

2017



*Birmingham*  
**New Music  
Festival**

Thursday 10/12 @ 7PM - ELECTROACOUSTIC  
Hulsey Recital Hall (UAB)

Friday 10/13 @ 7:30PM - MIOLINA DUO  
St Paul UMC (Civil Rights District)

Saturday 10/14 @ 1PM - YOUNG PIANISTS  
Alabama Piano Gallery (Vestavia)

Sunday 10/15 @ 2:30PM - THE BAMA PLAYERS  
Brock Recital Hall (Samford)

## 2017 / Fourth Annual Birmingham New Music Festival

Produced by the **Birmingham Art Music Alliance**, an autonomous nonprofit organization with the twofold mission of promoting music by Alabama composers and presenting concerts of recently created art music to communities in Birmingham and beyond.

### BAMA 2017-2018 Officers

President: Mark Lackey • VP of Membership: Brian C. Moon  
Secretary: Kenneth Kuhn • Treasurer: Matthew Scott Phillips

bama@artmusic.org

<http://artmusic.org>

### BNMF2017 Guest Artists

#### IOWA COMPOSERS FORUM



Craig Hultgren • Brooke Joyce • Aaron Israel Levin • Xingzimin Pan

#### MIOLINA DUO



Lynn Bechtold • Mioi Takeda (Photo by Mira Nitzberg)

# **Birmingham New Music Festival 2017**

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*We would love to see your photos of this year's festival!  
Tag them with #BNMF17 on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.*

# Birmingham New Music Festival 2017

## Concert 1: UAB Hulsey Recital Hall

950 13<sup>th</sup> Street South, Birmingham AL 35233

Thursday, October 12

7:00 pm

***Beatlings (Cello Club)*** for cello with electronics .....David Morneau\*  
Craig Hultgren, cello

***Suite for Fujara, Chitravenu, Viola, and Electronics*** ..... Geni Skendo  
Geni Skendo, fujara and chitravenu  
LaDonna Smith, viola  
Holland Hopson, electronics

***Minnehaha Miniatures*** ..... Lynn Bechtold  
Miolina Duo  
Mioi Takeda, violin; Lynn Bechtold, violin

***Meditation II*** ..... Matthew Scott Phillips  
two-channel stereo

***Tell a Gossip*** ..... Holland Hopson  
Holland Hopson, six-string banjo

***Wondrous Love for cello and electronics***.....Brooke Joyce\*\*  
Craig Hultgren, cello

***Procrustean Bed*** ..... Music by Melissa Grey  
Video by Nicole Antebi  
Miolina Duo  
Melissa Grey, Merlin

\* ICF guest artist

\*\*ICF Composer

Information about the composers, performers, and music is in the bios section of the program.

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## Concert 2: St. Paul United Methodist Church

1500 6th Ave N, Birmingham, AL 35203

Friday, October 13

7:30 pm

presented in partnership with  
Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of Central Alabama  
and Scrollworks

### **Miolina Duo**

Mioi Takeda, violin  
Lynn Bechtold, violin

***Across the Open Sky*** ..... Takuma Itoh  
Craig Hultgren, cello

***Dyad*** for violin duo ..... Mark Lackey

***Still Yet Already Again*** ..... Holland Hopson  
for 2 violins and live electronics

***What Could Have Been, Was, or Will Be*** ..... Brian C. Moon  
An Infinite Yet Temporary Journey of Finite Possibilities

***Recitative and Aria for Jean Baudrillard*** ..... Kyle McGucken

***Madera Resonante*** (2017) ..... Andrew Raffo Dewar  
For Two Violins and Live Electronics

***Winona's Lesson*** ..... Monroe Golden

Information about the composers, performers, and music is in the bios section of the program.

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## Concert 3: Alabama Piano Gallery

1425 Montgomery Hwy #151, Vestavia, AL 35216

Saturday, October 14

1:00 pm

### New Music for Young Pianists

This concert is presented in partnership with the Birmingham Metro Music Forum (AMTA).

The Birmingham Metro Music Forum is the Birmingham affiliate of the Alabama Music Teachers Association and the Music Teachers National Association. Founded originally as Birmingham Piano Teachers Forum, it became Birmingham Metro Music Forum in order to include teachers of all music disciplines.

**Jude** ..... Kyle McGucken  
Anna Grace Steele, student of Cathy Shelton

**For Dmitri** (duet) ..... William Price  
Samuel & Gabriel Coleman, students of Nadya Bogdan

**Benediction** ..... William Price  
Caitlin Whitworth, student of Betty Bridges

**Triangulation 11:13:31** ..... Monroe Golden  
Savitri Sasse, student of Karen Krekelberg

**The Waiting** ..... Mark Lackey  
Ivy Machua, student of Betty Bridges

**Reflection** ..... Michael Coleman  
Katie Chung, student of Susan Berg

**The Ice Cream Melts** ..... Brian C. Moon  
Peter Bogdan, student of Nadya Bogdan

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**Elegy** ..... Michael Coleman  
Michael Coleman, student of Nadya Bogdan

**Triangulation 11:13:31/13:23:49** ..... Monroe Golden  
Lily Fu, student of Jodean Tingle

**2, 3, 17, 19** ..... Monroe Golden  
Annie Li, student of Adam Bowles

**Fantasy** ..... Mark Lackey  
Kuleen Sasse, student of Karen Krekelberg

**Duet** ..... Andrew Bullard  
Annie Zhao, student of Margery Whatley

**Common Tones/Contrary Motion** ..... Monroe Golden  
Brian Chen, student of Kathy Burdette

**Waffles Before Bedtime** ..... Brian C. Moon  
Leo Turyk, student of Jodean Tingle

**Waltz** ..... Andrew Bullard  
Maxwell Wainwright, student of Kathy Burdette

**Reunion** ..... Kyle McGucken  
Lukas Fu, student of Jodean Tingle

**Staccatissimo** ..... Andrew Bullard  
Jamie Casey, student of Nadya Bogdan

**Drole de Passacaille** ..... Kyle McGucken  
Vivek Sasse, student of Karen Krekelberg

**Three Preludes #1** ..... Chris Steele  
Stephanie Lin, student of Jodean Tingle

**Three Preludes #3** ..... Chris Steele  
Carson Campbell, student of Margery Whatley

Information about the composers, performers, and music is in the bios section of the program.

