

W&L
Music

Lenfest Center
for the Arts

Sonoklect
A Festival of Modern Music



Past Meets Present: Blue Streak

October 27, 2012

8 p.m.

Wilson Concert Hall



LENFEST CENTER
for the ARTS
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM

BLUE STREAK ENSEMBLE

Margaret Brouwer, director
Sharon Roffman, violinist
Maaiké Harding, cellist
Madeline Lucas, flutist
Amitai Vardi, clarinetist
Nathan von Trotha, percussionist
Shuai Wang, pianist

Lonely Lake

for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion

Margaret Brouwer

Paris Quintet

for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano

- I. Rive Gauche
- II. L'aube sur la seine
- III. Fête de la Musique

Terry Vosbein

~ INTERMISSION ~

Bridges

for violin, clarinet, piano

- I. Railroad Trestle Bridge in Galax, Virginia
- II. Stone Bridge Over A Reflecting Pool in Souzhou
- III. The Golden Gate Bridge
- IV. The Brooklyn Bridge ("I Got Rhythm" Bridge)

Victoria Bond

Shattered Glass

for flute, cello, piano, percussion

Margaret Brouwer



PROGRAM NOTES

(by the composers)

Lonely Lake

Margaret Brouwer

Lonely Lake was commissioned by Hank and Mary Doll and is inspired by their “camp.” On Lonely Lake in Canada and accessible only by boat, this small settlement of cabins has been in the family for over 100 years. Picture Hank walking through the quiet early dawn to the lake. There is hardly any motion in the air and just an occasional birdcall. Beginning with instrumental renditions of the calls of the sandhill crane, wood thrush, the belted kingfisher, and the song sparrow, *Lonely Lake* goes on to reflect the early morning swim—gradual sounds of the swishing water at the beginning of the swim that gain momentum into a steady breast stroke and then the beauty and brilliance of the rising sun glinting on the water and in the eyes. Of his early morning swims, Hank says: “On the mornings when the sun isn’t shrouded by clouds, I’m usually looking directly into it. When I close my eyes, I always see a vivid orange/red color, which is split by the silvery brilliance of the sun. If I keep my eyes closed for a few strokes, the colors change somewhat, particularly when I put my head under water. Usually the sun-streak becomes blue, often looking a bit like a jagged fence or a deep blue insignia. The image takes on the quality of some Indian paintings I’ve seen where primary colors are used to depict the boldness and awesomeness of nature.” *Lonely Lake* progresses through musical development of the birdcalls and swimming motifs into busy daytime activities and ends with the sounds of loons at dusk.

Paris Quintet

Terry Vosbein

The *Paris Quintet* was written during a summer residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 2004. For a fourth time I spent the summer living and composing in the city of dreams. In 1998 I approached Paris as a new love. I returned to her the next year as an old familiar confidant. I strolled her familiar streets, shared experiences with her and watched as she turned from spring to fall. Over the last several years we have formed a lasting relationship. Like many relationships it has its ups and downs. But like a good relationship it is beautiful and eternal.

My routine while in Paris, if you can call it routine, is very simple. My studio is alongside the Seine. I take frequent strolls, eat a lot of bread and discuss the care and feeding of contemporary art with my artist neighbors. I compose in my studio as well as at various parks throughout Paris. I always carry my score with me, ready to stop and compose when the urge strikes. And it frequently strikes. I have even written within Notre Dame.

The city of Paris is divided by the meandering Seine. Historically, commercial activities were relegated to the right bank, or *rive droite*, and scholastic pursuits were found on the left bank, or *rive gauche*. It is on the left that one finds numerous universities, including the Sorbonne, as well as the Latin Quarter, Luxembourg Garden and Montparnasse. And it is here that I love to walk the streets, soaking up the atmosphere that so inspired the likes of Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway and James Joyce.

The title of the first movement of the quintet is *Rive Gauche*. It begins with a slow prelude, introducing several themes that will be heard throughout the entire work. The introductory material is followed by a romping allegro, complete with stride effects in the ensemble. There are two contrasting themes. One is highly rhythmically charged, full of syncopation and crunching dissonances. The second theme is more lyrical and is first heard in the cello accompanied by soft block chords on the piano. A development follows as both themes are bandied about until all hell breaks loose in a rip-snorting coda.

