

Saturday, March 24, 2012, 8pm
Hertz Hall

Eco Ensemble

David Milnes, *conductor*

PROGRAM

Aaron Einbond (b. 1978) What the Blind See (2009)

<i>bass clarinet</i>	Peter Josheff
<i>viola</i>	Ellen Ruth Rose
<i>harp</i>	Naomi Hoffmeyer
<i>piano</i>	Ann Yi
<i>percussion</i>	Daniel Kennedy
<i>electronics</i>	Aaron Einbond, Yotam Mann, Gregory Kuhn

Liza Lim (b. 1966) Songs Found in Dream (2005)

<i>oboe</i>	Kyle Bruckmann	<i>percussion 1</i>	Daniel Kennedy
<i>clarinet, bass clarinet</i>	Peter Josheff	<i>percussion 2</i>	Andrew Maguire
<i>alto saxophone</i>	Kevin Stewart	<i>cello</i>	Leighton Fong
<i>trumpet</i>	Ari Micich	<i>double bass</i>	Richard Worn

INTERMISSION

Nico Muhly (b. 1981) Clear Music (2009)

<i>cello</i>	Leighton Fong
<i>harp</i>	Meredith Clark
<i>celesta</i>	Ann Yi

Martin Matalon (b. 1958) Tunneling (2009; rev. 2012)

<i>flute, bass flute</i>	Stacey Pelinka	<i>percussion</i>	Daniel Kennedy
<i>clarinet, contrabass clarinet</i>	Matt Ingalls	<i>cello</i>	Leighton Fong
<i>horn</i>	David Goldklang	<i>double bass</i>	Richard Worn
<i>trumpet</i>	Ari Micich	<i>electronics</i>	Martin Matalon, Yotam Mann, Gregory Kuhn

Multichannel audio provided by Meyer Sound and the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies.

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Aaron Einbond (b. 1978)
What the Blind See (2009)

After interviewing Aaron Einbond for *The Garrett* in March 2010, Alizah Salarío remarked the following in relating to the composer's style: "Today, as live experience is recorded and replayed almost as quickly as it's created, Einbond's idea of 'real time' sound being in conversation with recorded and reconstructed sound is not just music, but social commentary." This notion of real time refers to the blending of certain sound sources and their presentation to audiences. Einbond's work puts instrumental composition in contact with other sound sources including noise and field recordings, and with other performance spaces. He has presented numerous works as sound installations at exhibits and festivals in the United States and in Europe.

In 2009, Einbond received his Ph.D. in composition from UC Berkeley. Working with Edmund Campion, David Wessel and Andrew Imbrie, the young composer honed his skills and developed an interest in live electronics that he would further cultivate during trips abroad to France and Germany. He has studied with composers Mario Davidovsky at Harvard, Robin Holloway at the University of Cambridge and Julian Anderson at the Royal College of Music in London. As a Fulbright Scholar, Einbond was given the opportunity to work in Paris with Philippe Leroux, and he also took part in the "Cursus" in Music Composition and Technologies at IRCAM, Paris's state-funded electro-acoustic music studio. There he studied with composer Yan Maresz and was honored with Berkeley's George Ladd Prix de Paris.

Einbond's work has been commissioned and performed by a number of ensembles and organizations, including Ensemble Cairn, Yarn/Wire, L'Instant Donné, L'itinéraire, Mosaik, Emyrean, SurPlus, Antonio Politano, Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra, New York Chamber Symphony, Long Island Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony, Festival MANCA, IRCAM/Centre Pompidou for the

Festival Agora, and, most recently, the Fromm Music Foundation for Ensemble Dal Niente.

Also a computer researcher, Einbond has presently scholarly work at the International Computer Music Conference and Society for Music Theory and has taught master classes at the Conservatoire National de Nice and Berkeley's Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (among others). In 2009, Einbond returned to his native New York as a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Music at Columbia University, where he studied for two years.

What the Blind See (2009) asks its audience to rethink conventional notions of perception as it musically explores how humans feel distance and closeness through sight and sound. The piece begins with intricately dense sounds that are closely examined and broken down into their smallest possible parts. These minute sounds stem from short and subtle instrumental gestures and seem to mark their space in the surrounding silence. These gestures, flanked by periods of silence, become longer and larger in scope as the piece progresses. The poignant absences of sound become shorter and shorter at the same time, and this process is revealed to be a motor for the piece.

Einbond's piece moves from microscopic to expansive aspects of sounds, and from an extreme perceptual closeness, to a very distant one. Live electronics are used to great effect toward the realization of these notions, as gestures in the ensemble are analyzed in detail by the electronic environment. At times, minute instrumental gestures induce grandiose reactions from the electronics, thus upending notions of proportionality between stimuli and the reactions they provoke. Einbond's diverse sound world for this piece stems from acoustic sounds (including those coming from extended instrumental techniques) and field recordings of rain and snow. These sounds are treated by the electronics that then refract and project them into the performing space. The resulting aesthetic is a highly percussive piece with intense density and range of scope. Noise also becomes a powerful force in this piece that both heightens and distorts our perception.

