

The Smithsonian Associates Presents

# 21st CENTURY CONSORT

April 5, 2008

Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium,  
Smithsonian American Art Museum

The Smithsonian Associates and  
The Smithsonian American Art Museum  
present



The Smithsonian Associates

# 21st Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director  
Peter Robinson, Manager

Elisabeth Adkins, Violin  
Cantate Chamber Singers

Gisele Becker, Music Director

Paul Cigan, Clarinet

Lisa Emenheiser, Piano

Tom Jones, Percussion

Jacqueline Leclair, Oboe

William Sharp, Baritone

Sara Stern, Flute

Rachel Young, Cello

Antonino d'Urzo, Recording Engineer

Curt Wittig, Director of Recording Emeritus

Saturday, April 5, 2008

Pre-Concert Discussion 4:00 p.m.

Concert 5:00 p.m.

Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium

Smithsonian American Art Museum



The 21st Century Consort's 2007-2008 Season is sponsored by  
The Smithsonian Associates and The Smithsonian American Art Museum and  
funded in part by generous contributions from The Argosy Foundation  
Contemporary Music Fund, The Cafritz Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund  
for Music, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the Board  
and Friends of the 21st Century Consort.

## Pre-Concert Discussion

Christopher Kendall with Bruce MacCombie,  
James Primosch, David Froom

## Program

### "Music of Color and Light"

in recognition of the current Smithsonian American Art Museum  
exhibition "Color as Field: American Painting, 1950-1975"

Rothko-Tobey Continuum . . . . . Evan Chambers

Ms. Adkins

By a Departing Light . . . . . Libby Larsen

1. Bind me — I Can Still Sing
2. In this Short Life
3. By a Departing Light
4. Adrift! A Little Boat Adrift!

Cantate Chamber Singers, Ms. Becker

Iridule . . . . . Charles Wuorinen

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Cigan, Ms. Emenheiser, Mr. Jones, Mr Kendall,  
Ms. Leclair, Ms. Stern, Ms. Young

### INTERMISSION

Color and Time . . . . . Bruce MacCombie

1. Harmony
2. Heat
3. Leaf
4. Time

Cantate Chamber Singers, Ms Becker

Lightscares. . . . . David Froom

- I: Radiant
- II: Coruscating
- III: Lambent

Ms Emenheiser, Ms Stern

Dark the Star (world premiere). . . . . James Primosch

- 1) *Dark the Star* - Susan Stewart
- 2) *Rose* - Rainer Maria Rilke
- 3) *Shadow/Shadow* - Susan Stewart
- 4) *Nights Like These* - Rainer Maria Rilke
- 5) *From Psalm 116*
- 6) *Rose* - Rainer Maria Rilke
- 7) *Shadow/Lintel* - Susan Stewart
- 8) *Losing Also is Ours* - Rainer Maria Rilke
- 9) *Dark the Star* - Susan Stewart

Mr. Cigan, Ms. Emenheiser, Mr. Jones, Mr. Kendall, Mr. Sharp, Ms. Young



The audience is invited to join the artists in the lobby for an informal post-concert reception, sponsored by the Board and Friends of the 21st Century Consort.

# Program Notes and Texts

## *Rothko-Tobey Continuum*

**Evan Chambers**

Evan Chambers (b 1963, Alexandria, Louisiana) is currently Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Composition at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance. He serves as resident composer with the new-music ensemble Quorum.

Chambers' compositions have been performed by the Cincinnati, Kansas City, Memphis, New Hampshire, and Albany Symphonies; he won first prize in the Cincinnati Symphony Competition, and in 1998 was awarded the Walter Beeler Prize by Ithaca College. His work has been recognized by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Luigi Russolo Competition, Vienna Modern Masters, NACUSA, the American Composers Forum, and the Tampa Bay Composers Forum. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Consort performed the composer's *Firehose Reel* on 11/9/02. He has been a resident of the MacDowell Colony, and been awarded individual artist grants from Meet the Composer, the Arts Foundation of Michigan and ArtServe Michigan. His composition teachers include William Albright, Leslie Bassett, Nicholas Thorne, and Marilyn Shrude, with studies in electronic music with George Wilson and Burton Beerman. Recordings have been released by Albany Records, the Foundation Russolo-Pratella, Cambria, Clarinet Classics, Equilibrium, and Centaur. His solo chamber music disk (*Cold Water, Dry Stone*) is available on Albany records.