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## *Concert 4: Samford University Brock Recital Hall*

800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209

Sunday, October 15

2:30 pm

### **The BAMA Players**

Hillary Tidman, flute

Brad Whitfield, clarinet

Pei-Ju Wu, violin and ensemble director

Sarah Nordlund Dennis, violin

Rene Reder, viola

Andrew Dunn, cello

Kathryn Fouse, piano

***Vignettes***..... Tom Reiner

Sarah Nordlund Dennis, violin; Pei-Ju Wu, violin;

Andrew Dunn, cello

***Intermezzo quasi che sognando***..... Joseph Landers

The BAMA Players

***Three American Paintings***..... Xingzimin Pan\*

I. Silvery Night

II. Connecticut Scene

III. Michigan Boulevard, Winter

Sarah Nordlund Dennis, violin; Pei-Ju Wu, violin;

Rene Reder, viola; Andrew Dunn, cello

***String Quartet No. 1: Vespers*** ..... Joel Davis

III. "Jubilations"

Pei-Ju Wu, violin; Sarah Nordlund Dennis, violin;

Rene Reder, viola; Andrew Dunn, cello



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**Ritratto #1 (“Portrait”) for Solo Flute (2017)**..... Michael Coleman  
Hillary Tidman, flute

**Big and Little** .....Matt Walker  
Pei-Ju Wu, violin, Andrew Dunn, cello

**The Named Angels**..... Mohammed Fairouz  
II. Azrael, Malak al-Maut

Sarah Nordlund Dennis, violin; Pei-Ju Wu, violin;  
Rene Reder, viola; Andrew Dunn, cello

**Once I Saw**.....Aaron Israel Levin\*  
Hillary Tidman, flute  
Brad Whitfield, clarinet  
Pei-Ju Wu, violin  
Andrew Dunn, cello  
Kathryn Fouse, piano

\*ICF Composer

Information about the composers, performers, and music is in the bios section of the program.

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## Composer and performer biographies

### Composer program notes after bios

**Lynn Bechtold** - violin - **Miolina**, composer of *Minnehaha*

#### **Miniatures**

Noted for her 'virtuosity and technical expertise' in *All About Jazz*, labeled 'up-and-coming' by *Time Out*, and called 'unapologetically dominating' by *San Diego Story*, violinist/composer Lynn Bechtold has appeared in recital throughout the US, as well as in Argentina, Canada, France, Holland, Japan, and Switzerland. She has premiered solo/chamber works by composers such as Carter Burwell, Gloria Coates, Alvin Lucier, and Morton Subotnick, and is a member of groups including Miolina, North/South Consonance, Quartet Metadata, SEM, and Zentripetal. An avid performer of all genres of music, she has performed at venues from Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, to Joe's Pub and Madison Square Garden. In addition, her performances have been broadcast on TV shows such as *30 Rock*, the *CBS Morning Show*, *Good Day NY*, and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*. She holds degrees from Tufts University, New England Conservatory, and Mannes College-The New School for Music. Her electroacoustic compositions have been performed on festivals/series including Circuit Bridges, Composers Concordance, ElectroMusic, Japan Society for Sonic Arts, Music With A View, NWEAMO, and Sound Traffic. She has received grants from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Leopold Schepp Foundation. Lynn is on the faculty at The Dwight School, Greenwich House Music School, and the Town School in NYC.

**Program notes:** *Minnehaha Miniatures*, for two violins and pre-recorded electronics, was written in early 2015, to be included on a concert Miolina would be performing on International Women's Day that year. At the time, I was spending time performing with a dance company in Minneapolis and Grand Marais, Minnesota, and I was surprised to see just how many streets/parks/towns there were named after *Minnehaha*, a fictional Native American woman in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha*. It seemed interesting to me that this fictional character was honored in so many ways, probably in more ways than many actual women. While researching the name "*Minnehaha*," I found out that it means "waterfall" in the Native American Dakota Sioux dialect. Ironically, "*Lynn*" is also said to mean "lake" or "waterfall" in Old English. During this time, I came across the amusing Google pronunciation and decided to include it in the piece. The pre-recorded electronics derive from this Google pronunciation and serve to add microtones to the work.

**Andrew Bullard** – composer of *Duet*, *Waltz*, and *Staccatissimo*

Currently attending the University of Montevallo on an academic presidential scholarship, Alabama native and pianist Andrew Bullard enjoys writing advanced, modern music for his instrument as well as small collaborative pieces. His musical style is tonal, with large influence from the Russian composers — particularly Prokofiev. As a composer, Andrew was a 2015-16 MTNA National Finalist in the Young Artist division for his piece "*Scherzo Ostinato*" and was Alabama's state representative in the same

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category the following year. As a pianist, he also won MTNA's 2016-17 concerto competition; he achieved an honorable mention the year prior in the solo piano competition. Andrew also has experience teaching privately and accompanying choirs and instrumentalists.

## **Michael Coleman – composer of *Ritratto #1 ("Portrait")* for Solo Flute (2017)**

Michael Coleman received his doctorate from the University of Maryland and holds degrees from the University of New Orleans and the University of South Alabama, studying with Lawrence Moss, Jerry Sieg, and Carl Alette. He has participated as composer/pianist in numerous new music programs and festivals in the U.S and Russia and has also had works performed in Costa Rica, France, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. He is on the faculties of Pensacola State College and the University of West Florida.

**Program notes:** *Ritratto #1 ("Portrait") for Solo Flute* is the first of several works that will be written for solo flute. The pitch language of the work is derived from twelve-tone technique and groupings of various forms of the row alternate and recur throughout the work, somewhat resembling a rondo. The ideas for this work were based on an original row and matrix, which were originally used in music theory courses for classroom analysis.

## **Joel Davis – composer of *Mvt. III. "Jubilations" from String Quartet No. 1: Vespers***

Joel Scott Davis is a composer, arranger, conductor, and multi-instrumentalist whose music has been performed at Carnegie Hall, Vienna's *Palais Ferstel*, and Harlaxton Manor in England. His vocal cycle, *Songs of Liberty*, was named a semi-finalist for the 2016 American Prize in Composition, and his film scores have been featured in international festivals, academic conferences, and nationwide PBS broadcasts. Davis serves as Associate Professor of Music and Coordinator of Music Theory, Musicology, and Technology for the Division of Music Samford University's School of the Arts. He holds degrees from Samford University and Claremont Graduate University, where he studied with James Jensen, Edward Zeliff, and Peter Boyer.

**Program notes:** String Quartet No. 1: *Vespers* was composed between late 2013 and 2015 for Jeffrey Flaniken, Caroline Nordlund, Angela Flaniken, and Samuel Nordlund of the Samford String Quartet, who have since performed the work at various concert halls, schools, and churches, including Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie in October 2016. The music is loosely based upon aspects of the Evening Prayer service; as such, it attempts to convey the awe, wonder, and abiding joy of liturgy and congregational worship. The third and final movement, entitled "Jubilations," serves as a festive, energetic scherzo-trio. Through its use of shifting, asymmetrical meters, the movement propels the quartet to a close in a brisk, exuberant, and rather light-hearted manner. The work's overall structure is as a meditation upon T.S. Eliot's transcendent vision in "Burnt Norton" from *Four Quartets*: "At the still point of the turning world. . . there the

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dance is. . . and there is only the dance.” Vespers is dedicated to Dr. Wilton Bunch and Dr. Victoria Dvovich, with great affection and admiration.

## **Sarah Nordlund Dennis – violin – BAMA Players**

Sarah Nordlund Dennis grew up in Birmingham, AL, studying violin with Jeffrey Flaniken and Patrick Rafferty. She entered the University of Alabama early and graduated Summa Cum Laude with honors at age nineteen. She went on to study with Paul Kantor at the Aspen Music Festival and Cleveland Institute of Music, earning a Master's Degree in Violin Performance. In 2004, Nordlund Dennis won a position with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, where she performed for two years. After a year performing and teaching in New York City, Nordlund Dennis joined the Alabama Symphony in 2007.

