



FRANCES-MARIE UTTI

MARCH 23, 2012 8:30 PM

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CaLARTS

FRANCES–MARIE UITTI, CELLO

Friday, March 23, 2012, 8:30pm

PROGRAM

Curve with Plateau (1982)

Jonathan Harvey

Three Safe Places (2012, world premiere)

Gregory Moore

A Folio of Large and Small Worlds Ending (2012, world premiere) Michael Jon Fink

Frances-Marie Uitti, cello

Molly McLaughlin, flute, alto flute and piccolo; Kathryn Pisaro, oboe and English horn; Ryan Glass, clarinet and bass clarinet; Adam Wolf, horn; Jessica Waithe, trumpet; Alex Iles, tenor trombone and alto trombone; Jillian Risigari-Gai, harp; Barry Newton: double bass; Travis Kane, conductor

Intermission

The Song of Songs (1996)

Karen Tanaka

Roman Holiday Blues (2010)

Lisa Bielawa

Age of Aircraft (2002)

Ken Ueno

Ygghur (1965)

Giacinto Scelsi

Please refrain from any recording, photographing, or videotaping during this performance.

Funded in part by a generous grant from the Argosy Foundation Contemporary Music Fund

PROGRAM NOTES

Curve with Plateau (1982)

Jonathan Harvey

Curve with Plateaux (1982) in Jonathan Harvey's words, "is a simple curve from bottom to top and down again, with passages which linger in one area or another on the way. I had in mind a sort of model of human personality. The low region represents the physical, muscular level strenuously confronting the world of matter. The next region represents the emotional, passionate level. As this rises, the emotions and thoughts become increasingly refined and delicate. Near the top they touch on the spiritual and at the very top, with an almost breath-like C (highest note on piano) the transcendental. The way down traces the same path, except that a coda is added in the style of a death march. Thus the work could be both in the form of a life and an examination of the many-layered beings we are at any moment in life." After I played and recorded this, Jonathan wrote me a wonderfully expressive cello concerto and another solo work, *3 Sketches*, as well as a two-bow work, *Chant*. We then started our improvisational adventure with *Philia's Dream*, and another full CD, *Imaginings*.

—Frances-Marie Uitti

Three Safe Places (2012, world premiere)

Gregory Moore

Three Safe Places is an exploration of the rhythms and melodies of human speech. All sounds in the pre-recorded accompaniment that Frances-Marie Uitti plays along with are derived purely from her own voice. Other than time-stretching, no artificial effects have been applied.

—Gregory Moore

A Folio of Large and Small Worlds Ending (2012, world premiere)

Michael Jon Fink

A Folio of Large and Small Worlds Ending, completed in February 2012, was composed for Frances-Marie Uitti with the intention of integrating her innovative two-bow technique into a large-scale chamber work. The soloist and ensemble perpetually sing (sometimes together, sometimes separately) unfolding episodes that vary in length and orchestration. Rather than emanating from a single motive, the musical gestures connect with each other by way of "family resemblance", each moment reflecting aspects of many other moments... The title (intended to be evocative) is in this case descriptive as well.

—Michael Jon Fink

***The Song of Songs* (1996)**

Karen Tanaka

The title comes from *The Song of Solomon* of the Old Testament, which is a beautiful song of love. It begins as follows.

The song of songs, which is Solomon's.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

I have attempted to project this sensual song of love onto the sound of cello and computer. My intention was to weave color and scent into the sound while blending the ancient story and today's technology. The sound of cello is consistently gentle and tender.

—Karen Tanaka

***Roman Holiday Blues* (2010)**

Lisa Bielawa

Lisa Bielawa, New York composer and singer, wrote *Roman Holiday Blues* while a fellow at the American Academy in Rome in 2010. We'd met the previous summer at a jazz festival in Austria and she was intrigued by the two-bow technique. A former violinist, she understood all the intricacies of the bowing as well as the left-hand possibilities, and subsequently produced the first movement of what will become a work with chamber ensemble. It is a perfect miniature, highlighting the contrasting colors of the upper and lower bows, and playfully using jogged rhythms to feature the contrapuntal possibilities in two-bowed performance.

—Frances-Marie Uitti

***Age of Aircraft* (2002)**

Ken Ueno

for amplified cello and electronic sounds

The cello is amplified with a Big Muff distortion box throughout. The primary discourse of the narrative is one in which the soloist blends with the electronic sounds. The electronic sounds evoke simultaneously a sense of power and a contemplative space. All of the sounds are derived from and refer to a sense of memory of past actions by the soloist.

