Donald Berman, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

In *The Death of the Author*, Roland Barthes rejects an assumption that many of us carry with us subconsciously when we interpret a piece of literature—that we are passive receivers deciphering specific messages and themes from a single source: the writer. Instead, Barthes encourages us to observe how *we* create meaning in dialog with the piece. Without knowing, we bring to bear on our interpretation all of a work's previous meanings and all of our own experiences. No two people (nor the same person at two different times) construct the same meaning twice. Meaning is contingent—it is always made from both the art and ourselves. Barthes's essay doesn't lament the fall of an omnipotent creator or fret over the loss of absolutes, but celebrates the ambiguity and flexibility of great works. Because meanings are never fixed, works of art shake off their contexts and find new immortality. Without Barthes, the *Star Spangled Banner* would be nothing but a tavern tune.

These dialogues are not limited to audience members. Some of the most rewarding pieces of literature, music, and film come from creators engaged in a similar artistic discussion with their sources, collaborators, and consumers. Radius opens its twenty-fourth season exploring these dialogs with a group of **Reflections**. Kaija Saariaho shares compositional control with her performers in *Mirrors*, Alyssa Morris spins glorious tributes to specific works by female visual artists from America in her *Collision Etudes*, Peter Child sends a series of musical greeting cards to friends and colleagues that have shaped his music in *Occasions*, and Ralph Vaughn Williams

struggles with dueling traditions, continental and national, as he contributes to the distinguished Piano Quintet tradition.

As a member of a group of illustrious Finnish composers (including Magnus Lindburg and Esa-Pekka Salonen) to come of age in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, **Kaija Saariaho** balanced compositional practice drawn from Western art music tradition with explorations into unique modes of expression. She studied with Paavo Heininen at Sibelius Academy, in Freiburg with Brian Ferneyhough, and at Darmstadt before settling at IRCAM in Paris beginning in 1982. There she encountered composers experimenting with ways of creating music drawn from computer analyses of musical and non-musical sounds, a process of composition that has come to be called “spectralism.” Reflecting on work by spectral composers like Tristan Murail and Gérard Grisey, Saariaho crafted new harmonic worlds along with the extended techniques to bring them to life (particularly harmonics, microtones, and un-pitched “noise”) and the notational methods to communicate them to performers.

Several qualities recur in her work. Among those are: an aversion to traditional forms and titles, a commitment to expressivity (marked by a profusion of expressive markers and other indications of communication), and a desire to connect with and write for specific, individual performers. All three shape *Mirrors* (1997) for cello and flute. In this piece, Saariaho invites her performers to “build and play [their] own version” of the piece by

“combining pre-defined fragments” to create a new whole. Saariaho conceived the duo for a CD-ROM entitled *Prisma*, released in 2001 and featuring a roster of close collaborators including Dawn Upshaw, Florent Jodelet, and the two performers for whom *Mirrors* was written and dedicated: cellist Anssi Karttunen and flutist Camilla Hoitenga. *Prisma* was explicitly, in Umberto Eco’s words, an “open work” which encouraged interactive creation and game-play, breaking down barriers between composer and performer and opening new creative dialogs between two previously siloed members of a traditional creative team. The score for *Mirrors* represents Saariaho’s own rendering, and she counsels musicians interested in making their own to maintain a musical “mirror” in at least of four parameters: rhythm, pitch, gesture, or timbre. What emerges is a whirlwind of sonic beauty, poised on the boundary of music and sound in which fragments of tonal things cascade through veiled normative progressions wrapped in a delicate chiffon of extended techniques, all of which are explained in detail on an addendum in the beginning of the score. The flutist whispers through their instrument, cycling through fragments of a text: “clear, shining mirror, without defilement, in which he can see himself, and his Lady’s love.”

Reflections change from the sonic to the visual in **Alyssa Morris’s** *Collision Etudes* (2017) for solo oboe, a virtuosic and playful showcase inspired by the paintings of contemporary American women. Morris is currently Assistant Professor of Oboe and Music Theory at Kansas State University and principle oboist for both the Topeka Symphony Orchestra and Wichita Grand Opera. The celebrated *Six Etudes Pour Hautbois*

(published 1879) by Gilles Silvestrini served as inspiration for her own *Etudes*, but where the elder composer drew inspiration from French Impressionistic paintings crafted exclusively by white men, Morris paid tribute to a collection of creative American women, painters of disparate backgrounds that would display America as a “collision” of cultures and beliefs.

