

Continental Divide

Sunday, March 5, 2006, 5:00pm
Roosevelt University, Rudolph Ganz Memorial Hall

Contempo: *eighth blackbird*; Pacifica Quartet; Cliff Colnot – conductor

Guest Artists: Julieanne Klein – soprano; John Sampen – alto saxophone;
David Schrader – harpsichord; Marilyn Shrude – piano;
Clay Condon – percussion; Piotr Mrugala – bass; Karl Rzasa – bassoon

Learning to See (2000)

Barbara White (b. 1965)

- I. From the Meta-matic Junk Heap [after Jean Tinguely]
- II. Bird [after Constantin Brancusi]
- III. Irregular Metronomy [after Eva Hesse]
- IV. Bird [after Constantin Brancusi]
- V. "...things the mind already knows" [after Jasper Johns]
- VI. Bird [after Constantin Brancusi]

eighth blackbird

Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano (2000)

Vache Sharafyan (b.1966)

Sampen, Shrude

Meditation on the Bach Chorale "Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit" (1993)

Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931)

Schrader, Pacifica Quartet, Mrugala

— Intermission —

Kavei-Avir (a volo d'uccello) (1996)

Betty Olivero (b. 1954)

Barth, Maccaferri, Rzasa, Condon, Kaplan, Pacifica Quartet, Mrugala, Colnot

Cancionero Sefardi (Sephardic Songs) (1999)

Roberto Sierra (b. 1953)

- I. A la una nací yo (At one I was born)
- II. El mi querido bevió vino (My lover drank wine)
- III. Al kenar de la nixava (Around the corner)
- IV. Pregoneros van y vienen (Town criers come and go)
- V. Una matica de ruda (A little plant of rue)
- VI. Dolores tiene la reina (The queen has pains)
- VII. Avridme galanica (Open up for me, beautiful girl)

Klein, Barth, Maccaferri, Kaplan, Albert, Photinos

ABOUT CONTEMPO

Dedicated exclusively to the performance of contemporary classical music, the University of Chicago's Contempo is one of the oldest and most successful professional new music groups in the world. Over its 41-year history, Contempo has earned an enviable reputation for its outstanding performances of music by living composers. It has given over eighty world premieres, and even more Chicago premieres, of works by both established and emerging composers, including Roger Sessions, John Harbison, George Perle, Pulitzer Prize-winning faculty member Shulamit Ran, and MacArthur fellows and former University of Chicago faculty members John Eaton and the late Ralph Shapey.

Contempo was founded by Shapey as the Contemporary Chamber Players in the fall of 1964. A composer and conductor of wide renown, Shapey continued to direct the ensemble until 1994, when he became Music Director Laureate. He was succeeded by Stephen Mosko, who held the position of Music Director from 1994 to 1998. Seeking to integrate its artistic vision with its educational mission, the Contemporary Chamber Players underwent a major restructuring by the Department of Music in 1998. Over the next four seasons, conductors Cliff Colnot, Barbara Schubert and Carmen Helena Tellez served alternately as Resident Conductors, with the award-winning Pacifica Quartet and *eighth blackbird* joining as Artists-in-Residence in 1998 and 2000, respectively. In 2002 Shulamit Ran was appointed Artistic Director, and in 2004—the ensemble's 40th season—the group forged a bold new artistic path,

exploring downtown and northside venues under the new alias of Contempo and adding an annual double bill with outstanding musicians from outside the classical sphere to its season. This year Contempo is delighted to be partnering with the Museum of Contemporary Art and Ganz Hall at the Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University.

In planning each season, Ran collaborates closely with Acting Faculty Director Martha Feldman and other faculty members in the Department of Music, as well as with conductor Cliff Colnot and the two resident ensembles. In addition to its Artists-in-Residence, Contempo often features musicians who perform regularly with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Lyric Opera. Since its inception, the ensemble has dedicated itself to the performance of works by countless composers whose name recognition may not yet equal their talent, including the University's own doctoral candidates in composition. This practice has greatly enhanced the living art of composition, as young composers participate in the rehearsal process and hear their work realized by a world-class professional ensemble.

