

Compact Disc  
F737  
2018  
5-27

# *DIALOGUES*

## Frequency

Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin

Melia Watras, viola

Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello

with guest artist

Yura Lee, violin

7:30 PM / May 27, 2018  
Meany Theater

UW MUSIC  
2017-18 SEASON

CD #18,027

PROGRAM

1 remarks MJL

From 34 Duetti: ..... 7:21 ..... Luciano Berio (1925-2003)

- 2 Bela (Bartok)
- 3 Fiamma (Nicolodi)
- 4 Bruno (Maderna)
- 5 Franco (Gulli)
- 6 Igor (Stravinsky)
- 7 Maja (Pliseckaja)
- 8 Aldo (Bennici)

Yura Lee & Michael Jinsoo Lim, violins

9 Ständchen für Tini for violin and viola (1972) ..... 1:19 ..... Bruno Maderna (1920-1973)

from Folk Style Project: ..... 9:56 ..... Melia Watras (b. 1969)

- 10 Lontano for violin and viola\*
- 11 Vetur öngum lánar lið for violin and viola\*
- 12 Wise Tentacles for violin and viola (2017)\*  
\*world premiere

Yura Lee, violin  
Melia Watras, viola

Sonata for Violin and Cello, Op. 7 ..... 21:39 ..... Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

- 13 Allegro
- 14 Très vif
- 15 Lent
- 16 Vif

Yura Lee, violin  
Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello

INTERMISSION

Serenade for String Trio in C Major, Op. 10.....21:12..... Ernő Dohnányi (1877-1960)  
17 Marcia: Allegro  
18 Romanza: Adagio non troppo  
19 Scherzo: Vivace  
20 Tema con variazioni: Andante con moto  
21 Rondo

Frequency:  
Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin  
Melia Watras, viola  
Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello

## Program Notes

Welcome to *Dialogues*! Frequency is thrilled to welcome violinist Yura Lee to the Meany stage. On the first half of the concert, Sæunn, Melia and I will each perform duets with Yura, before returning to the stage as a trio for the second half. The program has some of our favorite musical conversations; duos by Berio, Maderna, Ravel and our own Melia Watras, followed by the Dohnányi Serenade, one of the staples of the string trio repertoire. Notes on Melia's pieces are below.

Many thanks to the University of Washington School of Music and Director Richard Karpen for making this concert possible.

–Michael Jinsoo Lim

### **Melia Watras: Lontano for violin and viola (2017)**

For me, the term *lontano* (far-off, remote) in music conjures up something defined, yet undefined at the same time. It brings to my mind Alberto Giacometti's minuscule sculptures. Giacometti spent a period making these works that are about the size of a finger. In them, he was able to create the effect of looking at something at a great distance, in part by the contrast between the tiny subject and the base on which they are displayed. It's amazing how Giacometti communicates so much with very little information to the viewer.

In my short piece, which is part of my Folk Style Project, the primary conflict is between expressive material, and the restriction of the essence of a string player's identity, their sound.

### **Melia Watras: *Vetur öngum lánar lið for violin and viola (2017)***

*Vetur öngum lánar lið* for violin and viola is an adaptation of my piece for voice and cello, written for my colleague and close friend, cellist Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir. The title (English translation: "Winter aids no one") comes from a poem written by Sæunn's great-grandfather, Bjarni Jónsson. That poem and an additional Jónsson work, *Ævidansinn* (The Dance of a Lifetime) provided the text for the music. The piece was originally written in 2016 as part of my Folk Style Project, and transcribed for violin and viola the following year.

–Melia Watras

### **Melia Watras: *Wise Tentacles for violin and viola (2017)***

Infinity arms,  
Infinity tentacles,  
Kusama, Y not?

–Michael Jinsoo Lim

## **Biographies**

### **Yura Lee, violin**

Violinist/violist Yura Lee is one of the most versatile and compelling artists of today. She is one of the very few in the world that has mastery of both violin and viola, and she actively performs both instruments equally. Her career spans through various musical mediums: both as a soloist and as a chamber musician, captivating audiences with music from baroque to modern, and enjoying a career that spans more than two decades that takes her all over the world.

Yura Lee was the only first prize winner awarded across four categories at the 2013 ARD Competition in Germany. She has won top prizes for both violin and viola in numerous other competitions, including first prize and audience prize at the 2006 Leopold Mozart Competition (Germany), first prize at the 2010 UNISA International Competition (South Africa), first prize at the 2013 Yuri Bashmet International Competition (Russia), and top prizes in Indianapolis (USA), Hannover (Germany), Kreisler (Austria), and Paganini (Italy) Competitions.

At age 12, Yura Lee became the youngest artist ever to receive the Debut Artist of the Year prize at the "Performance Today" awards given by National Public Radio. She is also the recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant given by Lincoln Center in New York City. Yura Lee's CD with Reinhard Goebel and the Bayerische Kammerphilharmonie, titled 'Mozart in Paris' (Oehms Classics) received the prestigious Diapason d'Or Award in France.

