

The UB Department of Music and the Center for 21st Century Music
Present the

Slee Sinfonietta

James Baker, conductor

Laura Aikin, soprano

Nicholas Isherwood, bass

Elliott Caplan, image

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

8pm

Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall

PROGRAM

Chashmal (2006)

Sa'arah (2007 – World premiere)

David Felder

(b. 1953)

Dionysiacs (2004)

David Felder

Intermission

Improvisation I sur Mallarmé (1958)

Le vierge, le vivace, et le bel aujourd'hui

Pierre Boulez

(b. 1925)

Improvisation II sur Mallarmé (1958)

Une dentelle s'abolit

Pierre Boulez

Tombeau (1959/1960)

Pierre Boulez

Please join the UB Music Department and Kappa Kappa Psi for a reception in the lobby of Slee Hall following the performance.

Program Notes

“**Chashmal**” is translated as ‘speaking silence’, emblematic of just one of thirty-two potential states of consciousness referred to in the medieval Jewish mystical text, “Book of Formation”, and originally linked to Ezekiel's ecstatic state of 'prophecy'. A meditative musical process was made that maps the raw sonic materials made from the sound of the bass voice onto a landscape of elemental sounds enveloping an audience in 8 channels of sound wherein the sound of the individual letters, the breath sounds, the extraordinary presence of "harmonic singing", and the physical design and appearance of the letter shapes, are all made audible as engraved pathways. The Hebrew characters themselves create two states, a 'hissing', breathy and unvoiced state, and a humming or voiced state that are reflected in the two sections of the piece.

The work was made featuring the collaboration of an artistic team comprised of Nicholas Isherwood, bass voice, Drs. J.T. Rinker, Olivier Pasquet, and Benjamin Thigpen as music programming assistants, and the video by Elliot Caplan and was premiered in June, 2006. Tonight's presentation is part of a multi-staged work, currently in progress, and was made possible by commissions from a consortium of European contemporary music festivals, Project Isherwood, the UB 2020 Scholar's Fund, the New York State Music Fund, and the Birge-Cary Chair in Music.

Dionysiacs was commissioned by the Brannen-Cooper Fund and whooosh for an ensemble of flute-doubling soloists, and an obligato ensemble of instruments (and instrumentalists) selected by the soli to be played out in the performance space. The title and the musical materials refer to several episodes described within the body of legends attributed to the god Dionysos. Most important to this small set of musical scenes are those associated with the Maenads and their various rampages, and the sea voyage wherein Dionysos' flute-playing created a deeply mysterious enchantment. The composition is in three sections, or vignettes, connected together by ensemble textures. It is dedicated to flutist Cheryl Gobbetti Hoffman, and to composer Donald Erb, two inspirational friends and colleagues.

Toward the end of his life, Stephen Mallarmé imagined a book of his poems which could be recited in untold orderings and combinations. Pierre Boulez's **Pli selon pli** (Fold by Fold) takes this poetic musing and gives birth to an expanding musical universe of associations, infinite in its possibilities but not in its realized formations. The work was composed between 1957 and 1962 with five movements: two larger movements act as bookends to three improvisations on Mallarmé's poetry. Boulez conceived of these internal movements as a mobile structure between the framing music, but many of these performing freedoms were rescinded in extensive revisions through the 1980's. The work may be presented in whole or in part, and tonight's performance features improvisations 1 and 2 along with the concluding “*Tombeau*”, based on Mallarmé's late ode to fellow poet, Paul Verlaine.

