

Department of Music, University at Albany  
Recital Hall, UAlbany Performing Arts Center

*Metropolitan Identities: Music by New York and Philadelphia Composers*

New York

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| or like a...an engine (1994)  | Joan Tower<br>(b. 1938)            |
| Nocturne #1 (2011)<br>Nocturne #2 (2011-2012)   | Christopher Cresswell<br>(b. 1988) |
| Gargoyles, Op. 29 (1989)<br>Presto<br>Adagio semplice, ma con molto rubato<br>Allegro moderato<br>Presto feroce | Lowell Liebermann<br>(b. 1961)     |

*-Intermission-*

Philadelphia

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Metropolitan (2011)<br>Iron Organ<br>Magnetic Avenue  | Charles Peck<br>(b. 1988) |
| Radiate (2012)<br>I. Ripple Circles<br>II. Rock Breathing<br>III. Ice in Sun  | Kala Pierson<br>(b. 1977) |
| Makrokosmos, Volume I (1972)<br>Part One<br>1. Primeval Sounds (Genesis I) <i>Cancer</i><br>2. Proteus <i>Pisces</i><br>3. Pastorale (from the Kingdom of Atlantis, ca. 10,000 B.C.) <i>Taurus</i><br>4. Crucifixus [SYMBOL] <i>Capricorn</i><br>Part Two<br>5. The Phantom Gondolier <i>Scorpio</i><br>6. Night-Spell I <i>Sagittarius</i><br>7. Music of Shadows (for Aeolian Harp) <i>Libra</i><br>8. The Magic Circle of Infinity (Moto perpetuo) [SYMBOL] <i>Leo</i><br>Part Three<br>9. The Abyss of Time <i>Virgo</i><br>10. Spring-Fire <i>Aries</i><br>11. Dream Images (Love-Death Music) <i>Gemini</i><br>12. Spiral Galaxy [SYMBOL] <i>Aquarius</i> | George Crumb<br>(b. 1929) |

Thursday, March 27, 2014 at 7:30

**Holly Roadfeldt** holds degrees in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music, Indiana University, and the University of Colorado in Boulder. She made her orchestral debut with the Toledo Symphony Orchestra at the age of 13 and she continues to be an active solo pianist and chamber musician performing standard and eclectic recital programs in the United States, Europe, and Asia. Recent honors include participation in the World International Competition held in Santa Fe, New Mexico during the fall of 2007 as one of twelve selected pianists. For the 2013-2014 season, Holly will be giving solo recitals at Kent State University, Lafayette College, Westminster College, Youngstown State University, and the University of Albany. As a member of duoARTia, she will be performing at Gustavus Adolphus College, the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Viterbo University, and the University of Minnesota.

A dedicated performer of contemporary music, Holly has premiered over 70 solo and chamber works. In 1996, she was awarded the prize for the "Best Performance of a 20th Century American Composition" in the Frinna Awerbuch International Piano Competition, which resulted in a performance in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. Additional contemporary music honors include being a semi-finalist in the Concert Artists Guild International Competition in 1998 and 2001 as a contemporary music specialist. In the spring of 2013, Holly premiered works by Kirk O'Riordan, James Leatherbarrow, Kala Pierson, and William Pfaff. For 2013-2014, she will be premiering the solo piano works of Daniel Perttu, Anthony Donofrio, Alan Theisen and Kirk O'Riordan. She also recently commissioned a set of piano character pieces by New York composer, Christopher Cresswell, to be written and premiered during the 2014-2015 concert season. In April of 2014, she will be giving the world premiere of "Songs for Cifar and the Sweet Sea" for soprano, baritone, chorus, and two pianos by Gabriela Lena Frank.

As a chamber musician, Holly has performed with members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Colorado Orchestra, and the Utah Symphony as well as with concert artists Alexa Still, Bonita Boyd, and Marcia Baldwin. She is also co-founder of the contemporary piano duo, duoARTia, which was formed with Jeri-Mae Astolfi in 2012. In March of 2013, she collaborated with the Marie Chouinard Dance Company from Montreal giving a live performance of Chopin's 24 Preludes at Lafayette College in Easton, PA.