Of the six etudes, Radius Artistic & Executive Director and oboist Jennifer Montbach chose three for tonight’s program. *City Landscapes*, the second of the six, draws its title and inspiration from a 1955 painting by Joan Mitchell (an abstract artist and member of the mid-century New York School) that balances abstraction and realism. The bustle of the city portrait finds its echo in the etude’s restless motion and arpeggiated tonalities. The fourth etude, *Rainbow*, pays tribute to the painting by African-American artist and pedagogue Alma Thomas, who worked primarily in Washington, DC, and was most famous for her late “exuberant” style. This mournful lament seems to clash with the colors and textures of the painting, but the delicate balance between white brushstrokes and the vertical columns of color they obscure reflects the liminal space between tone and harmonic in the movement’s score. A virtuosic final movement, *My World is Not Flat*, finds its muse in the bright, bold colors and darkly bordered spirals of the Native American artist Margarete Bagshaw’s painting (2011) of the same name. All three etudes cycle through pentatonic scales and non-Western collections (particularly those with a flat second scale degree) and most end on a harmonic question mark. For Morris, it seems, these dialogs through time and between media have just begun.

After receiving his bachelor of arts degree at Reed and his PhD at Brandeis University studying with Arthur Berger, Martin Boykan, Jacob Druckman, and Seymour Shifrin among others, the Boston-based composer **Peter Child** joined the compositional faculty at MIT, a position which gave him copious opportunities to make connections with local collaborators. In the five-movement set of *Occasions* (composed over three years and finished in 2018) for violin and viola, he gives a nod to these associates with a set of musical “greeting cards,” all of them semi-tonal shorts saturated in canon and imitation between parts.

There are birthday cards, like the jaunty and playful first movement for Young-Nam Kim—a violinist for whom Child wrote and dedicated his 2002 Concertino—that nestles an inverted canon within deceptively simple materials, spiced with a bluesy play between major and minor thirds. The third movement, all breezy athleticism and rustic hunting fifths, sends birthday greetings to MIT colleague Marcus Thompson who premiered Child’s Sonata for Viola & Piano in 2000. Similarly, the final movement, an 80th Birthday gift for John Harbison, begins with fanfare made from a close, inverted canon of craggy modernist sounds, collapses into unisons, and finishes with a canon that divides into sections by melodic motives, each set on

producing unique harmonic results. The second movement is a quiet and brooding map of passing consonance and cadential dissonance, its silences and semitone dissonances forming a gloomy memorial to Gunther Schuller. There is even a ‘Get Well Card,’ movement four, dedicated to John and Rose Mary Harbison, and featuring a pastoral bed of drones, musette-style, over which a lilting 6/8 melody unfolds in chorale scoring. (Could that be a subtle tribute to the dedicatee’s expertise in the Bach Cantata tradition?)

Radius closes the evening with a the richly textured **Quintet in D** for clarinet, horn, violin, cello, and piano by **Ralph Vaughan Williams** (1872-1958), a leader the so-called “new English school” at the vanguard of the English music musical renaissance. The Quintet in D is among his early works, dating from 1898, and shows the twenty-six-year-old composer in dialogue with a contemporary giant of mixed chamber music: Johannes Brahms. After a first movement with typical sonata dramaturgy and an Intermezzo fabricated from a waltz-like tune, Vaughan Williams makes his inspiration explicit with a reference to Brahms’ Symphony No. 4 in the lyrical third movement that follows. The finale, which follows without pause, brings the piece to a lively close.

Matthew Heck

MEMBERS

SARAH BOB, PIANO, hailed as “sumptuous and eloquent” by the *Boston Globe*, is an active soloist and chamber musician noted for her charismatic performances, colorful playing and diverse programming. A strong advocate for new music and considered a “superstar” by *National Sawdust*, she is the founding director of the New Gallery Concert Series, devoted to commissioning and uniting new music and contemporary visual art with their creators. The goal, her strong suit, is to introduce music in a loving, inclusive, and intoxicating way. Her recent album, *...nobody move...*, a selection of NGCS commissioned solo piano works from over the past twenty years, has quickly received international acclaim and is considered “a must listen” by the BBC Magazine. Inspired by current events, she is also the creator of

The Nasty Cooperative, numerous dialogue-driven artistic events created to build community and help raise funds for organizations in need. In addition to Radius Ensemble, Sarah is an original member of her piano/percussion group, Primary Duo, and is faculty at the Longy School of Music of Bard College.