—Ken Ueno

Ygghur (1965)

Giacinto Scelsi

I met Giacinto Scelsi while rehearsing for a concert in Rome. He subsequently invited me to his house on the Via San Teodoro 8, where he played me orchestra works and his violin concerto *Anahit*. I was astounded by the power and force of his music. Later he asked me to work on three big pieces which were to become the massive 45-minute *Trilogia*, each representing a major period in his life and work. Morton Feldman called it Scelsi's "autobiography in sound." The first piece, *Triphon*, is filled with youthful energy and drama; the second, *Dithome*, is more reserved and reflective; the third, *Ygghur*, which is on this evening's program, is the culmination of a lifetime of meditation and represents a catharsis. The cello is radically retuned to accommodate the weaving of one-note voicings across the strings. We worked for 10 years on the *Trilogia*, and later on several other one-note works that came from our collaborations, including some pieces for two-bowed cello. The Isabella Scelsi Foundation asked me to transfer 700 hours of his improvisations to digital format, and in doing this I was privileged to hear his total output.

—Frances-Marie Uitti

BIOGRAPHIES

Frances-Marie Uitti is a composer and cellist known for her performances of the most esoteric and virtuoso contemporary classical music. She was born in Chicago to Finnish parents, and she studied classical music at Meadowmount with Ronald Leonard and Josef Gingold, at Boston University with Leslie Parnas, and at University of Texas with George Neikrug. In Europe she worked at the Academia Chigiana with Andre Navarra, winning their top award two years in a row.

Uitti invented a radically extended technique using two bows simultaneously in one hand; she was the first to transform the cello into a 4-part chordal instrument. This technique expands the harmonic and timbral possibilities of the instrument in extraordinary ways: for example, one can play simultaneously the 4, 3, 2, and 1 string, with contrasting polyrhythmic articulations between the two bows. Non-adjacent strings can also be accessed. One bow can be played near the bridge while the other is near the fingerboard.

She has used over 75 different tunings in her compositions using this technique, each producing new harmonic possibilities and exotic timbres plus a polyphony and independence of voices that her previous work with a single curved bow couldn't obtain. Early on, she combined singing with the cello and premiered Louis Andriessen's masterpiece *La Voce* which is dedicated to her. Other works featuring her voice include James Tenney's concerto, "Ain't I a Woman?" with text by Sojourner Truth, David Dramm's *Crosshair*, Rodney Sharman's *The Ecstasy of St. Teresa*, Vinko Globokar's *Janus*, and William Kirkpatrick's *Stations of the Cross*.

Uitti has collaborated with and is the dedicatee of composers Luigi Nono, Louis Andriessen, James Tenney, Jonathan Harvey, John Cage, Karen Tanaka, Per Nørgård, Giacinto Scelsi, Elliott Sharp, György Kurtág, Richard Barrett, Guus Janssen, Jay Alan Yim, Vinko Globokar, Clarence Barlow, David Dramm, Geoffrey King, Martijn Padding, Horatiu Radulescu, Calliope Tsoupaki, and Peter Nelson, among many others. She collaborates in duo with Mark Dresser, and with Evan Parker, Joel Ryan, Misha Mengelberg, David Wessel, and other legends of the jazz world as well as with DJ Low, Scanner etc, and artists Stansfield/Hooykaas, Marina Abramovic, Steina Vasulka, and Frank Scheffer. While living in Rome, she worked closely with Giacinto Scelsi, not only as dedicatee of all the cello works, but also transcribing from his archive and improvising together, from 1975 until his death in 1988. Uitti premiered his newly discovered cello concerto at the Angelica Festival, Teatro Comunale Bologna in 2006.

She was guest professor at Oberlin Conservatory for 2 years, and was awarded the Regents' Lectureship both at the University of California Berkeley and at University of California San Diego. She gives master classes worldwide for composers and string players at conservatories and universities including Yale, Princeton, Stanford, and University of Illinois, as well as having the Fromm Foundation Fellowship to teach during a residency at Harvard University. Ms. Uitti is finishing a massive book commissioned by the University of California Press on *New Cello Techniques* covering music from the 1915 Kodály Sonata to the present day.

In 2003, Uitti commissioned a custom-designed electric 6-string cello from Seattle luthier Eric Jensen, which she later enhanced ergonomically with sensors at CNMAT (University of California, Berkeley) working with David Wessel, Adrian Freed and Michael F. Zbyszynski. She returned to CNMAT in 2008 to design and construct a 12-stringless meta-cello with Adrian Freed. She recently acquired an aluminum cello made by the Pfretzner luthier family in 1929 (aluminum instruments were also used by Jascha Heifetz and Efram Zimbalist). She has recorded and performed on the Mongolian *morin choor*, a custom-built Uzbeki *sato*, and an original Stroh one-stringed cello.

As inventor Uitti has developed a difference-tone resonator that strongly amplifies the beating and subtle "ghost tone" produced by chordal playing. She has redesigned and built 5 prototype-bows under tutelage of bowmaker Andreas Grutter, to further facilitate her work with two bows in one hand. At the request of Scelsi, she redesigned the metallic mutes used in the String Quartet #2 and *Triphon* for solo cello.