Holly has numerous intellectual curiosities and has taught applied piano, piano pedagogy, piano literature, collaborative piano, piano sight reading, class piano, music theory, and music history at the collegiate level. Additional research interests include studying the music of Nicolai Kapustin; the expressionist music of Arnold Schoenberg and Alban Berg; and how social issues are conveyed through music. She is currently teaching "The Art of Performance" which explores the value of artistic integrity for performers and audiences and "Statements of Identity in Modern Music" at Lafayette College.

As a conference presenter, Holly has given lecture recitals and papers for the College Music Society national, super-regional, and regional conferences; for collegiate chapters of the National Association for Music Education; for the Delaware State Music Teachers Association; for the Institutes for Lifelong Learning at the University of Delaware and Susquehanna University; and as part of Belmont University's Music and Discourse Lecture Series.

Holly's live recordings can be heard on the Kosei Publishing (Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*) and the Composers Union of Armenia (music by Gor Hovhannisyian) labels. Additionally, Holly recorded the music (solo and chamber) for Kirk O'Riordan's *Strange Flowers* CD, which was released on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013 by Parma Records.

Holly is currently teaching at Lafayette College, has a private studio in New York City and serves as master piano faculty with distinction at The Music School of Delaware. Previously, she taught at the University of Delaware, Susquehanna University, Gettysburg College, the University of Colorado-Boulder, and Indiana University.

Personal Website: [HollyRoadfeldt.com](http://HollyRoadfeldt.com)

Twitter: [@HRoadfeldt](https://twitter.com/HRoadfeldt)

## Composer Biographies and Program Notes

**Joan Tower** is widely regarded as one of the most important American composers living today. During a career spanning more than fifty years, she has made lasting contributions to musical life in the United States as composer, performer, conductor, and educator. Her works have been commissioned by major ensembles, soloists, and orchestras, including the Emerson, Tokyo, and Muir quartets; soloists Evelyn Glennie, Carol Wincenc, David Shifrin, and John Browning; and the orchestras of Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Washington DC among others. Tower was the first composer chosen for a Ford Made in America consortium commission of sixty-five orchestras. Leonard Slatkin and the Nashville Symphony recorded **Made in America** in 2008 (along with **Tambor** and **Concerto for Orchestra**). The album collected three Grammy awards: Best Classical Contemporary Composition, Best Classical Album, and Best Orchestral Performance. In 1990 she became the first woman to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for **Silver Ladders**, a piece she wrote for the St. Louis Symphony where she was Composer-in-Residence from 1985-88. Other residencies with orchestras include a 10-year residency with the Orchestra of St. Luke's (1997-2007) and the Pittsburgh Symphony (2010-2011). She is in residence as the Albany Symphony's Mentor Composer partner in the 2013-14 season.

### **Joan Tower—Or Like a...an Engine** (notes by the composer)

Or Like a ... an Engine (1994) is dedicated to the pianist Ursula Oppens who premiered it at Alice Tully Hall in New York City in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the radio station WNYC-FM, which commissioned the work. It is a motoric piece, somewhat like a virtuosic Chopin etude.

Originally from Cazenovia, NY, **Chris Cresswell** is a young composer who is gaining recognition for his work in a wide variety of music genres, from large and chamber ensembles, solo works, vocal works, electro-acoustic works and collaborations with video artists. Praised for his idiosyncratic sense of sonority, Cresswell's music frequently explores the timbral possibilities of acoustic, electro-acoustic, and electronic only sonic worlds while still retaining an emotional core that is central to his expression. Having received awards and commissions from the American Composers Forum, the Jerome Foundation for New Music, the National Band Association, the Renee Crown Honors Program, the Setnor School of Music, Sar Shalom Strong, and the Society for New Music, his music has been presented by Kathleen Supove's Music with a View, Hot Air Music Festival (SF), Rhymes with Opera, ETHOS Society, the Syracuse University Wind Ensemble, among others, with additional performances at Syracuse University, Hamilton College, San Francisco Conservatory, The National Opera Center, the Tenri Cultural Institute, The Flea Theater, MoMA, and the Kennedy Center. November 2013 will see the world premiere of Stone Seeking Warmth, a commission from the American Composers Forum, with Jon English, James Tapia, and the Syracuse University Symphony Orchestra. Upcoming collaborations are planned with video artist Sarah Outhwaite, the Tempus Continuum Ensemble, the Jewell Piano Trio, and pianist Holly Roadfeldt. He has studied with Donald Bohlen, James O. Welsch, Andrew Waggoner, Gregory Mertl, and Nicolas Scherzinger. He currently lives in Astoria, NY and studies with Zibuokle Martinaityte.

