

THE BOB COLE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AT
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH AND THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS PROUDLY PRESENT:



ECLIPSE QUARTET

SARA PARKINS AND SARAH THORNBLADE, VIOLINS

ALMA LISA FERNANDEZ, VIOLA

MAGGIE PARKINS, CELLO



4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MUSIC & MINIMALISM

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2013 8:30PM

GERALD R. DANIEL RECITAL HALL

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC MOBILE DEVICES.

PROGRAM

Four Marys (1991)..... Julia Wolfe

Between the Wheels (1990)..... Jim Fox

Marty Walker—bass clarinet

INTERMISSION

John's Book of Alleged Dances (1994)..... John Adams
For string quartet and pre recorded CD

Standchen (The Little Serenade)
Toot Nipple
Habenera
Rag the Bone
Alligator Escalator
Dogjam
Pavane
Stubble Crotchet
Judah to the Ocean
Hammer & Chisel

PROGRAM NOTES

FOUR MARYS was inspired by my love for the mountain dulcimer, a 3-stringed lap instrument from Appalachia. The material is derived from gestures that are characteristic of dulcimer playing—the crying quality of the sliding melody string, the mesmerizing strumming of the drone strings. It is as if I have put a magnifying glass on these sounds to look at them up close and big. The title *Four Marys* is the name of a Scottish folk tune that I heard Jean Richie sing and play on the mountain dulcimer. *Four Marys* is the first of my four string quartets. It was commissioned by the Cassatt Quartet with funds from the Koussevitzky Foundation.

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Her music is distinguished by an intense physicality and a relentless power that pushes performers to extremes and demands attention from the audience. In the words of the *Wall Street Journal*, **Julia Wolfe** has “long inhabited a terrain of [her] own, a place where classical forms are recharged by the repetitive patterns of minimalism and the driving energy of rock.”

Wolfe has written a major body of work for strings, from quartets to full orchestra. Her quartets, as described by the *New Yorker* magazine “combine the violent forward drive of rock music with an aura of minimalist serenity [using] the four instruments as a big guitar, whipping psychedelic states of mind into frenzied and ecstatic climaxes.” Wolfe’s *Cruel Sister* for string orchestra, inspired by a traditional English ballad of a love rivalry between sisters, was commissioned by the Munich Chamber Orchestra and received its US premiere at the Spoleto Festival, and was recently released (along with her other string orchestra piece, *Fuel*) on Cantaloupe Records. Written shortly after September 11, 2001, her string quartet concerto *My Beautiful Scream*, written for Kronos Quartet and the Orchestre National de France (premiered in the US at the Cabrillo Festival under the direction of Marin Alsop), was inspired by the idea of a slow motion scream. *The Vermeer Room*, *Girlfriend*, and *Window of Vulnerability* exemplify Wolfe’s ability to create vivid sonic images. *Girlfriend*, for mixed chamber ensemble and recorded sound, uses a haunting audio landscape that consists of skidding cars and breaking glass. *The Vermeer Room*, inspired by the Vermeer painting “A Girl Asleep”—which when x-rayed reveals a hidden figure—received its orchestral premiere with the San Francisco Symphony. In *Window of Vulnerability*, written for the American Composers Orchestra and conducted by Dennis Russell Davies, Wolfe creates a massive sonic universe of dense textures and fragile windows.

The influence of pop culture can be heard in many of Wolfe’s works, including *Lick* and *Believing* for the Bang on a Can All-Stars. *Lick*, based on fragments of funk, has become a manifesto for the new generation of pop-influenced composers. The raucous *My Lips From Speaking* for six pianos was inspired by the opening riff of the Aretha Franklin tune *Think*. Wolfe’s *Dark Full Ride* is an obsessive and relentless exploration of the drum set, beginning with an extended hi-hat spotlight. In *Lad*, Wolfe creates a kaleidoscopic landscape for nine bagpipes.

Wolfe has also extended her talents to theatre by composing for Anna Deveare Smith's House Arrest, and won an Obie award for her score to Ridge Theater's *Jennie Richie*. She has compiled a series of collaborative multimedia works with composers Michael Gordon and David Lang, including *Lost Objects* (Concerto Koln, directed by Francois Girard), *Shelter* (Musikfabrik and Ridge Theater), and *The Carbon Copy Building* (with comic-book artist Ben Katchor). Wolfe recently created the city-wide spectacle *Traveling Music* with architects Diller Scofidio+Renfro in Bordeaux, France, filling the streets of the old city with 100 musicians walking and riding in pedi-cabs. Her work with film includes *Fuel* for the Hamburg-based Ensemble Resonanz and filmmaker Bill Morrison, and *Impatience* and *Combat de Boxe* for the Asko-Schoenberg Ensemble and 1920s film experimentalist Charles De Keukeleire.