Nordlund Dennis has collaborated with faculty of the University of Alabama and Cleveland Institute of Music including Dr. Bruce Murray and Paul Kantor in chamber concerts. She served on the faculty of Lutheran Summer Music from 2009-2013, where she performed with the Omega Quartet. She is a founding member of Birmingham-based Cahaba River Strings, and she has been part of the Amion Quartet and now the newly formed Birmingham Art Music Alliance Players performing new music in Birmingham. She began violin at age three in a Suzuki program in Rochester, NY, and has gone on to pursue Suzuki teacher training herself. She has taught with the Suzuki Talent Education Program in Birmingham since 2012.

## **Andrew Raffo Dewar – composer of *Madera Resonante* (2017)**

### **For Two Violins and Live Electronics**

Andrew Raffo Dewar (b.1975 Rosario, Argentina) is a composer, soprano saxophonist, ethnomusicologist, educator, and arts organizer. His work has been performed throughout North America, Southeast Asia and Europe, and he has studied and performed with avant-garde jazz legends Steve Lacy, Anthony Braxton, Bill Dixon, and experimental music composer Alvin Lucier. His music spans the spectrum of through-composed chamber music, aleatoric composition, electroacoustic music, and open improvisation. As a composer and performer he can be heard on nearly twenty commercially released albums. Notable performances from the past decade include the Venice Biennale di Musica and the Vancouver Cultural Olympiad (with Anthony Braxton), The Smithsonian Museum, The National Jazz Museum in Harlem, the Torino Jazz Festival, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie in Karlsruhe and Kunsthalle in Dusseldorf, Germany, the Center for New Music in San Francisco, and, in New York City, Roulette and The Stone. Dewar has received support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Chamber Music America, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, ASCAP, the Getty Foundation, Arts International, Meet The Composer, NewMusicUSA, the Tri-Centric Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dr. Dewar is an Associate Professor at the University of Alabama. For more info: [www.freemovementarts.com](http://www.freemovementarts.com)

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**Program notes:** *Madera Resonante* explores the resonant properties of two violins, tracing a sonic path from impulse to elongation, using the sounds of the instruments' dynamics and harmonic spectra to drive the live electronic accompaniment built in the Kyma sound design environment.

## **Andrew Dunn – cello – BAMA Players**

Praised by *AL.com* for his “enchanting solo work,” Andrew Dunn was appointed Assistant Principal Cellist of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra in 2008. Since then, he has become well known to Birmingham audiences for his appearances as a soloist and chamber musician. Excelling in a variety of styles, from classical to jazz, Andrew has collaborated with artists such as Bobby McFerrin, Christopher Rouse, and Plácido Domingo; played chamber music with members of the Cleveland and Cavani quartets; and performed with orchestras all over the southern United States, including the Houston, Nashville, and Huntsville Symphonies. As a recording artist, he has contributed to the soundtracks of dozens of movies, television shows, and video games, working with composers Bear McCreary and Christopher YOUNG among others. An avid music educator, Andrew maintains a private cello studio at home and has served as Professor of Cello at Jacksonville State University. He has previously served on the faculty of STEP Birmingham, the Dawson Music Academy, and the Rice University Preparatory Division. Andrew holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and Rice University and studied with Lynn Harrell, Merry Peckham, and Richard Aaron. When not playing the cello, Andrew enjoys brewing beer, baking bread, and making chocolates.

## **Mohammed Fairouz – composer of *Mvt. II. Azrael, Malak al-Maut* from *The Named Angels***

Mohammed Fairouz, born in 1985, is one of the most frequently performed, commissioned, and recorded composers of his generation. Hailed by *The New York Times* as “an important new artistic voice” and by BBC World News as “one of the most talented composers of his generation,” his large-scale symphonies, operas and oratorios all engage major geopolitical and philosophical themes with persuasive craft and a marked seriousness of purpose. Fairouz recently became the youngest composer in the 115-year history of the Deutsche Grammophon label to have an album dedicated to his works with the spring 2015 release of *Follow, Poet*. The album, which launched the label’s *Return to Language* series, includes two works that exalt the transformative power of language: his elegiac song cycle *Audenesque* and the ballet *Sadat*. The album has met with broad critical acclaim and received “highbrow and brilliant” distinctions in *New York Magazine*’s taste-making Approval Matrix. Fairouz’s solo and chamber music attains an “intoxicating intimacy,” according to New York’s WQXR. A composer who describes himself as “obsessed with text,” he has been recognized by *New Yorker* magazine as an “expert in vocal writing” and described by *Gramophone* as “a post-millennial Schubert.” His principal teachers in composition include György Ligeti, Gunther Schuller, and Richard Danielpour, with studies at the Curtis Institute and New England Conservatory. Fairouz’s works are published by PeerMusic Classical. He lives in New York City.

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**Program Notes:** Since I was a little boy, I've been fascinated with the mythology of angels in Middle Eastern folklore. They embody justice, power, kindness, healing, death, and other universals that have made them pervasive in many of the world's cultures. It is natural to express these attributes musically, since music is present in all human communities — it transcends the present and expresses the eternal, never-changing truths of the human condition. *The Named Angels* refers to those angels that are named and recognized in the Islamic, Christian and Jewish traditions: Michael, Israfil, Gabriel and Azrael. Each of the four movements represents a character portrait of a specific Angel.

The second slow movement is called "Azrael, Malak Al Maut" (Arabic for Azrael, Angel of Death). Azrael is the name used commonly used to refer to the Angel of death in the three Middle Eastern Monotheistic faiths. This narrative movement is framed by two chorales: an opening funeral chorale and a closing transformative chorale. It captures the attitude of the naturalness (even innocence) of death described in the Quran. This movement is more programmatic in structure than the others. It begins with a depiction of the exhalation of a last breath and proceeds to depict Azrael carrying the spirit beyond life and the metamorphosis of the human spirit in the apotheosis that ends the movement.

## **Kathryn Fouse – piano – BAMA Players**

Kathryn Fouse is Professor of Music and Associate Dean for the Division of Music at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. In addition to her commitment to education, she continues to maintain an active performing career with recent appearances in such venues as the World Piano Conference (Novi Sad, Serbia) and the soundSCAPE New Music Festival (Maccagno, Italy) as well as throughout the United States. She holds degrees in Piano Performance from Baylor University (BM), Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (MM) and the University of North Texas (DMA). Her principal teachers include Eugenia O'Reilly, David Albee, and Ruth Slenczynska.

Having developed a strong interest in contemporary music, Dr. Fouse frequently presents lecture-recitals in an effort to bring greater understanding of this music to audiences. Kathryn has received national grants for her research into the Surrealist movement and its influence on American composers and has presented her research at the MTNA national conference, for numerous regional and local arts organizations, and at such esteemed institutions as the University of Illinois, Baylor University, the Dallas Art Museum, Gothenburg University (Sweden) and the Norwegian State Academy of Music (Oslo).

## **Monroe Golden – composer of *Winona's Lesson***

Monroe Golden is a composer from rural Alabama whose works often explore microtonal systems. Critics have described his compositions as "delightfully disorienting, lovely, sumptuous, yet arcane," and "irresistible music, full of wit and

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beauty." He graduated from the University of Montevallo and earned a doctorate in Music Composition from the University of Illinois. There are three complete CDs of his music: *A Still Subtler Spirit* (Living Artist Recordings, 2003), *Alabama Places* (innova Recordings, 2007), and *Incongruity* (self-published, 2011).