Just as physical universes are born and die, the creative microcosm of *Pli selon pli* rises and falls, playing out the drama of its life cycle through a chronological presentation of Mallarmé poems. The first improvisation, “*Le vierge, le vivace, et le bel aujourd'hui*”, is scored for soprano and a percussion ensemble of tuned and metal instruments, drawing on the image of a swan flapping mightily while taking flight from an icy lake. The next, “*Une dentelle s'abolit*”, features undulating, melismatic vocal writing contrasting with static fixity of pitches to draw out fleeting moods while highlighting the formal organization of the poetry. These ephemeral surges of creative assemblage pull tirelessly against the necessarily limiting forces of musical structure as words, images, and musical gestures are repeatedly teased apart and reintegrated. The evanescent “*Tombeau*” concludes with only a single, sung line as a final, dying echo of this infinity within the finite interweaving of poetic word and musical meaning. (- annotated by Marc McAneny)

Artist Biographies

World renowned American Soprano **Laura Aikin** is considered a leader amongst the generation of dynamic young Sopranos today. Possessing a range of over three octaves and an arresting stage presence, her repertoire embraces works from the Baroque to the contemporary on both the concert and operatic stages. In great demand in both Europe and America, she began her career as a member of the ensemble at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin. At the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, Laura Aikin has performed more than 300 times in such major roles as Lulu (*Lulu*), Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*), Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Amenaide (*Tancredi*), Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Adele (*Die Fledermaus*), and Zaide (*Zaide*).

A regular guest in the world's leading opera houses, Laura Aikin has performed Aminta (*Die Schweigsame Frau*), Zerbinetta, Olympia, Adele, Sophie and Queen of the Night at the Vienna State Opera. At La Scala Milan she has sung Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Sophie, Soeur Constance (*Les Dialogues des Carmelites*) and Zerbinetta. She sang Zerbinetta at the Bavarian State Opera, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and Chatlet, for which she received Singer of the Year at the Chatlet. She sang Lulu and Amenaide with Opernhaus Zurich, Manon in Boulevard Solitude at the Liceu in Barcelona, Lulu with the Netherlands Opera and at the Bastille in Paris, Alcina and Zaide at the Beaune Festival and Sophie at the Semper Oper Dresden. Most recently she performed Zerbinetta and Badi'at in Lyon, the Flight Controller in Jonathan Dove's opera Flight in Glyndebourne and Konstanze in Die Entführung aus dem Serail for Opera Frankfurt and La Monnaie in Brussels, Lucia for Opéra de Montpellier and Cundegonde in Candide at Teatro San Carlo in Naples. In addition to numerous concert appearances since 1995 at the Salzburger Festspiele, she appeared in 1999 as the Queen of the Night, in 2003 as Bad'iat in the world premiere of Henze's opera L'Upupa, and as Blondchen in 2004 and Konstanze in 2006 in Die Entführung aus dem Serail.

In the United States Laura Aikin has sung Zerbinetta at the Chicago Lyric Opera, Aspasia (*Mitridate*) at the Santa Fe Opera, Sophie, Queen of the Night and Die Fiakermilli (*Arabella*) at the Metropolitan Opera and most recently has had a great success singing the Angel (*St. François d'Assise*) for San Francisco Opera.

As a concert artist Miss Aikin has appeared in numerous major concert houses throughout the world with orchestras such as the London, Chicago, San Francisco, Vienna, San Francisco, Cleveland, Melbourne, La Scala, NDR and BBC Symphony Orchestras, the Berlin, Munich, London, Israel and Vienna Philharmonics, the Berliner and Desdener Staatskapellen, the Bayerische Rundfunk Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg, the Sudwestfunk Orchestra, the Ensemble Intercontemporain, Tonhalle Zurich Symphony Orchestra, Les Arts Florissant, Concerto Köln, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Mozarteum Orchester and Cententus Musicus. The many international festivals in which she has performed include Mostly Mozart Festival in New York, Schleswig-Holstein, Melbourne, Edinburgh, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Luzern, Wienerfestwochen and Berlinerfestwochen. As a Lied singer, she has performed in Berlin, Milan, Munich, Vienna, Dresden, Rome and San Francisco.

Recent appearances included a command performance for Pope Benedict in Rome in a world wide television broadcast celebrating the first anniversary of his papacy, concerts with L'Orchestra di Santa Cecilia and Vladimir Jurovskij, the New Years Eve Concert with the Berlin Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle and her debuts with both the Cleveland Orchestra and the San Francisco Symphony.

