

presents

NEXTET

The New Music Ensemble for the 21st Century

Virko Baley, music director and conductor

PROGRAM

Justin Marquis
(b. 1989)

Thine Adversaires (2013)

Daniel Nunez, flute
David Chavez, viola
Erin Vander Wyst, bass clarinet
Bronson Purdy, vibraphone
Luigi Ng, vibraphone
Bronson Foster, conductor

Travis Bernau
(b. 1989)

Eternity (2013)

from poem "Dusk at Sea" by Thomas S. Jones, Jr.

Cady Marshall, soprano
Jae Ahn-Benton, piano

Toru Takemitsu
(1930–1996)

Voice (1971) for solo flute

Anastasia Petanova, flute

Maxwell R. Lafontant
(b. 1990)

Clockwork (2013) for 2 pianos

Jae Ahn-Benton, piano
Grace Haeun Kim, piano

Valentin Silvestrov
(b.1937)

Piano Sonata No. 1 (1961)

Moderato, con molta attenzione, rubato
Andantino

Virko Baley
(b. 1938)

Nocturnal No. 2 "Tears" (1960)

Timothy Hoft, piano

Kaija Saariaho
(b. 1952)

NoaNoa (1992) for flute and electronics

Carmella Cao, flute

Tuesday, October 29, 2013

7:30 p.m.

**Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

PROGRAM NOTES AND BIOGRAPHIES

Marquis: *Thine Adversaries* is a purely experimental piece, both with the style of writing and instrumentation. The score calls for open periods of time for a player or the entire ensemble, to improvise and create their own texture with limited material given. The bass clarinet and viola are the main motif holders for the beginning of the piece but as the improvisatory sections become more frequent, the flute and vibraphones take over and distort the once familiar melodies. The piece gradually returns to the viola's motif sounding around the rest of ensemble's distortion.

Lafontant: *Clockwork* (2013) started out as a process piece in the style of the 1970s minimalists. Pitch classes were added in a systematic fashion and then removed in that same fashion. As the pitch classes were removed, the structure of the pattern changed and effectively fell apart. While the premise was interesting, the execution resulted in too much monotony. Thus, leaving the process as the framework but changing several minor aspects, the piece was altered to create an aesthetic work with a strong conceptual structure.

Saariaho: Kaija Saariaho is not only among the most important Finnish composers of her time, but must be ranked as one of the leading composers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Born Kaija Anneli Laakkonen, she began studying visual arts at the University of Art and Design (then known as the University of Industrial Art). She married Markku Veikko Ilmari Saariaho in 1972, but the marriage was short lived, ending the following year. The composer, however, retained her married name.

In 1976, she began composition studies at the Sibelius Academy with Paavo Heininen. She obtained a degree in composition from the academy in 1980, but continued studies there for another year. Afterward, she enrolled at the Musikhochschule in Freiburg, Germany, to study with British composer Brian Ferneyhough and Germany's Klaus Huber. She was awarded a diploma there in 1983. By this time, Saariaho was already turning out some of her earliest works.

The most noted efforts from this period include *Verblendungen* for Orchestra and Tape (1982–1984) and the minimalist piece *Vers le blanc* (1982). This latter piece was composed with the use of a computer and software developed at the Paris-based I.R.C.A.M. (L'Institut de Recherche et Coordination), where she had begun extensive studies in 1982 in computer techniques as they relate to musical composition. Saariaho had permanently relocated to Paris that same year. In 1984, she married Jean-Baptiste Barrière, also a composer, and their marriage produced two children, Alexandre (born 1989) and Aliisa (born 1995). In the mid-1980s, Saariaho's works began garnering much attention and she received many prestigious awards, such as the Kranichsteiner Prize in 1986, the Prix Italia in 1988, and the following year the Ars Electronica for her works *Stilleben* (1987–1988) and *Io* (1986–1987). She also attracted several impressive commissions, including one from the Lincoln Center, which resulted in the chamber work *Nymphéa* (1987), which was premiered by the Kronos Quartet.

By the early 1990s, her music was beginning to appear with greater frequency on the concert stage and with some regularity on record labels. Saariaho had become one of the few composers to write in a modern, though not particularly dissonant, style who has achieved a good measure of popularity. Further commissions came to her, including an important one from the Finnish National Ballet, for which she produced *The Earth* (1991). Many of her compositions have been written specifically for major artists or groups, as with the violin work she produced for Gidon Kremer, entitled *Graal Théâtre* (1994), and the song cycle *Château de l'âme* (1996) for Dawn Upshaw. A 1993 trip to Japan led to a commission from Kunitachi College for which Saariaho composed a work for percussion and electronics, *Six Japanese Gardens* (1993–1995). The composer spent a year at the Sibelius Academy teaching composition (1997–1998), at a time when her stature could rival that of almost any other composer of the day. This pre-

eminence is evidenced by the numerous major performances of her compositions, such as the 1999 Kurt Masur-led New York Philharmonic premiere of her choral work *Oltra mar*, and the Salzburg Festival premiere of her first opera, *L'amour de loin*, in August 2000, which featured Upshaw and conductor Kent Nagano. Saariaho also continues to collect prizes, including the German Kaske Prize and the Swedish Rolf Schock Prize, both in 2001. Many of her works have been made available on a variety of labels, including DG, BIS, Finlandia, and Ondine.

The next NEXTET concert is on December 10, 2013. The guest composer Chris Arrell writes music for voices, instruments, and electronics. Praised for their unconventional beauty by *The Boston Music Intelligencer* and hailed as “sensuous” and “highly nuanced” by the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, his compositions blur conventional boundaries between color, line, harmony, and pulse.