Artistic Director

Shulamit Ran

Shulamit Ran, a native of Israel, began setting Hebrew poetry to music at the age of seven. By nine she was studying composition and piano with some of Israel's most noted musicians, including composers Alexander Boskovich and Paul Ben-Haim, and within a few years she was having her works performed by professional musicians and orchestras. As the recipient of scholarships from both the Mannes College of Music in New York and the America Israel Cultural Foundation, Ran continued her composition studies in the United States with Norman Dello Joio. In 1973 she joined the faculty of the University of Chicago, where she is now the William H. Colvin Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of Music. She lists her late colleague and friend Ralph Shapey, with whom she also studied in 1977, as an important mentor.

Ran has been awarded most major honors given to composers in the United States, and her numerous prizes, fellowships and commissions include those from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund, the Ford Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Fromm Music Foundation, the American Composers Orchestra, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Baltimore Symphony, the Brentano String Quartet, and the Koussevitzky Music Foundation. Her *Symphony* earned both the 1991 Pulitzer Prize and the first place 1992 Kennedy Center Friedheim Award. Ran's music has been performed by many of the world's

most prestigious organizations, and her works are recorded on over eight different labels, including Angel, Bridge, Erato, Koch International Classics, New World, and Vox. In 1990 Ran was appointed by Daniel Barenboim to be Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as part of the Meet the Composer Orchestra Residencies Program, a position she held for seven consecutive seasons. From 1994 to 1997 she also served as the fifth Brena and Lee Freeman Senior Composer-in-Residence with the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Ran is the recipient of honorary doctorates from Mount Holyoke College, Spertus Institute, Beloit College, and the New School of Social Research in New York. In 1987 she was Visiting Professor at Princeton University, and in 1992 she was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In Residence

eighth blackbird

Molly Alicia Barth—flutes
 Michael J. Maccaferri—clarinets
 Matthew Albert—violin/viola
 Nicholas Photinos—cello
 Matthew L. Duvall—percussion
 Lisa Kaplan—piano

One of the premier new music groups in the world, *eighth blackbird* promises its ever-increasing audiences provocative and engaging performances. It is widely lauded for its unusual performing style—often playing from memory with virtuosic and theatrical flair—and its efforts to make new music accessible to wide audiences. The sextet has been the subject of profiles in the New York Times and on NPR's *All Things Considered*; it has also been featured on CBS's

Sunday Morning, *St. Paul Sunday*, APR's *Weekend America*, and *The Next Big Thing*. Since its founding in 1996, *eighth blackbird* has been active in commissioning new works from eminent composers—most notably Frederic Rzewski and George Perle—as well as groundbreaking compositions from Jennifer Higdon, Derek Bermel, David Schober, Daniel Kellogg, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, and the Minimum Security Composers Collective. The group is looking forward to premiering new commissions by Steve Reich and Bang on a Can composers Michael Gordon, David Lang, and Julia Wolfe in the spring of 2008. *eighth blackbird* was the recipient of the first BMI/Boudleaux-Bryant Fund Commission and has received grants from Chamber Music America, Meet the Composer, and the Greenwall Foundation, among others. The ensemble is also enjoying acclaim for its three CD's released to date on Cedille Records. A fourth recording, entitled *Strange, Imaginary Animals*, is scheduled for release on the same label in Fall 2006. The winner of both the Naumburg Chamber Music Award and the Concert Artists Guild International Competition, where it was the first contemporary ensemble to win first prize, *eighth blackbird* is also a three-time recipient of the CMA/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming. The members of the group hold degrees in music performance from Oberlin Conservatory, the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory, and Northwestern University. The name *eighth blackbird* is derived from the Wallace Stevens poem "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," the eighth stanza of which reads:

*I know noble accents
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know*

Pacifica Quartet

Simin Ganatra—violin
Sibbi Bernhardsson—violin
Masumi Per Rostad—viola
Brandon Vamos—cello

