

between pairs of instruments, sometimes gradually bifurcating to become narrow intervals. A second figuration that surfaces throughout involves tiny swells appearing from and disappearing into nothingness, realized through a variety of techniques including tremolo behind the bridge, harmonic glissandi, and extreme sul pont. Also the element of ornamentation becomes increasingly elaborate as the piece develops, ranging from precisely notated dotted 32nd and 64th note patterns to actual grace notes. A quality of energy lurking just beneath the surface pervades the work, marked by indications such as "falsa posiz." (arco or pizzicati to be executed as harmonics that are not actually situated on harmonic nodes) and "afono" ("hoarse" sounds to be executed in high positions on low strings.) All these elements that seem to contradict one another as well as to deliberately inhibit the clarity of their own execution may be interpreted as aspects of this aforementioned wide summoning taking place. They speak of energies or spirits whose messages are marked by extreme urgency, but in their translation from one plane of existence to another become highly distorted. Perhaps the content of these messages is lost, but their form survives, piercing the silence with their pleas before returning back into the void. ~ Kevin McFarland

Laura SCHWENDINGER

String Quartet

The String Quartet in three movements, was commissioned by the Harvard Musical Association in 2002, the same year the Association commissioned Gunther Schuller's *Quodlibet for oboe, violin, cello, harp & French horn*. It was premiered by the Arditti Quartet on the Great Quartets Series at Kresge Auditorium, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on January 24, 2003.

The first movement is driving and rhythmically propulsive. The second movement is lyrically delicate and contrapuntal, and the third movement, starting with a "textured" tutti, visits areas of extreme registration and thick layering, yet returns to the tutti at various points, each time more intense than the last.

Keith Powers of the *Boston Herald* wrote of the work "...the second movement marked important textural ground, with sparse, tense and spirited writing. The finale broke at the end like surf hitting the sand, positively infectious" and Richard Buell of the *Boston Globe* wrote in his review "There was also the way that out of an abstract, "modern" sort of play with sound material, an unmistakable lyric intensity would want to emerge — and would actually do so. A fine piece all in all, and worthy of the Arditti's attention."

Helmut LACHENMANN

String Quartet no. 2 "Reigen seliger Geister"

Reigen seliger Geister — perception play: tones 'grasped out of the air,' 'air' grasped out of the tones. Following the adventure in my first string quartet Gran Torso with extraterritorial ways of playing the instrument — now long since developed by others in touristic fashion — here the reappropriation of interval constellations ('text') as 'facade,' as 'pretext,' so that their realization will enable the natural acoustic edges of the produced tones their timbral articulation, their muting, how they fade, how the vibrating strings are stopped (for example, also altering the noise component by sliding the bow between the bridge and the fingerboard) — to create, through the 'dead' tone-structure, a reborn object of experience. Thus, action fields determined by playing techniques are stages, transformed, shifted, abandoned, combined. The pianissimo as space for a manifold fortissimo possibile of the suppressed in-between values: figures that a sliding bowstroke makes vanish or arise within toneless murmuring, the pizzicatomixture that, despite its fugitive fading, can still be prematurely damped in part, 'filtered.' ~ Helmut Lachenmann

THE UNIVERSITY
OF IOWA

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA SCHOOL of MUSIC

Center for New Music
Concert

7:30 p.m. Thursday, November 11, 2010

Riverside Recital Hall

SEASON 45 CONCERT IV

David Gompper, *director*



The Jack Quartet

performing works by

Julie Wolfe

Salvatore Sciarrino

Laura Schwendinger

Helmut Lachenmann



DIVISION OF PERFORMING ARTS
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Center for New Music *Concert*

John Pickford Richards, *viola*
Ari Streisfeld, *violin*
Christopher Otto, *violin*
Kevin McFarland, *violincello*

NOV. 11, 2010, 7:30 p.m. RIVERSIDE RECITAL HALL

PROGRAM

Dig Deep (1995)

Julia WOLFE
(b. 1958)

String Quartet No. 7 (1999)

Salvatore SCIARRINO
(b. 1947)

String Quartet (2001)

- I. *With intensity and rhythmic concision!*
- II. *Molto Espressivo, Dancelike*
- III. *Maestoso, Resolute!*

Laura SCHWENDINGER
(b. 1962)

INTERMISSION

String Quartet No. 2 "Reigen seliger Geister" (1989)

Helmuth LACHENMANN
(b. 1935)

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

JOHN PICKFORD RICHARDS holds degrees from the Interlochen Arts Academy and Eastman School of Music, where his primary teachers were David Holland and John Graham. He is a member of Alarm Will Sound, bringing him into close contact with composers John Adams, Wolfgang Rihm, Meredith Monk, and Steve Reich at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and The Roxy. Richards has performed as a soloist with the Pasadena Symphony Orchestra, Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, Ossia New Music, and performed the solo part to Luciano Berio's *Chemins II* at the Lucerne Festival Academy under the direction of Pierre Boulez. He taught for three years at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and is now living in New York.