**Program notes:** *Winona's Lesson* was written for Miolina Duo. The title refers to my mother (Winona) and her favorite shaped-note hymn *Murillo's Lesson*, which was especially popular in the Sand Mountain community where she grew up. Fragments from the melody are mapped to sections of the violin duo, serving as points of departure. Underlying this structure are quasi-waveforms comprising harmonics and open strings in a ratio of 2:3 between the instruments. The work is written in 7-limit just intonation, often making use of symmetrical otonal/utonal scales.

## Melissa Grey – composer of *Procrustean Bed*

### Video by Nicole Antebi

Composer-performer Melissa Grey collaborates with artists, architectural designers, creative technologists, musicians, and composers. Recently, she has composed for Tom Piercy, ETHEL, Miolina, and The Occasional Noise Trio (Derin Oge, Cesare Papetti, William Lang). She has created kinetic scores based on combinatorial memory wheels: *blur (after blue hour)* for Payton MacDonald's "Sonic Divide" project and *Volvelle* for the Bowers-Fader Duo. Grey's *Environnement sonore*, composed with the modular synth benjolin, was broadcast in the gallery space for the exhibition curated by artist Angela Grauerholz, *Michèle Lemieux | The Whole and Its Parts, From drawing to animated films*, exhibited at the Centre de design, Université du Québec à Montréal September-November 2016. Grey has received awards and funding from Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC; Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Manhattan Community Arts Fund, American Music Center, Composer Assistance Program, and ASCAP Plus Awards, Concert Music Division. In 2016, with composer-performer David Morneau, she established l'Artiste ordinaire. They have been selected as the 2018 *Toy Piano Pioneer Resident Artists* at the Boyd Hill Nature Preserve. Their premiere of *Photon Ecstasy* was commissioned by the University of Pennsylvania's Kislak Center. *New York Arts* wrote that with repeated listenings "there's more to be moved and impressed by, to learn from [Photon Ecstasy]." Grey has taught Sound Studies at the School of Media Studies at The New School in New York City since 2009. She is an Associate Director of Composers Concordance, and a Board Member of Miolina, the violin duo of Lynn Bechtold and Mioi Takeda. <http://melissagrey.net/>

**Nicole Antebi** works in non-fiction animation, motion graphics, installation while simultaneously connecting and creating opportunities for other artists through larger curatorial and editorial projects such as *Water, CA* (a six year collaboration with Enid Ryce) and *Winter Shack* (a three year collaboration with Alex Branch). She has also collaborated on numerous visual music projects with experimental composer, Melissa Grey and musicians Laura Ortman, David Eng and most recently with electronic music pioneer, Vince Clarke. Her work has been shown in several continents and in fiercely alternative spaces such as Anthology Film Archives, High Desert Test Sites, The

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Manhattan Bridge Anchorage, Teeny Cine's converted trailer, Portable Forest, a Texas Grain Silo and in the cabin of a capsized ship at Machine Project in Los Angeles. And more traditional art spaces such as Cantor Center for the Arts at Stanford University, LACE Contemporary Exhibitions, Orange County Museum of Art, Torrance Art Museum, The Crocker Museum, Dallas Contemporary, and the Armory Center for the Arts. She was the 2015 animator-in-residence at Circuit Bridges, New York and was recently awarded a Jerome Foundation Grant in Film/Video for a forthcoming animated film about El Paso and Ciudad Juárez in the early 90's.

**Program notes:** *Procrustean Bed*, a performance for violins, Merlin, and live processing, with animation by the artist Nicole Antebi, is a collaborative work based on the myth of Procrustes, the subduer, the stretcher, the rogue metalworker who either cut or stretched his guests' legs to fit the specific size of an iron bed. The phrase is used in several disciplines to convey an arbitrary standard to which exact conformity is forced. Merlin, performed by Melissa Grey, is a handheld computer game from the late 1970s that was one of the earliest digital sequencers. In Music Machine mode, there is a limit of 48 pitches. This constraint is subdued or stretched to fit our procrustean bed.

## **Holland Hopson – composer of *Tell a Gossip* and *Still Yet Already Again* for 2 violins and live electronics**

Holland Hopson is a composer, improviser, and electronic artist. A multi-instrumentalist, he usually performs on clawhammer banjo and electronics. Holland often augments his instruments with custom-designed sensor interfaces and performs with his own highly responsive, interactive computer programs. Holland has performed in Australia, Europe and North America along with notable experimental and outsider musicians such as Macarthur Genius Award winners Anthony Braxton and George Lewis, live electronics pioneer David Behrman, sonic meditator Pauline Oliveros, mutant-trumpeter Ben Neill, network music trailblazer Tim Perkis, free-improv innovators LaDonna Williams and Davey Smith, noise-monger John Wiese, and others. Holland has held residencies at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, Florida; at LEMURPlex, Brooklyn; and Harvestworks Digital Media Arts, New York.

**Program notes:** *Tell a Gossip* is a directed improvisation for 6-string electric banjo and computer. The computer separates the instrument's sound into individual strands, processes each one uniquely, and then weaves them all back together.

**Program notes:** *Still Yet Already Again* embraces the fascinatingly complex, noisy sounds that violins are capable of producing. The live electronics part divides each instrument's sound into separate streams that are all processed independently. The sounds produced by each partner violinist also influence the electronic processing of the other instrument. In this way, the electronics remain just beyond the control of either performer alone.



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## **Craig Hultgren – cello**

For several decades, cellist Craig Hultgren has been a fixture on the scenes for new music, the newly creative arts, and the avant-garde. Recently leaving Birmingham after more than 30 years as a member of the Alabama Symphony, he now resides outside of Decorah, Iowa as the farmer-cellist. A year ago, the *New York Classical Review* commented that he, "...played with impressive poise and sensitivity..." for Dorothy Hindman's chamber music retrospective at Carnegie Hall. At this point, more than 200 works have been created for him. A recipient of two Artist Fellowships from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, he was a member for many years of Thámyris, a contemporary chamber music ensemble in Atlanta. He is a founding member of Luna Nova, a new music ensemble with a large repertoire of performances available as podcast downloads on iTunes. Hultgren is featured in three solo CD recordings including *The Electro-Acoustic Cello Book* on Living Artist Recordings. For ten years, he produced the Hultgren Solo Cello Works Biennial, an international competition that highlighted the best new compositions for the instrument. He taught at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the Alabama School of Fine Arts and Birmingham-Southern College where he directed the BSC New Music Ensemble. He is a founding member and former President of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance and was on the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Youth Orchestras of Birmingham and their Scrollworks program. Currently, he is Vice President of the Oneota Valley Community Orchestra Board of Directors in Decorah and teaches at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa.

## **The Iowa Composers Forum (ICF)**

The ICF was founded in March of 1987 in Des Moines by seven composers who wished to create an environment for the performance and dissemination of music composed by Iowans. Over the intervening years, the ICF has presented more than 100 concerts and tour recitals of works by member composers. These concerts have featured the performances of over 800 works of new music, including works by student composers from the elementary, middle, high school and collegiate level. The ICF has commissioned many new works, both unilaterally and in partnership with other organizations such as the Iowa Music Teachers Association and the Iowa Choral Directors Association. The ICF sponsors its own annual student composition competition, open to students studying at the collegiate level and earlier.