The Pacifica Quartet celebrated its 10th anniversary in the 2004-2005 season with its first tour of Japan, its first appearance at Wigmore Hall in London, a performance of all five Elliott Carter quartets for San Francisco Performances, a concert at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, the release of the complete Mendelssohn string quartets on the Cedille label, and more than sixty concerts across the country. The current season includes a European tour, a three-concert series in Chicago, two concerts at Lincoln Center in New York, two in Washington DC, and concerts across the country from Boston to New Orleans to Tucson. Winner of three of chamber music's most important international awards—Grand Prize at the 1996 Coleman Chamber Music Competition, top prize at the 1997 Concert Artists Guild Competition, and the 1998 Naumburg Chamber Music Award—the Quartet was subsequently honored in 2002 with Chamber Music America's prestigious Cleveland Quartet Award and was appointed a member of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's CMS Two program for gifted musicians. An ardent advocate of contemporary music, the Pacifica has commissioned and performed as many as eight new works a year, and has performed Elliott Carter's five quartets in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cleveland, Chicago, and at the Edinburgh International Festival. The Pacifica Quartet serves as Faculty Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Chicago.

The Conductor

Cliff Colnot

In recent years Cliff Colnot has emerged as a distinguished conductor and a musician of uncommon range. He is principal conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's contemporary MusicNOW series, resident conductor of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and principal conductor of Contempo. Colnot also conducts the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), various orchestras at Indiana University, the Callisto Ensemble, and the DePaul University Symphony Orchestra. One of the few musicians studying orchestral repertory with Chicago Symphony Orchestra music director Daniel Barenboim, Colnot is the assistant conductor for Barenboim's West-Eastern Divan Workshops for young musicians from Israel, Egypt, Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries. He is also assistant conductor at Pierre Boulez's Lucerne Academy.

Colnot received acclaim for his performances of Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* at Carnegie Hall and Pierre Boulez's *Le marteau sans maître* with members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. His orchestration of Duke Ellington's *New World Coming* for piano and orchestra had its world premiere with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the fall of 2000 with soloist Daniel Barenboim, and he recently arranged, conducted, and co-produced the compact disc *Tribute to Ellington*, which features Daniel Barenboim as piano soloist. Colnot graduated with honors from Florida State University and received the 1995 Ernst von Dohnanyi Distinguished Alumni Award. He earned a doctorate from Northwestern University and has taught jazz arranging and advanced orchestration at DePaul University and the University of Chicago, respectively. As a bassoonist, he was a member of the Lyric Opera Orchestra of Chicago, Music of the Baroque, and the University of Chicago Contemporary Chamber Players.

Special thanks:

James Gandre, Dean — *Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University*

Linda Berna, Associate Dean and Director — *The Music Conservatory of The Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University*

Christopher White, Performance Activities and Facilities Director — *The Music Conservatory of The Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University*

Ben Hartman, *stage manager*



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GUEST PERFORMERS

Julianne Klein

Soprano Julianne Klein has performed in numerous cities throughout North America, including Montreal, New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Charleston, and Washington D.C. Specializing in contemporary music, she is the soprano soloist for Ensemble Prima and has sung professionally with such ensembles as the Trenton Symphony Orchestra, the New York Choral Society, the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony, Société de musique contemporaine du Québec Orchestra, Opera Orchestra of New York, Music of Changes, the Westminster Cathedral Choir, and the New York Philharmonic. Recently, Ms. Klein traveled to England, where she was one of only three singers accepted into the prestigious Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme. She was also a finalist in the McGill Concerto Competition, and is the recipient of a McGill Major Fellowship, a Phyllis and Bernard Shapiro Fellowship, and a Gladys Turk Scholarship. Ms. Klein is featured on the CD *In Good Company*, which celebrates the music of Jewish composers, and has recently been contracted to record Luna Pearl Wolff's *Orpheus on Sappho's Shore* for Oxingale Records, conducted by Véronique Lacroix of Ensemble Contemporaine de Montréal. A graduate of the University of Southern California, Ms. Klein is currently pursuing a doctorate in music at McGill University in Montréal, specializing in contemporary vocal music.

