

14TH SEASON OF MUSIC & ART AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CASCADIA COMPOSERS & THE MOUSAI
CASCADIA INVOKES THE MUSES

MARIA CHOBAN, PIANO
JANET BEBB, FLUTE
ANN VAN BEVER, OBOE
CHRIS COX, CLARINET

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2016 AT 2 PM
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1200 SW ALDER STREET
PORTLAND, OREGON 97205

CASCADIA COMPOSERS & THE MOUSAI

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Program

Sunrise Prelude
flute, oboe d'amore, clarinet & piano Matthew Kaminski

Six Fables, #4: *The Rose and the Amaranth*
solo oboe (with intoned fable by Aesop) Liz Nedela

Gen-ei no Mai (Dances of Illusions and Fleeting Visions)
Second movement - Adagio
flute and clarinet John Bilotta

Memories
flute, oboe, clarinet & piano Thomas DeNicola

Converge, Disperse
flute, oboe, clarinet & piano Stacey Philipps

Tides
I. Warm Ripples
II. Waves
III. Riptide
IV. Noontide
flute/piccolo, oboe/english horn, clarinet, piano & rainstick Jan Mittelstaedt

Spirits from the Canyon
flute/piccolo, oboe d'amore/english horn, clarinet, piano & percussion Lisa Ann Marsh

Intermission

Six Fables
VI. The Shipwrecked Man and the Sea
oboe & piano (with intoned fable by Aesop) Liz Nedela

Piece for Flute, Oboe and Clarinet (With Piano Accompaniment)
Movements I & IV Scott Anthony Shell

Mood Swings:
II. Extroverted
oboe, clarinet & piano Ted Clifford

Piano Sonata no. 3
Movement III
piano solo Mark Vigil

deLIVERance
bass flute, oboe, clarinet, piano & tambourine Mike Hsu

Please join us for refreshments in the chapel narthex at intermission.

*Thank you to **Spella Caffè** for providing coffee, and to **Menucha Retreat and Conference Center** for providing cookies!*

All donations go toward the Celebration Works Concert Series.

COMPOSERS' NOTES (IN THEIR OWN WORDS)

Sunrise Prelude by Matthew Kaminski: Sunrise Prelude describes a beautiful walk at dawn in nature, the beauty of flowers and dark enchanted forests. One will hear the wind whispering and the birds singing; one will see the beautiful flowers with dew of their petals and feel the pristine air. This piece expresses all these thoughts, emotions or sensations that one would experience when in the midst of nature. This piece opens and closes with the main theme. Between these are the dark enchanted forests that embellish the piece.

Matthew Kaminski is in 8th grade at Conestoga Middle School in Beaverton. He studies piano with Ruth Sadilek and music composition with Daniel Brugh. He began composing when he was eight. Matthew has been a part of the Young Composers Project through Fear No Music for the last two years. He has participated in a number of piano and composition festivals, and has received honorable mention in the Northwest Division of the MTNA, and first place in the regionals of the NFMC. He has also played for events at the Polish Hall, including a celebration of Chopin's birthday. When he was younger, he also played violin for a couple of years. In addition, Matthew enjoys singing with the Oregon Youth Choral, and has just composed a piece for this choir. Recently, he also wrote a score for his school band, and a piano piece for In Good Hands. For other hobbies, Matthew enjoys painting, drawing, swimming, hiking, and traveling with his family.

Fables for Oboe and Piano by Liz Nedela: This piece was a commission by a concert oboist in 1986 who requested a piece containing extended techniques.

Liz Nedela likes to write music that is not normal to make it normal; experimental scales and intervals, modes, ethnic, extended techniques on instruments and voice. Her music tells a story, creates a mood, describes a happening. It is rhythmic, contrapuntal, sometimes jazzy, sometimes schmaltzy, accessible, avant-garde, impossible or overly simple, with a continued quest for the melodic line even when using the most dissonant sounds. The results have been commissions, competitions, and continual learning and studying. Growing up in the world of "only boys are composers," and being a play-by-ear pianist from age 2 which commanded years of structured lessons and an infatuation with J.S. Bach, she has defied her teachers, boldly becoming a "girl composer." Liz teaches piano and composition; BA, MEd, MM, all focusing on piano and composition/technology.

