

Compact disc

M&S

2018

5-24



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

MODERN MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Cristina Valdés, director

7:30 PM

May 24, 2018

Meany Studio Theater

UW MUSIC

2017-18 SEASON

CD# 18,025

PROGRAM

1 *remarks Valdés*

2 *Something to Hunt* (2014).....16:09.....Ashley Fure (b. 1982)

Logan Esterling, *oboe*
Caitlin Beare, *clarinet*
Brain Schappals, *alto & soprano saxophone*
Emily Acri, *violin*
Alessandra Barrett, *viola*
Chris Young, *cello*
Abbey Blackwell, *double bass*

Gabriela Garza Canales, *conductor*

3 *So sei es* (2013).....20:15.....Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931)

Emily Acri, *violin*
Abbey Blackwell, *double bass*
Aidan Gold, *percussion*
Hexin Qiao, *piano*

INTERMISSION

4 *Aer* (1991).....6:49.....Beat Furrer (b. 1954)

Caitlin Beare, *clarinet*
Chris Young, *cello*
Hexin Qiao, *piano*

5 *Next Level* (2018).....17:14.....Modern Ensemble and Richard Karpen (b. 1957)

Caitlin Beare, *clarinet*
Emily Acri, *violin*
Alessandra Barrett, *viola*
Chris Young, *cello*
Abbey Blackwell, *double bass*
Edward Curineen, *percussion*
Hexin Qiao, *piano*

PROGRAM NOTES

SOMETHING TO HUNT was commissioned on receipt of a 2012 Darmstadt Stipendienpreis. It was premiered by Dal Niente at the 2014 Darmstadt Summer Course for New Music, where it was awarded the Kranichsteiner Musikpreis.

- i. Think of a tiger first spotting its prey. The silence of it. The sudden singularity of purpose. Hair bristled, stomach to the grass, unbearably still, until: pounce.
- ii. Much of my work revolves around questions of compulsion and drive. What motivates a sound, what pulls it forward? Can we conjure, outside tonality, that inexplicable sense of craving that seems to tug *ti* towards *do*?
- iii. Questions of where to go and why haunt many in my ilk. We the hyper-mobile, hyper-privileged generation, saturated with choice and yet raised without the bedtime lies of progress, truth and tribal pride that guided so many before us. Our prey is pre-packaged; our gods are dead. So what do we search for? What do we hunt?
- iv. *Something to Hunt* is a timbral Shepard tone – a multidimensional but unidirectional thrust that circles back and pushes forth relentlessly, obsessively, until its end. Looking for something. Hungry for meat.

–composer's note

ASHLEY FURE is an American composer and installation artist. Called "raw and elemental," and "richly satisfying" by the New York Times, her works explore the kinetic source of sound, bringing focus to the muscular art of music making and the chaotic behaviors of raw acoustic matter. She holds a PhD in Music Composition from Harvard University and joined the Dartmouth College Music Department as Assistant Professor in 2015. A finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in Music, Fure also received numerous fellowship and prizes such as a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Rome Prize in Music Composition and a DAAD Artist-in-Berlin Prize. Her work has been commissioned by major ensemble throughout Europe and the United States including The New York Philharmonic, The Los Angeles Philharmonic, Klangforum Wien, Ensemble Modern, the Diotima Quartet, and International Contemporary Ensemble among others.

–Hexin Qiao

AER, composed in 1991, explores a sound palette that resides mostly on the extremes of the three instruments. Extended techniques such as *sul ponticello* (bowing very near the bridge) in the cello and buzzing a spoon against the inner piano strings combine into different, often unexpected textures (e.g. harsh and quiet). The pianist, in particular, is responsible with covering a wide array of sounds that require lots of athletic coordination across the whole instrument. A murmuring clarinet ostinato underlies much of the piece; although fully notated as a virtuosic stream of notes, it functions as a blurred background that becomes almost more noticeable in the silences that appear when it stops flowing.