John Sampen

As one of America's leading concert saxophonists, John Sampen is recognized as a highly distinguished advocate of contemporary music. He has commissioned over sixty new works, including compositions by Milton Babbitt, William Bolcom, John Cage, Morton Subotnick, Donald Martino, and Bernard Rands, and has premiered saxophone versions of music by Witold Lutoslawski, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Joan Tower. In 1970, Dr. Sampen was a recitalist and certificate winner at the prestigious International Geneva Concours in Switzerland, and he has since performed as a soloist with ensembles from all over the world, including the Nedo Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Internazionale d'Italia, the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, the Electric Symphony, and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble. He is a recipient of both NEA and Meet the Composer grants, and has recorded with Belgian and Swiss National Radio, Orion, CRI, Albany, and Capstone record labels. As a clinician for the Selmer company, Dr. Sampen has presented master classes at important universities and conservatories throughout Europe, Asia, and North America. He also performs regularly in recital with pianist/composer Marilyn Shrude. Currently, Dr. Sampen is a Distinguished Artist Professor at Bowling Green State University and President of the North American Saxophone Alliance. He holds three degrees from Northwestern University, where he studied with Frederick Hemke, Donald Sinta, and Larry Teal.

David Schrader

Equally at home in front of a harpsichord, organ, piano, or fortepiano, David Schrader has appeared as a featured artist with a number of prominent orchestras and ensembles throughout the world, including the Dallas Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, the Colorado Symphony, Canada's Tafelmusik, and Japan's Nagaokakyo Chamber Ensemble. He is especially active as a musician in the Chicago area, performing regularly with Music of the Baroque, the Newberry Consort, and Bach Week in Evanston, and has appeared alongside such celebrated ensembles as the Chicago Chamber Musicians, the Chicago Baroque Ensemble, Chicago Opera Theater, and The City Musick. Mr. Schrader has appeared at numerous music festivals throughout the United States and Europe: the prestigious Irving Gilmore Keyboard Festival, the Ravinia Festival, the Aspen Music Festival, the Oulunsalo Soi Music Festival in Finland, the Connecticut Early Music Festival, the Manitou Music Festival, and the Woodstock Mozart Festival. He has several releases of solo repertoire on the Cedille label, including the music of J.S. Bach, Soler, Franck, Vivaldi, Dupre, and Domenico Scarlatti, and has also recorded for the Centaur and CRI labels. Mr. Schrader is presently on the faculty of Roosevelt University, where he has taught both graduate and undergraduate courses since 1986. He received a Doctor of Music degree in organ, as well as a coveted Performer's Certificate, from Indiana University, and earned Bachelor of Music degrees in both piano and organ from the University of Colorado.

Marilyn Shrude

Chicago-born composer/pianist **Marilyn Shrude** received degrees from Alverno College and Northwestern University, where she studied with Alan Stout and William Karlins. Over the past five years, she has appeared as a pianist on over 40 concerts and has toured throughout the United States, Italy, Cyprus, France, Armenia, and the Czech Republic. She is an active recitalist, giving as many as 15 performances a year with saxophonist John Sampen, and has twice received awards from ASCAP/Chamber Music America for the presentation and promotion of contemporary music. In 1994, Dr. Shrude was one of only 25 musicians selected to participate in the first Carnegie Hall Professional Training Workshop, where she worked with Pierre Boulez on the preparation and performance of twentieth-century repertoire. Since 1977, she has been on the faculty of Bowling Green State University, where she teaches and chairs the Department of Musicology/Composition/Theory. She also is the founder and past director of the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music and co-directs the Annual New Music and Arts Festival. Dr. Shrude has served as a Visiting Professor of Music at Indiana University, Heidelberg College, and Oberlin College, and is a past faculty member and chair of the Composition and Theory Department at the Interlochen Arts Camp.

