

in-residence at numerous institutions, including the University of Sussex (England), Bennington College, and the University of Cincinnati. She has been a guest of the Ecole Nationale Claude Debussy and featured on French radio.

The first woman to receive a Ph.D. in music from Princeton, Thome also holds a Princeton M.F.A. in composition, an M.A. in theory and composition from the University of Pennsylvania, and undergraduate degrees in piano and composition from the Eastman School of Music.

Thome's honors include the 1994 Washington Composer of the Year; the 1995-96 Solomon Katz Distinguished Professor in the Humanities, University of Washington; and a 1998 International Computer Music Conference Commission. Recent commissions include those from the Bremerton Symphony Association, Seattle Symphony, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, The Eleusis Consortium, The Esoterics, and Trimpin. Her collaborative works include *Night Passage*, an environmental theatre piece for the Moore College of Arts in Philadelphia, and *Angels*, for virtual reality artwork shown at the Biennale des Arts Electroniques in Paris.

Thome's music has been recorded on the CRI, Crystal Records, Capstone, Leonarda, and Centaur labels, including *Palaces of Memory* and *Bright Air/Brilliant Fire*. The latter was described by *Computer Music Journal* as "a must-have for every electro-acoustic music collector."

CLASSICAL

**KING FM 98.1**

**School of Music**  
University of Washington • Seattle, Washington

*Presents a faculty recital*

**Melia Watras,**  
*viola*

**PRESTIDIGITATION**

*with*  
William George, *tenor*

World-premiere performances of works by  
Brent Michael Davids  
Richard Karpen  
Juan Pampin  
Heinrich Taube  
Diane Thome

7:30 PM  
OCTOBER 23, 2006  
MEANY THEATER

Circ CD #15236

Non-Circ CD #15235 PROGRAM

1 *TACOMA NARROWS for viola and tape* (2006) (7:59)  
..... HEINRICH TAUBE (b. 1953)

2 *AND YET... for viola and computer-realized sound* (2006) (10:18)  
..... DIANE THOME (b. 1942)

3 *NADA for viola and electronic sounds* (2006) (17:19)  
..... JUAN PAMPIN (b. 1967)

INTERMISSION

4 *VIOLA JOKES* (2005) (8:11)  
..... BRENT MICHAEL DAVIDS (b. 1959)

William George, *tenor*

5 ~ technical gap ~  
*APERTURE for amplified viola and interactive electronics* (18:17)  
..... RICHARD KARPEN (b. 1957)

One of the most fascinating facets of being a performer is getting the opportunity to work with composers. It has long been a dream of mine to perform an entire concert of works written specifically for me, by talented artists whom I hold in high admiration. Just as exciting is the fact that I get to document these works on an upcoming CD. The pieces on tonight's program will be recorded and released on by Fleur de Son Classics.

I'd like to thank the University of Washington Royalty Research Fund, DXARTS, and the School of Music for making this project possible. I'd also like to thank the five wonderful composers, the fantastic tenor, and my colleagues and friends, who devoted their talent and time to this project.

—Melia Watras

NOTES WRITTEN BY THE COMPOSERS

HEINRICH TAUBE: *TACOMA NARROWS* for viola and tape

The original Tacoma Narrows bridge, nicknamed Galloping Gertie, opened for traffic on July 1, 1940 and collapsed in a spectacular manner into the Puget Sound on November 7, 1940 just six short months after it had opened. Unbeknownst to the bridge's designers, their engineering decision to construct a thin, graceful roadway would cause the structure to act like a giant airfoil that oscillated up and down as cross winds lifted the roadway up and weight forced the surface back down again in the opposite direction. On the day of its collapse, a strong and steady 40 mph cross wind caused the roadway to begin oscillating in a new torsional mode of vibration (at .2 Hz) and the surface began to twist and buckle simultaneously in two dimensions. The resonance of this destructive mode eventually built up enough amplitude that the roadway fractured and the bridge collapsed into the waters below. A famous film shot by Barney Elliot captures the last moments of this beautiful and graceful structure as it literally shook itself apart, and the spectacular twisting, fracturing motion of its last gallop provides an inspiration for the melodic contours developed throughout this piece. In addition, the main source material of the composition is a pentatonic scale derived from the harmonic series (partials 17, 19, 23, 27, 31, roughly C# D# F# A# B#) that is then "fractured" in two different ways simultaneously to create all the pitch material presented in the work. In one sort of fracturing, foreign tones (the partials 2, 3 and 5, or the triad C G E) are sequentially added to the pentatonic collection to build increasingly dissonant scales of 6, 7 and 8 tones. The microtonal clash of the foreign triad tones with the original pentatonic set are featured in different musical ways during the course of the work. In

