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11-29-2012

## **New Music Ensemble**

Chapman New Music Ensemble

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# New Music Ensemble

Paul Sherman, Director

November 29, 2012



fall 2012

 **CHAPMAN**  
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# FALL 2012 calendar highlights

## september

September 27-29, October 4-6

**Company**, Book by George Furth, Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Directed by Todd Nielsen, Music Direction by Bill Brown

## october

October 19-21

Opera Chapman presents **"2012: An Opera Odyssey – The Journey Continues"**

Peter Atherton, Artistic Director, Carol Neblett, Associate Director, David Alt, Assistant Director

October 26

**Chapman University Choir and Women's Choir in Concert**

Stephen Coker and Angel Vázquez-Ramos, Conductors

## november

November 2-3

**American Celebration**

Dale A. Merrill, Artistic Director and Producer

William Hall, Music Director and Conductor

November 7-11

**If All the Sky Were Paper**

By Andrew Carroll, Directed by John Benitz

November 10

**Chapman University Wind Symphony**

Paul Sherman, Music Director and Conductor

November 12

**University Singers in Concert**

Stephen Coker, Conductor

November 16

**Chapman Chamber Orchestra**

Daniel Alfred Wachs, Music Director and Conductor

November 28-December 1

**Fall Dance Concert**

Directed by Jennifer Backhaus

## december

December 7-8

**49th Annual Holiday Wassail - Banquet and Concert**

Presented by the University Choir and University Singers, Stephen Coker, Conductor,

University Women's Choir, Angel Vázquez-Ramos, Conductor, and the Chapman University Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Alfred Wachs, Conductor

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*presents the*

Chapman New Music Ensemble

Paul Sherman, *Guest Director*



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November 29, 2012 ■ 8:00 P.M.

Salmon Recital Hall

## Program

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*Ebb and Flow* James Gaskin  
for piano and flute

*Two Prayer Settings* Mell Powel  
for voice, oboe, violin, viola, cello  
I. "Lo, fainter now lie spread the shades of Night"  
II. "My world, my only!"

*Village on Stilts* Matthew Owensby  
for string Quartet

*Serenade* Alfred Schnittke  
for clarinet, violin, contra bass, piano, percussion

~Intermission~

*Spartorii* Daniel John Gibson  
for string quartet

*Charisma* (1971) Iannis Xenakis  
for alto sax and contra bass trans. Colin Horrocks and Kevin Baker

*Inner Song* Elliott Carter  
for solo oboe

*Suite for Summer* Stephen Hartke  
for flute, oboe, clarinet, violin, cello

*Free Improvisation*  
Chapman New Music Ensemble

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## Chapman New Music Ensemble

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Guest Director.....Paul Sherman

Conductor.....Johannes Löhner

Tenor.....James Gaskin

Flute.....Bella Staav

Oboe.....Kyle Chatleton, Paul Sherman

Clarinet.....Kristen Yu

Alto Saxophone .....Colin Horrocks

Violin.....Cody Bursch, Michael Flemming,  
D.J. Gibson, Matthew Owensby

Viola.....Matthew Owensby

Piano .....Connor Bogenreif, Johannes Löhner,  
Kristi McKinley

Percussion.....Joy Liu

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## Director's Note

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It has been a great pleasure to work with the Chapman New Music Ensemble this semester. In my own life new music has had a place of great prominence and importance. I grew up working for the Ojai Music Festival where I was given the opportunity to work with great composers and performers like Messiaen, Xenakis, Berio, Carter and Boulez. Now when I say working with, I mean getting them lunch and driving them around, but none the less an introduction to their music created an understanding that music is not a “culture of the museum” we live in but is a living, breathing and vibrant art form. I hope that this semester’s performers have gained some of this understanding and passion as well. After the death of Elliott Carter I decided to add his *Inner Song* for solo oboe. In 1990 I was on hand for the second performance of his violin concerto performed by Ole Bohn. Ole decided that he simply could not play and keep up with the page turns. So suddenly there I was, on stage turning pages for a violinist for a concerto that I could barely follow on the page. I vowed then to learn to play this music and to understand it. Someday I hope to reach that goal.

Thanks to these wonderful young musicians and to Professor Heim for trusting me with his ensemble for the semester.