Upcoming concerts include appearances at the Styriate Festival with Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Candide opening the Edinburg Festival and Berg's *Altenberg Lieder* with Pierre Boulez. In 2007/8 she will appear with the San Francisco Opera and the Netherlands Opera.

Her critically acclaimed recordings include Beethoven's *Christus am Ölberg* with Daniel Barenboim on the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Centennial Edition Recording, *Songs and Cycles* by Ned Rorem for Orfeo with pianist Donald Sulzen, Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter* with the Sudwestfunk Symphony Orchestra, Respighi's *La Campana Sommersa* with the Montpellier Opera, and DVDs of *Lulu* from Opernhaus Zürich, Henze's *L'Upupa* and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* from the Salzburger Festspielen and *Les Dialogues des Carmelites* from La Scala with Ricardo Muti. Soon to be released a CD of Strauss songs with Pianist Donald Sulzen.

Miss Aikin began her studies in her hometown of Buffalo, New York and Indiana University, where she studied with Margaret Harshaw. On receiving a two-year grant from the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD), she traveled to Europe to study at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich with Kammer Sängerin Reri Grist. Since 1998 a student of Kammer Sängerin Brigitte Eisenfeld, she lives with her family in Basiglio, Italy, a small village south of Milan.

James Baker received a BFA from SUNY Purchase in music performance, where he studied percussion and conducting with Raymond Des Roches. He received BM and MM degrees from the Juilliard School where he was a scholarship student of Saul Goodman and Elden Bailey. He was an active conductor of contemporary music at Juilliard. Mr. Baker has a busy and varied career as performer, composer and conductor. He is currently the Principle percussionist of the New York City Ballet orchestra and percussionist with the American Composers Orchestra. He appears regularly with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and has toured extensively with them in Europe and Asia. He has also played often with such groups as St. Lukes, The NY Pops, Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. An expert in early music performance

practice, he plays regularly with the NY Collegium, Concert Royal and has appeared with The Academy of Ancient Music. He is currently Director of the Percussion Ensemble at the Mannes School of Music.

As a chamber musician, Mr. Baker has appeared with many ensembles, including NY New Music Ensemble, EOS, Da Capo Chamber Players, Speculum Musicae, Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society, Carnegie Hall "Making Music", SEM Ensemble, Bang on a Can Marathon, Continuum and New Band. He has worked closely with such composers as Hans Werner Henze, John Cage, Lou Harrison, Phillip Glass, Lucas Foss, George Crumb, Morton Subotnik, Earl Brown, Tan Dun, Jerry Hemingway, H.K. Gruber, Jacob Druckman, Mario Davidowsky, Milton Babbitt, George Perle, David Felder and many others. He has appeared as a soloist at the Lincoln Center, Next Wave, Santa Fe and Prague Spring music festivals and at Carnegie Hall.

As a conductor, Mr. Baker has a varied background. He is currently Music Director and conductor of the Composers' Conference at Wellesly college. A noted conductor of contemporary music, Mr. Baker often leads the New York New Music Ensemble in their regular NY seasons and on tour, having been resident conductor of the ensemble at the June in Buffalo Festival, and in tours including performances in LA at the LACMA, in San Francisco, Pittsburgh and in China and Japan as well as at The Kitchen, Knitting Factory, Carnegie Recital Hall, Miller Theater and many other venues. He has frequently conducted Speculum Musicae in a wide variety of new American music and will lead the ensemble on an upcoming tour of several music schools including Rice University. He has led "The Pocket Opera Company" in critically acclaimed performances of "Don Quixote" and "Peer Gynt" by the composer John Eaton. Young composers know him for his fine work in composition workshops, where he leads ensembles in new works. This he has done on many university campuses including Rice, U. of Pittsburgh, UC Long Beach, SUNY Buffalo and UC Sacramento. He conducted the Premier of Martin Brody's "Earth Studies" in Boston and in his student days led the Juilliard Contemporary Music Ensemble and The Purchase New Music Ensemble. On Broadway, where he has played in bands for many shows, he has been active on conducting staffs for several shows. He was associate Music Director for "An Inspector Calls" He was Associate Conductor of "The King and I", "The Sound of Music" and "The Music Man" and assistant conductor for "Oklahoma" and "La Boheme".