The composer writes:

The title *Rothko-Tobey Continuum* refers to the artists Mark Rothko and Mark Tobey. I have often felt that the work of these two painters was related in spirit, approaching a similar sensibility through different means: luminous floating planes in Rothko's work, and highly charged calligraphic line in Tobey's paintings. With this in mind, I have constructed the piece around two contrasting treatments of the same musical material, treatments that were inspired by, but are not imitative of the distinctive character of the paintings. There is a lyrical quality to the work of both men,

in spite of the abstractness of the images that they produced—this manifests itself in the melodic line of the solo part. The taped material was generated using the algorithmic composition program M; all of the note data was generated by processing the four chords that end the piece. The work was completed in July 1992 (originally for violin and live performance system) using a Macintosh computer and a Yamaha SY99 synthesizer.

### ***By a Departing Light***

**Libby Larsen**

Libby Larsen is one of America's most prolific living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 220 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to full orchestral and choral scores. Larsen has received numerous awards, including a 1994 Grammy as producer of the CD *The Art of Arlene Augér*, featuring Larsen's Sonnets from the Portuguese. Her opera *Frankenstein, The Modern Prometheus* was selected as one of the eight best classical music events of 1990 by *USA Today*. She has held residencies with the California Institute of the Arts, the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, the Philadelphia School of the Arts, the Cincinnati Conservatory, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony. Her works are recorded on such labels as Angel/EMI, Nonesuch, Decca, and Koch International.

Holder of the 2003-2004 Harissios Papamarkou Chair in Education at the Library of Congress and recipient of the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as well as a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Libby Larsen is an active, articulate champion of the music and musicians of our time. In 1973, she co-founded (with Stephen Paulus) the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composers Forum. She is currently completing a book, *The Concert Hall That Fell Asleep and Woke Up as a Car Radio*.

"By a Departing Light" (1999) was commissioned and premiered by the Kansas City Chorale in October 2000, with Charles Bruffy as director. The piece presents four poems by American poet Emily Dickinson (1830 - 1886).

1 Bind me — I still can sing —  
Banish — my mandolin  
Strikes true within —  
Slay — and my soul shall rise  
Chanting to Paradise —  
Still thine

2 In this short life  
That only lasts an hour  
How much — how little — is  
Within our power

3 By a departing light  
we see acuter, quite,  
by a wick that stays.  
There's something in the flight  
that clarifies the sight  
and decks the rays.

4 Adrift! A little boat adrift!  
And night is coming down!  
Will no one guide a little boat  
Unto the nearest town?

So Sailors say — on yesterday—  
Just as the dusk was brown  
One little boat gave up its strife  
And gurgled down and down.

So angels say — on yesterday —  
Just as the dawn was red  
One little boat — o'erspent with gales —  
Retrimmed its masts — redecked its sails —  
And shot — exultant on!

### ***Iridule***

**Charles Wuorinen**

**Charles Wuorinen** (b. 1938, New York) is one of the world's leading composers. His many honors include a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and the Pulitzer Prize (the youngest composer to receive the award). His compositions encompass every form and medium, including works for orchestra, chamber ensemble, soloists, ballet, and stage. Recent works include

*Theologoumenon* for James Levine and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; *Fourth Piano Concerto* for Peter Serkin, James Levine and the Boston Symphony; *Flying to Kabani*, commissioned by Carnegie Hall for Peter Serkin and the Orchestra of St. Luke's; and his opera, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, based on the novel of Salman Rushdie.

Wuorinen has been described as a "maximalist," writing music luxuriant with events, lyrical and expressive, strikingly dramatic. His works are characterized by powerful harmonies and elegant craftsmanship, offering at once a link to the music of the past and a vision of a rich musical future. Both as composer and performer (conductor and pianist) Wuorinen has worked with some of the finest performers of the current time and his works reflect the great virtuosity of his collaborators. His works have been recorded on nearly a dozen labels including several releases on Naxos, Albany Records (Charles Wuorinen Series), John Zorn's Tzadik label, and a CD of piano works performed by Alan Feinberg on the German label Col Legno. Wuorinen is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

*Iridule* is scored for oboe with six players (flute, bass clarinet, violin, cello, vibraphone/marimba, piano). The work is roughly 14 and ½ minutes and dedicated to Jacqueline Leclair and the New Millennium Ensemble. The title comes from Nabokov:

...and that rare phenomenon  
The iridule — when, beautiful and strange,  
In a bright sky above a mountain range  
One opal cloudlet in a oval form  
Reflects the rainbow of a thunderstorm  
Which in a distant valley has been staged....