## Text

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Mel Powell “Two Prayer Settings”

I. Prayer by Pope Gregory I, c. 540-504

Lo, fainter now lie spread the shades of night,  
And upward spread the trembling gleams of morn;  
Suppliant we bend before the Lord of Light,  
And pray at early dawn,  
That His sweet charity may all our sin Gorgive,  
And make our miseries to cease;  
May grant us health, grant us the gift divine  
Of ever lasting peace.

II. St. Augustine’s Confessions, book 8

My world, my only!

As I see soberly the necessity that thus I fail,  
And my hurts proportioned to my just deserts;  
That’s fine!

As any truth is fine.

But that I change I do not find nor that I triumph  
by embracing my fate, nor that I Suffer less.

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## Program Notes

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*Ebb and Flow*, as the title suggests, mimics rising and falling of tides. Individual phrases take on the contour of waves, swelling towards a goal and receding towards the end of a phrase. Additionally, the occasionally unusual modulations of the theme can be felt like the sometimes unpredictable, yet familiar directions of ocean waves.

–J. Gaskin

In the *Two Prayer Settings*, the strings are treated as a single polyphonic instrument and set against the oboe and the voice. The work is so rooted in the delivery of the texts that often they can be understood as normal discourse. Thus, the most complex passages occur when the voice is silent as, for example, at the opening of the second setting.

–Mel Powell

My *Suite for Summer*, commissioned by the Chamber Music Conference and Composers' Forum of the East, for performance in Bennington, Vermont in the Summer of 2004, is, in fact, a recomposition for a quintet of winds and strings of three piano pieces originally written as gifts for dear friends. The first, titled here "Sonatina for George," was composed in honor of George Rochberg's 70th birthday, and borrows some of its thematic material from the first movement of his first string quartet. The second, "Waltz for Lisa," was composed as a gift for my wife, and is a study in minor and major seventh chords. The last movement, "Sonatina for Don," was also a birthday present, in this case for Don Crockett's 40th.

- S. Hartke

*Spartorii* (pronounced Spar-tore-eye-ee, literally “String Quartet, One, Written in Winter”) is the first piece written in series of works with no real focus, other than an unusual system of titling. The title is a word that does not exist in any earthly language and serves as a way to say something standard, such as String Quartet in F-flat Augmented No.531 Op.1, but still contributes a programmatic element to ignite a listener’s imagination.

–D.J. Gibson

At the top of *Charisma's* first page, the composer quotes the *Iliad*: “then the soul like smoke moved into the earth, grinding.” Xenakis wrote this work in memory of French composer Jean-Pierre Guézec, his student at Tanglewood in Massachusetts, in the year of Guézec’s death. As I listen to this piece, I can see this voyage’s smoky haze in the long, held tones, feel its disturbing cause in the sudden high notes and acoustic “beating,” and hear the ‘grinding soul’ in the cello’s harsh scratch tones and the clarinet’s dissonant multi-phonics. Nouritza Matossian, Xenakis’s biographer, wrote that the composer was indistinguishable from his music, and this work, with its unpredictable, vacillating extremes

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## Program Notes

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in energy, seems to parallel his tumultuous life and constantly churning intellect. As in much of his other music, he expands the timbral possibilities of the clarinet and cello, in isolation and together, challenging both the performers and listeners with distinctive new sounds emanating from familiar instruments. The score's extended techniques include microtonal pitch variations and deliberately detuned passages that create audible "beats," caused by the interference of closely related sound waves, along with extremely high clarinet notes and extensive multi-phonics, key clicks, cello scratch tones, and, at the end of the work, the lowest cello string tuned an octave down. A controversial piece sometimes criticized for a lack of musicality or informed part writing, I hear the musicality manifest itself in the piece's utmost sensitivity to timbre and dynamics, as well as its successful programmatic elements. The writing is fertile and innovative in its drive to extend the limits of sound production and combination within a musical context.

- Alex Kotch

*The Village on Stilts* is based on a transcription of a dream, which weaves its way through each of the three movements:

**Movement I:** The scene begins at dusk, the dreamer finds himself in a rickety wooden village, standing above an endless black abyss, the buildings supported by wooden poles stretching down beyond the darkness below. There are strange people here, seemingly impoverished, yet sinister and maniacal. They proceed with their lives, oblivious to the threat of the abyss. The Jig shows a scene in the marketplace, bustling with people moving quickly, shouting over each other, pushing and shoving each other to get to their destinations. There is a drunkard hollering about being saved, but he is generally ignored.

