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## What's Old is New

by Jan Jezioro



From left to right: David Felder, June in Buffalo's artistic director; composer Augusta Read Thomas; festival founder Morton Feldman.

## The region's foremost contemporary music festival, June in Buffalo, is still going strong at 35

Though the calendar tells us that it is still May, it is already time for June in Buffalo, the annual festival at the University at Buffalo that celebrates the work of contemporary composers. The June in Buffalo, which runs from Monday, May 31 through Sunday, June 6, features the works of both UB's senior faculty, who are established contemporary composers, and new, emerging composers, who are often graduate or post-graduate students, who may be having their works performed for the first time by professional ensembles.

This year's edition of June in Buffalo celebrates two anniversaries: the 35th anniversary of the festival itself, which was founded by Morton Feldman in 1975, and the 25th anniversary of UB faculty member David Felder as the artistic director of the festival. Felder, professor of composition at UB and director of the Center for 21st Century Music, has been the artistic director of June in Buffalo since 1985, when he resurrected the festival after a five-year hiatus. David Felder, along with composers Olivier Pasquet, Bernard Rands, Steve Reich, Roger Reynolds, and Augusta Read Thomas, who make up the senior faculty for this year's June in Buffalo, have all participated in previous years.

The format for the events of the festival is a morning or early afternoon lecture in Baird Recital Hall by one of the senior faculty, that is free and open to the public, followed by either an afternoon, or also, this year, a pair of morning concerts, free and open to the public, featuring works for the most part by emerging composers; in previous years, the works at these free concerts have on occasion been more interesting than the works by the senior composers. There is an admission charge for the final afternoon event, a concert by the BPO on Sunday, June 6. There is also an admission charge for most evening events, featuring works by senior faculty members.

On Monday, May 31 at 4pm, Brad Lubman leads his cutting-edge ensemble SIGNAL in works by June in Buffalo participants in the Center for the Arts Black Box Theater, featuring pianist Eric Huebner in *Intimate Rejection* by Ashley Wang, and cellist Jonathan Golove in Shiuang Chang's *Warrior Dance*. At 7:30 pm, Lubman and Signal return for "An Evening with Steve Reich," at the Center for the Arts Drama Theater. Reich's 1984 *Sextet*, for percussion and keyboards, will be performed, along with his 2007 *Double Sextet*. Reich, best known for his minimalist works, won the Pulitzer Prize in 2009 for *Double Sextet*. The 22-minute work has two performing options, either for an ensemble of 12 instrumentalists, or as a live sextet of flute, clarinet, violin, cello, vibraphone, and piano playing against a pre-recorded sextet on tape.

There is no afternoon performance on Tuesday, June 1, but there is no admission for the 7:30pm performance at the Center for the Arts Black Box Theater by the Ensemble SurPlus, a chamber group of woodwinds, strings, and piano, conducted by Sven Thomas Kiebler. The program features Euterpe's *Caprice* (2008) by Augusta Read Thomas, *Riding the Wind I* (1974) by Harvey Sollberger, and *Music for Six* (1978) by Lukas Foss, among other works.

The Ensemble SurPlus returns to the Center for the Arts Black Box Theater on Wednesday, June 2, at 4pm, for a diverse program of works by emerging composers, including a trio of intriguingly titled works: *This is one small stone in an entire city of monuments I am building for you* by Joe Lake; *Bellows Pumped, The Bottom Approaches* by Mischa Salkind-Pearl; as well as *Subcutaneous Salvation* by William Zucherman, which features pianists Stephen Gosling and Eric Huebner. At 7:30pm, in Lippes

### June in Buffalo Lectures

#### Monday, May 31

10:30-11:45am: David Felder  
 12:30-3:30pm: Francois Eckert

#### Tuesday, June 1

10am-12pm: Steve Reich  
 1-4pm: Francois Eckert

#### Wednesday, June 2

10am-12pm: Olivier Pasquet

#### Thursday, June 3

1:45-3:45pm: Roger Reynolds

#### Friday, June 4

1:45-3:45pm: Olivier Pasquet

Concert Hall in Slee Hall, James Baker leads the Slee Sinfonietta in *Tweener* (2001/2010) by David Felder, with Tom Kolor as percussion soloist; *Kasper* (2010) by Olivier Pasquet; *6 Piano Etudes* (2005) by Augusta Read Thomas, with Stephen Gosling on piano; and Roger Reynolds' *Aspiration* (2008), with Irvine Arditti on solo violin.