MIRIAM BOLKOSKY, CELLO, appears nationally as an orchestral and chamber musician. She has performed extensively with orchestras in Boston, New York, D.C. and Chicago, including Boston Lyric Opera, A Far Cry, Boston Pops, BMOP, Boston Ballet, ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, National Lyric Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. She has appeared as soloist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Paul Hill Chorale, and on classical and popular commercial

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recordings. A graduate of the University of Michigan and the Cleveland Institute of Music, Miriam maintains a large private studio and has held faculty positions at Northwestern and the Cleveland Institute of Music. She is also a Registered Yoga Teacher, Alexander Technique Teacher, and Coach.

SARAH BRADY, FLUTE, called “enchanted” (*Boston Globe*) and “clairvoyantly sensitive” (*New Music Connoisseur*), is principal flute with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and Opera Boston, and appears with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Ballet, Portland Symphony Orchestra, Firebird Ensemble, Boston Musica Viva, The Cortona Collective, and Brave New Works. She has premiered and recorded new music from many of today’s leading composers, including new music commissioned by Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Project. Sarah is the newly appointed Director of Contemporary Classical Music at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, where she is Associate Professor of Flute. She recently enjoyed a sold-out debut at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall with pianist Oxana Yablonskaya. Her chamber and orchestral recordings can be heard on the Albany, Naxos, Oxingale and Cantaloupe labels.

GABRIELA DÍAZ, VIOLIN, began her musical training at the age of five, studying piano with her mother, and the next year, violin with her father. She studied at New England Conservatory, where she earned Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees under James Buswell. A cancer survivor, Gabriela is committed to cancer research and treatment. In

2004, she was awarded a grant from the Albert Schweitzer Foundation to organize a series of chamber music concerts in cancer units at various hospitals in Boston called the Boston Hope Ensemble. Devoted to contemporary music, Gabriela has worked closely with many significant living composers, including Pierre Boulez, Magnus Lindberg, Frederic Rzewski, Roger Reynolds, Alvin Lucier, John Zorn, Osvaldo Golijov, Steve Reich, Brian Ferneyhough, Hans Tutschku, and Helmut Lachenmann. Gabriela is a member of several Boston area new music groups, including Sound Icon, Ludovico Ensemble, Dinosaur Annex, Firebird Ensemble, and Callithumpian Consort. She is a member of the Wellesley College faculty and can be heard on New World, Naxos, Centaur, BMOP/Sound, Mode, and Tzadik records.

ERAN EGOZY, CLARINET, hailed as “sensitive and energetic” (*Boston Musical Intelligence*), is a musician, entrepreneur, and educator. He is the co-founder and Chief Scientist of Harmonix Music Systems, which developed Guitar Hero, Rock Band, The Beatles: Rock Band, and Dance Central. Eran and his business partner are recipients of the Time 100, Fortune Magazine’s “40 under 40” award, and USA Network’s “Character Approved” award. Eran is currently Professor of the Practice in Music Technology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he teaches and conducts research on new forms of interactive computer and music systems. He holds degrees in electrical engineering and music from MIT studied clarinet with Jonathan Cohler and William Wrzesien at New England Conservatory. He has performed as soloist with the MIT Symphony Orchestra and has

appeared with Emmanuel Music, A Far Cry, Winsor Music, and the Worcester Chamber Players.

NORIKO FUTAGAMI, VIOLA, enjoys a distinguished career as a versatile and prolific soloist, orchestral and chamber musician. She is Principal Violist for the Albany Symphony, an ensemble with numerous world premiere performances and recordings, and plays with their Dogs of Desire contemporary ensemble as well as the New Jersey Symphony. Now living in the Greater Boston area, she serves as Assistant Principal Violist for the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. Her dynamic virtuosity, combined with a passion for new music, has led to collaborations with the Boston Ballet Orchestra, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Boston Musica Viva, Radius Ensemble and Winsor Music Chamber Series.

ANNE HOWARTH, HORN, is a freelance horn player and chamber musician, appearing regularly in area ensembles including the wind quintet Vento Chiaro, Juventas New Music Ensemble, Lexington Symphony, Plymouth Philharmonic Orchestra, and Portland Symphony Orchestra. Anne is not only a founding member of Radius Ensemble, but also serves as its outreach director. She teaches horn and coaches chamber music at Boston Conservatory at Berklee and Tufts University, maintains a private studio, and is on the horn faculty of the New England Conservatory Preparatory and Continuing Education divisions, and the Brookline Music School. Anne studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich and holds degrees from Oberlin College, Oberlin College Conservatory, and New

England Conservatory. She is currently fascinated by transformation and the way it is represented in music.