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THE COMPOSERS

Barbara White

Composer Barbara White was born in Boston and was educated at Harvard/Radcliffe Colleges (A.B.) and the University of Pittsburgh (M.A., Ph.D.). She also studied in Paris with Betsy Jolas under the auspices of Harvard's Paine Traveling Fellowship. She is an Associate Professor in the Music Department at Princeton University, which recently awarded her a Harold Willis Dodds University Preceptorship. White has received commissions from the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York New Music Ensemble, Boston Musica Viva, the Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players, the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, and marimbists Nancy Zeltsman, Dominic Donato, and Stephen Paysen. Her music has been presented by Speculum Musicae, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the New Millennium Ensemble, the Wellesley Composers Conference, the Fromm Foundation Contemporary Music Series at Harvard, the Longy School's new-music group Longitude, Dinosaur Annex, and Music on the Edge. Recent honors and awards include an ASCAP Award to Young Composers, two awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Interdisciplinary Arts Award, and several MacDowell Colony residencies. She received a 2000 fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and a 2003 Guggenheim Fellowship.

Vache Sharafyan

Vache Sharafyan was born in Yerevan, Armenia in 1966. At the age of 19, he won the All-Union Composers' Competition in Moscow, and in 1990, he graduated with distinction from the Yerevan State Conservatory. As an official composer for the renowned Silk Road Project, Sharafyan has received performances of his works by cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble throughout the world. His music has also been featured at numerous international festivals, including June in Buffalo, the PNME Festival in Pittsburgh, the Sunny Buffalo Festival, the Hungarian Radio Festival, the Bowling Green Festival of New Music and Arts, the Budapest Mini Festival, the Transcaucasian Festival of Modern Music in Georgia, the MATA festival in New York, and Festival Culturescapes in Switzerland. From 1992 to 1996, Sharafyan served as a Professor of Music Theory and Sacred Music at the Jerusalem Theological Armenian Seminary, and he is currently teaching composition at the Yerevan State Conservatory.

Sofia Gubaidulina

Sofia Gubaidulina was born in Chistopol in the Tatar Republic of the Soviet Union in 1931. After instruction in piano and composition at the Kazan Conservatory, she studied composition with Nikolai Peiko at the Moscow Conservatory, pursuing graduate studies there under Vissarion Shebalin. Until 1992, she lived in Moscow, but since then she has made her primary residence in Germany.

Gubaidulina's compositional interests have been stimulated by the tactile exploration of rare Russian, Caucasian, and Asian folk and ritual instruments collected by the *Astreja* ensemble, of which she was a co-founder, by a rapid absorption and personalization of contemporary Western musical techniques, and by a deep-rooted belief in the mystical properties of music. Her uncompromising dedication to a singular vision, however, along with her frequent explorations of unconventional sound production techniques, did not endear her to the Soviet musical establishment. It was the determined advocacy of Gidon Kremer, the dedicatee of Gubaidulina's masterly violin concerto, *Offertorium*, that helped bring the composer to international attention in the early 1980s, and since that time, her stature in the world of contemporary music has increased dramatically. Since 1985, when she was first allowed to travel to the West, Gubaidulina has received commissions from such prestigious ensembles and organizations as the Berlin, Helsinki, and Holland Music Festivals, the Library of Congress, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Her music is also broadly represented on the Deutsche Grammophon, Chandos, Philips, Sony Classical, BIS, and Berlin Classics labels, and she has twice been honored with the coveted Koussevitzky International Recording Award.

Betty Olivero

Born in Tel-Aviv, Israel, Betty Olivero studied music at the Rubin Academy of Music, Tel Aviv University and Bar-Ilan University, as well as at Yale University, where her teachers included Jacob Druckman, Bernard Rands, and