On Thursday, June 3, at 10am (note the unusual starting time), the Arditti Quartet performs a program of works by emerging composers in Baird Recital Hall, with *Il y a l'Océan* by Carl Christian Bettendorf, among other pieces. The Center for the Arts Drama Theater is the location for the 7:30pm performance for Ensemble Laboratorium, a group of strings, woodwinds, brass, and piano hailing from 14 countries on five continents, conducted by Baldur Brönnimann, featuring *Glint* (1995) by Jacob Druckman and *déjà* (1972) by Bernard Rands. At 9:15pm, the film *Haxan*, with a soundtrack by Mauro Lanza and Olivier Pasquet will be shown in the Center for the Arts Screening Room.

The Arditti Quartet returns at 10am on Friday, June 4, to Baird Recital Hall, for a second program of works by emerging composers, including *Oszillationen* by Benjamin Scheuer, while Ensemble Laboratorium returns to the Center for the Arts Drama Theater at 4pm for a program of works by emerging composers, including *Cross-sightedness* by the UB-based composer Diana Soh. The performance by the Slee Sinfonietta and guest soloists conducted by Brad Lubman at 7:30pm in Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall is the designated anniversary concert for June in Buffalo. Harvey Sollberger is the flute soloist in his own composition *New Millennium Memo* (2000), while violinist Yuki Numata will be the soloist in *Carillon Sky* (2005) by Augusta Read Thomas.

Mezzo-soprano Julia Bentley will sing Bernard Rands' *Now again—fragments from Sappho* (2007); the performance of this beautiful work was the highlight of last year's edition of June in Buffalo, and the work is a rarity in contemporary music: The music was composed in a style that preserves and enhances the undiminished aural clarity of the text for the listener.

The concert will include two works by June in Buffalo artistic director David Felder: *Canzonne XXXI* (1993), where Felder employs the what has been described as the "refreshingly direct manner of the Brass Music of the 16th century Venetian tradition," and *Partial [Dis]res[is]toration* (2002).

Since its founding in 1974 by legendary first violinist Irvine Arditti, the Arditti Quartet has been one of the most internationally admired quartets in the world of contemporary music, having commissioned and recorded several hundred new quartets. The members of the quartet—Irvine Arditti, violin; Ashot Sarkissjan, violin; Ralf Ehlers, viola; and Lucas Fels, cello—will appear on the stage of Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall on Saturday, June 5 at 7:30pm for a program that includes *Structures* (1951) by June in Buffalo founder Morton Feldman, the *String Quartet No. 2* (1989) by Jonathan Harvey, *Not Forgotten* (2010) by Roger Reynolds, *Tetras* (1983) by Greek composer Iannis Xenakis, and *Third Face* (1988) by David Felder.

The June in Buffalo Festival ends on Sunday, June 6, at 2:30pm, when Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra music director JoAnn Falletta makes her debut performance on the stage of Slee Hall, leading the BPO in a program of works by David Felder, Bernard Rands, and Augusta Read Thomas.

Felder's *Six Poems from Neruda's "ALTURAS..."* is a large-scale orchestral work written in 1992, when he was composer-in-residence with the BPO, and performed by then BPO music director Max Valdes on a classic series concert in February of that year. The work is based on six of the cycle of 12 poems in Pablo Neruda's searching cycle, "Alturas de Macchu Picchu." A short, explosive first movement is followed by an expansive middle movement described as "a landscape of desolate beauty filled with lush harmonic expanses," while the third and final movement makes a return to the "rugged atmosphere of the first movement and ends with a powerful cataclysm." *Terpsichore's Dream*, composed in 2007 by Augusta Read Thomas, is a 17-minute ballet for chamber orchestra. The composer notes that "In Greek mythology, Terpsichore ('delight of dancing') was one of the nine Muses, ruling over dance and the dramatic chorus. She lends her name to the word 'terpsichorean' which means 'of or relating to dance.'" Bernard Rands was awarded the John F. Kennedy Center's prestigious Friedheim Award for his orchestral suites *Le Tambourin*, and a performance of Rands' *Le Tambourin Suite No. 2*, (1984) will conclude both the concert and this year's festival.

Advance tickets are \$12; \$9 for UB faculty/staff/alumni and senior citizens, and \$5 for students At the door \$20, \$15, and \$8. For more information, call 645-2921 or visit [www.slee.buffalo.edu](http://www.slee.buffalo.edu).

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