

Slee Sinfonietta

May 5, 2008 at 8pm

Drinko Hall, Cleveland State University

James Baker, conductor

Lucy Shelton, soprano

flutes

Kathleen Chastain

Cheryl Gobbetti-Hoffman

Derek Charke

Sabatino Scirri

Alice Teyssier

Anne Thompson

Jackie Leclair, oboe/english horn

Bohdan Hilash, clarinet/contrabass clarinet

John Hunt, bassoon

Jacek Muzyk, horn

Jon Nelson, trumpet

Gareth Flowers, trumpet

Ben Herrington, trombone

Jim Daniels, tuba/contrabass trombone

Kristen Theriault, harp

Catarina Domenici, piano/celeste

Tom Kolor, percussion I

Rin Ozaki, percussion II

Courtney Orlando, violin I

Maureen Yuen, violin II

Adrienne Elisha, viola

Jonathan Golove, cello,

James VanDemark, contra bass

Program

Rabbi Akiba

Morton Feldman

I

II

Dionysiacs

David Felder

Opening Veins

Andrew Rindfleisch

The Slee Sinfonietta is the professional chamber orchestra in residence at the University at Buffalo and the flagship ensemble of the Robert and Carol Morris Center for 21st Century Music. The Sinfonietta presents a series of concerts each year that feature performances of challenging new works by contemporary composers and lesser-known works from the chamber orchestra repertoire. Founded in 1997 by composer David Felder, and comprised of UB faculty artists, visiting artists, regional professionals and advanced performance students, the ensemble celebrates a decade of performance.

Other activities include tours, professionally produced recordings, and unique concert experiences for regional and international audiences alike.

Bios

MORTON FELDMAN was born in New York on January 12th 1926. At the age of twelve he studied piano with Maurina-Press, who had been a pupil of Busoni, and it was her who instilled in Feldman a vibrant musicality. At the time he was composing short, Scriabin-esque pieces, until in 1941 he began to study composition with Wallingford Riegger. Three years later Stefan Wolpe became his teacher, though they spent much of their time together simply arguing about music. Then in 1949 the most significant meeting up to that time took place – Feldman met John Cage, commencing an artistic association of crucial importance to music in America in the 1950s. Cage was instrumental in encouraging Feldman to have confidence in his instincts, which resulted in totally intuitive compositions. He never worked with any systems that anyone has been able to identify, working from moment to moment, from one sound to the next.

His music at this time uses graph notation, which allows the players some freedom of choice. Then, finding this unsatisfactory, he returned to precise notation, though in some pieces of the sixties he again allowed the performers some choice. In the seventies, and for the rest of his life, he maintained control over pitch, dynamics and duration.

In 1973 the University of New York at Buffalo asked Feldman to become the Edgard Varèse Professor, a post he held for the rest of his life. From the late 1970s his compositions expanded in length to such a degree that the **Second String Quartet** can last for up to five and a half hours. The scale of these works in particular has often been the cause of some controversy surrounding his work. Feldman died on September 3rd 1987 at his home in Buffalo, aged 61.

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, IRCAM Agora, 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 "*In Between*", for solo electronic percussion, and chamber orchestra for June, 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; "*Shredder*", and "*Incendio*", two works for virtuoso brass ensemble, in 2001; 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 electronics added in 2003-4), a work for flute plus ensemble, "*Dionysiaks*" commissioned by the Brannen-Cooper Fund and "whoosh" for Cheryl Gobbetti Hoffman (premiere in January, 2005, by the Orchestra of French Flutes in Paris), and a Cary Trust commission for the New York Virtuoso Singers, "*Memento mori*" (March, 2004 premiere). New projects for 2005-6 will include a second quartet for the Arditti Quartet, commissioned by the Siemens Foundation, a commission for bass voice and electronics for Nicholas Isherwood, co-commissioned by GRAME in Lyon, France, and four European Festivals, and a work on texts by poet Robert Creeley.

Currently, Felder is Professor of Composition at SUNY 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. From 1992 to 1996 he was Meet the Composer "New Residencies", Composer-in-Residence (one of six such residencies in the US) 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 both the American Record Guide, and BBC Music Magazine) 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 cd-dvd-audio, 5.1 surround project featuring works with electronics is forthcoming.

ANDREW RINDFLEISCH (b. 1963) is an internationally active composer, conductor, and pianist whose work continues to gain consistent critical and popular acclaim. A leading composer of his generation, he has produced dozens of works for the concert hall, including solo, chamber, vocal, choral, orchestral, and wind music. His committed interest in other forms of music-making have also led him to the composition and performance of jazz and related forms of improvisation. As a composer, Mr. Rindfleisch has been awarded many prestigious honors in recognition of his work. He is the 1997-98 recipient of the coveted Rome Prize and in 1996 received a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship. Most recently, he received the Cleveland Arts Prize, the Aaron Copland Award, and the Koussevitzky Foundation Commission from the Library of Congress. He has also been the recipient of over thirty-five other prizes and awards, including those from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Fromm Foundation, ASCAP, and the League of Composers-ISCM. He has participated in dozens of renowned music festivals and has received residency fellowships from the Bogliasco Foundation (Italy), the Charles Ives Center for American Music, the Czech-American Music Institute in Prague, the June in Buffalo Contemporary Music Festival, the MacDowell Colony, and the Pierre Boulez Workshop at Carnegie Hall, among others. Mr. Rindfleisch holds degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Bachelor of Music), the New England Conservatory of Music (Master of Music), and Harvard University (PhD).