Yura Lee was nominated and represented by Carnegie Hall for its ECHO (European Concert Hall Organization) series. For this series, she gave recitals at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall and at nine celebrated concert halls in Europe: Wigmore Hall in London, Symphony Hall in Birmingham, Musikverein in Vienna, the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Stockholm Konserthus, Athens Concert Hall, and Cologne Philharmonie.

As a soloist, Yura Lee has appeared with many major orchestras, including New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Monte Carlo Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Tokyo Philharmonic, to name a few. She has performed with conductors Christophe Eschenbach, Lorin Maazel, Leonard Slatkin, Myung-Whun Chung, Mikhail Pletnev, among many others.

As a chamber musician, Yura Lee regularly takes part in the Marlboro Festival, Salzburg Festival, Verbier Festival, La Jolla SummerFest, Seattle Chamber Music Festival, ChamberFest Cleveland, Caramoor Festival, Kronberg Festival, Aspen Music Festival, among many others. She has collaborated with many artists including Gidon Kremer, Andras Schiff, Leonidas Kavakos, Mitsuko Uchida, Miklós Perényi, Yuri Bashmet, Menahem Pressler, and Frans Helmerson. Yura Lee is currently a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (New York City), and Boston Chamber Music Society.

Yura Lee studied at the Juilliard School (New York City), New England Conservatory (Boston), Salzburg Mozarteum (Austria), and Kronberg Academy (Germany). Her main teachers were Namyun Kim, Dorothy DeLay, Hyo Kang, Miriam Fried, Paul Biss, Thomas Riebl, Ana Chumachenko, and Nobuko Imai. She teaches both violin and viola at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. Yura Lee lives in Portland, Oregon.

## **Frequency**

Frequency is a Seattle-based ensemble, joining together distinguished artists from two acclaimed chamber groups, the Corigliano Quartet and Decoda. Made up of Michael Jinsoo Lim (violinist and artistic director), Melia Watras (violist) and Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir (cellist). Frequency is a modular chamber music group, breaking into different parts to present solos, duos and trios, while also expanding with renowned guest artists to perform in a variety of formations. Frequency members have performed as soloists and chamber musicians worldwide, in leading concert halls such as Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Suntory Hall, and Disney Hall. In 2017-18, the ensemble begins its second season of presenting innovative, invigorating and intriguing concerts.

## **Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin**

Violinist Michael Jinsoo Lim has been praised for playing with "delicious abandon" by *Gramophone*, described as "bewitching" and "masterful" by the *Seattle Times*, and hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* as a "conspicuously accomplished champion of contemporary music." He is concertmaster and solo violinist of the Pacific Northwest Ballet Orchestra ("surely the best ballet band in America"—*New York Times*) and serves as artistic director and violinist of the Seattle-based ensemble Frequency.

Recent highlights include the world premiere of Andrew Waggoner's Violin Concerto, appearances as soloist for the Stravinsky Violin Concerto at New York's City Center (as part of Pacific Northwest

Ballet's 2016 NYC tour), and performances of concertos by Prokofiev and Stravinsky with PNB during the 2016-17 season. Lim will travel with the company in the summer of 2018 to perform Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 1 in Paris.

For twenty years, Lim toured and recorded with the Corigliano Quartet, a group he co-founded. With the quartet, he won the Grand Prize at the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition and the ASCAP/CMA Award for Adventurous Programming, and performed in the nation's leading music centers, including Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, and the Kennedy Center. The quartet's Naxos label CD was honored as one of *The New Yorker's* Ten Best Classical Recordings of the Year.

As a theater artist, Lim appeared in director Nick Schwartz-Hall's *Tempo of Recollection*, a show about composer Erwin Schulhoff, and served as music consultant for Seattle Repertory Theatre's production of *Opus*, directed by Braden Abraham. Lim has performed onstage with Pacific Northwest Ballet in George Balanchine's *Duo Concertante* and Christopher Wheeldon's *After the Rain*. Lim has also worked as a record producer on three critically acclaimed albums by violist Melia Watras and co-producer on a fourth.

Lim attended Indiana University, where he was a pupil of the legendary Josef Gingold. He 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. Lim has recorded for Naxos, DreamWorks, Albany, Bridge, CRI, Bayer Records, RIAX and New Focus, and has been heard on NPR programs such as *Performance Today* and *All Things Considered*.

### **Melia Watras, viola**

Hailed by *Gramophone* as "an artist of commanding and poetic personality" and by *The Strad* as "staggeringly virtuosic," violist/composer Melia Watras has distinguished herself as one of her instrument's leading voices. She has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, and Alice Tully Hall, while achieving acclaim as an established recording artist. Recent highlights include the release of her latest disc from the Sono Luminus label, *26*, which features world premiere recordings of her own compositions, and video projects with violist Garth Knox (performing with Knox on his duos, *Viola Spaces for Two*) and video artist Ha Na Lee.