The second movement, *L'aube sur la Seine*, reflects the Seine as the sun rises, tranquil but bursting with promise. Before Paris awakens there is a calm across the city. And nowhere is it more evident than on the shimmering Seine. This slow movement begins with a sixteen-measure theme presented by the clarinet with soft piano accompaniment. A set of variations follows.

The finale is off and running from the first repetitive notes of the clarinet. The music is marked "with constant energy." Every summer on the longest day of the year Paris celebrates *Fête de la Musique*. The city is overflowing with music. Every street corner features a different band and the revelry goes on throughout the night. This final movement of the sonata attempts to express the feeling of excitement as I wandered through the night following the sounds. There are two main ideas which weave in and out much as I did that music-filled night.

Wrapped within the sonata are many feelings and experiences of my summer overlooking the Seine. Paris is truly a city of dreams...in all senses. One cannot help but be affected by her.

Working with folk songs from my own background as well as Chinese songs that I had learned, I decided to organize the piece around four actual bridges, covering a wide variety of landscapes and cultures. The first movement, *Railroad Trestle Bridge in Galax, Virginia*, uses the motoric rhythm of a train and the sound of a fiddle and banjo playing country music. The second movement, *Stone Bridge Over A Reflecting Pool in Souzhou*, is based on a traditional Chinese song called "Moli Hua" or "Jasmine Flower." The third movement, *The Golden Gate Bridge*, recalls the folk music revival of the 1960s and 70s in California, with particular respect paid to singer Joan Baez, whose haunting songs had a profound effect on me. The fourth movement, *The Brooklyn Bridge*, has a particularly happy coincidence. I wanted this bridge to partake of the vibrant be-bop era in New York City. In researching be-bop melodies, I came across a standard favored by many jazz musicians, "I Got Rhythm," by George Gershwin. Using only the harmonic chord changes to this tune, players crafted seemingly endless improvisations. As the song was written in the typical AABA song form, the "B" section was referred to as the "bridge." Here was the ideal confluence of the many meanings of the word "bridge," and I leaped at the opportunity to bring them all together.

Shattered Glass

Margaret Brouwer

Shattered Glass is like a musical kaleidoscope. Instead of seeing the constantly changing colors as you do in a kaleidoscope, you hear them. There are two contrasting yet related sound worlds. A soft but brittle atmosphere with sharp stabs of piercing sound that sometimes builds to wild cacophonous moments, and soft, blurred, mysterious sections that still have tiny intrusions of bright, pointed stabs of sound. The brittle and blurred timbres eventually mix and overlap becoming sometimes rhythmic, sometimes raucous, and sometimes mysterious and melodic. There are solos for each instrumentalist throughout the work culminating in short, rhapsodic, cadenza-like flourishes for each. *Shattered Glass* was written for and is dedicated to MOSAIC.



BLUE STREAK ENSEMBLE

The Mission

Composer Margaret Brouwer brought together this group of vibrant, young musicians to launch a concert series along the shores of Lake Erie in Ohio. She was on a mission to spread classical music one resort at a time. She named the group the Blue Streak Ensemble after The Blue Streak, the oldest operating roller coaster at Cedar Point—a thrill ride—just like the performances of the Blue Streak Ensemble! Achieving immediate success, the concerts quickly expanded beyond the shores of Lake Erie. Through her music and the music of other fine living composers, Brouwer's mission is to show the connection between the rich music of the past and the compelling and exciting music of the present. Thus the listener in a Blue Streak Ensemble concert streams along through a varied pallet of traditional and progressive sounds.

