

Guest Ensemble Concert:

2024-03-31 – Duo Cortona



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CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC

David Gompper, *director*
Season 58, Concert 12

Duo Cortona

Rachel Calloway, *mezzo-soprano*
Ari Streisfeld, *violin*

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 7:30pm
Voxman Music Building Concert Hall

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Ari Streisfeld, *violin*

PROGRAM

Selections from *Koans*

34

19

41

2

Ingrid LAUBROCK

(b. 1970)

Erica Hunt, poet

(b. 1955)

Love Sonnets

Let me not to the marriage of true minds

My love is as a fever, longing still

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day

Laura SCHWENDINGER

(b. 1962)

The Frontierswomen

Eric MOE

(b. 1954)

Mikko Harvey, poet

It is what it is

Sticks and Stones

Who am I to Say?

Annika K. SOCOLOFSKY

(b. 1990)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Mezzo-Soprano **Rachel Calloway** brings versatility and compelling insight to stages worldwide. Praised as “a gale-force” (Time Out New York) with a “dark-hued and sizable voice” (New York Times), she is especially recognized as an interpreter of new and contemporary music. Recent and upcoming premieres include music by Augusta Read Thomas, John Zorn, Orlando Jacinto Garcia, Robert Xavier Rodriguez, David Garner, Gabriela Lena Frank, Christopher Cerrone, and Annika Socolofsky. With her husband, violinist Ari Streisfeld, Ms. Calloway performs as Duo Cortona, creating new works for mezzo-soprano and violin.

Highlights of the 2023 - 2024 season include a Schumann residency at The Castleton Festival, John Zorn at 70 at The Walker Arts Center (MN), continued collaborations with the Amernet Quartet (Southern Exposure New Music Series, Columbia Museum of Art, and New Music Miami), Su Lian Tan's opera *Lotus Lives* with the University of Buffalo's Center for the Arts, Mozart's *Requiem* with the South Carolina Philharmonic, Mahler's 2nd Symphony (alto soloist) with the New York Philharmonia Orchestra, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Florence Symphony Orchestra, and Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and songs of Jesse Montgomery with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Duo Cortona will appear in concert and artist residency at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Denver University, University of Wisconsin at Madison, and the University of Iowa.

Ms. Calloway has appeared in concert with the Orlando Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Series, Charleston Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, Berkeley Symphony, Ojai Festival, San Francisco Girls' Chorus, BAM Next Wave Festival, Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, Cal Performances, and Lincoln Center Festival. Ms. Calloway made her European operatic debut as Mrs. Grose in *The Turn of the Screw* at Opéra de Reims, Athénée Théâtre Louis-Jovet (Paris), and Opéra de Lille. She co-founded the musical collective

Shir Ami: Song of our People with her brother, cellist Jason Calloway.

A passionate and devoted educator, Ms. Calloway serves on the faculty of the University of South Carolina as Assistant Professor of Voice and Director of Spark: Music Leadership at Carolina. She joined the faculty of the Cortona Sessions for New Music (Italy) in 2014, Summer Performing Arts with Juilliard in 2016, and the Chautauqua Opera Conservatory in 2023. Ms. Calloway holds degrees from The Juilliard School (BM) and Manhattan School of Music (MM).

Violinist **Ari Streisfeld** has garnered critical acclaim worldwide for his performances of diverse repertoire and has established himself as one of the foremost interpreters of contemporary classical music. Praised for his “dazzling performance” by the New York Times and “scintillating playing” by New York Classical Review, Dr. Streisfeld has toured worldwide as a founding member of the world-renowned JACK Quartet. Together with his wife, mezzo-soprano Rachel Calloway, Dr. Streisfeld formed Duo Cortona, a contemporary music ensemble dedicated to the creation of new works for the unique instrumentation of mezzo-soprano and violin. He is also a member of Shir Ami, an ensemble dedicated to the performance and preservation of Jewish art music. Dr. Streisfeld frequently collaborates with some of today’s leading ensembles, including Ensemble Signal, International Contemporary Ensemble, Worldless Music Orchestra, and Weekend of Chamber Music. Hailed as “imaginative” by the Los Angeles Times, Dr. Streisfeld’s arrangements of madrigals and motets for string quartet by Machaut and Gesualdo have been performed to acclaim both at home and abroad. He has recorded for Mode, Albany, Carrier, Innova, Cantaloupe, Another Timbre, New Focus, and New World Records.

A passionate and committed music educator, Dr. Streisfeld holds the position of Associate Professor of Violin and Violin Pedagogy at the University of South Carolina School of Music. He also serves as Music Director of Point CounterPoint (Vermont), and as violin faculty of the Cortona Sessions for New Music (Italy). Dr. Streisfeld holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music (Bachelor of Music), Northwestern University (Master of Music), and Boston University (Doctor of Musical Arts).