Originally commissioned by IRCAM/Centre Pompidou for the Festival Agora, *What the Blind See* was first presented to audiences as a sound installation at the CentQuatre concert series in Paris. With a film by Pierre-Edouard Dumora, the installation sought to give a perceivable form to an invisible world through two autonomous works that nonetheless communicate pertinently with each other. The piece's title takes its name from an article by neurologist Oliver Sacks, suggesting internal and external representations of sound that we all carry with us.

Liza Lim (b. 1966)
Songs Found in Dream (2005)

In an interview with Andrew Ford of the Australian radio program *The Music Show*, Lim expressed her interest in exploring the sensual experience of her music's perception. "The sensory experience of sound as a vibration that you make contact with through not just your ears, but your whole body, I think has always been pretty central to how I think about sound and composition, that it is about the flow of vibrations and energies, and very much the sort of physical, or on the one hand the physicality of performance for the performers, but also this idea of physical sensation, you know, as a listener it's been really important to me."

Lim's music is known for its combination of instinctual energy, vibrant colors and modernist intellect. She often plays on the boundaries between these various aesthetics and has described her music as taking a "magical realist" approach to form and harmony, while highlighting timbre in an expressive idiom. In 2003, her *Ecstatic Architecture* was premiered by the Los Angeles Philharmonic as part of the inaugural season of the Frank Gehry-designed Walt Disney Concert Hall. The piece's powerful climax called upon a heavy artillery of brass and percussion, featuring a gamelan, and was, according to the composer, meant to fill every crevice of the hall and enter the body of the listener.

Lim grew up in Melbourne, Australia, and completed her doctoral work in composition at the University of Queensland. She has studied with Richard David Hames and Riccardo Formosa in Melbourne, and with Ton de Leeuw in Amsterdam. Numerous eminent performers from around the world have called upon Lim to compose pieces for them, including Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble Modern and the BBC Symphony. In 1986, Lim began working with the ELISION Ensemble, directed by her husband Daryl Buckley, and she has continued to work closely with them ever since. She has been a guest lecturer at the Darmstadt Summer School, UC San Diego, Cornell University, IRCAM Agora Festival and at a number of Australian universities. From 2005 to 2007 Lim served as composer in residence with the Sydney Symphony. The following year she finished work on her third opera, *The Navigator* (2008), while serving as artist-in-residence in Berlin. Lim currently teaches composition as a professor at the University of Huddersfield.

Songs Found in Dream (2005) expresses certain aspects of song in its small ensemble medium. Almost antiphonal in nature, solo instruments in this piece spark similar activity in the rest of the ensemble. The opening gesture, which the cello presents, playing expressively in a high register, can be thought of as a call that the rest of the ensemble then responds to. At various points in the piece, other instruments present their own gestures as calls for response; this antiphonal relationship between voices in the ensemble reveals itself to be one convincing way of understanding the piece's form.

While the notion of call and response is helpful in considering the piece's form and the way in which members of the ensemble relate to one another, Lim's allusion to antiphonal singing is abstracted by a complex, layered texture. Throughout *Songs Found in Dream*, distinct voices are layered in various ways, at times delicately, and at other moments with great force and conviction—at the end in particular.

Even sounds coming from one instrumentalist can be thought of as being layered in this

piece. Perhaps the most notable of Lim's various uses of extended instrumental techniques are the striking clarinet multiphonics (wind instruments playing multiple notes at once). This technique brings forth very dense sounds, whose internal aspects are rendered separately perceivable, giving certain sounds themselves a granular texture. Lim's piece also calls for the wind instrumentalists to breathe audibly into their instruments. This technique, along with the use of multiphonics, points towards a reference to the physical and communicative force of the human voice.

The composer has recognized the importance of Aboriginal culture as a point of reference in the creation of *Sounds Found in Dream*. In particular, Lim wished to musically convey the notion of "shimmering," representing the existence of spiritual power. Shimmering implies not only an intense presence of light, but also the way in which lightness and darkness are intertwined and layered. Lim at times purposefully obscures and dulls this "shimmer," referencing an Aboriginal ritual practice that does so to protect human onlookers. The piece's finale gives us a glimpse of what this shimmering spirit world might be like without its various protective veils.

Nico Muhly (b. 1981)
Clear Music (2009)

Nico Muhly is an exciting and charismatic young composer whose music reaches a large diverse audience due in part to its exuberance and stylistic accessibility through intelligent and strongly witty writing. Muhly has been largely influenced by his own experiences as a performer, most notably his long career as a choral singer which he began as a young boy. He has composed extensively for choir, including commissions from the Clare College Choir, the Brooklyn Youth Chorus and New York's Saint Thomas Church.