Emmy award winning producer **Elliot Caplan** served as filmmaker in residence at the Cunningham Dance Foundation from 1983 until January 1998, collaborating with Merce Cunningham and John Cage in the production of films and videos. Together, their work has aired nationally on PBS, Bravo, and Arts & Entertainment, and internationally to thirty-five countries. *Beach Birds For Camera*, a 35mm widescreen film was first shown at L'Opera de Paris Garnier. *Cage/Cunningham*, a feature-length documentary on the life-long collaboration of Merce Cunningham and John Cage, was released theatrically by October Films, translated into six languages for international distribution, and distributed on home video by Kultur Video. *Points In Space*, commissioned by BBC-Television was distributed to more than 400 libraries in the United States through a grant from the MacArthur Foundation. *Changing Steps*, filmed at the Sundance Institute with an introduction by Robert Redford, was produced in association with La Sept and distributed by éditions a voir.

Caplan served as segment producer for PBS's national series on art in America, *EGG THE ARTS SHOW*, and received an Emmy Award and Cine Golden Eagle for "Outstanding Cultural Programming." His work includes segments on *Richard Serra* and *The Whitney Biennial 2000*. As producer for *City Arts on WNET/THIRTEEN*, Caplan's work included, the making of *Carmen Backstage* at The Metropolitan Opera with James Levine, Plácido Domingo, Waltraud Meier and Franco Zeffirelli; *Jackson Pollack @ MoMA*; the restoration of the Rose Reading Room at The New York Public Library, *Reading Room Restored*; and a segment profiling architect/sculptor Maya Lin, *Maya Lin: Pure Landscape*.

Caplan's other work includes theater design and direction. In collaboration with Tony award winning performer Bill Irwin, Caplan designed an evening of theater and video which was presented at The Roundabout Theatre in New York, June 1999. Caplan designed pieces that were performed by the Cunningham Company at the Next Wave Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music, October 1997 and in Paris at the Opera Garnier, January 1998. Together with composer Michael Gordon and the orchestra ENSEMBLE RESONANZ, Caplan produced the twenty-six screen video opera *Weather*, sponsored by the Siemens Foundation Kultur Program and Oper Bonn, which toured five cities in Europe through 2001. In 1991, Caplan and Gordon made *Van Gogh Video Opera*, first performed at the Bang On A Can Festival and then at the Akademie der Bildenden Kunst, Vienna. With German choreographer Sasha Waltz, Caplan designed a sixteen-screen multi-monitor projection for live performance. *Allee der Kosmonauten* has been the recipient of numerous awards including, "Berliner Theatertreffen", 1996 and the National Theater Festival selection 1997, Seoul, Korea. Caplan produced the film, *One To Four* with British choreographer, Robert Poole which features Poole as performer. Additional film

collaborations include works by Bruce Baillie, Richard Foreman, Yvonne Rainer and Susan Seidelman.

Caplan's work is included in the permanent collections of museums around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre George Pompidou and Cinematheque Francais, Paris; the National Institute of the Arts, Taiwan; Tanzfilm Institute and the Munich Filmmuseum, Germany; the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel and the Instituto Itaú Cultural, Brazil.

David Felder has long been recognized as a leader in his generation of American composers. His works have been featured at many of the leading international festivals for new music including Holland, Huddersfield, Darmstadt, Ars Electronica, Brussels, ISCM, North American New Music, Geneva, Ravinia, Aspen, Music Factory, Bourges, Vienna Modern, and many others, and earns continuing recognition through performance and commissioning programs by such organizations as the New York New Music Ensemble, BBC Orchestra, Arditti Quartet, American Composers Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, American Brass Quintet, Ensemble InterContemporain and many others. Felder's work has been broadly characterized by its highly energetic profile, through its frequent employment of technological extension and elaboration of musical materials (including his *Crossfire* video series), and its lyrical qualities.