Duo Cortona is a contemporary music ensemble dedicated to the creation of works for its unique instrumentation: mezzo-soprano and violin. This ensemble explores new sounds and possibilities for its intimate, expressive, and vital combination. We create opportunities for both established and emerging composers through commissions, competitions, educational workshops, university residencies, and major concert performances.

Duo Cortona was founded at the Cortona Sessions for New Music (Italy) by husband and wife team Ari Streisfeld and Rachel Calloway. Recent seasons include residencies and performances at the University of Notre Dame, University of Missouri (Mizzou), Columbia Museum of Art, Eastman School of Music, University of Pittsburgh Music on the Edge, and Thrive Music Live (Baltimore). Duo Cortona has previously performed on the Southern Exposure Series for New Music (South Carolina), East Carolina New Music Initiative, University of Wisconsin, College of Charleston, New Music New College, with the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music, Resonant Bodies Festival, The Stone, the SONiC Festival, New Music on the Point, and Contemporary Undercurrent of Song Project (Princeton).

PROGRAM NOTES & COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES

Koans

34 - Dream falls face down canvas side down stripped of their letters

19 - waiting to be worded careful

41 - Exactly my size the version in the mirror appears closer

2 - the sun sprints across the year and who has time for sleep

Ingrid Laubrock is an experimental saxophonist and composer, interested in exploring the borders between musical realms and creating multi-layered, dense and often evocative sound worlds. A prolific composer, Laubrock was named a “true visionary” by pianist and The Kennedy Center's artistic director Jason Moran, and a “fully committed saxophonist and visionary” by the New Yorker. Her composition *Vogelfrei* was nominated 'one of the best 25 Classical tracks of 2018' by The New York Times.

Love Sonnets

Texts by William Shakespeare

Sonnet 116: Let me not to the marriage of true minds

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments; love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O no, it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand'ring bark
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come.
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Sonnet 147: My love is a fever, longing still

My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease,
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
Th' uncertain sickly appetite to please.
My reason, the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve
Desire is death, which physic did except.
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest;
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,
At random from the truth vainly expressed:
For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

Sonnet 18: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

The first composer to win the Berlin Prize, **Laura Schwendinger's** music has been championed by artists Dawn Upshaw (Tour 1997-2013; TDK/Naxos DVD), Matt Haimovitz, Miranda Cuckson, Julian Wachner with Trinity Wall Street NOVUS, Arditti & JACK Quartets, ICE, New Juilliard Ensemble, Jenny Koh, Janine Jansen, Eighth Blackbird, Mathieu Dufour, American Composers Orchestra, Franz Liszt Orchestra; Internationally at venues including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Ctr, Times Ctr, Symph Space, BargeMusic, Wigmore Hall, Berlin Phil, Théâtre Châtelet, and National Arts Center CA; And at the Tanglewood, Bennington, Aspen and Ojai Festivals. Honors include a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship, a rare two time Koussevitzky foundation at the Library of Congress commission, a Fromm Foundation Commission, a Radcliffe Institute at Harvard fellowship, a Copland House prize, Harvard Musical Association commission for the Arditti Quartet, Chamber Music

America commission, League of American Orchestras/NewMusic Alive orchestral residency; And fellowships from the McDowell (10), Yaddo (8) colonies, as well as Rockefeller's Bellagio, Bogliasco Foundations, American Acad. Arts & Letters (Leiberson "mid-career composers of exceptional gifts" and Ives Scholarship), First Prize ALEA III Competition (1995), and an Opera America Discovery Grant for Artemisia in with Center for Contemporary Opera in NY (10/18), at the Times Arrow festival (1/7/17); And with fully produced World premieres lead by Left Coast Chamber Ensemble (June 2019), and with Trinity Wall Street NOVUS (March 2019), and with Chris Alden, Lidiya Yankovskaya, and Mathilda Hoffman, conducting & directing, and in a joint production in Milan Italy (2020).

The Frontierswomen

Text by Mikko Harvey

It turned out that the cause of her memory loss
was a family of microscopic women
who had burrowed into the frontal lobe of her brain,
hollowed out a tiny portion, and taken up residence there.
A CAT scan revealed this clearly.
Before she could really
process what she had just heard, the doctor
began narrating a slideshow of images.
So, as you can see, there are four tiny people
living in the prefrontal cortex. Of the four, two
are particularly small; they seem to be children,
little girls. They pass the time
playing various physical games — tag, things like that.
The girls have two mother figures, one of whom
spends all day slicing bits of meat
off the brain wall,
and when her hands are full
she calls over her daughters
who then eat the meat out of her hands.
The other mother seems to have more
of a maintenance/landscaping role.
And that's basically it. That's how they live,
hour after hour, as far as I can tell.
The patient was speechless.
But I'm getting ahead of myself, the doctor said.
You want to hear the prognosis. Of course.
Well, as you've noticed, there has been some
disruption to your working memory, your mood,
perhaps the structure of your sleep.
This is because, during their initial migration
into your brain, these tiny people,
these... frontierswomen, if you will,

traversed several neural pathways
and left a narrow band of reduced activity in their wake,
which you can see here, in this gray matter.
And we will definitely address those symptoms.