The Habanera introduces an unusual character: a slender young woman with blood red hair. With so much of the scene drab and filled with shades of brown, the bright hair of the woman cannot be ignored by the dreamer, yet she is ignored by the general populace. She is illusive, appearing only for seconds, flashing a grin, and disappearing, as if warning of a violent fate. The Jazz Ride describes a gang of suspicious characters loitering away from the crowds. They chat rapidly amongst themselves and trade glances at the rest of the village. The villagers then begin to shut themselves away in their homes with great haste, as fear sets in.

**Movement II:** The night has progressed and the townspeople have shut themselves away in their homes. The dreamer remains outside, wandering, seeking shelter. A lurking fear alerts the dreamer that something is amiss, but it is too late. Slowly, the village on stilts begins to crumble as a monstrous entity begins to rise up from the abyss. Although never explicitly seen, the beast slowly devours the village as the dreamer frantically searches for stable footing. The chaos is over suddenly as the village and the monstrosity disappear altogether without a trace.

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**Movement III:** The dreamer now sits alone on a cliff overlooking the abyss. Peace has been restored and only the last of the dust has yet to settle from where the village on stilts had been. Just below the cliff, there is a whirlpool of bright blues and reds which swirl endlessly, never mixing, and posing no threat. The sun rises on the great abyss.

-Matthew Owensby

*Inner Song*, the second part of my *Trilogy* for oboe and harp, composed for those great performers and dear friends, Ursula and Heinz Holliger, has as its motto the last two stanzas of Rainer Maria Rilke's Sonette an Orpheus, II. 10.

*Aber noch ist uns das Dasein verzaubert; an hundert  
Stellen ist es noch Ursprung. Ein Spielen von reinen  
Kräften, die keener berührt, der nicht kniet und bewundert.*

*Worte geben noch zart am Unsäglichen aus...  
Und die Musik, immer neu, aus den bebendsten Steinen,  
baut im unbrauchbaren Raum ihr vergöttliches Haus.*

*But existence is still enchanting for us; in hundreds of places it is still  
pristine, A play of pure forces, which no one can touch without kneeling  
and adoring.*

*Words still peter out into what cannot be expressed...  
And music, ever new, builds out of the most tremulous stones her divinely  
consecrated house in unexploitable space.*

Each of the three sections of *Trilogy* was written for a special occasion. *Inner Song*, for solo oboe, was written for a festival of Stefan Wolpe's music in Witten, Germany, in April, 1992, for Heinz Holliger to perform, to whom it is dedicated. The fascinating friendship with Wolpe is a very treasured memory.

-Elliott Carter

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## Artists

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**James Gaskin** is a freshman composition major from Redwood City with piano and guitar as primary instruments. His pieces pull from a variety of his musical experiences in high school such as classical piano, choirs, worship music, jazz, and new age instrumental music.

Born 12 February 1923 in New York, **Mel Powell** began his musical life as a prodigious jazz artist, working as pianist and arranger with the Benny Goodman Orchestra and later, the Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band. Soon, however, a strong compositional instinct prompted his matriculation at Yale University, where he studied with Paul Hindemith. Under Hindemith, and throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, Powell composed primarily in a neoclassic style producing such works as the **Cantilena Concertante** for English horn and orchestra, **Divertimento** for violin and harp, and **Trio** for piano, violin and cello.

In 1959, Powell's musical personality blossomed and the influence of Webern was manifested in a brevity of forms and transparency of textures. An innovative and consistently adventurous musical style embraced experimentation with extended string techniques and invented notations (as in the **Filigree Setting** for string quartet), musical blocks of chords, pitch sequences, rhythms, and colors (represented in **Modules: An Intermezzo** for chamber orchestra), and tape and electronics (such as in the song cycle **Strand Settings: Darker**). **Duplicates: A Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra** was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1990 and illustrates Powell's meticulous craftsmanship and singular skill at assembling richly expressive yet intricately complex musical structures.