another sort of fracturing, the harmonic structures in the piece are all derived by superimposing multiple copies of the source scales, but each shifted and stretched in time by prime numbers so that a non-periodic harmonic smearing takes place. Finally, the .2 Hz destructive mode that produced the fatal twisting vibration in the bridge provides the incessant, steady pulse for the piece. The work was composed entirely in the Common Music software package with audio produced using Common Lisp Music, developed by William Schottstaedt at CCRMA, Stanford and the performance score produced by the FOMUS music notation package developed by David Psenicka at University of Illinois. Tacoma Narrows was commissioned by, and is dedicated to, Melia Watras of the University of Washington.

DIANE THOME: *AND YET...* for viola and computer-realized sound

In contrast to my earlier viola/electronic work, *LIKE A SEATED SWAN*, composed for the Seattle Symphony in 1999, I wanted to compose a more intimate, less dramatic piece. I was also interested in constructing and integrating timbral content and formal design from a minimal acoustic source that would be transformed in multiple and even surprising ways. All synthesized sounds in the composition are derived from several excerpts of the violin music in *SILVER DEER*, my 1981 acoustic piece.

*AND YET ...* displays a certain autonomy and self-containment in both acoustic and electronic parts, even where they are intertwined. While the viola maintains a clear melodic profile in the two sections of the work, the electronic music undergoes a major timbral transformation, which introduces the second section of the piece with a distinct choral-like sound. Through the combination of various timbres and, in particular, the coupling of a rapidly moving, fast-attack sound with the longer melodic sculpting of the choral timbre, the quicker structural rhythm of the second section of the piece brings the work to a gentle close.

The title, taken from a haiku by the Japanese poet Issa (1763-1827), is intended to suggest the elegiac quality of the work. Here is an English translation:

*The world of dew  
Is the world of dew  
And yet...  
And yet...*

Commissioned by Melia Watras for the University of Washington, this composition is dedicated to my mother, who died in September 2004.

Software used in the creation of the electronic portion includes Metasynth Pro, Deck 3.5, and Soundhack. I thank Robert Austin for his collaboration in the production of the computer-realized sound.

JUAN PAMPIN: *NADA*, for viola and electronic sounds

*No hay, al principio, nada. Nada.*

Juan José Saer, "Nadie nada nunca" (1980)

*NADA* is an homage to writer Juan José Saer (1937-2005), one of the greatest contemporary writers in the Spanish language. The piece attempts to capture the time of Saer's literature, to materialize it, to make time advance in a liminal way. The use of electronic media helps this purpose, transforming the instrument's sound to turn it strangely ethereal. Those spectral transformations occur just beyond our perceptual thresholds, producing a symbiosis between the acoustic and electronic material.

*NADA* was commissioned by violist Melia Watras for her upcoming CD *Prestidigitation*.

Technical note: Most of the electronic sounds for the piece were generated with the ATS spectral modeling system using its Super Collider interface, developed by Josh Parmenter. (<http://www.dxarts.washington.edu/ats/>)

BRENT MICHAEL DAVIDS: *VIOLA JOKES*

Commissioned for Violist Melia Watras by the University of Washington, *VIOLA JOKES* is a soloistic work for viola, with the addition of a Tenor whose lyrics are viola jokes. For those so informed, there exists an incredibly vast and time-honored anthology of viola jokes. It is from this literary storehouse that the lyrics are derived, in contrast to the considerable virtuosity of the viola. For the duration of this playful work, the Violist is the defensive witness, while the Tenor is the accusatorial barrister. To reveal any more in advance would betray too much!