## **Christopher Cresswell—Nocturne No. 2 “With Sadness” (Notes by the composer)**

Nocturne No. 1 "Lonely Tonight" is built around the pitch sets [014] and [016], which are featured in many of my recent works, with special emphasis placed on the intervals of minor 2nds/Major 7ths and the tritone. After the opening gesture, built around a tritone, a quiet melody unfolds in the right hand until it unleashes a sudden climax that fades away almost as quickly as it arrived. A new melody is introduced in parallel major 7ths in the right hand based on the song "Don't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight" by James Taylor. This melody is quickly transformed into an ostinato pattern as the opening gesture returns, building to a longer, more sustained climax. The piece ends quietly with the repeated opening gesture fading away.

I began writing Nocturne No. 2 “With Sadness” in November 2011 and finished it in February 2012, during a time of personal and creative crisis. In many ways the musical material reflects the struggle to overcome a serious writer’s block that was exacerbated by the dissolution of a personal relationship. The opening pitches [Bb, A, C, Eb] (in the right hand) and [C, B, E, C] (in the left hand) become an *idée fixe* that the pianist struggles to develop. After several failed attempts to generate sustainable musical material, the pianist unleashes a frustrated, violent gesture culminating with the repetition of the *idée fixe* in the low range of the piano.

**Lowell Liebermann** is one of America's most frequently performed and recorded living composers. Called by the New York Times "as much of a traditionalist as an innovator." Mr. Liebermann's music is known for its technical command and audience appeal. Having written over one hundred works in all genres, several of them have gone on to become standard repertoire for their instruments, including his Sonata for Flute and Piano, which has been recorded more than twenty times to date, and his Gargoyles for Piano, which has been recorded fifteen times. Mr. Liebermann has written two full-length operas, both of which were enthusiastically received at their premieres. His first, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, was the only American opera to be commissioned and premiered by Monte Carlo Opera. His second opera *Miss Lonelyhearts*, to a libretto by JD McClatchy after the novel by Nathanael West, was commissioned by the Juilliard School to celebrate its 100th anniversary.

A pianist himself, Mr. Liebermann has written a wealth of music for the solo instrument, much of which frequently appears on concert and competition programs. Mr. Liebermann was awarded the very first American Composers' Invitational Award by the 11th Van Cliburn Competition after the majority of finalists chose to perform his *Three Impromptus*, which were selected from works submitted by forty-two contemporary composers. In an interview with newscaster Sam Donaldson, Van Cliburn described Mr. Liebermann as “a wonderful pianist and a fabulous composer.” Mr. Liebermann is a Steinway Artist.

## **Lowell Liebermann—Gargoyles (notes by Holly Roadfeldt)**

A great favorite of pianists because of its emotional and rhythmic intensity, Lowell Liebermann's *Gargoyles* requires great physical stamina from the performer and a laser beam focus from the listener. While the outer movements can be described as a virtuosic tour de force, the middle character pieces allow the audience to reflect on the title’s meaning. In the impressionistic and flowing third movement, the gargoyle’s practical function of throwing rainwater away from the buildings can be easily visualized. The ethereal trance that characterizes the second movement, however, may be the most revealing. Used by ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, the carved spouts took the shapes of wild animals. These fantastical forms became even more macabre when adopted by the medieval Church since they were also designed to repel evil spirits. Liebermann’s suite suggests the mystical, the obsessive, and the melancholic traits of the gargoyle while acknowledging what is also architecturally compelling.