Felder has received numerous grants and commissions including many awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, two New York State Council Commissions, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, Guggenheim, Koussevitzky, and two Fromm Foundation Fellowships, two awards from the Rockefeller Foundation, Meet the Composer "New Residencies" (1993-1996) with the Buffalo Philharmonic, two commissions from the Mary Flagler Cary Trust, and many more. Recently completed commissions include 1997's *a pressure triggering dreams*, a premiere by the American Composers Orchestra in Carnegie Hall, *In Between* for solo electronic percussion and chamber orchestra for a 2000 premiere by percussionist Daniel Druckman; *Inner Sky* (1999) for flutist (doubling picc., alto and bass) and chamber string orchestra with percussion and piano plus computer cues; and *Shredder* and *Incendio*, two works for virtuoso brass ensemble in 2001. Current commissions include a sextet, *partial [dist]res[s]toration* for the New York New Music Ensemble (commissioned by the Fromm Foundation, and premiered first in June 2002, with revisions to the electronics in 2003), a work for flute plus ensemble, *Dionysiaks*, commissioned by the Brannen-Cooper Fund and "whoosh" for Cheryl Gobbetti-Hoffman (premiere in Fall 2003), and a Cary Trust commission for the New York Virtuoso Singers, *Memento mori* (Winter 2004 premiere). New projects for 2004 and 2005 will include a second quartet for the Arditti Quartet, and a work for chamber orchestra with soprano and bass voices on texts of Neruda and Daumal.

Currently, Felder is Professor of Composition at the University at Buffalo, where he has held the Birge-Cary Chair in Composition since 1992, and has been Artistic Director of the June in Buffalo Festival from 1985 to the present. In 2002, he received one of the first awards from the SUNY-system wide Chancellor's Office for Excellence in Research and Creative Activity. From 1992 to 1996 he was Meet the Composer "New Residencies", Composer-in-Residence to the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and WBFO-FM. In 1996, he formed the professional chamber orchestra, the Slee Sinfonietta, and has been Artistic Director since that time. He has taught previously at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the University of California, San Diego, and California State University, Long Beach, and earned a Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego in 1983. His works are published by Theodore Presser, and a first full CD of his works was released to international acclaim (including "disc of the year" in chamber music from the American Record Guide) on the Bridge label (Bridge #0049) during 1996. A second disc containing orchestral work was released by Mode Records (Mode #89; "Editor's Best of the Year" selection, *Fanfare Magazine*, 2002) in Spring 2000, and EMF #033 was released in July 2001, containing premiere recordings of orchestral works by Morton Feldman and David Felder (two works for each composer) to very enthusiastic critical review. A fourth full length disc of his music featuring works with electronics was released in 2003, and will be followed by a fifth recording project, a DVD-multi-channel disc in 2004.

Nicholas Isherwood is one of the leading singers of early music and contemporary music in the world today. He has worked with Joel Cohen, William Christie, Peter Eötvös, Paul McCreech, Nicholas McGegan, Kent Nagano, Zubin Mehta and Gennadi Rozhdestvensky as well as composers Sylvano Bussotti, Elliott Carter, George Crumb, Hans Werner Henze, Mauricio Kagel, György Kurtág, Olivier Messiaen, Giacinto Scelsi, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Iannis Xenakis in prestigious venues around the world (La Scala, Covent Garden, the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Salzburg Festival, Concertgebouw, Berlin Staatsoper, Vienna Konzerthaus, Tanglewood). Operatic roles include "Antinoo" in Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno di Ulisse in Patria* with Boston