To disclose the history of our Violist-Composer collaboration, however, is rather noteworthy. It all began at the "Crossroads of Traditions" Inter-American Composer Workshop in 1997. As a guest composer, I met Melia Watras for the first time, a graduate viola student at Indiana University in Bloomington. She was a member of IU's celebrated graduate string quartet that performed my challenging work *The Singing Woods*, which had been previously and exclusively performed by the Kronos Quartet. John Corigliano was also one of the guest-composers at this workshop presenting one of his own compositions for string quartet, likewise performed by IU's graduate quartet. Following the "Crossroads" Workshop, the true impetus for our current Viola-Composer collaboration came to its fullest realization. That wonderful graduate ensemble went on to become one of America's favorite quartets, naming themselves after one of the guest composers from the "Crossroads" Workshop. Now, if you were naming your quartet after a Workshop composer, who would you chose? Davids, or Corigliano? "The Davids String Quartet" or "The Corigliano String Quartet?" Hmmm. Davids Quartet. Corigliano Quartet. But, of course, they chose to become the "Corigliano Quartet," and Melia has been trying to make amends to me ever since. Hence, the current collaboration. Enjoy!

Lyrics to *VIOLA JOKES*:

*All Rise. Behold Viola! The instrument of worship, for in its sounding we long for the mercy of God, and in its ending we know the grace of God. Let me put it this way, like this lawsuit, everyone will be ever so grateful when your case is closed. Please, be seated.*

*First, let me ask you, how long does it take to tune your Viola? Oh, pardon me, no one can know that, let me rephrase. For the record and in front of your peers, do you live by the well-known Viola credo: it's a far, far better thing I do, to play a little sharp, than to play out of tune.*

*Yes, yes, we've all heard the best way to tune two Violas together is to shoot one of them. But the conductor shouted that you were the one out of tune. When one Violist grumbled: My tuning is all right, all the strings are equally tight, you chimed in: It's not the tension, the pegs must be parallel! Then you complained: She turned my tuning peg, and she won't tell me which one!*

*But I digress. On the night in question, you claimed you were playing thirty-second notes. To reassure those of us in this room, would you be willing to play one? You were bragging your fingers were like lightning. A kernel of truth I think, as they rarely strike the same place twice! That night, however, weren't you locked outside the concert hall? You had trouble with the key, and did not know when to come in.*

*Now, I realize, to you a "passing tone" is that curious resonance from a Bucket O' beans, but do you deny there is little difference between your Viola and a chainsaw? Except the person holding the chainsaw may actually read music. Come to think of it, they both start out very sharp. But a chainsaw does not stay that way! And well, one can actually tune a chainsaw, and you don't normally pour gasoline on a chainsaw. Oh, okay, I concede, there is a discord between a Viola and a chainsaw, the exhaust smells different.*

*In closing, first, considering that a Viola player with half a brain is widely considered to be gifted, that you are a Violist living with not one but two brain cells, we must conclude that you are pregnant! Don't get your G string in a knot. Unexplained Viola mysteries abound. If a viola falls in the forest, does it make a "bratsche"?*

*While heralding wittily, for Harold in Italy, you naively slip and slide all over the so-called "sonata" form. But you remain unaware, quite simply that it snot.*

*What did you get on your recent music theory exam? Drool. Is that a rag under your chin? I rest my case.*

*For God sake use a Victrola! Or Motorola! Why is it only a "True Lady" knows how to play the instrument but won't? You'd give ebola to Chief Osceola! In Pensacola, you'd sink your gondola!*

*Were you a Lady I should my tears let fall upon your cheek, and say, "Thrice Welcome, drowned Viola".*

RICHARD KARPEN: *APERTURE* for amplified viola and interactive electronics

*APERTURE*, composed in 2006, is another in my series of pieces exploring the extension of musical instruments and performance through live computer enhancement and processing. In addition to the live processing of the sound of the viola, this work further integrates the performer with the computer through the use of an accelerometer worn on wrist of the bow arm of the violist. The device tracks the speed of the movement of the arm and sends data to the computer where algorithms process the information in real time to affect the nature of the interaction between performer and computer. For example, small changes in the violist's arm speed can create nuanced effects while sudden changes in speed or direction of the violists arm or just the wrist can trigger immediate reactions by the computer.