## **Takuma Itoh – composer of *Across the Open Sky***

Takuma Itoh spent his early childhood in Japan before moving to Northern California where he grew up. His music has been described as "brashly youthful and fresh" (New York Times). Featured amongst one of "100 Composers Under 40" on NPR Music and WQXR, he has been the recipient of such awards and commissions as: the Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Music Alive: New Partnerships grant with the Tucson Symphony, the ASCAP/CBDNA Frederick Fennell Prize, six ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, the Leo Kaplan Award, the American Composers Orchestra Underwood New Music Readings, the Symphony in C

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Young Composer Competition, the New York Youth Symphony First Music, The New York Virtuoso Singers, and the Renée B Fisher.

**Program notes:** When I was asked to write a piece for the Troy Savings Bank Hall, I began imagining a group of musicians surrounding the audience, playing a soft murmur that gently resonated against all corners of the space. As I pictured myself listening to the work in the dimly lit hall, I had an image in which the ceiling of the hall opened up, and the sounds of the piece seemed to simply float across the night sky. The work is scored for two violins and a cello placed around the hall antiphonally. It is lyrical and atmospheric, and meant to highlight the nuances of this magnificent space and acoustics.

## **Brooke Joyce – composer of *Wondrous Love for cello and electronics***

Brooke Joyce's music has been described as "vividly pictorial" (San Francisco *Chronicle*) and "exceptionally gripping" (Los Angeles *Times*) and has been performed by soloists and ensembles around the world, including the Indianapolis Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic, the Brentano Quartet, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, the Nash Ensemble, and tenor James Gilchrist. He is the recipient of the Joseph Bearn Prize, the Wayne Peterson Prize, the Darius Milhaud Award, and many citations from the National Federation of Music Clubs and ASCAP. Brooke is the Composer-in-Residence at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, chair of the Iowa Composers Forum, and a founding faculty member of the International Music Festival of the Adriatic.

**Program notes:** The music heard on the tape part of *Wondrous Love* is taken from the collection *Sacred Harp Singing*, recorded at the Alabama Sacred Harp convention in 1942 by Alan Lomax and George Pullen Jackson, and released by the Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress (AFS L11). The tune "Wondrous Love" continues to be a popular hymn in many American Protestant denominations. The words are attributed to Alexander Means, and the music was arranged by William Walker, though the tune itself is a traditional ballad from the British Isles. This version of the hymn first appeared in *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*, published in 1835.

## **Mark Lackey – composer of *Dyad* for violin duo**

Mark Lackey composes new music with beguiling lyricism and rhythmic energy. His music invites us into the transcendence of beauty with a sense of play. As a composer of vocal, electronic, chamber, orchestral, and wind ensemble music, Mark Lackey has garnered premieres from many gifted artists including Rhymes With Opera, Fireworks, Eastman Wind Orchestra, Definiens Ensemble, Druid City Ensemble, cellist Craig Hultgren, violist Victor de Almeida, and violinist Courtney Orlando. He is president of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance, and his music is available on the Potenza Music label, through Dorn Publications, and on his own Julian Date Music imprint. Honors include a public reading by the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and selection as finalist in the

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American Composer Competition of the Columbia (MD) Orchestra. Mark Lackey is also an energetic educator. As Assistant Professor at Samford University's School of the Arts, he teaches composition and music theory. He earned the degrees Doctor of Musical Arts in composition, Master of Music in theory pedagogy, and Master of Music in composition from The Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University where his teachers included Christopher Theofanidis, Bruno Amato, and Nicholas Maw.

**Program notes:** The opportunity to compose new music for Miolina inspired a piece in two parts – a dyad – that explores the peculiar possibilities of a dyad of violins. Rather than behaving as “first” and “second” violins, both instruments assert their presence, sometimes functioning together as a single entity, sometimes in close counterpoint with nearly identical material. The piece explores extended tonal materials that include a hexatonic scale and various ancient modes. A technique of “throwing” the bow across the strings, known by the French name *jeté*, produces groups of quick notes (the controlled bouncing of the bow) followed by two longer notes. This two-part rhythmic idea in turn appears in many guises throughout the work and helps to give it rhythmic coherence. I am deeply grateful to Miolina for their commitment to new music and for choosing to prepare and perform mine. I also wish to thank you, the audience, for your support of new music. Thank you!

## Joseph Landers – composer of *Intermezzo quasi que sognando*

Joseph Landers studied with Frederic Goosen at the University of Alabama, Lothar Klein at the University of Toronto, and Alexander Goehr at Cambridge. He has been awarded fellowships by the Fulbright Foundation, the Tanglewood Music Center, the American Music Center, and the MacDowell Colony, where he was selected as the Margaret Lee Crofts Fellow in Composition for 1995-96. His orchestral work *Karangan* was selected as a finalist for the 1999 Alexander Zemlinsky International Prize for Composition. In 2000 he was awarded the Thor Johnson Memorial Commission for his *Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano*, and in 2008, he was awarded an individual artist fellowship by the Alabama State Council on the Arts. The compositions of Joseph Landers have been featured on concert series and festivals across the U.S. and abroad, including the Echizen International Music Festival (Japan), the Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music, the AD\*Evantgard Festival in Munich, the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (U.K.), and at other recent festivals in France, Poland, and Equador. In 1997 his orchestral work *Nine forty-eight* was selected as a finalist for the prestigious Gaudeamus Prize of Holland. His works for orchestra have been performed by the Alabama Symphony, the Florida Orchestra, the Netherlands Radio Orchestra, the Omaha Symphony, the Tuscaloosa Symphony, and various other orchestras under conductors, including Justin Brown, Christopher Confessore, Jahja Ling, Ransom Wilson, Bruce Hangen, Adrian Gnam, and Jac Van Steen. Landers has also appeared as guest conductor in the performance of several of his orchestra works, including *Istanpita* with the Lincoln Symphony, *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra* with the Newburgh Symphony with Richard Killmer as soloist, and *Concerto for Four Horns and Orchestra* with the Alabama Symphony and the TransAtlantic Horn Quartet as soloists.

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**Program notes:** *Intermezzo quasi que sognando* was composed for and dedicated to the BAMA players for their first performance on the BNMF 2017. The title refers to the treatment of short musical ideas that are continually reappearing in different contexts, as one would experience images in a dream.

## Aaron Israel Levin – composer of *Once I Saw* for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano

Aaron Israel Levin is a composer whose music is guided by the emotional dynamism of storytelling and drama, drawing from a wide array of influences to create music that is both personal and multi-dimensional. He is currently pursuing his M.M. in composition at the Yale School of Music. Levin has composed for a variety of ensembles, from jazz band to orchestra, string quartet to toothbrushes, and much more. He has had his music performed across the United States and abroad by members of Fifth House Ensemble, members of Bent Frequency, Pavia Winds, Kayleigh Butcher, Lisa Neher, the Grinnell Symphony Orchestra, and others. A recipient of many awards and honors, Levin's piece, *Once I Saw*, has been selected by multiple calls-for-scores across the country. Originally from Saint Paul, Minnesota, Levin received his B.A. in music from Grinnell College in Iowa where he studied with Eric McIntyre and John Rommerein. Levin has also attended several music festivals and programs where he has studied with Donald Crockett, Joel Hoffman, Pierre Jalbert, Hannah Lash, David Ludwig, Clint Needham, Dan Visconti, Chen Yi, Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, and others.