**Charles Peck** is an American composer originally from Philadelphia, PA. He was recently named the winner of the 2013 Castleton Festival Young Composer's Forum by Maestro Lorin Maazel, which resulted in a world premier by the festival's orchestra. "Peck's work held the audience spellbound... it was fabulous" says Roger Piantadosi of the Rappahannock News. He has also received an Artist Fellowship from the McKnight Foundation, in association with the American Composer's Forum, to develop a new collection of works in Minneapolis, Minnesota. As part of this fellowship, he has partnered with several schools, museums and organizations on his project Threshold of Beauty, which fuses music with the sciences. Peck's other recent successes include winning First Prize in the 2012 OFMC Collegiate Composition Competition, being a finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards and the Glick Competition with the Indianapolis Symphony, and winning the University of Cincinnati's Composition Competition. The latter of which earned him a commission for a new work by the CCM Concert Orchestra that was just premiered during the 2012/2013 season.

#### **Charles Peck—Metropolitan** (Notes by the composer)

Metropolitan is a piece that was inspired by the multitude of life inherent to every city. A huge variety of people, from all walks of life come together, now united by proximity. The result is a completely unique experience that breeds collaboration for the inspired, ambition for the eager, danger in the masses, beauty in the diversity, coldness in the operation, power in the structure, and everything in between. Each movement of the piece explores a different aspect of this complex environment. It is the composer's hope that the music may inform, illuminate, or resonate with your urban experiences.

**Kala Pierson** is a composer and sound/installation artist. Vivid and rhythmically free, her works have been performed by ensembles and soloists in 26 countries on six continents, widely commissioned, and published by Universal Edition. Her music's "seductive textures and angular harmonies" (Washington Post) are "intricately structured, both mathematical and lyrical" (Dnevnik). She often sets texts of cultural and political significance by living writers, producing works of "marvelous political power" (Louis Andriessen).

With deep interests in non-western cultures and musics, Kala has founded or co-founded many cross-cultural projects and collaborations, including the unique annual composition workshop Summer in Sombor in northern Serbia and her Axis of Beauty project (since 2004, she has collected texts by living Middle Eastern writers and set them in many forms, in an ongoing creative response to her government's "Axis of Evil" wartime propaganda). Kala's works have been performed in 26 countries and at festivals including Musica Viva (Portugal), Contemporanea/Citta di Udine (Italy), Tanglewood (USA), International Congress of Art and Technology (Brazil), Vienna Days of Contemporary Piano Music (Austria), and the 2012 National Symposium on American Choral Music (U.S. Library of Congress). She studied at Eastman School of Music with Joseph Schwantner, Augusta Read Thomas, David Liptak, and Robert Morris. Kala lives in Philadelphia with her spouses and son. She greatly values listener comments and contact; visit [kalapierson.com](http://kalapierson.com), or follow kalapierson on Twitter.

#### **Kala Pierson—Radiate** (Notes by the composer)

Radiate is a "divisible cycle" of three short pieces (meaning the pieces are ideally performed together but can also be performed individually; tonight we'll hear all three pieces). Each piece is very free rhythmically, without steady rhythms, and each is inspired by the natural world. Ripple Circles suggests ripples on a pond, surface motion above calm stasis. Rock Breathing is a series of very long phrases, each like a 'breath' on a significantly slower-than-

human scale. (Each phrase is made of a series of chords, and the pianist freely chooses the duration of each chord, within a range of about 1 to 4 seconds.) *Ice in Sun* suggests the brittle beauty of light bent through ice crystals' sharp angles. Tonight is Radiate's Pennsylvania premiere. The cycle was first performed in the 21st Vienna Days of Contemporary Piano Music in Vienna, Austria, with other full or partial performances in the U.S., Wales, and Zimbabwe.

Radiate will be published by Universal Edition later this fall, in its volume K2013: Anthology of the Four Winners of the Quadrennial Mauricio Kagel Composition Competition.

**George Crumb** is one of the most frequently performed composers in today's musical world. Crumb is the winner of Grammy and Pulitzer Prizes, and continues to compose new scores that enrich the lives of all who come in contact with his profoundly humanistic art. Crumb's music often juxtaposes contrasting musical styles, ranging from music of the western art-music tradition, to hymns and folk music, to non-Western musics. Many of Crumb's works include programmatic, symbolic, mystical and theatrical elements, which are often reflected in his beautiful and meticulously notated scores.