Uitti has recorded on ECM, Wergo, Hat Hut Records, CRI, BvHaast, JdKproductions, Cryptogramophone, Sargasso, and CRI.

Michael Jon Fink has composed concertos for soprano saxophone, bass clarinet, violin and cello, as well as incidental music for two plays by W.B. Yeats and three by

Wajdi Mouawad. He recently composed the score for Tareq Daoud's short dramatic film *La Salle des Maîtres*, an Official Selection of the Film Festival Locarno. His *Prelude to Alone* for clarinets, trombones and electric guitar will appear on the soon-to-be-released "Cold Blue Two" Anthology (Cold Blue Records). M.J.F. has been a composer/improviser with experimental and new music groups that have included the Negative Band, Musica Veneris Nocturnus, Stillife and Ghost Duo; and currently plays electric guitar with Pickaxe (noise), Gods of Rain (experimental metal), the Feedback Wave Riders (free improv) and Trio Through the Looking-Glass (jazz-inflected). For the last thirty years he has served on the faculty of the Herb Albert School of Music at the California Institute of the Arts where he teaches composition, orchestration and analysis. His music appears on the Cold Blue, Centaur, Contagion, C.R.I., Trance Port, Raptoria Caam and Wire Tapper labels.

Gregory Moore studied linguistics at U.C. Berkeley, and electronic music at CalArts. For 16 years he has produced concerts and recordings and hosted musical residencies at Maybeck Studio in Berkeley. He has collaborated and performed with musicians from around the world, and is currently writing a piece for Luciano Chessa's 100th-anniversary celebration of the Italian Futurist Intonarumori project.

Karen Tanaka is an exceptionally versatile composer and pianist. She was born in Tokyo where she started piano and composition lessons as a child. During her studies at Toho Gakuen School of Music in Tokyo, she won several major awards in Japan and Europe for her composition, including prizes at the Viotti and Trieste international competitions and the Japan Symphony Foundation Award. In 1986 she moved to Paris to study with Tristan Murail and work at IRCAM. In 1987, she was awarded the Gaudeamus Prize at the International Music Week in Amsterdam. She studied with Luciano Berio in Florence in 1990–91. In 1998 she was appointed Co-Artistic Director of the Yatsugatake Kogen Music Festival, previously directed by Toru Takemitsu. Her works have been performed by distinguished orchestras and ensembles worldwide including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Symphony Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Kronos Quartet, Brodsky Quartet, BIT20 Ensemble in Norway, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen and Kent Nagano. Various choreographers and dance companies, including Wayne McGregor and Nederlands Dans Theater, have often featured her music.

A recipient of the Rome Prize and the Berlin Prize, **Ken Ueno** is a composer/vocalist who is currently an Associate Professor at UC Berkeley. Ensembles and performers who have played Ken's music include Kim Kashkashian and Robyn Schulkowsky,

Mayumi Miyata, Teodoro Anzellotti, Wendy Richman, Greg Oakes, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, the Nieuw Ensemble, and Frances-Marie Uitti. His music has been performed at such venues as Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MusikTriennale Köln Festival, the Muziekgebouw, Ars Musica, the Hopkins Center, Spoleto USA, STEIM, and at the Norfolk Music Festival. Ken's piece for the Hilliard Ensemble, *Shiroi Ishi*, has been featured in their repertoire for over ten years, with performances at such venues as Queen Elizabeth Hall in England, the Vienna Konzerthaus, and was aired on Italian national radio RAI 3. Another work, *Pharmakon*, was performed dozens of times nationally by Eighth Blackbird during their 2001–2003 seasons. A portrait concert of Ken's was featured on MaerzMusik in Berlin in 2011. As a vocalist, he specializes in extended techniques and has collaborated in improvisations with Joey Baron, Robyn Schulkowsky, Joan Jeanrenaud, Ikue Mori, Tim Feeney, and David Wessel amongst others. Ken holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University. A monograph CD of three orchestral concertos was released on the Bmop/sound label. For more information, please visit: <http://kenueno.com>

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES AT REDCAT

March 24

Morton Subotnick and the California E.A.R. Unit: From *Silver Apples to A Sky of Cloudless Sulphur*: Revisited

March 31 – April 1

STUDIO: Spring 2012

April 5 – 8

Dayna Hanson: *Gloria's Cause*

April 12 – 13

KarmetiK Machine Orchestra: *Samsara*

April 14 – 15

My Barbarian: Post-Living Ante-Action Theater

April 18 – 19

New Zealand in L.A.

April 28 – 29

Wunderbaum: *Songs at the End of the World*

For more information visit redcat.org