BEAT FURRER, born in Switzerland in 1954, spent his student years studying piano at the local music academy. In 1975, he moved to Vienna, where he studied composition more intensively. He co-founded the Klangforum Wien contemporary ensemble in 1985 and finished his first opera (*Die Blinden*) in 1989 as a commission from the Vienna State Opera. Since then, Furrer has composed four more operas, in addition to numerous pieces for orchestra, chamber ensembles, choirs, and soloists. He has held a professorship at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Graz, and a guest residency at the Lucerne Festival.

–Chris Young

Tonight's piece *SO SEI ES* ('So be it') was commissioned by the Israeli Nurit Stark for a Viktor Suslin memorial CD. The composer Suslin died in 2012; he was Gubaidulina's close friend and long-time colleague. The recurring motifs throughout the piece are the composer's beloved B-A-C-H motif (Bb, A, C and B natural) and the "cross motif" in the form of the theme from Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I. (Suslin also applied this motif in his *Grenzübertritt* for viola, cello and double bass.) The piece starts with a reminiscent and contemplative duet between the violin and the double bass. The percussion and the piano afterwards proceed with another duet that brings out shimmering sonorities. The two pairs alternate multiple times before the arrival of the climax. The piece concludes with a chorale-like passage restating the "cross motif" and ends with the motif ascending to a G major chord.

Born in Tartar Republic of the Soviet Union in 1931, SOFIA GUBAIDULINA is a graduate of the Kazan Conservatory and the Moscow Conservatory where she studied composition with Vissarion Shebalin. She is considered as one of three major Moscow composers of the post-Shostakovich era, together with Schnittke and Denisov. Her music is praised as "a striking combination of spiritual and dramatic, with daring and transparently original colors." Gubaidulina is notable for the prominent religious themes in her compositions. She said that "I am a religious Russian Orthodox person and I understand 'religion' in the literal meaning of the word, as 're-ligio', that is to say the restoration of connections, the restoration of the 'legato' of life. There is no more serious task for music than this."

–Hexin Qiao

NEXT LEVEL was composed for and with the group of musicians performing the piece this evening. For a piece like this, I work with the musicians to bring their unique artistic voices as well as their "group dynamic" directly into the creation of the new work. The piece emerges through processes of guided improvisations, in this case over a couple of months of working together. During our work sessions I might prompt the musicians with challenges such as "what happens if you play like this" or "have you ever tried to...". They might add "how about if I/we do..." All the time we're shaping the work into a structured narrative that tells the same "story" each time it is performed, but for which the "words" used can (must) vary in each telling. It has been a joy to bring this collaborative composition method to this group of wonderfully talented and deep-thinking students. Many thanks to Cristina Valdés, Director of the Modern Music Ensemble, for inviting us to make this piece together and for her own vision and guidance along the path that led to Next Level.

–Richard Karpen

RICHARD KARPEN is a composer and researcher in working across several genres of the arts. His compositions for fixed electronic media and live performance are widely known, recorded, and performed internationally. Karpen is currently Director of the School of Music at the University of Washington where he is also a Professor of Music Composition. He was the founding Director of the UW DXARTS program. 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 United States 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 and Gheorghe Costinescu.

Karpen has composed works for many leading international soloists and ensembles. 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 several labels including Wergo, Centaur, Neuma, Le Chant du Monde, DIFFUSION i MeDIA, Fleur du Son, Capstone, and RareNoise.

Director Biography:

Considered one of today's foremost interpreters of contemporary music, pianist CRISTINA VALDÉS is known for presenting innovative concerts. She has performed across four continents and in venues such as Lincoln Center, Le Poisson Rouge, Miller Theatre, Jordan Hall, and the Kennedy Center. An avid chamber musician and collaborator, Cristina has toured extensively with the Bang On a Can "All Stars," and has performed with the Seattle Chamber Players, the Mabou Mines Theater Company, the Parsons Dance Company, and Antares. She has also been a featured performer on both the Seattle Symphony's Chamber Series and [UNTITLED] concerts. Cristina has appeared as a soloist with the Seattle Symphony, Johns Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, the Binghamton Philharmonic, the Seattle Philharmonic, the Eastman BroadBand, and the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra, among others. Valdés holds degrees from the New England Conservatory and SUNY Stony Brook, and is currently an Artist-in-Residence at the University of Washington.