Baroque, "Claudio" in Händel's Agrippina with Nicholas McGegan, "Satiro" in Rossi's Orfeo and "Pan" in Marais' Alcione with Les Arts Florissants, "Joas" in Porpora's "Il Gedeone" with Martin Haselböck, "Frère Léon" in Saint François d'Assise in the last composer supervised production, "Der Tod" in the two productions of Ullmann's Der Kaiser von Atlantis with the Bach Akademie in Stuttgart and 2e2m, "Roméo" in Dusapin's Roméo et Juliette at the Avignon Festival, "Lear" in Hosokawa's Vision of Lear for the Munich Biennale, "Il Testimone" in Bussotti's Tieste at the Rome Opera, "Micromégas" Mefano's Micromégas and "Lucifer" in the world premieres of Stockhausen's Montag, Dienstag, and Freitag from Licht at La Scala and the Leipzig Opera and in Donnerstag aus Licht at Covent Garden. He has improvised with Steve Lacy, Joelle Léandre, Sainkho Namtchilak and David Moss, recorded 48 cd's and appeared in three films. He has published an article on Scelsi the journal of the Scelsi Foundation. His article on the vocal vibrato will be published next year in the Journal of Singing in 2007 and his book The Techniques of Singing will be published in 2008 by Bärenreiter Verlag. He has been visiting professor of singing at SUNY at Buffalo, Notre Dame and the Ecole Normale de Musique and taught master classes in venues such as the Paris Conservatoire, Salzburg Mozarteum, Milan Conservatory and Stanford.

Personnel

Chashmal
Sa'arah

Nicholas Isherwood, bass
Elliot Caplan, image

Dionysiacs

Flutes

Cheryl Gobbetti Hoffman
Sabatino Scirri
Derek Charke
Kathy Chastain
Alice Teyssier
Anne Thompson

Gli Altri

Eileen Mack, clarinet
Jean Kopperud, bass clarinet
Gregory Barrett, bass clarinet
Jon Nelson, trumpet
Tim Leopold, trumpet
Trevor Bjorklund, trombone
Jim Daniels, contra bass trombone
Kristen Theriault, harp
Jason Trueting, vibraphone
Josh Quillen, vibraphone
James Avery, piano
David Hanner, organ
Charles Haupt, violin
Maureen Yuen, violin
Adrienne Elisha, viola
Maria Boncaldo, viola
Jonathan Golove, cello
Lauren Radnofsky, cello
Eric Polenic, bass

Improvisation I

Laura Aikin, soprano
Kristen Theriault, harp
Dinesh Joseph, percussion
Rin Ozaki, percussion

SO Percussion

Jason Trueting
Josh Quillen
Adam Sliwinski
Lawson White

Improvisation II

Laura Aikin, soprano
Kristen Theriault, harp
Catarina Domenici, celeste
James Avery, piano
Dinesh Joseph, percussion
Rin Ozaki, percussion

SO Percussion

Jason Trueting
Josh Quillen
Adam Sliwinski
Lawson White

Tombeau

Laura Aikin, soprano
Sabatino Scirri, flute/piccolo
Cheryl Gobbetti Hoffman, flute
Eileen Mack, e-flat clarinet
Jean Kopperud, clarinet
Gregory Barrett, bass clarinet
Lauren Toner, bassoon
Catherine Estes, english horn
Jacek Muzyk, horn
Jon Nelson, trumpet
Tim Leopold, trumpet
Jonathan Lombardo, trombone
Jeff Dee, bass trombone
Jim Daniels, contra bass trombone
Bill Anderson, guitar
Kristen Theriault, harp
Michelle Gott, harp
Catarina Domenici, celeste
James Avery, piano
Jon Hepfer, percussion
Dinesh Joseph, percussion
Rin Ozaki, percussion

SO Percussion

Jason Trueting
Josh Quillen
Adam Sliwinski
Lawson White

Charles Haupt, violin
Maureen Yuen, violin
David Leung, violin
Will Knuth, violin
Janz Costelo, viola
Adrienne Elisha, viola
Maria Boncaldo, viola
Jonathan Larson, viola
Jonathan Golove, cello
Lauren Radnofsky, cello
Ed Gnekow, bass
Eric Polenic, bass