

Cleveland Composers Guild

presents

Solos & Duos

A livestreamed concert from The Bop Stop

Sunday, March 21, 2021 3pm

<https://fb.me/e/1DW98qjH5>

Works by

Sebastian Birch

Margaret Brouwer

Margi Griebing-Haigh

Nicholas Puin

Jeffrey Quick

Ryan Charles Ramer

Robert Rollin

Matthew Saunders

Stephen Stanziano

James Wilding

And featuring Gabriel Stossel's *Four Fractals*

winner, 2020 Collegiate Composition Contest

Performances by

Eric Charnofsky (piano) Mell Csicsila (percussion)

David Ellis (cello) Paul Ferguson (trombone) Randall Fusco (piano)

Maya Ito Johnson (violin) Charlie King (clarinet) Julie Myers King (cello)

Justine Myers (oboe) Caroline Oltmanns (piano) Andrew Pongracz (percussion)

Mari Sato (violin) Wanda Sobieska (viola) Shuai Wang (piano)

Celebrating 60 years of presenting new music in Northeast Ohio.

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Cleveland Composers Guild
2020-2021 Season Concert 1
Solos & Duos

Sunday, March 21, 2021 | 3:00pm
Bop Stop at The Music Settlement
Cleveland, Ohio

Program

Little Melodramas

Despair
Madness

Eric Charnofsky, piano

Margi Griebing-Haigh

One or the Other

Paul Ferguson, trombone

Eric Charnofsky, piano

Nicholas Puin

Variations

Tema—Grazioso—Marziale—Scherzando—
Mormorando—Istantaneamente—
Affettuosamente—Grazioso

Wanda Sobieska, viola

Robert Rollin

Prelude No. 4: "Tears of Joy"

Caroline Oltmanns, piano

James Wilding

Essay in Teal

Justine Myers, oboe

Matthew Saunders

Vibraphone & Piano

Overture: Hockets
Who is Ellie Light?
Tiddly-wink for Alisa
Endless Rain
Elio

Mell Csicsila, vibraphone

Randall Fusco, piano

Jeffrey Quick

Four Fractals

Apollonian Net
Sierpinski Triangle
Koch Snowflake
Mandelbrot Set

Winner, 8th Annual Collegiate Composition Competition

Maya Ito Johnson, violin

Gabriel Stossel

<i>Humoresque</i>	Stephen Stanziano
Mell Csicsila, vibraphone	Andrew Pongracz, marimba
<i>Drugged by the Relish of Fear</i>	Ryan Charles Ramer
	David Ellis, violoncello
<i>I Cry — Summer 2020</i>	Margaret Brouwer
Mari Sato, violin	Shuai Wang, piano
<i>Jeux de quarantaine à deux</i>	Sebastian Birch
Rhythmic Dualism	
Duplicitous Isolation	
The Binary Prance	
Charlie King, clarinet	Julie Myers King, violoncello

About the Music & Musicians

Little Melodramas was written in 2014 for the Cleveland Composers Guild's annual *Creativity: Learning through Experience* junior program. The first movement, "Despair," is gloomy and dissipated, while the contrasting second movement, "Madness," is obsessive and insistent.

Margi Griebeling-Haigh has been Composer-in-Residence at the Kent/Blossom Music Festival since 2011. Ms. Griebeling-Haigh earned her BM from the Eastman School of Music and her MM from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. In 2020 her *Rhapsody* for violin and piano was featured on NPR's *Performance Today*, and her dramatic work, *The White Trout* was released on YouTube to outstanding reviews. Her music is published by Jeanné Inc.; Trevco Inc., and Musicalligraphics, and can be heard on 17 CD recordings. Please visit <https://www.musicalligraphics.com>

Eric Charnofsky enjoys a multi-faceted career as a collaborative pianist, composer, classroom music teacher, radio programmer, and lecturer. He has performed in recital throughout North America and as an orchestral keyboardist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra. A graduate of The Juilliard School where he majored in piano accompanying, Mr. Charnofsky currently works as an Instructor and Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Music at Case Western Reserve University and has taught numerous courses at the Cleveland Institute of Music. His 2016 CD with flutist George Pope features Mr. Charnofsky's own *Four Characters*. Mr. Charnofsky's radio program, *Not Your Grandmother's Classical Music*, airs Monday afternoons on WRUW-FM in Cleveland.

One or the Other is meant to bridge the categories of contemporary and jazz composition. Both jazz and classical melodic elements, alternating between "straight" and "swung" rhythms, allow an exploration of this dichotomy in a fantasia on two styles that have long fascinated this composer.

Nicholas Puin holds degrees from Berklee College of Music and Cleveland State University. His compositions and arrangements have been performed by members of the Cleveland Orchestra, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, the Bop Stop Jazz Unit and the Baldwin Wallace University and the Case Western University Jazz Ensembles. Mr. Puin has taught music for Beachwood, Maple Heights, Brunswick, Berea, and Strongsville City Schools. He leads his own ensemble, The Nick Puin Band, which has performed around Cleveland and Akron since 2001.

