

*Presents a Faculty and Guest Artist Recital:*

# KARPEN/LIM/WATRAS/WHITE

Melia Watras, *viola*  
Michael Jinsoo Lim, *violin*  
Sheila Daniels, *voice*

January 13, 2014

7:30 PM

Meany Theater

## PROGRAM

*POEMS IN AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE*

for violin, viola and reader (2009) ..... MICHAEL JINSOO LIM

*LUMINOUS POINTS* for violin solo (2013)\* ..... MELIA WATRAS

*LIQUID VOICES* for violin and viola (2013)\* ..... MELIA WATRAS

*AS NIGHT FALLS* (2012)\* ..... FRANCIS WHITE / JAMES PRITCHETT

*INTERMISSION*

Sonata for viola solo (2012).....MELIA WATRAS  
Agitato  
Semplice  
Ansioso - IV

*BICINIUM* (2014)\* .....RICHARD KARPEN

\*world premiere

## PROGRAM NOTES

MICHAEL JINSOO LIM, *POEMS IN AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE* for violin, viola and reader (2009)

Tory Dent was a brilliant poet, essayist, and art critic whose poetry expressed her struggles and experiences living with HIV. Tory passed away in 2006. I met Tory in New York City through her husband, my dear friend Sean Harvey. Sean, my wife Melia, and I went to Indiana University together. Although I did not know Tory for very long, I will always remember attending a poetry reading that she did in the East Village. I am glad to have had the experience of hearing Tory read her beautiful and powerful words to a moved audience.

*POEMS IN AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE* is a poem from Tory's book *What Silence Equals*. In setting her poetry to music, I wanted to show, in some small way, my admiration for Tory's work. The piece was premiered at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, in January 2009.

— MICHAEL JINSOO LIM

MELIA WATRAS: *LUMINOUS POINTS* for violin solo (2013)

I began with the image of a mysterious, secret garden, where the night sky, brilliantly studded with unending stars, is reflected in a pond. The sky becomes the water and the water the sky.

I wrote the piece for violinist Michael Jinsoo Lim, hoping to imbue the work with his gentle character and *molto dolce* E string playing.

— MELIA WATRAS

MELIA WATRAS: *LIQUID VOICES* for violin and viola (2013)

*LIQUID VOICES* takes its inspiration from Virginia Woolf's short story, *The Fascination of the Pool*. Woolf has been a profound, influential and special author to me. Her experimental nature and ever-changing writing style make her elusive. She was lyrical, poetic and forward-thinking.

I was taken with the story's fluidity, imagery and depth, which helped shape the structure and basic concept for my piece: voices floating on top of each other. The pitch centers of *LIQUID VOICES* are taken from the harmonic series played by the violin in the first few measures of the work.

— MELIA WATRAS

FRANCES WHITE & JAMES PRITCHETT: *AS NIGHT FALLS* (2012)

*AS NIGHT FALLS* is the third in a series of works that began with *The old rose reader*. In that piece, the scene is a bedroom. A woman is having difficulty getting to sleep, and a man sits by her bedside, reading to her from horticultural books about roses. Sometimes he reads from the book, and sometimes he makes up his own fanciful stories about the roses. After *The old rose reader* we made a companion piece, *The book of roses and memory*, which acts as a kind of remembrance of the first piece, as if from a much later time.

*AS NIGHT FALLS* is meant to occupy the space between *The old rose reader* and *The book of roses and memory* to form a concert-length theatre piece. The bedroom scene is the same, but this time we view it from the perspective of the woman. Her monologue, read by the narrator, comes from a place of fluid boundaries: between past and present, memory and perception, consciousness and unconsciousness, reality and dream, life and death.

In *AS NIGHT FALLS* Frances refrained from alluding to themes from the other two pieces. Instead, she tried to create music that is in the same

sonic world but has a completely different feeling and texture. Because this is a duet, the violin and viola inevitably suggest, in some sense, the couple in the story, but they also create a kind of commentary on the text that magnifies and empathizes with the human condition of the characters.

*AS NIGHT FALLS* was written for Michael Jinsoo Lim and Melia Watras, with funding from The New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

— FRANCES WHITE & JAMES PRITCHETT

MELIA WATRAS: Sonata for viola solo (2012)

My Sonata for viola solo was written in 2012, with a desire to continue my work as a violist/composer, exploring emotional landscapes that are very difficult, or impossible to explain with words. The first movement is a contemplation of an inner and outward journey of a lone figure. At its core is a sense of yearning to find or return home. The movement opens in the midst of a tempest, and the second section begins with a quote from the refrain of the Appalachian folk song *O Death*. I was particularly influenced by Ralph Stanley's interpretation and soulful singing.

The idea of a timeless, positive force provided the impetus for the second movement, written in Mixolydian mode. *Ansioso*, the third movement, reflects on the desire to escape. Each section can be seen as a side of a cage, with the first segment providing the pitch material and order for the other three. When the sonata ends, we are left with the timeless force from movement 2; revealing the ever-present nature of its existence.