Muhly was born in Vermont and grew up in Providence, Rhode Island. He then moved to New York, where he studied English literature at Columbia University before receiving a Master

of Music degree from Juilliard in 2004. There he studied with composers Christopher Rouse and John Corigliano, both of whom cultivated and encouraged Muhly's personal style.

In addition to his extensive choral output, Muhly has composed in a number of other contexts. His orchestral pieces have been premiered by the New York Philharmonic, Boston Pops, Chicago Symphony and American Symphony, among others. Film scores by Muhly include Academy Award Best Picture nominee *The Reader* (2008) and *Joshua* (2007); he has also worked with choreographer Benjamin Millepeid to create pieces for American Ballet Theatre, the Paris Opéra and the Dutch National Ballet. Muhly has further contributed as a performer, arranger and conductor to a number of albums by contemporary recording artists, including Antony and the Johnsons, Björk, Doveman, Grizzly Bear and Jónsi, lead guitarist of the Icelandic band Sigur Rós. Working closely with collaborators at an artist-run label named Bedroom Community, which is headed by Icelandic musician Valgeir Sigurðsson, Muhly released the albums *Speaks Volumes* (2007) and *Mother tongue* (2008).

Most recently, Muhly has been a topic of much discussion in the press for his full-scale opera *Two Boys*, which saw its premiere in June 2011 at English National Opera. The work will soon make its way across the pond to New York, where it will be featured during the 2013–2014 season at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. A collaboration with librettist Craig Lucas and director Bartlett Sher, *Two Boys* explores an on-line friendship between two gay male teenagers that ultimately results in murder.

Clear Music (2009) references Muhly's personal connection with performing a choral piece by English Renaissance composer John Taverner. In the composer's own words: "*Clear Music* is an extended exploration of a single measure in John Taverner's (1490–1545) motet *Mater Christi Sanctissima*. I have structured the piece into a series of peaks featuring the highest registers of the treble voice here, the cello. I remember very vividly performing this piece and being struck by how distant the treble was from

the other voices (sometimes, there are spaces of over an octave between the treble and the alto) and I attempted to recreate the somewhat terrifying and exposed contours of these lines. The end result is, I hope, a prolonged and transparent recollection of the Taverner which exposes not only my appreciation for the music itself but also my response to performing it."

This piece begins with an expressive passage in the cello that features extremely high notes in the instrument's register that drop dramatically during the line. Its texture and mode of expression are shortly put into conversation with the celesta, whose entrance clearly signals a sentimental gesture of another sort. As it delicately repeats syncopated rhythmic motifs, the celesta brings its minimalist aesthetic into contact with the directional melodic lines of the cello. Adding colorful plinks from the harp to complete *Clear Music's* kaleidoscopic sound world, the piece progresses in part through the increasing relentlessness of the celesta's ostinato (repeated pattern). The ostinato becomes progressively more dominant in our perception of the musical texture, not by nature of its force per se, but through its obsessive restatement of its identity.

The overly clear cadential passage towards the end of this short piece, during which the three instruments all unanimously agree, may seem out of place considering how their distinct textures and expressive voices have developed in stark opposition to each other. However, this moment does not end the piece: a long extended coda rethinks the clarity and conviction of this cadence. Each voice then revisits its personal means of expressing the musical material presented in this piece, as each moves its focus away from external clarity and back to the inner individual center with which it began.

Martin Matalon (b. 1958)
Tunneling (2009; rev. 2012)

"I want to work with real-time technologies, which are a perfect synthesis between performing and using the possibilities of computer

music. This allows us to keep everything that is valuable in the art of performing—all that is human—and at the same time to expand and extend the instrument and its capacities beyond our imaginations. At a moment when the harmonic, rhythmic, and melodic languages seem to have arrived at a sort of dead end, there is a boulevard that is just open in front of us with parameters such as spatialization, timbre transformation, and time expansions."

This quote from a 2005 interview with composer and scholar Fernando Benadon highlights Martin Matalon's ever-growing interest in using interactive electro-acoustic technology to great effect in a number of his works. Throughout Matalon's exciting compositional career, the Buenos Aires-born composer has worked for a number of different performing forces in a myriad of musical contexts. His oeuvre includes pieces for orchestra, chamber ensembles and ensembles with live electronics; he has composed for films, choreographic works, installations, horspiels (or radio dramas), musical theater and mime shows.