Gilbert Amy. In 1982, a Leonard Bernstein Scholarship enabled Olivero to work at Tanglewood with Luciano Berio, and she continued her studies with him in Italy from 1983 to 1986. Olivero's innovative music speaks the language of contemporary composition, yet is inspired by ancient Jewish musical traditions and other early folk styles. Her works combine influences as diverse as Judeo-Spanish (sephardic) music, Arab melodies, and medieval music, and her adaptation of these materials touches on widespread and complex areas of contrast, such as east and west, holy and secular, traditional and new. Olivero's compositions have been performed by leading orchestras and chamber groups throughout the world, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Israel Philharmonic, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the London Sinfonietta, the Juilliard Ensemble, and the Arditti Quartet. She is also the recipient of numerous awards, such as the Fromm Award, the Koussevitzky Award, Israel's Prime Minister Prize, the Rosenblum Award for the Performing Arts, and the Landau Award for the Performing Arts. At present, Olivero is a lecturer in composition in the Music Department of Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel

Roberto Sierra

For more than a decade, the works of Roberto Sierra have been part of the repertoire of many of the leading orchestras, ensembles, and festivals in the United States and Europe. Born in Puerto Rico, Sierra he pursued early studies at the Conservatory of Music and the University of Puerto Rico. After graduation, he went to Europe to further his musical knowledge, studying first at the Royal College of Music

and the University of London, and later at the Institute for Sonology in Utrecht. Between 1979 and 1982, Sierra did advanced work in composition at the Hochschule für Musik in Hamburg under György Ligeti. Currently, he is serving as an Old Dominion Foundation Professor of Composition at Cornell University. Among the groups that have performed Sierra's works are the orchestras of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Houston, Minnesota, Dallas, Detroit, San Antonio, and Phoenix, the American Composers Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Symphony

Orchestra, the Kronos Quartet, Continuum, England's BBC Symphony, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Tonhalle Orchestra of Zurich, and the Spanish orchestras of Galicia, Castilla y León, and Barcelona. In 2003, he was awarded the Academy Award in Music by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2004 he won the Kenneth Davenport Competition for Orchestral Works. Sierra's music can be heard on recordings by New World, Albany, Gasparo, Koch, Newport Classic, New Albion, Koss Classics, CRI, BMG, Fleur de Son, and Dorian Records.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Learning to See

The composer writes:

Like several of my chamber works, *Learning to See* is a response to visual art—in this case, to the work of four twentieth-century painters and sculptors. I think of the piece as a translation of my visual experiences into sound: in the process of composing I “tried on” the artists’ formal preoccupations and mused on the evolution and unfolding of their individual aesthetic attitudes. The music is quite diverse in many respects, but at the same time all six movements tend toward simplicity, economy, and brevity. The even-numbered movements, which are modeled on a series of sculptures by a single artist, make up a set of progressively leaner variations, while the odd-numbered ones present contrasting sonic objects, including a musical machine featuring “junk percussion” and a

formalist fabrication of tangled lines and sharp points. The fifth movement, “. . . things the mind already knows,” is built entirely out of brief citations from pre-existing music. *Learning to See* was commissioned by Boston Musica Viva and was recorded by the New Millennium Ensemble for my CD *Apocryphal Stories* (Albany, 2004). The work is dedicated to Steven Mulvey, with whom I have most often seen and discussed the artworks involved.

Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

In 1998, John Sampen and Marilyn Shrude were introduced to Vache Sharafyan, a special guest composer at Bowling Green State University's 19th Annual New Music and Arts Festival. Shrude and Sampen later toured Armenia and reestablished contact with the

composer in the city of Yerevan, the country's capital. Their renewed friendship led to the proposal of a saxophone/piano commission, and Sharafyan elected to create a work which could either stand alone as a duo sonata or be performed with string orchestra accompaniment. The resulting composition was completed in 2000, and the duo version was premiered by Sampen and Shrude at the 25th BGSU New Music and Arts Festival on October 23, 2004.

Sharafyan's *Sonata* is influenced by the exotic sounds and timbres of the shawm and the dudak, both ancient Armenian instruments. Special effects include quarter tones, multiphonics, playing on the piano interior, slap tonguing, and air sounds. The composition evokes an image of Armenia, a stark, land-locked country bordering on Turkey. Perhaps one can imagine the haunted sights and sounds of this ancient country landscape marked by desolate stone churches, Roman ruins, and a barren and craggy terrain.