*APERTURE* also continues my departure from composing and giving direction to performers though a written (notated) score. There is no musical score for *APERTURE*. Instead the composition was worked out over an extended time of collaborative exploration and practice with violist Melia Watras, for whom the work was composed. The final version of the work is not improvised nor aleatoric in the sense those terms are usually used for music, although improvisation did play an important role during the developmental stages of the work. While this kind of experientially developed music has existed in many cultures, I am specifically experimenting with the kinds of techniques film director Mike Leigh uses for character development in his works in which the actors create their characters through an organic and rigorous series of directed improvisation and reiteration through rehearsal. The final documentation of the work will be in the form of a video recording of Ms. Watras performing the work along with instructions and demonstrations showing how to play it. This video document will take the place of a musical score so that the integrity of the work can be maintained over time and the work can be performed by other violists as well as Ms. Watras in the future.

Along with Melia Watras' integral role in the development of viola material for *APERTURE*, my research team for the development of the hardware and software for the piece included: DXARTS Research Associate Dr. Joshua Parmenter who brilliantly developed most of the key underlying control code structure for sound processing and synthesis and interaction with the accelerometer in Supercollider and the C programming language, and DXARTS PhD students Joel Kollin and James Coupe who worked on design and implementation of the analog electronics coming from the accelerometer. Thanks also to Blake Hannaford, Professor of Electrical Engineering at the UW for reminding us about the effects of gravity!

## BIOGRAPHIES

Described as "staggeringly virtuosic" by *The Strad*, violist MELIA WATRAS has been hailed by audiences and critics alike for her electrifying and vibrant performances. She has long been at the forefront of the American new music scene, performing numerous commissions and world premieres as a soloist and co-founder of the award-winning Corigliano Quartet. Ms. Watras has performed in Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Alice Tully Hall and the Kennedy Center and at festivals such as Aspen and Ravinia. As the violist of the Corigliano Quartet, she has received awards such as the Grand Prize at the Fischhoff Competition and the ASCAP/CMA Award for Adventurous Programming.

Ms. Watras's debut solo CD, *Viola Solo*, was released by Fleur De Son ([www.fleurdeson.com](http://www.fleurdeson.com)) to much critical acclaim. *Strings* remarked, "Watras is a young player in possession of stunning virtuosic talent and deserving of the growing acclaim." *The Strad* called her "excellent" and "authoritative", while the *American Record Guide* proclaimed, "Watras is a terrific violist." Composed entirely of unaccompanied viola works, the disc features world premiere recordings of pieces by Andrew Waggoner and Paola Prestini, as well as the first recording on viola of John Corigliano's *Fancy on a Bach Air*. With the Corigliano Quartet, she has recorded for Albany, Bayer, CRI, Riax, and Aguava and has appeared on NPR's *All Things Considered* and *Performance Today* and WFMT-Chicago's *Live from Studio One*.

Watras attended Indiana University, where she studied with Abraham Skernick and Atar Arad, earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees and the prestigious Performer's Certificate. While at Indiana, she served as Arad's assistant for many years, and was a member of the faculty as a Visiting Lecturer. She went on to study chamber music at the Juilliard School, while also teaching as an assistant to the Juilliard String Quartet. Watras then served as Musical Artist in Residence at Dickinson College and on the faculty of the New York Youth Symphony Chamber Music Program. In 2004 she was appointed Assistant Professor of Viola at the University of Washington School of Music, where she teaches viola and chamber music. For more information on Melia Watras, please visit [www.meliawatras.com](http://www.meliawatras.com). For more information on the Corigliano Quartet, please visit ([www.coriglianoquartet.com](http://www.coriglianoquartet.com)).