-Vladimir Nabokov in *Pale Fire*

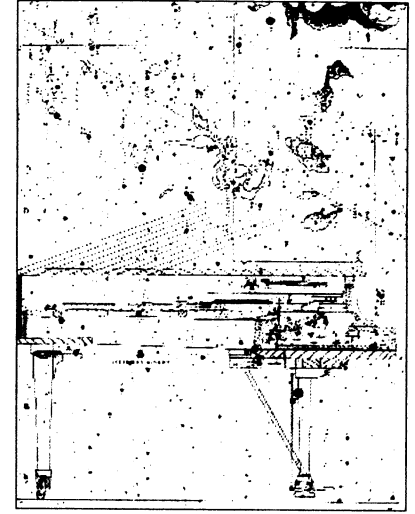
*Iridule* was made possible with the support of the Argosy Foundation, the Evelyn Sharp Foundation, the Hanson Institute for American Music of the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester, the Amphion Foundation, and private individuals. Grateful acknowledgement is made to Marianne Gythfeldt for her role in coordinating the commission.

## *Color and Time* **Bruce MacCombie**

Bruce MacCombie was born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1943. He first studied composition with Philip Bezanson at the University of Massachusetts, where he earned a B.A. in 1967 and an M.M in 1968. He also studied with Wolfgang Fortner at the Freiburg Conservatory and holds a Ph.D. in music from the University of Iowa. In 1975, after four years in Europe, he was appointed to the Music Theory faculty at Yale University and one year later was appointed to the Composition faculty at the Yale School of Music. While at Yale he coordinated an annual series of new music concerts and taught various seminars relating to 20th Century music literature.

In 1979, MacCombie was awarded one of the first Goddard Lieberon Fellowships by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The award noted that "Mr. MacCombie composes polished gems of musical understatement. Characterized by a fresh and penetrating wit, they sparkle and yet are clothed in mystery." During the 1979 - 80 season, various works were presented by Composers Forum in New York, where Bernard Holland, writing in the New York Times, referred to MacCombie as "a deft and evocative craftsman." Since then, his works have been commissioned by organizations such as the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Seattle Symphony, the 20th Century Consort, the Jerome Foundation, and the International Guitar Foundation. Performances have been given at Carnegie Hall, the Seattle Opera House, the Kennedy Center, the Warsaw Autumn Festival, the Hong Kong Arts Festival, Alice Tully Hall, the Hirshhorn Museum, the Royal Academy of Music, and other venues and festivals throughout the U.S. and Europe.

From 1980 to 1986 MacCombie served as Director of Publications for G.Schirmer and Associated Music Publishers,



from 1986 to 1992 as Dean of The Juilliard School, from 1992 to 2001 as Dean of the School for the Arts at Boston University, and since 2002 as Professor of Music and Associate Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he has also been awarded an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts.

The composer writes:

*Color and Time* is a set of four unaccompanied choral pieces commissioned by the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts, where they were first performed in 1988. The texts were selected from a group of poems by Thomas E. Bezanson, who was requested to provide poetry reminiscent of an earlier time spent in Amherst.

### 1. Harmony

Celebrate in season song,  
Put proof aside and come along,  
With us in truth abide,  
While, for awhile, in harmony hide.

### 2. Heat

Heat burning down  
Green turning yellow, and brown  
Dusty heat, field heat grasses  
Blown around  
Their color left in the wind

Blue breezes burning  
Turning grey into the night  
Longing in the night wind  
Frosty dawn revival  
Melting yellow with the light.

### 3. Leaf

Leaf explosion  
soul's delight  
Fall drive  
full spectrum site

The tall old trees  
Through years of winter still  
Dot the yard  
And quilt the hill.

### 4. Time

In lost watch cold time,  
the sun she shines  
Lightly lightly and lowly.