**Program notes:** *Once I Saw* draws influences from the driving impulse of popular music and the rich harmonies of jazz. These characteristics give structure to the work, allowing a narrative to transpire that seesaws between both the colorful similarities and the stark differences between these distinct voices. *Once I Saw* was written in Summer 2014 at the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium.

## Kyle McGucken – composer of *Recitative and Aria for Jean Baudrillard*

Kyle McGucken is an aspiring composer and musicologist, whose works touch on themes of Post-Structuralism, Lacanian Psychoanalysis, and Deconstruction. Utilizing ultraminimal material, extended techniques, and long durations, Kyle McGucken's compositions attempt to embody a compositional spirit similar to Morton Feldman, and the Mass composers of the Renaissance. Kyle McGucken studied under Dr. Mark Lackey, and has had pieces performed by Sybarite5 and self-formed Iris Ensemble.

**Program notes:** Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality continues to be of relevance in regard to the current political climate of the United States and the European Union. In *Recitative and Aria for Jean Baudrillard*, a familiar musical form, that of the Baroque recitative and aria, is copied and reproduced to create a simulacrum of itself. The violinists simulate the actions and timbres of a Viol da Gamba and a lute. The overall effect of simulating the aria form will be to realize musically, Baudrillard's words from

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*The Perfect Crime*, that “It is the simulacrum which ensures the continuity of the real today, the simulacrum which now conceals not the truth, but the fact that there isn’t any.”

## Miolina Duo

**Miolina** was formed in 2012 when artistic director/violinist Mioi Takeda decided to form a violin duo with longtime collaborator, violinist/composer Lynn Bechtold. To date, the duo has had successful performances in NYC at Brooklyn College, The Church of the Transfiguration, City Lore, Gallery MC, Greenwich House Music School, The Morbid Anatomy Museum, National Opera Center, NoMad Loft, Parsons School of Design, Queens Library, Rockwood Music Hall, Spectrum, St. Mark’s Church, Tenri Cultural Institute, and Turtle Bay Music School. In addition, they’ve had concerts at Experimental Sound Studio in Chicago; at Monk Space in Los Angeles; at the Cité Internationale des Arts and l’Institut Finlandais in Paris, France; at Koendori Classics and Monten Hall in Tokyo, Japan; and at Corner Store Arts in Washington, DC. In addition, they have performed on series and festivals such as Circuit Bridges, Composers Concordance, Electronic Music Midwest, JUMP, and Soft Series. In July 2017, they had a productive residency at Avaloch Farm Music Institute, working with two different composers as part of Avaloch’s New Music Initiative.

Miolina specializes in violin duo music that employs the natural beauty and sound of the instruments, with or without electronics and video. They enjoy collaborating on new compositions with composers, as well as discovering hidden gems of the past. To date, they have premiered 23 duos. Some of their recent collaborators include multi-instrumentalist Ken Butler, cellist Jennifer DeVore, percussionists Ian Ding and Eric Millstein, soprano Sharon Harms, and violinists Mari Kimura and Machiko Ozawa. Miolina’s future productions include creating music for silent Japanese films of the 1920s, and an educational program about immigration and its influence on composers. Both violinists are longtime advocates of new music, and perform with various new music groups, including the American Symphony Orchestra, Composers Concordance, Glass Farm Ensemble, North/South Consonance, SEM Ensemble, VIA, & Zentripetal. They are honored to have been chosen to join the New Music USA Impact Cohort in 2017. In addition, they are recipients of a 2017 grant from Japan Foundation NY, a 2015 grant from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, and 2014 and 2016 grants from New York Women Composers. They are a 501(c)3 non-profit.

## **Brian C. Moon** – composer of *What Could Have Been, Was, or Will Be*

Brian C. Moon received his Master of Music in Composition from Birmingham-Southern College and his Bachelor of Arts in Music Technology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. His composition instructors include Ron Clemmons, Jan Vicar, Traci Mendel, Charles Mason and Dorothy Hindman. For fifteen years, Brian has been an active composer and member of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance, as well as an adjunct music instructor at Birmingham-Southern and UAB, where he has taught Ear

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Training, Computer Music, and Multimedia Productions. As for the local Birmingham band scene, Brian is singer/songwriter for the Maisleys and bassist for Delicate Cutters. Brian currently serves as Vice-President of Membership for the Birmingham Art Music Alliance, an autonomous nonprofit organization with the twofold mission of promoting music by Alabama composers and presenting concerts of recently created art music to communities in Birmingham and beyond.

**Program notes:** *What Could Have Been, Was, or Will Be: An Infinite Yet Temporary Journey of Finite Possibilities* was written for the Miolina violin duo to be premiered at the 2017 Birmingham New Music Festival. The composition consists of fifteen pre-composed segments of music, each five measures in length, which will be randomly presented to the duo at the time of the performance. Each performer will be presented with a new segment, along with randomly selected dynamic markings every 25 beats, and segments will only be presented once for each performer. Improvisatory embellishment is encouraged as they interpret the music being presented to them. The addition of various audio effects such as delay and reverb almost guarantees that the performance you hear has never been heard before, and will likely never be heard again.

## **David Morneau – composer of *Beatlings (Cello Club) for cello with electronics***

David Morneau is a composer of an entirely undecided genre. Described by Molly Sheridan as a "shining beacon" of inspiration, his diverse work illuminates ideas about our culture, issues concerning creativity, and even the very nature of music itself. His eclectic output has been described variously as "elegantly rendered," "happily prissy," "impressive," "unusual, esoteric, and offbeat." His chiptune album, *Broken Memory*, "absolutely wrecks shop.... For that, David Morneau wins." His *Not Less Than the Good*, a musical celebration of morning as embraced by Henry David Thoreau in *Walden*, was commissioned by New Thread Quartet (a New York based saxophone ensemble) and will premiere at The Morgan Library in New York, with narration performed by poet J.D. McClatchy, at the opening of *This Ever New Self: Thoreau and His Journal*, the exhibition celebrating the bicentennial of Thoreau's birth. With Melissa Grey, he has established *l'Artiste ordinaire*. Their recent concert-length performance, *Photon Ecstasy*, an adaptation of Dan Rose's artist book *The DNA-Photon Project*, premiered at the University of Pennsylvania's Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts in October 2016. Their *Gadget Berry Dimple*, an Oulipian translation of Hugo Ball's *Gadji beri bimba*, is published in *Circumference* (a journal of poetry in translation). Grey & Morneau also direct and produce *Soft Series*, a concert series dedicated to presenting soft premieres, which is live streamed and archived on ClockTower Radio. Morneau's music can be found on Composers Concordance Records, Immigrant Breast Nest, and Irritable Hedgehog. His words have been published in *Emergency Index* (an annual document of performance practice), published by Ugly Duckling Presse.