The Director

Margaret Brouwer's music has earned singular praise for its lyricism, musical imagery, and emotional power. Lawson Taitte of The Dallas Morning News praised Brouwer saying, "Ms. Brouwer has one of the most delicate ears and inventive imaginations among contemporary American composers." Steven Ritter of Fanfare wrote, "...simply a marvel to hear, combining phenomenally difficult solo passages with some of the most ingratiating melodies I have heard in a recent composition." The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Arild Remmereit conducting, commissioned and premiered Brouwer's *Caution Ahead – Guard Rail Out*, in May 2012. Her *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra* was premiered by the Dallas Symphony with violist Ellen Rose in January 2010. Brouwer received a Meet The Composer Commissioning/USA award to compose *Path at Sunrise, Masses of Flowers* which was premiered by the Cleveland Women's Symphony in April 2010. In August, 2011, Brouwer was a composer-in-residence at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music where Marin Alsop led the Festival Orchestra in a performance of Brouwer's *Pulse*. Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle wrote "*Pulse*...proved to be a brilliant and witty play of motor rhythms with a sinuously melodic middle section—a piece far too lovely to be so short." Some highlights of other premieres of Brouwer's music have been by the Detroit Symphony, Leonard Slatkin, conducting (2009); by the American Composers Orchestra, George Manahan conducting, at Carnegie's Zankel Hall (2009); and at the Tanglewood Music Center's 2005 Festival of Contemporary Music. Ms. Brouwer's awards include an Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2006, an Ohio Council for the Arts Individual Fellowship for 2005 and being named a Guggenheim Fellow for 2004.

The Musicians

Violinist Sharon Roffman, prizewinner in the 2003 Naumburg Foundation International Competition, made her solo debut with the New Jersey Symphony in 1996. Since then, Ms. Roffman has forged a unique career equally sought after as a soloist, chamber musician and music educator throughout the United States and abroad. Ms. Roffman made her Carnegie Hall debut as a soloist in Vivaldi's *Concerto for Four Violins* with Itzhak Perlman playing and conducting in 2004. As a chamber musician, Ms. Roffman has collaborated with members of the Guarneri Quartet, Juilliard Quartet, Brentano Quartet, Shanghai Quartet, Avalon Quartet, and Miami Quartet among others, has been a frequent guest of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Meet the Music and Inside Chamber Music series, and spent several summers performing at the Marlboro Music Festival. Ms. Roffman was a member of the critically acclaimed contemporary music ensemble Counter)Induction from 2007-2009, and has performed all over the world as a guest member of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Orchestre National de France, and principal second of Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen. Passionate about education, Ms. Roffman is the founder and artistic director of ClassNotes, a chamber music ensemble and non-profit organization dedicated to introducing public school students to classical music through interdisciplinary school residencies and performances. Ms. Roffman is a concert artist and professor of violin at Kean University, and a member of the faculty at the Thurnauer School of Music in New Jersey. Ms. Roffman is a graduate of the Juilliard School and the Cleveland Institute of Music; her former teachers include Itzhak Perlman, Donald Weilerstein, Peter Winograd, Robert Lipsett, Patinka Kopec and Nicole DiCecco. She currently resides in New York City.

Cellist Maaike Harding, currently living in Miami Beach, Florida, joined the New World Symphony in 2011. She has recently played under conductors Michael Tilson Thomas, Manfred Honeck, Osmo Vanska, and Esa-Pekka Salonen. Maaike received her undergraduate and graduate training at the Cleveland Institute of Music where she studied with Richard Aaron and Desmond Hoebig. After her studies, she began an active freelance career in the Cleveland area, performing with CityMusic Cleveland, The Canton Symphony, and The Akron Symphony. A devoted teacher, Maaike maintained a private studio and was instrumental in developing a youth orchestra in the Slavic Village neighborhood of Cleveland. Maaike will return to Miami in September to continue her fellowship with the New World Symphony.

Madeline Lucas is a Cleveland-based professional flutist and artistic administrator. Ms. Lucas earned a B.M. and M.M. from the Cleveland Institute of Music where she studied with Cleveland Orchestra principal flutist Joshua Smith. Madeline has performed with the C.I.M. Orchestras and New Music Ensemble, The Cleveland Orchestra Blossom Band and Orchestra, The Ohio Philharmonic, and is a managing partner and flutist of FiveOne Experimental Orchestra. Ms. Lucas is in demand as a chamber musician and frequently collaborates with area professionals on recordings and recital performances. A contemporary specialist, Madeline has participated in over 20 American and World premieres, including two pieces written for her. Ms. Lucas was invited to compete in the 2010 National Flute Association Young Artists' Competition in Anaheim, California. Madeline currently is the Ensembles Manager at Cleveland Institute of Music.