An active conductor and producer, Mr. Rindfleisch's commitment to contemporary music culture has brought into performance over 500 works by living composers over the past 15 years. He has founded several contemporary music ensembles and is currently the Music Director of both the Cleveland Contemporary Players and the Utah Arts Festival Orchestra -- both committed to performing, presenting, and commissioning new works. Mr. Rindfleisch regularly makes guest conducting appearances throughout the United States and abroad with many diverse musical organizations; from opera and musical theatre, to orchestral, jazz, improvisational, and contemporary avant-garde ensembles.

Mr. Rindfleisch is currently a Professor of Music and Head of Music Composition Studies at Cleveland State University. Here, he has built one of the most unique and supportive programs of composition study in the country that includes the Cleveland Contemporary Players and an unprecedented Music Composition Resource Center

James Avery studied piano and conducting with Roy Hamlin Johnson and Robert Baustian at the University of Kansas, and with Walter Robert and Tibor Kozma at Indiana University. As a Fulbright scholar he continued his studies in piano with Carl Seemann at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany. A prizewinner in the International Gaudeamus Competition for Interpreters of Contemporary Music in Holland, Avery has performed as pianist and conductor in major festivals for new music worldwide, in the festival for chamber music in Lockenhaus (Austria), and with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He was visiting artist at the American Academy in Rome and has been professor of piano at the University of Iowa (1967/1980), the Hochschule für Musik, Freiburg (1980/2004), and the Eastman School of Music (1986/1988). From 1989 to 1992 he was pianist and conductor with ensemble recherche, since 1992 artistic director of SurPlus, an ensemble for new music based in Freiburg.

The only artist to receive the International Walter W. Naumburg Award twice, as a soloist and as a chamber musician, soprano LUCY SHELTON has performed repertoire from Bach to Boulez in major recital, chamber and orchestral venues throughout the world.

Highly acclaimed as an interpreter of new music, Ms. Shelton continues to bring new audiences into the sound world of new works, often composed for her. Notable among numerous world premieres are Elliott Carter's *Of Challenge and Of Love* and his *Tempo e Tempi*; Oliver Knussen's *Whitman Settings*; Stephen Albert's *Flower of the Mountain*; Joseph Schwantner's *Sparrows* and his *Two Poems of Agueda Pizarro and Magabunda*; Alexander Goehr's *Sing, Ariel* and *The Mouse Metamorphosed Into a Maid*; David Del Tredici's *Quaint Events*; Poul Ruder's *The Bells*; Gerard Grisey's *L'Icône Paradoxiale*; Ned Rorem's *Schuyller Songs*; Sally Beamish's *Monster*; James Yannatos's *Trinity Mass*; Lewis Spratlan's *Of Time and the Seasons*; and Rob Zuidam's *Johanna's Lament*.

Since her return to the USA from England in 1997, Shelton has had five recordings released on Deutsche Grammophon and KOCH International with repertoire of Carter, Stravinsky, Crawford Seeger and Messiaen. Five additional CD's are in the works, with repertoire of Del Tredici, Rands, Adolphe, Kim, and Carter. She also has recordings on Bridge Records, Unicorn-Kanchana and Virgin Classics with music of Goehr, Knussen and Schoenberg.

In the season 2001-2002 abroad, Shelton premiered Rob Zuidam's *Johanna's Lament* at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and gave the Dutch and UK premieres of Zuidam's *McGonagall Lieder*. In the USA she gave the world premieres of Lewis Spratlan's *Of Time and the Seasons* in Boston and a work by Gheorghe Costinescu in New York. In the city she also sings Ferneyhough's *Fourth String Quartet*, joined Da Capo for a recording of Shatin and a concert of Kernis, Previn and Birtwistle. The season also included some of her "standard" repertoire: Berio's *Folk Songs*, Babbitt's *Philomel*, Knussen's *Hums and Songs of Winnie the Pooh*, Carter's *Of Challenge and Of Love* and *Tempo e Tempi*, Druckman's *Lamia* and Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*.

Some highlights of previous seasons include staged performances of Berio's *Passaggio* with the Ensemble Intercontemporain, Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* with Da Camera of Houston and the role of Jenifer in

Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage* for Thames Television. Shelton made her BBC Proms debut in Dallapiccola's *Il Prigioniero* and her Vienna and Berlin debuts singing Kurtag's *The Sayings of Peter Bornemissza* with Andras Schiff. Among notable conductors with whom Shelton has worked are Barenboim, Boulez, De Leeuw, Knussen, Metzmacher, Nott, Oetvos, Rattle, Rilling, Rostropovich, Salonen, Slatkin, and Wolff.

A native Californian, Ms. Shelton's musical training began early with the study of both piano and flute. After graduating from Pomona College she pursued singing at the New England Conservatory and at the Aspen Music School where she studied with Jan de Gaetani. Shelton has taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the New England Conservatory and the Eastman School. She is currently on the faculty of the Tanglewood Music Center and coaches privately at her studio in New York City.

"In the forefront was Lucy Shelton, a new-music diva if there ever was one, performing with fire, sensitivity, astounding surety of pitch, and what seemed like love abounding." (*The Boston Globe*, May 2001)

Notes

Dionysiaks is performed by six flutists who double other flutes, and *gli altri* ("the others"), a group of instrumentalists placed antiphonally within and around the performance space. The piece is dedicated to flute instructor Cheryl Gobbetti-Hoffman and American composer Donald Erb. *Dionysiaks* was commissioned by the "whoosh" fund and Brannen-Cooper Fund and premiered in the Spring of 2004.