**Program notes:** *Beatlings*, composed for cellist Craig Hultgren, approaches the construction of a composition using the metaphor of the seed. It begins small and

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delicate, then grows and transforms before our ears. The music is the result of seeds planted the composer's life. *Beatlings* is the fourth composition in a series written for solo instrument and electronic dance tracks. These follow in the long tradition of composers expanding vernacular dance forms into concert music. *Beatlings* draws its inspiration from a style known as *minimal techno*. Previous compositions in the series were for flute, clarinet, and drum set.

## **Xingzimin Pan – composer of *Three American Paintings***

Xingzimin Pan is the recipient of several composition competitions include the 4th China-ASEAN Music Week Composition Competition, the 1st FNMC Composition Contest and 2nd IFCM International Composition Competition. Recent years, he emerges as one of the most active choral music composers in China. Pan has collaborated with many outstanding choirs, and his choral works have been performed in the United States, Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, Australia and China, and have been published by Fudan University Publishing House and Schott Music. Pan received BA in Music from Central China Normal University and MM in Composition from the University of Northern Iowa. He is now a Ph.D candidate in Composition at the University of Utah and want to graduate desperately.

**Program notes:** *Three American Paintings* is inspired by three paintings of American artists in the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, *Silvery Night* by Ralph A. Blakelock, *Connecticut Scene* by Julian A. Weir, and *Michigan Boulevard, Winter* by Guy C. Wiggins. The piece tries to convey the atmospheres of the paintings. In the first movement, there is a forbidding feeling; in the second movement, there is a sense of tranquility; in the third movement, there are impressions of the strong wind and the sound of walking in the heavy snow.

## **Matthew Scott Phillips – composer of *Meditation II***

Matthew Scott Phillips is a graduate of the University of Alabama at Birmingham (B.A.), Birmingham Southern College (M.M.) and of the University of Georgia (D.M.A). He has written for orchestra, chamber groups, independent film, live theatre productions, and multimedia presentations, and his music has been played from Brazil, to the United States, to Germany and the Czech Republic. The content of Matthew's compositions are centered around expressions of emotional states, the struggle to understand intellectual and philosophical concepts, the contrast between musical elements symbolic of individualism and those symbolic of social imperative, and of the conflicts between various aspects of the human psyche. Matthew is the winner of the 2011 Alabama Music Teachers' Association Composition Commission Competition, and was among thirteen other American composers chosen in the summer of 2006, to study and compose music in the city of Prague under the tutelage of Ladislav Kubik. He has composed over 70 instrumental and vocal works including 3 string quartets, 5 symphonies, 3 piano trios, and a host of orchestral overtures, and smaller instrumental works for mixed ensembles. His repertoire includes music composed in serial, freely

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atonal, traditional, polytonal, pantonal, modal, and electroacoustic styles. In addition to composition, Matthew has twice been a judge of the National Young Composers Competition, has given lectures on the music of Smetana, Chopin and Rachmaninoff, and taught classes in music fundamentals, musicology, music theory, music technology, and composition. He is also an active member and former Vice President of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance, an avid bass player in the Birmingham live music scene, and a qualified audio technician and occasional stagehand. Matthew lives in Birmingham, Alabama.

**Program notes:** *Meditation II* is a purely electronic composition whose primary sample sound was the plucking of a monochord. It is designed to gradually invite the listener to focus on a few repeated timbres, that gradually become less active, and ultimately arrive at a sustained harmonic consonance.

## **William Price – composer of *For Dmitri* and *Benediction***

William Price's music has been featured at numerous international and national events, including the World Saxophone Congress, the International Trumpet Guild Conference, the International Computer Music Conference, the International Saxophone Symposium, the *Musica Viva* Festival in Portugal, the *Musinfo Journées Art & Science* in France, the Engine Room International Sound Art Exhibition in London, the *Festival Internacional de la Imagen* in Colombia, and the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Chamber Music Festival in Singapore. An award-winning composer, Price's music has received commissions and accolades from numerous organizations, such as ASCAP, the Percussive Arts Society, the National Association of Composers, USA, the United States Army Band, the Second International Art!/Climate Competition, the Black Bayou Composition Competition, and the Southeastern Composers League. In 2009, Price was named the Music Teachers National Association Shepherd Distinguished Composer of the Year.

Price received his M.M. and D.M.A. degrees from Louisiana State University, where he studied composition with Dinos Constantinides and electro-acoustic composition with Stephen David Beck. Dr. Price serves as Associate Professor of Music and Coordinator of Music Theory and Composition at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB).

## **Rene Reder – viola – BAMA Players**

Violist Rene Reder joined the Alabama Symphony Orchestra in 2004. She was born and raised in Tacoma, Washington, where she attended the University of Puget Sound, earning her Bachelor's Degree in music. She then studied at Temple University in Philadelphia, receiving her Master of Music Degree and Performance Diploma.

Music has taken her to a handful of beautiful and interesting places including Florida, New Hampshire, Colorado, Idaho, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Puerto Rico, Europe, Israel and Argentina. In 2001, after three years in the New World Symphony, Rene won



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a position with the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra, which unfortunately folded two years later. In June of 2004, she completed a one-year position with the Virginia Symphony in Norfolk, VA.

## **Tom Reiner – composer of *Vignettes***

Tom Reiner is a professor of psychology at Troy University in Montgomery, Alabama. He started college as a piano and composition major but later switched to psychology and would go on and earn his Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from the University of Nevada, Reno. His dissertation investigated melody recognition and his academic area of research is music perception. He studied music composition with Stephen Blumberg at California State University, Sacramento and with Joseph Spaniola at the University of West Florida. He has had works featured at Pensacola ComposerFest since 2011 and has been a member of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance since 2015. He was selected as the Alabama Music Teachers Association Commissioned Composer for 2016. Additional information about the composer can be found by visiting his website at [www.songwritingplace.com](http://www.songwritingplace.com).

**Program notes:** *Vignettes* is comprised of short musical sections or vignettes tied together by virtue of being from the same source material. The piece varies in texture from vigorous rhythmic motifs to broad melodic sections. The entire piece depicts a narrative told by the three instruments as it unfolds, evolves, and then concludes with a final quixotic statement.

## **Geni Skendo – composer of *Suite for Fujara, Chitravenu, Viola and Electronics***

The Boston Globe calls Geni Skendo a “virtuoso,” creating a unique blend of jazz, free jazz, and world music. He made it two years in a row at *Downbeat* magazine critics poll of “Rising Star Jazz Flute.” After a successful performing career in his native Albania, Geni moved to the United States in 2003 to raise his jazz playing to a higher level. Studies at the Berklee College of Music and The New England Conservatory (MM) led to a deep, ongoing involvement with the Boston music scene. Geni performs with Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica (Best World Music Act, *Boston Phoenix Readers' Poll*, 2012), in both its quartet and big-band incarnations. The quartet utilizes Geni's full palette, while the big band relies heavily on Geni's powerful bass flute in its recreation of long-lost arrangements by the legendary Mexican arranger Juan Garcia Esquivel. Geni leads the Albanian/Jazz/Ambience group "Astronauts of Albania" and the free improvised chamber music group, Samurai Jazz Trio, consisting of shakuhachi, bass/shamisen and piano. Geni has released three CDs, most recently *Acoustic Cowboy*, featuring original compositions and new arrangements of songs from Olivier Messiaen, African pygmies and the Balkans.

