

Department of Music
Center for the Arts
Recital Hall



**College Music Society, Mid Atlantic Chapter
Composers' Concert II
New Chamber, Vocal, and Solo Works**

Saturday, April 1, 2017

10:00 AM

Calle veneziana

Christopher Dillon, piano

Kye Ryung Park
(b. 1974)

in generationes sempiternas...

Erika Binsley, horn

Bradley S. Green
(b. 1989)

L'Etere del Tempo

Emily Madsen, oboe; Christopher Dillon, piano

Keith Kramer
(b. 1968)

two Souls for the Space of one

Christopher Dillon, piano

J. M. Smith
(b. 1992)

The Bunyip: a folktale retelling

Douglas O'Connor, alto saxophone

Thomas Dempster
(b. 1980)

Mandala of the Dark Waves

Lily Josefsberg, piccolo
Andrew Kwon, viola; Jasmine Hogan, harp

Douglas Buchanan
(b. 1984)

Batter my heart, three-person'd God

Sara Woodward and Clair Galloway Weber, sopranos
Lucy McVeigh, mezzo soprano

Buchanan

Purgatory Branch (Winter)

Leneida Crawford, mezzo soprano; Terry Ewell, bassoon

Dempster

Indelible Imprint

Douglas O'Connor, alto saxophone; Nathan Cornelius, guitar

L. A. Logrande
(b. 1963)

A Seeker's Song

Nathan Cornelius, guitar

Gregory Mertl
(b. 1969)

Please silence all electronic devices.

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Program Notes

Park: *Calle veneziana* is inspired by my impressions and experiences in Venice. It depicts a beautiful day I spent exploring the charming scenery along the hidden streets. It begins with the mysterious and capricious morning in Venice. Once the day begins, the second section echoes the present beauty of Venice on its busy streets crowded with tourists. The third part is nostalgic, and reflects some old memories with its twisted waltz. Finally, the last section reflects the evening as I return to where I started my day.

Green: *in generationes sempiternas*, which roughly translates to “generations to come,” inherits its formal structure and progression of aural materials from a loose interpretation of Darwinian evolution. At the start of the piece, the aural material is very simple and “primitive.” As time progresses, the horn (or more literally, the sounds that the horn can produce) “evolves.” However, the horn does not simply give up old sounds in lieu of the new, but instead new sounds are added to the catalogue of sounds the horn can produce. Through this type of formal evolution, the piece ultimately develops into a soundscape where complex interrelationships of the material occur, and every sound has a specific origin in the timeline of the piece.

Kramer: *L'Etere del Tempo* is based on the second-order all-combinatorial hexachord 6-7 [012678], which is the same set demonstrated by Messiaen’s fifth mode of limited transposition. This set is featured in two distinct row forms that shape the melodic and harmonic basis of the work. The title of the piece is Italian for “The Ether of Time,” as the concept of time expanding is a focus of the work, as exemplified by the silences demonstrated throughout the composition. An additional feature is the use of oboe multiphonics, integrated into the piece so as to accentuate the fundamental pitches of melodic constructs with the use of overtones.

Smith: *two Souls for the Space of one*, for solo piano, was written for Luciane Cardassi in the summer of 2016. It was premiered at the International Symposium for New Music in September, 2016 in Curitiba, Brazil.

Dempster: Across the first-nations people of Australia, as well as in Wemba Wemba and other languages across the continent, the bunyip stirred fears and imaginations for centuries before the first white colonizers arrived. While generally *bunjil* could mean any sort of mean spirit or devil, the bunyip, as the story goes, was a foul, large beast, a sort of great cat that also possessed qualities of the dog, rabbit, and kangaroo. It lurked in billabongs and along riversides, and had a rather impressive appetite. Unwitting human wanderers would sate that appetite, as the bunyip was said to be a voracious eater. In this piece, the saxophone takes multiple roles: that of the hapless wanderer drifting too close; the bunyip, unleashing shrill cries at the beginning of the work; elements of nature (wind and rustle of leaves); and an unseen narrator. The drama unfolds as a young person strays too close, innocently wandering, and, with his human affectation of song, accidentally awakens the hungry beast. A chase ensues, and then a quick dinner for one. The fixed media accompaniment serves as both atmosphere and commentary in our grim tale, and enters into repartee with the saxophone extensively.

Buchanan: Mandalas are a ritual symbol in Tibetan Buddhism representing the universe. Their most basic form includes a central square with four gates or entrances; these gates frequently have a resonance with one of the four elements. Mandalas also tend towards intricacy, creating detailed patterns within a finite space. In *Mandala of the Dark Waves*, the intricacy is created with undulating *moto perpetuo* lines in the harp, while the finite space is defined by the compositional form, that of a *rondellus*. A *rondellus* was a peculiar type of double canon from the Middle Ages based upon a *pes* (foot), which repeats over and over with ornamenting lines surrounding it. This appears as a gently sailing melodic line, imitated between piccolo and viola, which gradually descends before being reborn again in the uppermost register: the return of the cresting wave.

Batter my heart, three-person'd God is the fourteenth of John Donne's *Holy Sonnets*. It represents a struggle between an earthly life and a heavenly one, replete with imagery of being knocked and blown about in the ensuing tussle. This is borne out in the juxtaposition between jagged rhythms and melismas, as well as between sweeter harmonies and those which are more aggressive and clangorous, while canonic imitation illuminates the concept of being enthralled, bound, and imprisoned.

Dempster: *Purgatory Branch* is the name of a small creek not far from where I spent my adolescence. The name is evocative of the space one finds oneself in among rural places, held between the wild and the desolately human. Close to where I grew up, the creek flowed between two large tobacco fields, before disappearing into pine forests and reemerging among fields now fallow and overgrown with scrub and grasses. The real Purgatory Branch area once held a small, run-down church, a small cluster of mobile homes, and farms and woods. Twenty-five years later, it has been subjugated by a highway bypass and suburban sprawl. My poem, the lyric for this song, is meant to be an impressionistic memorial of a December morning, gazing across fields covered in frost under the milky, pale sunrise, light at once familiar and unsettling.

Logrande: *Indelible Imprint* explores the delicate balance between present and past, through remembrances spurred by John Keats' "In drear-nighted December." A duet pairing saxophone and acoustic guitar requires such a balance dynamically. The rhythmic and harmonic ease of the opening and the ending serves as a frame of the present, through which to view the challenging and changing moods of the past.

Mertl: In virtually all my pieces, it is the sound and personality of an instrument (or combination of instruments) that serve as inspiration. As I gradually acquainted myself with the guitar, it revealed its searing, vulnerable beauty, a quality which totally enchanted me. It is the guitar's inability to sustain, its particular six-string resonance, the method of plucking, and the special sound of turns or ornaments—due to the technique of hammer-ons and pull-offs—that I believe yield this beauty. Turns, in particular, enthralled me; there is simply nothing like that sound on any other instrument. They are central to the musical fabric of *A Seeker's Song*, as both rhythmic and figurative elements. Although we are used to the guitar in highly amplified settings, in its untainted state the guitar seems to me to embody intimacy, both in its delicacy and in its quiet power. And it is intimacy, mainly, that I explore in this piece—an exploration which unconsciously and naturally gave rise to an air of seeking. Seeking is universal to humans, but how and why we seek is unique to each individual. It is a personal process, intimate in the extreme. "Song" in the title speaks to an overarching lyricism, punctuated by impassioned cries and invocations that spill out beyond the confines of that lyricism.