The Sonata received its premiere in New York, NY at the Tenri Cultural Institute in April of 2013.

— MELIA WATRAS

RICHARD KARPEN: *BICINIUM* (2014)

There are only small differences between how we experience the past and the future. For the past we have tangible evidence that it existed. For the future we have just our expectations, desires, or fears for what will be. But we live in neither the past nor the future and can only experience them in our imaginations.

It's always most enjoyable to compose for friends. *BICINIUM* was composed for two of the best musicians and best people I know. Melia Watras and Mike Lim inspired this piece and while they are two people

who always make others around them feel hopeful and optimistic, this is a somewhat nostalgic composition, a kind of meditation on the mysteries and intangibles of time and art.

— RICHARD KARPEN

## BIOGRAPHIES

SHEILA DANIELS has been making theatre as a director, choreographer, writer, educator, actor and producer in Seattle since 1994. Most recently she co-directed *The Ramayana* at ACT Theatre. She has also directed work for On the Boards, Intiman, Seattle Children's Theatre, Seattle Rep, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Seattle Shakespeare Company/Wooden O, CHAC, Theatre Underground, Seattle Public Theatre, Book-It Repertory, Theater Schmeater, Children's Theatre of Minneapolis and Throwing Bones (NYC). As a generative artist she has created work with UMO Ensemble, Sarah Rudinoff, Ladykillers and with her own company Baba Yaga Productions. Sheila was on the faculty of Cornish College of the Arts from 1998 through 2008, and continues to be a Guest Artist on a regular basis. She also has taught for the University of Washington, Seattle University and Seattle Children's Theatre. As a producer, Sheila has served as Associate Director of Intiman Theatre, Associate Artistic Director at CHAC, Artistic Director of Theater Schmeater, and co-founded Baba Yaga and Theater Underground. She is an Affiliate Artist at ACT, a member of Intiman's Collective, and an Associate Artist with Seattle Shakespeare Company. She is a 3-time nominee and 2-time recipient of the Gregory Award for Outstanding Director. She is adapting and choreographing a new adaptation of Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*, and creating a solo show about Helen Keller's later life, sexuality and politics. Sheila is currently directing *The Normal Heart*, which opens on January 16 and runs until February 15 at Strawberry Theatre Workshop in Seattle

RICHARD KARPEN is a composer and researcher in multiple areas music and the arts. His compositions for traditional and experimental media and are widely known, recorded, and performed internationally. Over the last 30 years he has also been one of the leaders in the development of computer applications for music composition, interactive performance and sonic arts. He has recently returned to the stage as a pianist.

Karpen is currently Director of the School of Music at the University of Washington where he is also a Professor of Music Composition. He previously served at the UW as Divisional Dean for Research in the College of Arts and Sciences and Founding Director of the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS). He has been the recipient of many awards, grants and prizes including those from the National Endowment for the Arts,

the ASCAP Foundation, the Bourges Contest in France, and the Luigi Ruscillo Foundation in Italy. Fellowships and grants for work outside of the U.S. include a Fulbright to Italy, a residency at IRCAM in France, and a Leverhulme Visiting Fellowship to the United Kingdom. He received his doctorate in composition from Stanford University, where he worked at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA). Karpen is a native of New York and he studied composition there with Charles Dodge and Gheorghe Costinescu.

Karpen has composed works for many prominent international musicians and along with frequent concert performances his works have been set to dance by groups such as the Royal Danish Ballet and the Guandong Dance Company of China. Karpen's compositions have been recorded on a variety of labels including Wergo, Centaur, Neuma, Le Chant du Monde, DIFFUSION i MeDIA, Fleur du Son, and Capstone.

Violinist MICHAEL JINSOO LIM ([www.MichaelJinsooLim.com](http://www.MichaelJinsooLim.com)) has been praised by Gramophone for playing with “delicious abandon” and described as “bewitching” by the Seattle Times. Acclaimed for his role as concertmaster of the Pacific Northwest Ballet Orchestra in Seattle (“beautifully executed, clear violin solos”—Dance International), Lim is also in demand as a chamber musician and as a performer of new and experimental music (“a formidable violinist who gave a knockout reading of Davidovsky's Synchronisms No. 9” –The Stranger). He is co-founder of the renowned Corigliano Quartet and a member of Open End, a New York City-based ensemble specializing in contemporary music and improvisation.

As a member of the Corigliano Quartet ([www.coriglianoquartet.com](http://www.coriglianoquartet.com)), Lim has performed in Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, and the Kennedy Center, and has won awards such as the Grand Prize at the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition and the ASCAP/CMA Award for Adventurous Programming. The quartet's Naxos label CD, was honored as one of The New Yorker's Ten Best Classical Recordings of the Year. Lim has recorded for Naxos, DreamWorks, Albany Records, CRI, Bayer Records, RIAX and Aguava New Music, and appears on numerous television and film soundtracks, including the Oscar-winning score to *Brokeback Mountain*. He has been heard on NPR programs such as *Performance Today* and *All Things Considered*.