A shy, yet warmly eloquent personality, Crumb retired from his teaching position at the University of Pennsylvania after more than 30 years of service. Honored by numerous institutions with honorary Doctorates, and the recipient of dozens of awards and prizes, Crumb makes his home in Pennsylvania, in the same house where he and his wife of more than 60 years raised their three children. George Crumb's music is published by C.F. Peters and an ongoing series of "Complete Crumb" recordings, supervised by the composer, is being issued on Bridge Records.

### **George Crumb--Makrokosmos, Volume I** (Notes by the composer)

*Makrokosmos, Volume I* was composed in 1972 for my friend David Burge. Ten years previously, in 1962 (we were then colleagues at the University of Colorado), he had commissioned and premiered my *Five Pieces for Piano*. I was very much excited about the expanding possibilities of piano idiom—it seemed as if a whole new world were opening up to composers; and I was especially impressed by Burge's immediate and total mastery of this new idiom, which implied an organic synthesis of conventional (keyboard) and unconventional (inside the piano) techniques. I wanted to do a sequel to the *Five Pieces* but, alas, several attempts proved abortive. One set of sketches was assimilated into my *Songs, Drones, and Refrains of Death*; other ideas wandered homelessly through the years; and two or three germinal ideas finally evolved into *Makrokosmos*.

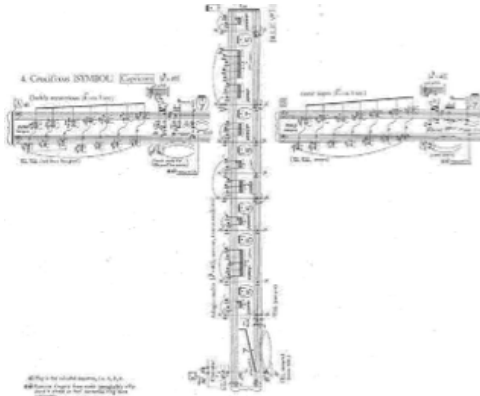
The title and format of my *Makrokosmos* reflect my admiration for two great 20th-century composers of piano music—Béla Bartók and Claude Debussy. I was thinking, of course, of Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* and Debussy's *24 Preludes* (a second zodiacal set, *Makrokosmos, Volume II*, was completed in 1973, thus forming a sequence of 24 "fantasy-pieces"). However, these are purely external associations, and I suspect that the "spiritual impulse" of my music is more akin to the darker side of Chopin, and even to the child-like fantasy of early Schumann.

And then there is always the question of the "larger world" of concepts and ideas which influence the evolution of a composer's language. While composing *Makrokosmos*, I was aware of certain recurrent haunting images. At times quite vivid, at times vague and almost subliminal, these images seemed to coalesce around the following several ideas (given in no logical sequence, since there is none): the "magical properties" of music; the problem of the origin of evil; the "timelessness" of time; a sense of the profound ironies of life (so beautifully expressed in the music of Mozart and Mahler); the haunting words of Pascal: "*Le silence éternel des espaces infinis m'effraie*" ("The eternal silence of infinite space terrifies me"); and these few lines of Rilke: "*Und in den Nächten fällt die schwere Erde aus allen Sternen in die Einsamkeit. Wir alle fallen. Und doch ist Einer, welcher dieses Fallen unendlich sanft in seinen Händen hält*" ("And in the nights the heavy earth is falling from all the stars down into loneliness. We are all falling. And yet there is One who holds this falling endlessly gently in his hands").

Each of the twelve “fantasy-pieces” is associated with a different sign of the zodiac and with the initials of a person under that sign. I had whimsically wanted to pose an “enigma” with these subscript initials; however, my perspicacious friends quickly identified the Aries of *Spring-Fire* as David Burge, and the Scorpio of *The Phantom Gondolier* as myself.

*Makrokosmos, Volume I* was premiered at Colorado College (in Colorado Springs) on February 8, 1973.

4. Crucifixus [SYMBOL] Capricorn



12. Spiral Galaxy [SYMBOL] Aquarius