Watras's discography has received considerable attention from the press and the public. *The Strad* called *26* "a beautiful celebration of 21st century viola music." Soon after its release, the album debuted on the *Billboard* Classical Music Chart at #15. *Ispirare*, which features the world premiere recording of Pulitzer Prize-winner Shulamit Ran's *Perfect Storm* (written for Watras), made numerous Best of 2015 lists, including the *Chicago Reader's* ("Watras knocked the wind out of me with the dramatically dark beauty of this recording"). *Short Stories* was a *Seattle Times* Critics' Pick, with the newspaper marveling at her "velocity that seems beyond the reach of human fingers." Of her debut solo CD (*Viola Solo*), *Strings* praised her "stunning virtuosic talent" and called her second release (*Prestidigitation*) "astounding and both challenging and addictive to listen to."

Watras's compositions have been performed in New York City, Chicago, Seattle, Bloomington (IN), Denmark and Spain, by artists such as violist Atar Adad, cellist Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir and violinist Michael Jinsu Lim. Her music appears on her album *26* and has been recorded for another upcoming

disc. Watras's adaptation of John Corigliano's *Fancy on a Bach Air* for viola is published by G. Schirmer, Inc. and can be heard on her *Viola Solo* CD.

Watras is violist of the Seattle-based ensemble, Frequency, for whom she has composed, and a member of Open End, with whom she has performed in France, Denmark and the United States and recorded for Albany Records. For twenty years, Watras concertized worldwide and recorded extensively as violist of the renowned Corigliano Quartet, a group that she co-founded. Other chamber music explorations have included improvising in concert with jazz innovators Cuong Vu and Ted Poor. She and Vu recently premiered and recorded a work of his for viola and trumpet.

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 Professor of Viola and chair of Strings at the University of Washington School of Music, where she holds the Adelaide D. Currie Cole Endowed Professorship and was previously awarded the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Fellowship and the Royalty Research Fund. Watras has given viola and chamber music classes at schools such as Indiana University, Cleveland Institute of Music, Strasbourg Conservatoire (France), and Chosun University (South Korea). She frequently returns to her alma mater, Indiana, to teach as a guest professor.

### **Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello**

"Riveting" (*NYTimes*) cellist, Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir, has appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Toronto and Iceland Symphonies, among others, and her recital and chamber music performances have taken her across the US, Europe and Asia. Following the release of her debut recording of Britten's *Suites for Solo Cello* on Centaur Records, she has performed in some of the world's greatest halls including Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall and Disney Hall. The press have described her as "charismatic" (*NYTimes*) and praised her performances for their "emotional intensity" (*LATimes*).

Highlights of the 2016-2017 season include the premiere of a new concerto written for Sæunn by Páll Ragnar Pálsson, co-commissioned by the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, as well appearances at the Seattle Chamber Music Society and Iceland Symphony's Friday Series. In addition to having worked closely with Daníel Bjarnason on his award-winning composition "Bow to String", she is currently working with composers Halldór Smárason, Melia Watras, and Þuríður Jónsdóttir on new pieces for solo cello.

An avid chamber musician, she has collaborated in performance with Itzhak Perlman, Mitsuko Uchida, Richard Goode and members of the Emerson, Guarneri and Cavani Quartets and has participated in numerous chamber music festivals, including Prussia Cove and Marlboro, with whom she has toured. She is cellist of the Seattle-based chamber music group, Frequency, and cellist, founding member, and co-Artistic Director of Decoda, The Affiliate Ensemble of Carnegie Hall.

In the fall of 2015, Sæunn joined the faculty of the University of Washington in Seattle, teaching cello and chamber music. From 2013-2015, Sæunn was Artist-in-Residence at the Green Music Center's Weill Hall in Sonoma, California, presenting concerts, masterclasses, lectures and informal discussions at Sonoma State University.

Sæunn has garnered numerous top prizes in international competitions, including the Naumburg Competition in New York and the Antonio Janigro Competition in Zagreb, Croatia. She received a Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music, a Master of Music from The Juilliard School and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from SUNY Stony Brook. Her principal teachers include Richard Aaron, Tanya L. Carey, Colin Carr and Joel Krosnick.

Sæunn is an alum of Ensemble ACJW (now known as Ensemble Connect)—a program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and the Weill Music Institute in partnership with the New York City Department of Education—performing chamber music at Carnegie Hall and bringing classical music to students in the New York City Public Schools.

Born in Reykjavik, Iceland, Sæunn first moved to the states as a child, however she still has family in Iceland and enjoys going back, both for concerts and family visits. For more information, please go to [www.saeunn.com](http://www.saeunn.com).

#### UPCOMING EVENTS:

MT - Meany Theater  
MS - Meany Studio Theater

May 30 IMPFest X. 7:30 PM, MS.  
31 IMPFest X. 7:30 PM, MS.

Jun 1 UW Symphony & Combined Choirs. 7:30 PM, MT.