Gen'ei no Mai by John G. Bilotta: A duo in five movements for flute and clarinet, "Gen'ei no Mai" started with a friend's suggestion that I write a piece for two clarinets, something players could pull out for casual performance. I liked the idea but decided instead to make it a duo for flute and clarinet, a light-hearted, colorful, and virtuosic twelve-tone work — too difficult perhaps for casual performance, but very suitable for a chamber concert. On hearing the finished work, my friend noted its dance-like character and the strong visual images it evoked. We discussed and rejected a number of titles until the Japanese phrase "gen'ei no mai" was proposed. "Mai" is an ancient word for a stylized or ceremonial dance. The word "gen'ei" refer to vague or transitory images. The closest English equivalent might be "dance of illusions and fleeting visions".

John G. Bilotta was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, but has spent most his life in the San Francisco Bay Area where he studied composition with Frederick Saunders. His works have been performed by soloists and ensembles around the world including Rarescale, Earplay, the Talea Ensemble, the Washington Square Contemporary Music Society, Chamber Mix, North/South Consonance, Musica Nova, the Avenue Winds, the Presidio Ensemble, the Boston String Quartet, the San Francisco Composers Chamber Orchestra, the Kiev Philharmonic, the Oakland Civic Orchestra, San Francisco Cabaret Opera, Bluegrass Opera, Boston Metro Opera, the Thompson Street Opera, New Fangled Opera, and VocalWorks. His music is available on Capstone Records, New Music North, Beauport Classical Recordings, ERM Media, Bouddi Music/Australia and Navonna Records, and are distributed by Naxos. He serves on the Board of Directors for Goat Hall Productions and on the Executive Committee of the Society of Composers, Inc., for which he edits SCION, the organization's opportunities newsletter.

COMPOSERS' NOTES CONTINUED ON REVERSE...

COMPOSERS' NOTES (CONTINUED)...

Memories by Thomas DeNicola: Memories was inspired, mostly, by my girlfriend. At the end of this past summer she had to move back home to Florence, Oregon, a coastal town a ways away that is not exactly easy to get to. Knowing this all summer, we spent time a lot of time together, and those special nights by the waterfront catching fireworks or at the park at dusk were all that more intense in their insistence of saying “live in this moment, experience it as completely as you can, but know that it will be over and become nothing more than a memory.” I tried to reflect that feeling in this piece of realizing as you grow older that you will not be able to remember everything, but you are trying so hard to hope that you can.

Thomas DeNicola is a local Oregonian currently seeking his undergraduate degree in composition at Portland State University, under the tutelage of Bonnie Miksch. His earliest memories consist of plunking out Beethoven’s Ode to Joy on a small light-up casio keyboard. After getting into blues guitar in high school, Thomas pursued violin lessons before college. When his teacher, Chris Fotinakis, kept having to deal with him showing up with small pieces written out and a lack of actual practice on the violin, he switched gears and started privately teaching Thomas composition, setting him on the path he is on today. A sense of catharsis from different emotions is ultimately what Thomas tries to do in his music, hoping to reach the listener, performer, and especially himself.

Converge, Disperse by Stacey Philipps: This musical depiction of the Columbia River’s journey and major tributaries begins with a slow, ascending arpeggio outlining the distance of the journey ahead, gradually gaining enough momentum to build to a rivulet flowing along in the high mountains. The Kootenay River tributary joins in, characterized by an icy sound in the high range of the flute representing its origins in glaciers and its running rapids and precipitous drops from the Canadian Rockies. Music of the Kootenay stops midstream for a dam and the crackle of electricity it generates before continuing on. After a journey from volcano territory and through Hell’s Canyon, the enormous Snake River joins the flow with a sinuous oboe melody, which quotes a whole-tone and rather hellish variation on a British Columbian folk song, “The Song of the Sockeye,” and moves the entire river into the whole tone scale. A calm, glassy clarinet sound depicts the lake origins of the Pend Oreille River and the way the tributary cuts and creates space through the American Rockies. Finally, industrial rhythms signal the major transportation and shipping corridor of the Willamette River. Quotes from the “Song of the Sockeye” return in their original form, and the river, ever running downhill, broadens and flows into the expanse of the ocean.