In lost breath frost time  
the grass grows grey  
Hardly hardly and slowly.

In skink heart fog time,  
while shadows pass  
Homely homely and lonely

On the way to bud bright green time,  
the sun she shines  
Brightly brightly and finally.

In addition to writing poetry, Thomas Bezanson is a partner and managing director of the law firm of Chadbourne and Parke in New York City. He holds a B.A. from Grinnell College and an M.A. from Rutgers University Law School. He is a member of the American Bar Association, the New York State Bar Association, and the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. He served for several years as a board member of Composers Forum, Inc. and has also served on the board of the Orchestra of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. He and his wife Janie live in Scarsdale, NY. They have two sons, Philip and Jeffrey.

## ***Lightscapes***

### **David Froom**

David Froom was born in California in 1951. His music has been performed extensively throughout the United States by major orchestras, ensembles, and soloists, including, among many others, the Louisville, Seattle, Utah, and Chesapeake Symphony Orchestras, The United States Marine and Navy Bands, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Twentieth Century Consort, the New York New Music Ensemble, violinist Curtis Macomber, and saxophonist Kenneth Tse; he also has had performances in England, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Holland, China, and Australia. His music is available on CD on the Bridge, Delos, Arabesque, Capriccio, Centaur, Sonora, Crystal, Opus 3, and West Point Academy labels, and much of it is published by MMB Music, Inc.

Among the many organizations that have bestowed honors on him are the American Academy of Arts and Letters (Academy Award, Ives Scholarship); the Guggenheim, Fromm, Koussevitzky, and Barlow Foundations; the Kennedy Center (first prize in the Friedheim Awards); the National Endowment for the Arts; and the state of Maryland (four Individual Artist Awards). He had a Fulbright grant for study at Cambridge University, and fellowships to the Tanglewood Music Festival, the Wellesley Composers Conference, and the MacDowell Colony. He has taught at the University of Utah, the Peabody Conservatory, and, since 1989, St. Mary's College of Maryland, where he is professor and chair of the music department. Mr. Froom was educated at the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Southern California, and Columbia University. His main composition teachers were Chou Wen-chung, Mario Davidovsky, Alexander Goehr, and William Kraft.

The composer writes:

"*Lightscapes*" is in three movements and is about ten minutes long. Each of the movement titles refers to light. The first movement, "Radiant," moves gently and evenly, with ideas flowing smoothly between the piano and flute. The second movement, "Coruscating," drives forward with strong rhythmic momentum, and uses a small number of ideas that recur in various guises at unpredictable times as a way of evoking brilliant light glinting in

different directions off a single entity (like a crystal or a river). The last movement, "Lambent," is a kind of accompanied flute recitative, and uses spare and simple textures to create the impression of softly glowing light.

This work, commissioned by the Maryland State Music Teachers Association, was written in the fall of 2006 for the flutist Lucille Goeres (whose first name suggested the idea of music about light). She and the pianist Eliza Garth gave the premiere performance at St. Mary's College of Maryland in November of 2006. It was the winner of the 2007 MTNA national composers award.

## ***Dark the Star* (world premiere)**

### **James Primosch**

Born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1956, James Primosch studied at Cleveland State University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia University. He counts Mario Davidovsky, George Crumb and Richard Wernick among his principal teachers.

Primosch's instrumental, vocal, and electronic works have been performed throughout the United States and in Europe by such ensembles as the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Collage, the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Consort, and Speculum Musicae. His *Icons* was played at the ISCM/League of Composers World Music Days in Hong Kong, and Dawn Upshaw included a song by Mr. Primosch in her Carnegie Hall recital debut.

Among the honors he has received are the American Academy of Arts and Letters Goddard Lieberman Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Regional Artists Fellowship to the American Academy in Rome, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, the Stoeger Prize of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, a 2002 Fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and a fellowship to the Tanglewood Music Center. Primosch has received commissions from the Koussevitzky and Fromm Foundations, the Chicago Symphony, the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, the Folger Consort, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Speculum Musicae, pianist Lambert Orkis, the Barlow Endowment, Town Hall, the New York Youth Symphony, the Network for New Music, and the New York Camerata. In 1994 he served as composer-in-residence at the Marlboro Music Festival.