Lim received his formal training at Indiana University, where he studied with the legendary violinist and teacher Josef Gingold. While at Indiana, he won First Prize in the school's Violin Concerto Competition and served on the faculty as a Visiting Lecturer. Lim later studied chamber music at the Juilliard School and taught there as an assistant to the Juilliard String Quartet. He currently serves on the faculty of Cornish College of the Arts, where he teaches violin and chamber music.

JAMES PRITCHETT has written both for and about music. He has collaborated with composer Frances White on various works. He designed and built the software for her interactive installation *Resonant landscape*, and he created the text and video for her instrumental theatre trilogy: *The old rose reader*, *As night falls*, and *The book of roses and memory*. Pritchett & White are currently working on a series of works with music and text inspired by the fairy tale “The princess in the chest” from one of Andrew Lang’s collections. In the realm of music criticism, Pritchett was one of the first writers to deal with John Cage’s music on its own terms—as music. His research presented the first clear documentation of Cage’s chance operations of the 1950s, and provided a model for the analytical study of this work. Pritchett is the author of *The music of John Cage* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), the first critical study of the whole of Cage’s work. He has also written on the work of pianist/composer David Tudor and is currently trying to find a way to write about the music of Morton Feldman. You can read more of his writing at *The piano in my life* ([RoseWhiteMusic.com/piano](http://RoseWhiteMusic.com/piano)).

Hailed by Gramophone as “an artist of commanding and poetic personality” and described as “staggeringly virtuosic” by *The Strad*, violist MELIA WATRAS ([meliawatras.com](http://meliawatras.com)) has distinguished herself as one of her instrument’s leading voices. As a soloist, chamber musician and recording artist, Watras has championed the works of living composers throughout her career. She has commissioned, premiered and recorded numerous new compositions, while appearing at prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, and Alice Tully Hall. Recent and upcoming highlights include the European premiere (aired live by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation) of Pulitzer Prize-winner Shulamit Ran’s *Perfect Storm*, a piece that was written for Watras, and collaborations with violists Atar Arad and Garth Knox.

The *Seattle Times* named her most recently released CD, *Short Stories*, a *Critics’ Pick*, and marveled at her “velocity that seems beyond the reach of human fingers.” Of her debut solo CD (*Viola Solo*), *Strings* remarked, “Watras is a young player in possession of stunning virtuosic talent and deserving of the growing acclaim,” and called her second release (*Prestidigitation*) “astounding and both challenging and addictive to listen to.” Watras is co-founder of the award-winning Corigliano Quartet. The group has appeared on NPR’s *All Things Considered* and *Performance Today* and can be heard on over a dozen CDs. The ensemble’s Naxos label CD was named one of the Ten Best Classical Recordings of the Year by *The New Yorker*.

Watras studied with Atar Arad at Indiana University and served as a teaching assistant to the Juilliard String Quartet while at the Juilliard School. She is currently Associate Professor of Viola and chair of Strings at the University of Washington School of Music, where she was awarded the

Donald E. Petersen Endowed Fellowship and the Royalty Research Fund. Watras has given viola and chamber music classes throughout the United States and abroad, at schools such as Indiana University, Cleveland Institute of Music, Strasbourg Conservatoire (France), and Chosun University (South Korea). She has twice returned to her alma mater, Indiana, to teach as a guest professor.

FRANCES WHITE composes instrumental, vocal, and electronic music. She studied composition at the University of Maryland, Brooklyn College, and Princeton University. A 2004 Guggenheim recipient, she has been given awards, honors, grants, and fellowships from organizations such as The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Alice M. Ditson Fund, the Mary Flagler Cary Trust, the Aaron Copland Fund, Prix Ars Electronica, the Institut International de Musique Electroacoustique de Bourges, the International Computer Music Association, Hungarian Radio, ASCAP, the Bang On A Can Festival, the Other Minds Festival, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, the Dale Warland Singers, the American Music Center, the MacDowell Colony, and the Djerassi Resident Artists Program. Recent commissions include one from the Third Practice Festival to write for the acclaimed ensemble eighth blackbird; from the Fromm Foundation; from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; from the MAP Fund; from the Solaris Vocal Ensemble of Seattle; and from the 2013 European Shakuhachi Society festival. She is currently at work on *Music for emptiness/Music for empty chairs*, funded by Commissioning Music USA (formerly Meet the Composer).

White's music can be heard on CD on the Wergo, Centaur, Nonsequitur, Harmonia Mundi, and Bridge Records labels. A CD of her chamber works, *Centre Bridge*, is available on the Mode Records label. Another collection of her music, *In the library of dreams*, was released in 2012 on the Pogus Productions label. White's music was featured as part of the soundtrack of three of Gus Van Sant's award-winning films: *Elephant*, *Paranoid Park*, and *Milk*.

Special thanks to **Doug Niemela**, **Sonja Myklebust**, and **Anna Stachurska**.

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