Stacey Philipps writes music of close, lush harmonies and contrapuntal textures, exploring the timbre of voices and instruments in minute detail and sweeping gestures. A lifelong choral singer, Stacey is an early- and new-music devotee, and she currently sings with the Oregon Repertory Singers. Her vocal interests extend to a love for composing choral music and art song, as well as collaborating with solo instrumentalists and chamber music ensembles. A sometime pianist and frequent dabbler in playing underappreciated instruments – she has an accordion, mountain dulcimer, and ukulele on hand and is pining for a harpsichord, banjo, and viola da gamba – Stacey graduated with a degree in music composition from Portland State University and also holds a degree in philosophy and math from St. John’s College, Santa Fe.

Tides by Jan Mittelstaedt: This is my musical rendition of life’s ups and downs. Warm Ripples, Waves, and Riptide move the listener from life in its idyllic stage through times of difficulty to the most upsetting and stressful periods in our lives. However, I have observed that there is often sunshine after a storm. So, Noontide celebrates people who, with the help of our Creator, are able to rise above life’s difficulties.

Jan Mittelstaedt was a late bloomer. During her first year of teaching sixth grade, she was asked to teach a colleague’s young sister how to play the piano. With much nerve and no piano pedagogical training, she soon had eight students. What a shock to discover that she loved teaching piano and didn’t care much for classroom teaching. In her early 40’s, she wrote her first composition when she was a music student at Marylhurst Univ. Another student mentioned that she was writing songs for the children in her church to sing. “I can do that, too,” thought Jan. And, she did! The rest is history, as they say. Jan is very indebted to Dr. Walter Saul, now at Fresno

Spirits from the Canyon by Lisa Ann Marsh: Canyon De Chelly can only be traversed with a Native American guide. Ours was wise and funny and drove a mean Jeep Cherokee through rutted and muddy canyon beds. We stopped often to stand in awe viewing the ruins of the ancient ones- some 5,000 years old. At the end of the canyon we came upon Travis Terry playing his Native American flute with mastery. The echoing sounds wove the past and present together into a magical tapestry that inspired this piece.

Lisa Ann Marsh: I began writing songs and piano music when I was 10 years old. Early musical influences include Beethoven, Ravel, Messiaen, and a band called X. After pursuing many roles including emergency nurse, symphony pianist, piano instructor and wellness program director I returned to music composition. About five years ago I found a box in my attic filled with remnants of pieces I had written over the decades- my Muse had returned. With the friendship and support of the Crazy Janes and Cascadia Composers my musical voice has found new life- inspired by the natural and supernatural worlds.

Piece by Scott Anthony Shell: “Piece for Flute, Oboe and Clarinet...” was written in 1990, when I was in college. I wrote several pieces for flute and clarinet in an attempt to woo a pair of twin sisters who played those instruments. The wooing didn’t work, partially because I couldn’t decide which one to woo. But the music that resulted is, in my opinion, not too shabby. Movement 1 presents 3 separate melodic interpretations to a chord progression, each performed as a solo by the wind instruments. Then the final pass of the chord progression, after a brief piano interlude, combines the 3 interpretations to create some nice harmonies and counterpoint. In movement 4, the wind instruments explore moments of unity, dissolution, and finally re-unification. The piano drone provides the anchor for the individual instruments to explore their individuality, while remaining part of the group.

Scott Anthony Shell earned his BM in music composition from DePaul University in 1992, where he studied with Kurt Westerberg and George Flynn. He attended the Aspen Music School, Interlochen, and the Charles Ives Institute. He was accepted to the Cleveland Institute of Music for graduate studies with Donald Erb, but started an indie rock record label instead. His garage rock band toured all over the country and released several recordings. Scott also worked as a professional bass guitarist for several years. In 2014, after a 19 year break, Scott returned to composing contemporary classical music. He has since completed over 40 new compositions. In 2015, fifteen of his works were performed in the United States and Italy. In 2016, his works are being performed in Austin, Chicago, Portland, and as part of the Charlotte New Music Festival (N. Carolina), and New Music on the Bayou (Louisiana). Scott will also be a composer fellow at the Atlantic Music Festival in Maine.www.ScottAnthonyShell.com

Mood Swings, Extroverted by Ted Clifford: This is actually a re-arranged chamber piece, taking the 2nd and 3rd movements from a previous work. I was thinking of how to present and title this, given the missing first movement and the resulting asymmetry of a solo oboe piece followed by a trio. I’m always thinking about the human brain so it eventually struck me how this can represent changes in temperament. Thus, we have Mood Swings: Introverted and Extroverted. To put it another way think of the first movement representing the day you just don’t want to talk to anyone – just to take a walk or work on something. The second movement is more like happy hour. [note: The Mousai went straight to happy hour!]