Clarinetist Amitai Vardi, an avid soloist, orchestral, and chamber musician, was recently appointed Assistant Professor of Clarinet at Kent State University. Vardi made his solo debut at the age of sixteen with the Madison Symphony Orchestra as a first place winner of the Steenbock Young Artist Competition. He has since won several concerto competitions, including the Round Top International Festival Competition, The Cleveland Institute of Music Concerto Competition, and the Agnes Fowler Competition. In addition, Vardi has been a featured soloist with the Spoleto Symphony Orchestra, and performed the North American premiere of Srul Glick's concerto, *The Klezmer's Wedding*, with members of the Pittsburgh Symphony. Vardi received his Bachelor of Music degree from Indiana University, where he studied with Eli Eban, and his Master of Music degree at The Cleveland Institute of Music, as a student of Franklin Cohen. Mr. Vardi pursued his post-graduate studies with Yehuda Gilad in Los Angeles. His enthusiasm for chamber music has led to performances across the United States, South America, Europe, and his native Israel. He is featured in several chamber music CDs, and later this year will appear on a recording with his father, cellist Uri Vardi. As an orchestral player, Vardi served as principal clarinetist of Red {an orchestra}, and Lyric Opera Cleveland. He currently holds positions with Opera Cleveland, Blue Water Chamber Orchestra, City Music Cleveland, and Blossom Band and Orchestra. Vardi has performed with many orchestras, including the American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet, The Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra and the Cleveland Orchestra, with which he performed dozens of concerts and has toured to New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Miami.

Nathan von Trotha is an exciting young **percussionist** from Orange County, California. He actively pursues performances with orchestras and chamber ensembles in Southern California and is an advocate for the performance of new music. World and United States premier performances and recordings include works by Magnus Lindberg, Joachim Hespos, Brett Dean, Havergal Brian, and Jeremy Allen in venues across the United States. In 2007, Nathan was the recipient of the Avedis Zildjian Fellowship at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. Nathan studied at the Cleveland Institute of Music under the tutelage of Paul Yancich and Richard Weiner, Principal Timpanist and Principal Percussionist of The Cleveland Orchestra, respectively. He was a founding member of the FiveOne New Music Ensemble in Cleveland, Ohio, which has received much praise for its performances in and around Cleveland, and was instrumental in a collaboration with the film artist Kasumi, a Guggenheim fellow. Nathan also performed extensively with the New Music Ensemble at the Cleveland Institute of Music, exploring the music of Eugene O'Brien, Franco Donatoni, John Cage, Claude Baker, Jacob Druckman, Donald Erb, Keith Fitch, and many others. Mr. von Trotha can be heard on MMC Recordings.

Dr. Shuai Wang, pianist, performs actively as a recitalist, soloist, and orchestral keyboardist. She recently performed concerts in the US on the East Coast, including the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Merkin Hall in NYC, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Kleinhans Music Hall on the Buffalo Chamber Music Series, Sailfish Point Culture Center in Florida, and the Performing Arts Center at the University of Georgia. She presented solo recitals in 2007 at the Tianjin Chinese (ZhongHua) Theatre and Tianjin People's Art Theatre, sponsored by the Tianjin Symphony Orchestra, and has performed solo programs in Palm Beach Florida, Ann Arbor, Chicago and San Francisco. Dr. Wang has appeared as a soloist with the CIM Orchestra and the Canton Symphony Orchestra. She has collaborated with the CIM New Music Ensemble at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Cleveland, and the FiveOne New Music Ensemble at the Cleveland Public Theatre. She is the keyboardist for the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Fireland Symphony Orchestra and a substitute keyboardist for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. She has received her BM, MM and DMA from Cleveland Institute of Music. Currently, Dr. Shuai Wang serves on the piano faculty at the Cleveland Institute of Music. She is the director of the Classical Revolution Cleveland.