Meditation on the Bach Chorale "Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit"

The composer writes:

This composition is my contemplation on Bach's chorale, specifically on Bach's use of numbers. Amazingly, Bach's working with numbers represents and reflects his deepest and most personal relation to God. "Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit" (I Step before Thy Throne, O Lord) is the last chorale written by Bach. Analyzing it, I discovered that Bach used "his own" numbers 41, 14, 23. Scholars of Bach's music know that each of these numbers represents his name, like his signature. For example, the number 41

means "Johann Sebastian Bach"; it is the sum of all the letters constituting his name. Bach transferred letters of the alphabet into numbers and added them together. The number 14 means "Bach"; the number 23 means "J.S. Bach." As far as I remember, the number 37 means "Jesus Christ"; 73 means "Death of Christ." In his last chorale Bach used all these symbolic numbers. Every single counterpoint contains one of the "Bach" numbers (41, 14 or 23). Their usage is so beautiful that one might conclude that, addressing God in this chorale, Bach meant: "Look, God: I, Johann Sebastian Bach, step before thy throne."

I build a musical form according to Bach's principle: episodes of music embodying my personal reflection alternate with the chorale, only instead of Bach's four-section form there is a five-section form (I like the number five and prefer it to four). The four development sections, each of them rounded off by a line of the chorale, represent the four stages of a path which the music must cover until the chorale can be heard in full. This is the ascent of Bach's soul: "Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit." Surprisingly, not only special tonal relationships become apparent here, but numerical patterns as well. This is like the visible and invisible element of a soul in anticipation of an encounter with God.

Kavei-Avir (a volo d'uccello)

Kavei-Avir (As the Crow Flies) was commissioned by Milano Musica-Festival Luciano Berio in 1996 and was dedicated to Berio on the occasion of his 70th Birthday. The piece is based on one of Berio's compositional sketches, and various chords

from that source are used as musical cells. These harmonies, which are interwoven melodically and harmonically within the body of the work, are salient in their structural character and unique harmonic color. Their presence is like that of a mysterious guest whose appearance and disappearance remains an enigma that longs to be solved. In 1999, the composer extended some sections of *Kavei-Avir* into the second movement (*Kavei-Or*) of a large symphonic piece entitled *Merkavot*.

***Cancionero Sefardí* (Sephardic Songs)**

The Sephardim (plural of S'faradi, from the Hebrew word for Spain) are Jews who settled in Spain during the Middle Ages. Many of their descendants settled in communities around the Mediterranean Sea after they were expelled from Spain in 1492 by the very same Ferdinand and Isabella who sponsored Columbus's voyage to America. As has often been the case in countries where Jews have settled, religious and secular cultures tended to combine gradually with the passage of time. As a result, many Sephardic songs are lacking overtly religious characteristics or references, and some of those that have come down to us in collections, such as "A la una nació yo," may simply have been secular folk songs that were taken up by Jewish musicians. Nevertheless, some of these songs still enshrine folk customs of the Sephardic Jews—pre- or post-Expulsion—along with elements of their history. "Avridme galanica," for instance, refers to a Sephardic wedding custom that required the groom to stand outside the bride's door and sing her parents to sleep before he was allowed to enter. Similarly, "Una matica de ruda" refers to the

wine rue twig, which was thought to deflect the "evil eye" and thus bring luck to newlyweds. While there is certainly something universal about the sentiments in "Al kenar de la nixava" and "Una matica de ruda," "El mi querido bevió vino," and "Pregoneros van y vienen" clearly refer to more particular circumstances that are more Iberian than Hebraic. With regard to his setting of these ancient texts and melodies, the composer comments that, "The sheer beauty and the poignant melodic structures in the music from the Sephardic tradition have captivated me since I heard the first Ladino song. In *Cancionero Sefardí* I didn't want to do a mere 'arrangement,' but to rather recreate these melodies within my own musical language. While the vocal line retains the original spirit of the sources, the instrumental accompaniment is colored by microtonal inflections. These inflections provide a new context for the harmonies, producing music that is both very ancient and very new at the same time." This is clearly audible simply by listening to the individual instrumental lines that surround the tune. They each seem to be going their own way, singing their own songs in a sort of lyrical haze, underpinned sometimes by characteristic medieval drones and pedal points."