Ted Clifford is a Portland area composer, performer and arranger of various styles, private teacher, and currently a board member with Cascadia Composers. He began studying the piano at age 6, and has performed in local and touring ensembles as a keyboardist since age 18. He earned his BA in music from St. Cloud State University in Minnesota, and has continued his music education through independent studies over the past 15 years, most recently studying composition with Tomas Svoboda. His influential teachers include Tom Allen, Art Lande, and David Friesen.

COMPOSERS' NOTES CONTINUED ON REVERSE...

COMPOSERS' NOTES (CONTINUED)...

Sonata no. 3, third movement by Mark Vigil: I have always been a strong supporter of sonata allegro form despite its maybe antiquated reputation. I would rather write a good piano sonata than anything else. I've always admired the piano music of Prokofiev, notably his third piano sonata and the final movement of his seventh piano sonata. When played well his piano style is so interesting and so virtuosic (the perpetual motion). The fingering is a nightmare and sometimes the arms have to make gigantic leaps over the breadth of the keyboard. But, I love it. Seriously though, I do believe that Prokofiev's piano music was and still is a major influence upon my whole piano sonata thing. This sonata took me ten long months to write.

Mark Vigil: I was born in Spokane, Washington in 1954. I began taking piano lessons at the age of 16. I progressed quickly. I remember I was playing Rachmaninoff's c#-minor Prelude after about a year. With whatever skills I possessed at the time, I managed to get accepted, in 1976, as a piano student at the Cornish School of the Allied Arts, located in Seattle, Washington. In my last year of the program I was asked to stay on an extra year as both a piano major and a composition student. There, I studied composition with Janice Giteck. What she imparted to me about the process of composition was invaluable. What she showed me was that composition and its inspiration emanated from me, not from anyone or anything else. I graduated from Cornish in 1981 with a BMA. In 1991 I was accepted as a composition student at the University of Oregon School of Music. I studied with both Robert Kyr and Hal Owen. I graduated with a masters degree in 1996. My Master's thesis was my first string quartet. In 2002 I began studying composition with Tomas Svoboda. I was his student for ten wonderful years.

deLIVERance by Mike Hsu: I decided to walk to work one day, and during the two-hour trip, various melodies and motifs entered into my head to the pace of 120 bpm (I'm a fast walker). The movements flow into one another like a dance mix created by a DJ, sharing several common rhythmic motifs, yet each maintaining a unique character as described in the movement's name. deLIVERance is a celebration of that feeling of freedom a composer enjoys somewhere amidst the otherwise grueling process of writing a piece.

As a child of the 80's and 90's, **Mike Hsu** grew up listening to the sounds of British new wave and synthpop bands such as Erasure and Depeche Mode, and house DJ's from his hometown Chicago. He incorporates the rhythmic energy and layering techniques of dance music into simple classical structures, such as fugue, rondo, and sonata form. Drawing from 30+ years of experience as a violinist and pianist, Mike's opus includes two orchestral works, eight solo and chamber works, a body of electronic works and two non-classical albums, *Waiting for the Dawn* and *Adaptation*, under the name *Motoya*. Public performances of his works include a 1996 premiere of *Fountain Variations* by the Toscanini Chamber Orchestra of Harvard University, a 2004 and 2015 performances of *Synchronicity* by the Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra, and performances of his *String Quintet in G* and *Quartet No. 1 in A minor* with Cascadia Composers, Classical Revolution PDX, and ARCO-PDX, the Amplified Repertory Chamber Orchestra of Portland (founded by Mike in 2014). Professionally, Mike works as a doctor of Psychiatry at Kaiser Permanente.