Tenor WILLIAM GEORGE has been praised as "a world-class performer," "a truly excellent tenor," "a delight to hear," and "worth shouting about." He has performed with many musical organizations around the world, including Los Angeles Opera, San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Hong Kong Arts Festival, the Savonlinna (Finland) Festival, the Aldeburgh (England) Festival, the Stockholm Tonsätarfestival, and at Carnegie Hall. He has toured the country as Count Almaviva with New York City Opera, and as Don Ottavio with Western Opera Theater, and recently he sang the role of Le Peinture in Charpentier's *Les Arts Florissants* with Concert Royal and New York Baroque

Dance Company. His most recent appearances included Leighton's Symphony #3 with the Philippines Symphony, an appearance at the Elysium festival in Germany and New York singing Kurt Well, and appearing with contemporary music ensemble New Music New York in the programs *Mystics & Misfits* and *Songs of Post-War New York*. Upcoming appearances include a concert and recording of premieres in Seattle, and chamber music performances in New York and Vancouver.

As a recitalist, Mr. George has appeared in the U.S., England, and Sweden, and has taped a recital for Japan's NHK network television. His recordings include *Geometrics* by L. Warde (Platso), two solo recital discs (*Metier*), as a soloist with the Pacific Chorale (Bay Cities), a collection of Irish songs and a CD of original country songs (*Milk Cow*). He has contributed vocals for an upcoming CD of music by avant-garde composer Franklin Latner, Marga Richter's opera *Riders to the Sea*, and Charpentier's *Les Arts Florissants*.

A specialist in contemporary music, Mr. George has sung several prestigious American premieres, including the role of Hermes in Sir Michael Tippett's *King Priam*, Edgar Allen Poe in Augusta Read Thomas' *Ligeia*, and Kenneth Leighton's *Symphony #3*. He also received acclaim for his performances of Tippett's song cycles at Tippett festivals in Stockholm and Sacramento, and Benjamin Lees' *Echoes of Normandy*, also in Sacramento. Most recently he sang the world premiere of Marga Richter's *Dew-drops On A Lotus Leaf*, for voice and string quartet.

Mr. George is a graduate of the University of Southern California, where he was named Outstanding Graduate Student from the School of Music. He has been regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, and was awarded generous grants for four years by the Leni Fe Bland Foundation. The tenor also took part in San Francisco Opera's *Merola Program* and Western Opera Theater, and studied at the Britten-Pears School of Music in England.

BRENT MICHAEL DAVIDS is an enrolled citizen of the Mohican Nation. Davids' composer career spans 30 years, including awards from ASACP, NEA, Rockefeller Foundation, In-Vision, Joffrey Ballet, Chanticleer, Kronos Quartet, Meet-The-Composer, Miró Quartet, National Symphony Orchestra, Bush Foundation, McKnight Foundation, and Jerome Foundation, among others. Davids' work, *Powwow Symphony* (for Powwow M.C. and Orchestra), was premiered by New Mexico Symphony and Phoenix Symphony to rave reviews. Commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra, his *Canyon Sunrise* premiered at the Kennedy Center to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Kennedy Center and the 60th Anniversary of the NSO. Garrison Keillor asked Davids for an orchestra work, *Prayer & Celebration*, that premiered on "A Prairie Home Companion" show in Indiana. Davids has also been commissioned by Grammy Award-winning, Chanticleer — *Night Chant*, *Mohican Soup*, and *Un-Covered Wagon* (Teldec Classics). In 2006, the NEA named Davids among the nation's preeminent choral composers in its project "American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius," in all 50 states. As one of only 29 celebrated

composers listed by the NEA, Davids was selected along with Leonard Bernstein, Chen Yi, Harry T. Burleigh, Libby Larsen, Stephen Foster and others.