Cancionero Sefardí (Sephardic Songs)

(translations by Roberto Sierra)

A la una nació yo

At one I was born

A la una nació yo,
a las dos me engrandecí,
a las tres espozi,
a las cuatro me cazaron.
Dizme, niña, ¿dónde vienes?
que te quiero conocer.
Y, si no tienes amante,
Yo te haré defender.
Alma, vida y corazón.

*At one I was born,
at two I grew up,
at three I was affianced
at four they married me off.
Tell me, child, from whence you come?
For I wish to know you.
And, if you have no lover,
I shall be your defender.
Soul, life, and heart.*

El mi querido bevió vino

My lover drank wine

El mi querido bevió vino.
El tino ya lo pedrió.
Allí debaxo l'arvolera,
taradarí, taradám,
cuchillo me travó.
Taradarí, taradáni . . .

*My lover drank wine.
He lost his aim.
There under the trees,
taradarí, taradám,
he pierced me with his knife.
Taradarí, taradám . . .*

Al kenar de la nixava

Around the corner

Al kenar de la nixava
todo vedre 'stá
Mancevo lindo y hermoso
tómate atrás.
Que mejor d'esta muchacha
otra ya no hay.
Allí está la muchacha,
sekliyada s'tá.

*Around the corner
everything is green.
Fair and handsome boy,
turn back.
That there is no girl
better than this one.
There is the girl,
she is very sad.*

Pregoneros van y vienen

Town criers come and go

Pregoneros van y vienen
por la ciudad de Aragón.
Todo varón que hijo tiene
A la guerra debe ir.

*Town criers come and go
around the city of Aragon.
Every male that has a son
to war must go.*

Pregoneros van y vienen.
Qué que vos conte la mi madre
lo que hoy me acapitó.
Un mancevo a la Guerra
hija es y no varón.

*Town criers come and go.
Let me tell you mother
what happened today.
A boy went to war,
she is a daughter and not a son.*

Una matica de ruda

A little plant of rue

Una matica de ruda
una matica de flor.
Me la dió un mancevico
Que de mí s'enamoró.

*A little plant of rue
a little flower plant.
I got it from a boy
who fell in love with me.*

Hija mía mi querida
no t'eches a la perdición.
Mas vale un mal marido
que un mancevo d'amor.

*My dear daughter
Don't succumb to damnation.
A bad husband is worth more
than a young lover.*

Mal marido la mi madre,
el pilisco y la maldición.
Mancevo d'amor la mi madre,
la mançana y el buen limón.

*Mother, a bad husband,
the pinch and the curse.
Mother, a young lover,
the apple and the good lemon.*

Dolores tiene la reina

The Queen has pains

Dolores tiene la reina.
No los puede soportarlos.
Cuando s'asentó a parir
y demandó piedades.

*The Queen has pains.
She can not endure them.
When she laid down to give birth,
and asked for help.*

Allí la oyó su suegra
de altas torres mas arriva.
Andavos la mi nuera
parir onde'el vuestro padre.

*Her mother-in-law heard her
from high towers.
Go, daughter-in-law,
to give birth with your father.*

Avridme galanica

Open up for me, beautiful girl

Avridme, galanica
que ya va a amanecer.
Avrir, ya vos avro,
mi lindo amor.

*Open up for me, beautiful girl
dawn is coming.
I will open right away,
my beautiful love.*

Esta noche yo non duermo
Pensando en vos.

*Tonight I won't sleep
thinking of you.*

Mi padre está meldando,
se sentirá.
Amataldle la candelica,
se durmirá.

*My father is reading
he will hear you.
Blow out his candle,
and he will fall asleep.*

Mi madre está enforando
se sentirá.
Aruvaldle la palica
se dormirá.

*My mother is baking
she will hear you.
Rock her chair,
and she will fall asleep.*