JENNIFER MONTBACH, OBOE, is the founder and artistic director of Radius Ensemble, named Boston's Best (2016) by the *Improper Bostonian*, in residence at the Longy School of Bard College since 2011. She has been acclaimed for her “energetic and eclectic” programs that have “attracted a younger, more diverse audience” (*Boston Globe*), winning the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming from Chamber Music America in 2013. Jen curated and produced the Ensemble's debut album, *Fresh Paint*, and has commissioned and premiered more than twenty new works in her role as artistic director. As an oboist, she is known for her “evocative lyricism and nuanced phrasing” (*Bay Windows*); she has appeared with orchestras and ensembles throughout New England, and has held administrative positions at the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. She holds a Bachelor of Arts *cum laude* from Harvard College and a Master of Music in oboe performance from New England Conservatory. Jen founded and produces the West Concord Porchfest, and is also a volunteer with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, where she mentors families of children newly diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

ADRIAN MOREJON, BASSOON, praised for his “teeming energy” and “precise control” by the *New York Times* and having “every note varnished to a high gloss” by the *Boston Globe*, is New York-based soloist, chamber musician, and

orchestral musician. As a soloist, Adrian has appeared in New York, Boston, Vienna, Prague, Memphis, and Miami with the Talea Ensemble, IRIS Orchestra, Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), and the Miami Symphony. Morejon will be featured in recordings of Harold Meltzer's Full Faith and Credit, double concerto for two bassoons and string orchestra, and Joan Tower's Bassoon Concerto *Red Maple*, to be released by BMOP/Sound. Adrian is a member of the Dorian Wind Quintet, Talea Ensemble, Radius Ensemble, bassoon duo Dark & Stormy, and the Gene Project, and has appeared with numerous other chamber ensembles and festivals. He is co-principal of IRIS Orchestra and has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the Boston Pops, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Knights, and others. Adrian holds degrees from Yale School of Music and the Curtis Institute of Music. He currently teaches at SUNY Purchase, CUNY Brooklyn College and CUNY Hunter College.

GUEST ARTISTS

DONALD BERMAN, PIANO, is recognized as a chief exponent of new works by living composers, overlooked music by 20th century masters, and recitals that link classical and modern repertoires. His two-volume *The Unknown Ives* and *The Uncovered Ruggles* (New World) represents the only recordings of the complete short piano works of Charles Ives and Carl Ruggles extant. Other recordings on Bridge Records include the

four CD set *Americans in Rome: Music by Fellows of the American Academy in Rome*, The Piano Music of Martin Boykan, and Scott Wheeler: Tributes and Portraits. Berman has also recorded *The Light That Is Felt: Songs of Charles Ives* (with Susan Narucki, soprano, New World), *Wasting the Night: Songs of Scott Wheeler* (Naxos) and Christopher Theofanidis's Piano Concerto (Summitt). Mr. Berman was a Radcliffe Institute Fellow, a current Faculty member at the Longy School of Music of Bard College, and President of The Charles Ives Society.

RHONDA RIDER, CELLO, whom *The Boston Globe* calls "a glorious cellist," remarkable for her "extraordinarily expressive and inventive playing," was the founding cellist of the Naumburg-award-winning Lydian String Quartet, with whom she performed for over twenty years. Rider is currently Chair of Chamber Music and on the faculty of The Boston Conservatory. During the summer months, she is heard at various festivals including Music from Salem, Green Mountain, Tanglewood, and Token Creek. She is also the cello coach for the Asian Youth Orchestra in Hong Kong. An advocate of contemporary music, she has premiered works by such composers as John Harbison, Lee Hyla, and Steve Mackey. In 2010 she was named Artist-in-Residence at Grand Canyon National Park. Rider holds degrees from Oberlin Conservatory and the Yale School of Music.

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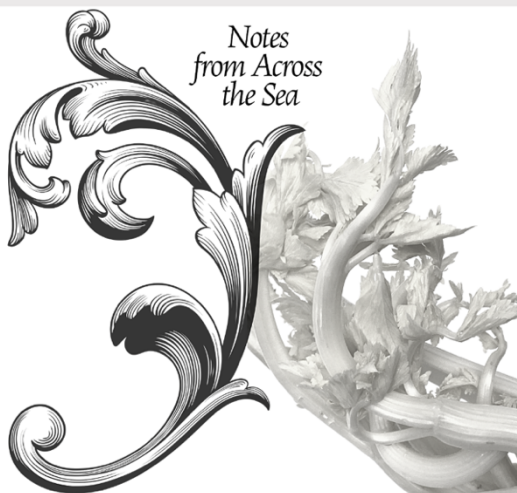
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