Davids holds Bachelors and Masters degrees in Music Composition from Northern Illinois University and Arizona State University respectively, trained at Redford's Sundance Institute, and apprenticed with film composer Stephen Warbeck (*Shakespeare In Love*) on the TV-Miniseries *Dreamkeeper* (Hallmark and Abc). Davids has been featured on ABC, NBC, CBS, NPR, PBS and NAPT. Davids' film scores include: *The 1920 Classic Myth: Last of the Mohicans*, *The World of American Indian Dance*, *The Business of Fancy Dancing*, *The Silent Enemy* and *Bright Circle*.

Brent Michael Davids is an American Indian music expert in all geographic culture areas of North America, and schooled in American Indian Religious Studies at the Masters degree level. Davids is highly regarded as a professional Source Music Director for American Indian singers, drummers, flutists, solo artists and contemporary bands. As an Educator, Davids founded the Composer Apprentice National Outreach Endeavor (CANOE) to teach Native youth to compose their own 'written' concert music, and the First Nations Composer Initiative (FNCI), a virtual chapter of the American Composers Forum (ACF), now the largest composer institute in the world. His web site is [www.filmcomposer.us](http://www.filmcomposer.us)

RICHARD KARPEN (b. 1957) is one of the leading international figures in Computer Music. He is known not only for his pioneering compositions, but also for developing computer applications for composition, live/interactive performance, and sound design.

Karpen currently holds several academic positions at the University of Washington in Seattle: Divisional Dean for Research in the College of Arts and Sciences, Director of the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS), and Professor of Music Composition and Theory. 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 Russolo 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 also worked at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA). Karpen is a native of New York, where he studied composition with Charles Dodge, Gheorghe Costinescu, and Morton Subotnick.

Karpen's works are widely performed in the U.S. and internationally. While he is primarily known for his work in electronic media, Karpen has also composed symphonic and chamber works for a wide variety of ensembles. Furthermore, he has composed works for many leading international soloists such as soprano Judith Bettina, violist Garth Knox, trombonist Stuart Dempster, flutists Laura Chislett and Jos Zwaanenberg, and oboist Alex Klein. Along with numerous concert and radio 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, and DIFFUSION i MeDIA.

JUAN PAMPIN has been teaching at the University of Washington since 1999. He was appointed Assistant Professor of Music Composition in 2002, and since then has been faculty at the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS). Pampin received an MA in Composition from Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Lyon, France, and a DMA in Composition from Stanford University. Juan Pampin's compositions, including works for instrumental, digital, and mixed media, have been performed around the world by soloists and ensembles such as Arditi Quartet, Les Percussions de Strasbourg, and Sinfonia 21. His research has focused on Spectral Modeling, Perceptual Audio Coding, and Sound Spatialization, and has been presented at major international conferences, particularly his Analysis Transformation Synthesis (ATS) system project. He has taught at Stanford University's Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA) and often lectures and gives master classes in a number of Latin American countries.

HEINRICH TAUBE is an associate professor of music composition at the University of Illinois. He received his B.A. and M.A. in Music Composition from Stanford University, where he studied with John Chowning, and his Ph.D. in composition at The University of Iowa.

Active as a composer, researcher, and music software designer, Taube has published music, books and numerous articles on issues related to music composition and technology. His book on algorithmic music composition *Notes from the Metalevel, an Introduction to Algorithmic Composition*, was published in 2004 by Thompson Publishing. Taube has won awards for both his musical compositions and for his software. The *Aeolian Harp*, a composition for piano and computer generated tape, recently won the Eric Siday Musical Creativity Award as the top composition submitted to the 2003 International Computer Music Conference. In 1996 the Common Music software environment won 1st Prize at the First International Competition of Music Software in Bourges, France. In 1995 Taube joined the faculty at the School of Music at the University of Illinois where he currently teaches music composition, music theory, acoustics and computer-music related classes along with pursuing his own music and research.

Composer of a wide variety of works spanning solo, chamber, choral, orchestral, and electronic media, DIANE THOME is the first woman to write computer-synthesized music. Thome's compositions have been presented in Europe, China, Australia, Israel, Canada, and the United States. She has been composer-