**Program notes:** The piece explores the tonal qualities of Fujara overtones mashed against the viola and electronic soundscape. Add to the mix the new microtonal flute

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Chitravenu and you will hear a global sound. The piece uses free improvisation and Balkan based odd time signatures.

## **LaDonna Smith – viola**

LaDonna Smith (b. 1951) is an American avant-garde musician from Alabama (U.S.). She is a violinist, violist, and pianist. Since 1974 she has been performing free improvisational music with musicians such as Davey Williams, Gunther Christmann, Anne Lebaron, Derek Bailey, Eugene Chadbourne, Misha Feigin, Michael Evans, David Sait, Jack Wright, John Russell, Sergey Letov, Toshi Makihara, Andrew Dewar and many other of the world's major improvisers. As a performer, she has toured the USA, Canada, Europe, including Russia and Siberia, China and Japan. Her music is documented on dozens of CD and LP recordings, including the obscure *Say Daybaw Records* - of Fred Lane & the Debonaires. An active organizer, she produced numerous concerts in Alabama and the Southeast, including the Birmingham Improv Festival. She is an educator and serves on the Board of Directors of I.S.I.M., the International Society of Improvised Music. In 1976, LaDonna Smith co- founded TransMuseq Records, in collaboration with Davey Williams. In 1980, *the improviser magazine* began as an extension of I.N., the Improvisor's Network, a grassroots organization that attempted to connect improvising musicians across the USA, founded at that time in New York City. LaDonna is currently editor-in-chief and publisher of *the improviser (the international journal of free improvisation)*, which now exists on the web.

## **Chris Steele – composer of *Three Preludes #1* and *#3***

Chris Steele is Staff Pianist and Instructor of Aural Skills and Class Piano at UAB. An active performer, Steele collaborates with members of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and Opera Birmingham, and is a member of the UAB Chamber Trio and the Birmingham Art Music Alliance. He has held previous positions at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts as Staff Pianist, and at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro as both Lecturer of Music Theory and Ear Training as well as Faculty Fellow for the UNCG Grogan College Music Learning Community. He received his Doctor of Musical Arts in Accompanying and Chamber Music from UNCG where he studied with Andrew Harley and James Douglass, and held assistantships in both accompanying and music theory/ear training. He received two Masters degrees from The Florida State University in Piano Performance and Music Theory where he studied with Carolyn Bridger.

## **Mioi Takeda - violin - *Miolina***

Since she settled in NYC, Japanese violinist Mioi Takeda earned her reputation as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral player, and as a seasoned new music specialist in town. As *Miolina's* artistic director, her mission is clear: Encourage composers to write music for violin duo employing the natural beauty and sound of the instruments, without limitations. She also hopes to expand the violin-duo repertory for future

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generations. Mioi wants to help rediscover neglected violin-duo compositions by old masters, and to share the joy of current violin-duo music with her audiences. In addition, Ms. Takeda has performed with new music groups, including North/South Consonance as concertmaster, SEM Ensemble, and Composers Concordance, giving countless premieres. She has also performed with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, American Symphony Orchestra, Washington Square Festival, Scandia Symphony, Stamford Symphony, Strathmere Orchestra, The Japan Philharmonic, and The New Japan Philharmonic. Ms. Takeda's performances can be heard on North/South and Naxos Recordings. Mioi was a scholarship student of Dorothy DeLay and Masao Kawasaki at The Juilliard School, and she earned a Doctorate of Musical Arts from The City University of New York under the guidance of Itzhak Perlman. She also enjoys doing yoga and watching *The Big Bang Theory* when she is not playing the violin.

## **Hillary Tidman – flute – BAMA Players**

Hillary Tidman, flute, has been the assistant principal flutist of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra since 2013. A native of Washington, DC, Hillary earned her Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Her primary teachers include Walfrid Kujala, John Thorne, Aaron Goldman, and Richard Graef.

## **Brad Whitfield – clarinet – BAMA Players**

Brad Whitfield, native of Birmingham, Alabama, joined the Alabama Symphony Orchestra in December of 2015. Prior to joining the ASO, he was a member of the New World Symphony in Miami Beach, Florida under the musical direction of Michael Tilson Thomas. During his fellowship, he performed chamber music with artists such as Garrick Ohlsson and toured with the orchestra to the Harris Theater, Carnegie Hall, and the Kennedy Center. He has also performed with the Central City Opera, the North Carolina Symphony, and The Cleveland Orchestra. During the summers, Brad has performed with the Verbier Festival Orchestra, Tanglewood Music Center, Spoleto Festival USA, Music Academy of the West, Pacific Music Festival, and the National Repertory Orchestra. His primary teachers include Yehuda Gilad, Steve Cohen, and Danny Granados, former Principal Clarinet of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra.

## **Pei-Ju Wu – violin – BAMA Players**

Violinist Pei-Ju Wu, a native of Taipei, Taiwan, has established a performance career as an active chamber and orchestral musician. She joined the first violin section of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra in 2013 and is a member of the Des Moines Metro Opera. Prior to moving to Birmingham, Pei-Ju was a member of the San Antonio Symphony, and performed frequently with the Houston Grand Opera, Fort Worth Symphony and Dallas Chamber Symphony. She was the former concertmaster of the Woodlands Symphony and Opera in the Heights. Pei-Ju toured with the Star Wars in Concert orchestra during its 2010 North America tour and performed with Peter Gabriel's New Blood North America tour.

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In 2010, Pei-Ju co-founded Quartus Chamber Players, a Houston-based chamber music ensemble that focused on collaborating with local artists and educational outreach through music. During its 4-year operation, Quartus reached over 2,000 students with its educational program and brought numerous chamber music concerts of varied ensemble settings to the audience of Houston. She was a member of the Hall Ensemble while living in Fort Worth, Texas, and performed frequently with other Texas chamber music groups, such as Aperio, Music of the Americas, Virtuoso String Quartet, Mount Vernon Music and Ensemble 75.

Pei-Ju studied with Kathleen Winkler, Roman Totenberg, Shirley Givens and Rodney Friend, and received her degrees from Boston University and Rice University. She was an adjunct instructor at the Texas Wesleyan University and currently teaches privately, as well as at STEP Birmingham in Birmingham, Alabama.

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**Birmingham Art Music Alliance**, in addition to an exciting concert series, presents numerous free programs each year in educational institutions and other community venues. It takes resources to meet these production values, and you can help by becoming a supporting member of the Alliance. **BAMA is a well-established 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and your contribution is fully tax-deductible.** If music is to continue as a living art form, we must encourage the creation and performance of new works. Won't you join us in that effort? You can make a secure donation online through Network for Good by visiting [give.artmusic.org](http://give.artmusic.org) or mail your donation to:

Birmingham Art Music Alliance  
429 Greensprings HWY  
Suite 161 #323  
Birmingham, AL 35209

# **Birmingham New Music Festival 2017**

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Department of Music

# ST PAUL UMC



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