After receiving his master's degree in composition at Juilliard, Matalon became interested in using the literary voice of Jorge Luis Borges as a creative impetus, and his chamber opera, *Le Miracle Secret*, which was based on one of the author's novellas, saw its premiere at the Avignon festival in 1989. In 1993, Matalon worked on his *La Rosa profunda* at Paris's state-funded electro-acoustic studio IRCAM, a piece commissioned by the Centre Pompidou as part of an exhibition entitled *The Universe of Borges*. Matalon then composed a score for the restored 1995 version of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* before writing music for three silent films by Spanish filmmaker Luis Buñuel: *Las siete vidas de un gato* (1996) for *Un Chien Andalou* (1927), *Le Scorpion* (2001) for *L'Age d'or* (1931) and *Traces II (La Cabra)* (2005) for *Las Hurdes: Tierra sin pan* (1932).

Mr. Matalon has composed for a number of prominent performing groups, including the Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre Philharmonique, Orchestre National de Lorraine, Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya,

Ensemble Intercontemporain, Barcelona 216, Les Percussions de Strasbourg, Court-circuit, Ensemble Modern and MusikFabrik. He is also an accomplished conductor and has taught at numerous institutions including McGill University, IRCAM and Centre Acanthes; he was also a Regents' Lecturer at UC Berkeley in 2007. Matalon served as composer in residence with the Orchestre National de Lorraine and the Arsenal de Metz from 2003 to 2004, and from 2005 to 2009 was composer in resident at La Muse en Circuit in Paris.

Tunneling (2009) was originally part of a multimedia production at the Voix Nouvelles festival entitled *Chute(s)*, with video art by Paolo Pachini. Composed for a seven-piece ensemble with interactive electronics, *Tunneling* explores the complex relationship between certain concepts and their opposing forces, namely weightlessness and the idea of falling, and lightness with that of density. *Tunneling's* form stems from considering how these premises oppose each other, as well as how they complement one another.

The idea of lightness presents itself during the first two-thirds of the piece as a static ambience and is established and colored through the sparsity of musical events. Musical material expands during these sections without apparent directionality. During *Tunneling's* last section, however, musical activity is condensed as multiple layers of material are superimposed to create a potent perceivable density.

There is a constant tension in *Tunneling* even through its extended moments of weightlessness and sparse musical activity. This tension is felt in part through the movement towards three instrumental bursts that work to reignite the motion and energy of the piece. The trumpet and horn (and their electronic treatments) take the leading role during the first climax, while the second highlights the cello and bass. During the third burst of instrumental activity, Matalon blends together flute and percussion, highlighting their perceivable similarities and differences in this pairing's timbre, or tone color.

These bursts take on new significance as the piece develops, blurring the divide between the opposing concepts of its initial formulation. *Tunneling's* global form can be thought of as stasis marked by four discrete colorful bursts, the last of which challenges the preceding three in its intensity and scope.

The harmonic language of the piece presents another approach to understanding the notion of falling. *Tunneling* begins with its highest-pitched sound, then falls gradually until ultimately reaching the lowest note of the piece, which occurs at its end. This descending glissando is elusive. Its place in the musical texture shifts constantly from foreground to background, and is at times inaudible.

Notes by Alexander Stalarow

The **Eco Ensemble**, under the direction of David Milnes, is a new group of leading Bay Area musicians dedicated to exploring and sharing the work of adventurous composers. Its mission is to bring exciting, contemporary music to both experienced audiences and new listeners.



David Milnes serves as Music Director of the Eco Ensemble, Berkeley's professional new music ensemble in residence, as well as Music Director

of the UC Berkeley University Symphony Orchestra since 1996. In his early years, he studied piano, organ, clarinet, cello and voice, and briefly entertained a career as a jazz pianist, appearing with Chuck Mangione, Gene Krupa, Billy Taylor and John Pizzarelli. After receiving advanced degrees in conducting from SUNY Stony Brook and the Yale School of Music, and studying with Otto-Werner Müller, Herbert Blomstedt, Erich Leinsdorf and Leonard Bernstein, he won the prestigious Exxon Assistant Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony, where he also served as Music Director of the highly acclaimed San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra, which he led on its first European tour in 1986.

Mr. Milnes has conducted frequently in Russia and the Baltics, serving as Music Director of the Riga Independent Opera Company and as a principal guest conductor of the Latvian

National Symphony. Recent engagements have included appearances at the MANCA Festival in Nice, France, with the Philharmonic Orchestra of Nice; in Mexico, at the International Festival "El Callejón del Ruido" with the Guanajuato Symphony Orchestra; and in Russia, with the Novosibirsk Symphony Orchestra. He has collaborated in performances with Frederica von Stade, Dawn Upshaw, Bill T. Jones, Paul Hillier, James Newton, David Starobin and Chanticleer, and has appeared at the Santa Fe, Tanglewood, Aspen and Monadnock music festivals.

A dedicated proponent of new music, from 2002 to 2009 Mr. Milnes was Music Director of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, with whom he commissioned and premiered many new works from around the world. He has made recordings of music by John Anthony Lennon, James Newton, Edmund Campion, Jorge Liderman and Pablo Ortiz.

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