However, the doctor said,
face once again turning to gaze
upon the monochromatic images,
at this point, the frontierswomen seem to be going
about their business rather sustainably.
The pace at which the mother is slicing meat
is so slow — the brain bits she is removing
so infinitesimal — that your symptoms
will most likely never get any worse.
Of course we'll monitor you, carefully,
to make sure of this.

A crow shrieked
loudly enough to penetrate
the window of the doctor's office, through which
sunshine was also silently penetrating.
The patient studied the doctor's face studying
the images. Now, there is a surgical option,
he said. But surgery comes with significant risks.
And, what's more, any manual intervention
would almost certainly result
in the death of the frontierswomen.
Which brings us to another point, although
I do hate laying all this on you at once,
the doctor said, staring now
straight into the patient's eyes.
It is possible that these frontierswomen
are the only ones of their kind. If so,
certain scientific concerns, as well as
moral ones, I would argue, need to be considered.

Or... or perhaps not. Perhaps
there are other frontierswomen, in other brains.
Living in brains all over the world.
That would be so awesome,
the doctor said, unable
to quite control himself.

It might even finally
signal the beginning of the revolution, he said, veering
wildly off course now, although
his voice remained calm
as ever.

Eric Moe (b. 1954), composer of what the NY Times has called “music of winning exuberance,” has received numerous grants and awards for his work, including the Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a Guggenheim Fellowship; commissions from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the Barlow Endowment, Meet-the-Composer USA, and New Music USA; fellowships from the Wellesley Composer’s Conference and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; and residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Bellagio, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the UCross Foundation, the Camargo Foundation, the Aaron Copland House, the Millay Colony, the Ragdale Foundation, the Montana Artists Refuge, the Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians, the Hambidge Center, and the American Dance Festival, among others.

It is what it is

*It is what it is
It just is what it is
It is just what it is if you let it be
It’s only what it is if you refuse to see
It’s only what it is if you refuse to see what it could be
It’s only what it is if you refuse to be what you can see*

Sticks and Stones

*Sticks and stones may break my bones but
What is a name but how we are known,
Stand on our own,
Choose to be poems,
Sticks and stones may break by bones but
Names are souls in poems.*

Who am I to say?

Who should I marry?
Who am I to say?
Who am I?
Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor?
Who should I have?
Who should?
What if my husband is a wife?
Who am I to say?
Tinker, tailor, soldier, failure.
Why?
Who am I to say who I should marry?

Annika Socolofsky is a composer and avant folk vocalist who explores corners and colors of the voice frequently deemed to be “untrained” and not “classical.” Described as “unbearably moving” (Gramophone) and “just the right balance between edgy precision and freewheeling exuberance” (The Guardian), her music erupts from the embodied power of the human voice and is communicated through mediums ranging from orchestral and operatic works to unaccompanied folk ballads and unapologetically joyous Dolly Parton covers. Annika writes extensively for her own voice with chamber ensemble, including composing a growing repertoire of “feminist rager-lullabies” titled Don’t say a word, which serves to confront centuries of damaging lessons taught to young children by retelling old lullaby texts for a new, queer era. Annika has taken Don’t say a word on the road, performing with ensembles including Eighth Blackbird, New European Ensemble, Albany Symphony, Knoxville Symphony, Latitude 49, and Contemporaneous. Her follow-up feminist rager-lullaby song cycle in collaboration with ~Nois, titled I Tell You Me, was recognized by the Chicago Tribune as “grotesquely gorgeous... among the most captivating compositions heard the whole festival [Ear Taxi 2021]” and was included in their “Chicago’s Top 10 for classical music, opera and jazz that defined 2021”.

UPCOMING EVENTS





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APRIL

4	7:30pm	Guest Chamber Recital: Aizuri Quartet 	Concert Hall
5	5:30pm	Horn Studio Recital	VOX 2301
6	8:00am	Midwest Graduate Music Consortium Conference 2024	VOX 5 & 2301
6	3:00pm	Iowa Percussion Spectacular 	Concert Hall
7	8:00am	Midwest Graduate Music Consortium Conference 2024	VOX 5 & 2301
7	1:30pm	Piano Sundays at the Old Capitol: Réne Lecuona and Studio	Old Capitol Museum
7	3:00pm	Faculty Recital: Swansongs - The Last Recital 	Concert Hall
9	7:30pm	Guest Artist and Clinician Recital: Brittany Lasch, <i>trombone</i>	Recital Hall
11	7:30pm	Iowa Steel Bands Spring Concert 	Concert Hall

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