Powell was one of the instrumental founders of the California Institute of the Arts. He served as dean of the music school from 1969 to 1978, and, at the time of his death on 24 April 1998, he held the Roy E. Disney endowed chair in music composition

**Daniel John Gibson** is a Composition major with a minor in Germanic Studies at Chapman University who has been seen with a violin from time to time. He enjoys using counterpoint, unusual sonorities, meter confusion and Arnold Schwarzenegger quotations in his music. In his free time, "D.J." likes to waste free time, and he plans to return to his bagpipe study when he gets more free time. He intends to complete his degree in the winter of 2012.

**Stephen Hartke** is widely recognized as one of the leading composers of his generation, whose work has been hailed for both its singularity of voice and the inclusive breadth of its inspiration. Born in Orange, New Jersey, in 1952, Hartke grew up in Manhattan where he began his musical career as a professional boy chorister, performing with such organizations as the New York Pro Musica, the New York Philharmonic, the American Symphony Orchestra, and the Metropolitan Opera. Following studies at Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of California at Santa Barbara, interrupted by stints as advertising manager for several major music publishers, Hartke taught in Brazil as Fulbright Professor at the Universidade de São Paulo, before joining the University of Southern California faculty in 1987.

**Iannis Xenakis** (1922-2001) was a Greek composer who spent much of his life in Paris, France. He is acclaimed as one of the most important composers of contemporary music.

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He was born in Brăila, Romania, and studied architecture in Athens, Greece. Xenakis participated in the Greek Resistance during the World War II and the first phase of Greek Civil War as a member of the students company Lord Byron of ELAS (Greek Peoples Liberation Army). He received a severe face wound and escaped a death sentence. In the '50s he fled to Paris and worked with Le Corbusier. While his assistant, Xenakis designed the Philips Pavilion, home of the première of Edgar Varèse's *Poème Électronique* at the 1958 Brussels International Fair.

He studied music composition with Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, and Olivier Messiaen. He is particularly remembered for his pioneering electronic and computer music, and for the use of stochastic mathematical techniques in his compositions, including probability (Maxwell-Boltzmann kinetic theory of gases in *Pithoprakta*, aleatory distribution of points on a plane in *Diamorphoses*, minimal constraints in *Achorriopsis*, Gaussian distribution in *ST/10* and *Atrées*, Markovian chains in *Analogiques*), game theory (in *Duel* and *Stratégie*), group theory (Nomos Alpha), and Boolean algebra (in *Herma* and *Eonta*). In keeping with his use of probabilistic theories, many of Xenakis' pieces are, in his own words, 'a form of composition which is not the object in itself, but an idea in itself, that is to say, the beginnings of a family of compositions'. In 1962 he published *Musique Formelles*—later revised, expanded and translated into *Formalized Music: Thought and Mathematics in Composition* in 1971—a collection of essays on his musical ideas and composition techniques, regarded as one of the most important theoretical works of 20th century music.

Twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize, first composer to receive the United States National Medal of Arts, one of the few composers ever awarded Germany's Ernst Von Siemens Music Prize, and in 1988 made "Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" by the Government of France, **Elliott Carter** is internationally recognized as one of the leading American voices of the classical music tradition. He recently received the Prince Pierre Foundation Music Award and is one of only a handful of living composers elected to the Classical Music Hall of Fame. Carter was recognized by the Pulitzer Prize Committee for the first time in 1960 for his groundbreaking String Quartet No. 2. Igor Stravinsky hailed Carter's *Double Concerto* for harpsichord, piano, and two chamber orchestras (1961) and Piano Concerto (1967), as "masterpieces."

Of his creative output exceeding 130 works, Carter composed more than 40 pieces in the past decade alone. This astonishing late-career creative burst has resulted in a number of brief solo and chamber works, as well as major essays such as *Asko Concerto* (2000) for Holland's ASKO Ensemble. Some chamber works include *What Are Years* (2009), *Nine by Five* (2009), and *Two Thoughts About the Piano* (2005–06), now widely toured by Pierre-Laurent Aimard. Carter continues to show his mastery in larger forms as well, with major contributions such as *What Next?* (1997–98), *Boston Concerto* (2002), *Three Illusions for Orchestra* (2004), called by the *Boston Globe* "surprising, inevitable, and vividly orchestrated," *Flute Concerto* (2008), a piano concerto, *Interventions* (2007), which premiered on Carter's 100th birthday concert at Carnegie Hall with James Levine, Daniel Barenboim, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra (December 11, 2008), and the song cycle *A Sunbeam's Architecture* (2010).

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