Cascadia Composers is a non-profit organization, a chapter of NACUSA (National Association of Composers USA) based in Portland and dedicated to the promotion and support of regional composers. The chapter was founded in 2008 by composers David Bernstein and Greg Steinke. David, who moved here in 2006, looked for a fellowship of local composers similar to the Cleveland Composers' Guild. After meeting with several local composers, David and Greg were soon followed by Jack Gabel, Gary Noland, Dan Senn, Tomas Svoboda and Jeff Winslow. Greg, who had been a member of NACUSA for over 30 years, suggested that the group form as a chapter under NACUSA's umbrella. The group presents several concerts each year in collaboration with local musicians and provides workshops and presentations for and by its members.

Please check out the website at www.cascadiacomposers.com.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

The Mousai includes flutist Janet Bebb, oboist Ann van Bever, clarinetist Chris Cox and pianist Maria Choban. When The Mousai formed in 2010 as a trio, they envisioned playing music written for flute, oboe and piano, but performing works that include other instruments as well. Clarinetist Chris Cox joined the group as a core member in 2014 after several years of being a "friend" of The Mousai. The name, Mousai, is an allusion to the Muses, the Greek goddesses of music, song and dance and the inspiration of poets. Visit us at www.TheMousai.net to find out more fun stuff about who we are and what we do!

JANET BEBB, FLUTE

Flutist Janet Bebb grew up playing flute with her family in Oklahoma and has studied flute in Boston, Honolulu and Florence Italy. She was a music major at the University of the Pacific conservatory and a graduate student in ethnomusicology at Tufts University. She has studied south Indian flute in India, sax and dance in Turkey, and recorders in Italy. For the past 15 years she has been a dedicated chamber music player and has performed in the Portland area. She is a founding member of The Mousai.

MARIA CHOBAN, PIANO

Maria Choban, pianist and founding member of The Mousai, has produced and released four CDs on her recording label, Alitisa. Her mission through Alitisa is to promote the music of contemporary Greek and American composers, mirroring her own background as a full blooded Greek born and raised in America. Choban has performed and lectured in the US and in Europe, living in Greece for 2 years researching Greek classical music. She is a fiery, focused performer who also champions the work of dead-white-guy composers, breathing her fire into them. She is one of the founders of the South West Music School in Beaverton, OR. She maintains her own teaching studio. She thoroughly enjoys her busy life, playing hooky and taking off to hike or bike in the hills and dance 3 nights a week...just enough to maintain a healthy balance. Check out Maria's website at www.alitisa.com.

ANN VAN BEVER, OBOE

Ann van Bever plays oboe, oboe d'amore and English horn in the Bach Cantata Choir Orchestra, the Portland Columbia Symphony, and the Double Reed Divas, and is a founding member of The Mousai. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, and a law degree from Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI. After practicing law in Florida, Texas, California and Oregon for 17 years, she returned to music as a full-time vocation in 2000. In January of 2012 she performed the Bach Concerto for Violin and Oboe with the Oregon East Symphony in Pendleton and has played principal oboe in that orchestra from 2011 to the present. She currently teaches private oboe students and freelances all over Oregon and southwest Washington.

CHRISTOPHER COX, CLARINET

Chris Cox grew up in Southern Oregon. Coming from a decidedly non-musical family, he owes his lifelong interest in music to the band programs in public schools. An avid chamber musician, Chris is delighted to be the newest member of the Mousai. He is also a founding member of the Chinook Winds woodwind trio and has performed with them for 25 years. He serves as the principal clarinetist with the University of Portland Community Orchestra and is a past member of the Eugene Opera orchestra. He holds a bachelors degree in clarinet performance from the University of Oregon and studied clarinet at Boston University's Tanglewood Institute.

Join us for the next *Celebration Works* concert on Sunday, June 5, 2016 at 2 pm

NORTHWEST PIANO TRIO: WOMEN OF THE 19TH CENTURY AND BEYOND

Adults: \$15 Seniors (65+): \$10 Students (with ID) & Arts for All (with Oregon Trail Card): \$5

If you would like to receive our season brochure and reminders before each concert, please add your name to our mailing list, located at the ticket table, or email music@firstpresportland.org.



CELEBRATION WORKS

2015-2016