Wolfe's *Cruel Sister* for string orchestra (commissioned by the Munich Chamber Orchestra) was recently released with Ensemble Resonanz (along with her other string orchestra work, *Fuel*) on Cantaloupe Music. Other CDs on Cantaloupe include *Dark Full Ride* (music for multiples) and *Julia Wolfe—The String Quartets*. Recent projects include *riSE and fLY*, a percussion concerto for Colin Currie and the BBC orchestra and an evening length work for the Mendelssohn Club Choir of Philadelphia with the Bang on a Can All-Stars.

Wolfe has collaborated with theater artist Anna Deveare Smith, architects Diller Scofidio+Renfro, filmmaker Bill Morrison, Ridge Theater, director Francois Girard, Jim Findlay, and choreographer Susan Marshall among others. Her music has been heard at BAM, the Sydney Olympic Arts Festival, Settembre Musica (Italy), Theatre de la Ville (Paris), Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, and has been recorded on Cantaloupe, Teldec, Point/Universal, Sony Classical, and Argo/Decca. In 2009 Wolfe joined the NYU Steinhardt School composition faculty. She is co-founder of New York's music collective Bang on a Can. Her music is published by Red Poppy Music (ASCAP) and is distributed worldwide by G. Schirmer, Inc.

BETWEEN THE WHEELS was commissioned by Marty Walker, who premiered it at LACE Gallery (in its original downtown LA location) shortly after it was written, in 1990. Two years later Walker recorded it beautifully with the Amelite Consortium, and it was released on Maria Newman's Raptoria CAAM record label. In 2002, Cold Blue reissued it. Mixing measured and unmeasured time, the hushed music suspends ascending bass clarinet lines and whispering violin tones among fluttering string harmonies.

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Jim Fox's music has been commissioned and performed by ensembles and soloists throughout the U.S. and presented at the Monday Evening Concerts, New Music America, Real Art Ways, Wires, the SCREAM Festival, the Ventura Chamber Music Festival, the CalArts Contemporary Music Festival, Podewil (Berlin), the Schindler House/SASSAS, REDCAT, the Ear Inn, L.A.C.E., and many similar venues. He has also scored feature films.

Described by critics as "austere" and "sensuous" and "filled with a beautiful sadness," his music has been recorded on the Cold Blue, CRI, Advance, Grenadilla, Raptoria Caam, and Citadel labels and published in such new music anthologies as *Soundings* and *Scores*. His Cold Blue recording *Last Things* (CB0001) was chosen as a Record of the Year (2000) by the Italian music magazine *Blow Up* and *The Wire* magazine (UK) described it as "an ethereal experience." *International Record Review* wrote of it: "Fox's music invites one to believe that if the stars, constellations and galaxies emitted sounds, these unearthly harmonics are what one might hear." John Schaefer, producer of WNYC's *New Sounds*, described Fox's second Cold Blue recording, *The City the Wind Swept Away*, as a "beautiful and evocative work," and *e/i* magazine described it as "captivating and truly refreshing." Of Fox's recording *Descansos, Past*, John Schaefer wrote that it has a "lush bleakness that evokes the windswept open spaces of the American West," and Frank J. Oteri, editor of the American Music Center's *NewMusicBox*, wrote, "Easily the most beautiful thing I heard all week ... haunting ... deep on so many levels ... you won't want to listen to anything for a while after you've heard this."

In the late 1970s, Fox briefly taught electronic music at the University of Redlands, and subsequently has visited universities across the U.S. as a guest composer. He co-edited, with Barney Childs and Elliot Schwartz, the second (expanded) edition of *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music* (DaCapo Press, 1998) and has edited many film-related books for Silman-James Press. He is the founder/director of the Cold Blue Music record label. He has designed the CD covers for most Cold Blue releases and a good number of releases from other new music labels.

JOHN'S BOOK OF ALLEGED DANCES The "Book" is a collection of ten dances, six of which are accompanied by a recorded percussion track made of prepared piano sounds. The prepared piano as, of course, the invention of John Cage, who first put erasers, nuts, bolts, and other damping objects in the strings of the grand piano, thereby transforming it into a kind of pygmy gamelan. In the original version of *Alleged Dances* the prepared piano sounds were organized as loops installed in an onstage sampler, and one of the quartet players triggered them on cue with a foot pedal. This made for a lot of suspense in the live performance—perhaps too much, as the potential for crash-and-burn was so high that Kronos eventually persuaded me to create a CD of the loops, a decision that allowed for significantly less anxiety during concerts. The dances were "alleged" because the steps for them had yet to be invented (although by now a number of choreographers, including Paul Taylor, have created pieces around them). The general tone is dry, droll, sardonic. The music was composed with the personalities of the Kronos players very much in mind. The little pavane, "She's So Fine," for example, is expressly made for Joan Jeanrenaud's sweetly lyrical high cello register, and the hoe-down, "Dogjam," honors David Harrington's bluegrass proclivities.