ARI STREISFELD began playing the violin at age six and grew up studying with Philadelphia Orchestra members Paul Arnold and Yayoi Numazawa. He received his bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Zvi Zeitlin, and his master's degree from Northwestern University studying with Almita Vamos. He was a member of Dal Niente and has worked with composers Steven Mackey, Bernard Rands, Robert Morris, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, Ricardo Zohn Muldoon, and David Liptak. Streisfeld has attended the Music Academy of the West, New York String Orchestra Seminar, Kent/Blossom Music Festival, and the Lucerne Festival Academy. He was a recipient of an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award and currently resides in Cambridge, Mass. while pursuing his Doctorate of Musical Arts at Boston University studying with Peter Zazofsky.

CHRISTOPHER OTTO studied composition at the Eastman School of Music with Martin Bresnick, David Liptak, and Robert Morris. As a violinist, Otto has premiered many compositions and worked with such composers as Harrison Birtwistle, Pierre Boulez, Helmut Lachenmann, and Steve Reich. Otto has participated as a composer and performer in such contemporary music festivals as the Lucerne Festival Academy, Internationale Musikinstitut Darmstadt, Karlheinz Stockhausen Courses, Institute and Festival for Contemporary Performance at the Mannes College of Music, June in Buffalo, and Festival Internacional de Música Contemporánea de Michoacán.

KEVIN MCFARLAND. A Lancaster, Pa. native, Kevin McFarland is quickly rising to prominence in the New York new music scene. As a freelance musician, he has recently appeared with ensembles such as Alarm Will Sound, Dal Niente, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Signal, and the Wordless Music Orchestra. He is also a member of the Tarab Cello Ensemble, a new music cello octet, with whom he has recorded for Bridge Records. McFarland holds a degree from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied composition with David Liptak, Robert Morris, and Ricardo Zohn Muldoon, and cello with Steven Doane. At Eastman, he performed often with new music ensembles Ossia and Musica Nova and premiered over one hundred student compositions. He continues to compose both acoustic and electronic music and lives in Brooklyn.

PROGRAM NOTES

Julia WOLFE

Dig Deep

Dig Deep is the third of my string quartets. It is incessant and crazy driven. I wrote it at a time of personal struggle, tearing through the material to get to a deeper place of understanding. The music wrestles with itself — the bows dig deep into the strings for a thick reedy sound. Dense chords are cut up with frenzied tunes that sing at hyper speed. The quartet is united and fractured — unified in odd metered attacks in an off beat pulse, interrupted by frenetic counterpoint — everyone playing together and not together. The tunes interrupt and lengthen. While there is a clear tie to blues riffs, by the end the harmony becomes almost Brahmsian in always leading somewhere but never landing. But it's messier. *Dig Deep* was written in a series of my obsessive breathless pieces, and perhaps it is the most extreme of them all. Its virtuosity lies not only in the speed of the notes, but also in endurance and concentration. *Dig Deep* was commissioned by the Kronos Quartet with generous support from Nora Norden. —Julie Wolfe

Salvatore SCIARRINO

String Quartet no. 7

The opening inscription of Salvatore Sciarrino's *String Quartet No. 7* reads "si deve trattare questo recitativo con semplicità penetrante," which roughly translated means "this recitative must be executed with penetrating simplicity." It is not surprising that Sciarrino refers to the work as a recitative, considering his obsession with the human voice is a constant thread uniting his rather prolific output. In its notation, however, the composition is far from simple, it being the job of the performers to make it seem as such against many obstacles the composer has placed in their way. The work opens with a unison gesture comprising two downward glissandi and an intervening ornamental figure, made rather difficult with the added stipulation that each instrument plays the figure in an awkwardly high position on a lower string than is necessary. The character marking for the entire piece "ampiamente chiamando," translated as "widely summoning," indicates that this figure represents a spiritual invocation, perhaps a magical ritual or religious ceremony. This figure is fragmented, transformed, and reconstructed over the course of the work. The glissandi become stretched out, in both time and pitch-space, sometimes appearing as harmonic glissandi. Also they are often truncated, executed fortissimo with an immediate decrescendo followed by intervals of powerful silence, or repeated with increasing or decreasing intensity. Many of these transformed gestures are executed as unisons

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