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Composer, conductor, and creative thinker **John Adams** occupies a unique position in the world of American music. His works, both operatic and symphonic, stand out among contemporary classical compositions for their depth of expression, brilliance of sound, and the profoundly humanist nature of their themes. Over the past 25 years, Adams' music has played a decisive role in turning the tide of contemporary musical aesthetics away from academic modernism and toward a more expansive, expressive language, entirely characteristic of his New World surroundings. Born and raised in New England, Adams learned the clarinet from his father and played in marching bands and community orchestras during his formative years. He began composing at age ten and heard his first orchestral pieces performed while still a teenager. The intellectual and artistic traditions of New England, including his studies at Harvard University and attendance at Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts, helped shape him as an artist and thinker. After earning two degrees from Harvard, he moved to Northern California in 1971 and has since lived in the San Francisco Bay area.

Adams taught at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music for ten years before becoming composer-in-residence of the San Francisco Symphony (1982-85), and creator of the orchestra's highly successful and controversial "New and Unusual Music" series. Many of Adams's landmark orchestral works were written for and premiered by the San Francisco Symphony, including *Harmonium* (1981), *Grand Pianola Music* (1982), *Harmonielehre* (1985), *My Father Knew Charles Ives* (2003) and *Absolute Jest* (2012). In 1985, Adams began a collaboration with the poet Alice Goodman and stage director Peter Sellars that resulted in two groundbreaking operas: *Nixon in China* (1987) and *The Death of Klinghoffer* (1991).

John Adams is a much sought-after conductor, appearing with the world's major orchestras in programs combining his own works with a wide variety of repertoire ranging from Beethoven and Mozart to Ives, Carter, Zappa, Glass and Ellington. He has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the London Symphony and the BBC Symphony, among others. In the coming season he tours Australia with concerts in Melbourne and Sydney and conducts the Toronto Symphony, Houston Symphony and presides over a two week festival of his music in Madrid, Spain. With the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he holds the title of Creative Chair, he will conduct his "Naive and Sentimental Music" and the world premiere of Terry Riley's new Organ Concerto as part of that orchestra's Minimalist Jukebox festival, of which he is also curator.

Adams' recordings have won numerous Grammy awards, including three for the Nonesuch release of *On the Transmigration of Souls*. Last season's release of *Harmonielehre* with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony won the Grammy for Best Orchestral Performance. Other new releases include the Nonesuch DVD of the Metropolitan Opera's *Nixon in China*, conducted by the composer, and *Fellow Traveler: The Complete String Quartet Music of John Adams* by the Attaca Quartet. Adams' educational activities reach from the local (the John Adams Young Composers program in his hometown of Berkeley, California) to the international (directing the Juilliard and Royal Academy of Music orchestras at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall and the BBC Proms).

—notes by Maggie Parsons

ABOUT THE ECLIPSE QUARTET

The Eclipse Quartet is an ensemble dedicated to the music of twentieth century and present day composers. The scope of their repertoire spans works from John Cage and Morton Subotnick to collaborations with the singers Beck and Caetano Veloso. Eclipse has the versatility to cross genres from works that include electronics and computer processing to the jazz compositions of grammy award winning pianist Billy Childs. The Quartet has performed frequently on both coasts and has participated in festivals such as the Look and Listen Festival in NYC, the Festival for New American Music in Sacramento, the Scarlatti Festival in Naples, Italy, the Martha's Vineyard Chamber Music Festival and the Angel City Jazz Festival in Los Angeles.

The repertoire of Eclipse contains works by such dynamic composers as Roger Reynolds, Julia Wolfe, Ben Johnston, Ruth Crawford Seeger, Annie Gosfield, John Zorn, Fred Frith, Philip Glass, John King and Lois V. Vierk. They have premiered new works by Zeena Parkins, Carla Kihlstedt, Justin Haynes, Gernot Wolfgang, Stephen Cohn and David Jaffe. Eclipse has recorded the string quartets of Zeena Parkins for the Tzadik label and Morton Feldman's epic *Piano And String Quartet* piece with pianist Vicki Ray on Bridge Records. In June 2013, Eclipse released a disc of three works for percussion and string quartet with percussionist William Winant on New World Records as recipients of the Aaron Copland Fund for Music Recording Grant.

The Eclipse Quartet have been Artists in Residence at Mills College in Oakland California and at the historic artists' retreat Villa Aurora in Los Angeles.

For more information and tickets please call 562.985.7000 or visit:

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