Paul Ferguson has enjoyed a varied career as a trombonist. Identified mainly as a jazz trombonist due to extensive touring with the Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey orchestras, he has also been active over the years with the symphonies of Canton and Akron, as well as 20 years playing sackbut with Apollo's Fire. Paul has taught at Case since 1988 and is currently Artistic Director of the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra and principal trombone of the Cleveland Pops. His arrangements for Pops Orchestra, Big Band and other ensembles are performed internationally.

Variations is cast as a passacaglia, and poses prodigious technical problems for the viola. The variations following the 29-measure theme project a variety of moods: graceful legato, military echoes, playful frolics in seven-eight, volatile leaps into the stratosphere, or "mosquito" register of the viola, a coquettish caprice in five-eight, theatrical affections, and graceful lyricism. The final four measures close the proceedings with the fragrance of numinousness. (*Adapted from a note by Walter Mony*).

Robert Rollin is Professor Emeritus of Music and former Chair of Composition at the Dana School of Music, Youngstown State. Rollin studied at the Juilliard School, City College of New York, Cornell University, and the Hochschule für Musik Hamburg. He is founder and coordinator of the New Music Guild, Inc. Festival, and his premieres and guest residencies have taken him to New York, Cleveland, Quebec City, Zurich, Guadalajara, Aberdeen, Kiev, and Grahamstown (South Africa).

Violist and violinist **Wanda Sobieska** belongs to the fifth generation of a family of musicians and musicologists. She has appeared as a solo and chamber musician in the United States, Poland, and Canada, performing for such organizations as the Toronto Cultural Center, Warsaw Institute of Fine Arts, and the Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus. In addition, she regularly plays in orchestras, including the Orchestra of Opera Circle Cleveland, Ashland Symphony, Mansfield Symphony, and Youngstown Symphony. She attended the Grazyna Bacewicz School of Music in Warsaw, the Cleveland Music School Settlement, and the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati.

Major and minor sounding simultaneously is an ambiguous mix of the happy with the sad, and the tenor for "**Tears of Joy.**" As often in my piano music the chord is not simply played and then allowed to resound on its own, but rather constantly energized by repeating note patterns, in this case in a pattern of thirds. Against this pattern, the joyfully tearful mix of major and minor, are little melodies that express a cautious hopefulness, tarnished with melancholy. "Tears of Joy" is part of *Eleven Preludes*, and was premiered by Caroline Oltmanns at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2009.

South African composer **James Wilding's** work has been performed by such groups as the Stow Symphony Orchestra, the New York Middletown Wind Ensemble, the Harburger Orchester Akademie, the TEMPO ensemble, and the Chamber Music Society of Ohio. Wilding is Professor of Instruction and Co-Chair in Composition and Theory at the University of Akron, and studied at the University of Cape Town and Kent State University.

Caroline Oltmanns is fast becoming a star in the piano world, which is heavily evident in her refined, crystalline playing and charismatic persona' (Donald Hunt, *Pianist Magazine*). She has recorded six solo CDs on the Filia Mundi label, and performed concerti with Youngstown Symphony Orchestra, Johnson City Symphony Orchestra, Harburger Orchester Academie, and Cleveland Philharmonic Orchestra. Oltmanns presents recitals across the US, Europe, China, and South Africa, and is Professor of Piano at Youngstown State University.

Essay in Teal is a work for unaccompanied oboe composed in January 2012 for a one-hour composition contest and revised nine years later. As befits its rapid composition, it paints in broad strokes with long, meditative phrases characteristic of its instrument. The choice of color reflects the vast open sky of the Oklahoma Panhandle, where the composer lived and worked at the time of its composition.

Matthew Saunders has taught music from kindergarten to college in styles from madrigal to mariachi, and strives to make beautiful music for and with captivating people. He has loved, lost, and loved again; helped friends find salvation, and found it for himself as well; taught genius students, and learned from genius teachers. He will never write unlistenable music, or stop stargazing. Dr. Saunders is Professor of Music and music department chair at Lakeland Community College, where he directs the Lakeland Civic Orchestra.

Oboist **Justine Myers** has performed with the Cleveland Orchestra, both at home and on European tour, the New World Symphony, and is a member of several regional orchestras. She is a graduate of Baldwin Wallace, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Oberlin Conservatory. She studied with Cleveland Orchestra oboists Jeffrey Rathbun, Frank Rosenwein, and Robert Walters.

Vibraphone & Piano is neither sonata nor suite, and so bears a Feldmanesque title. "Overture: Hockets" is a pseudo-French overture in which the players bat notes at each other. "Who is Ellie Light?" Why, just a shadowy character from 2010. All pitches are equal, but some pitches are more equal than others. "Tiddly-wink for Alisa" is inspired by the early 20th- century popular instrumental music loved by Alisa Rosenbaum, a.k.a. Ayn Rand, who referred to it as "tiddly-wink music." "Endless rain" indulges in moody Romanticism. "Elio" is in honor of Paul Elio's never-produced 3-wheeled auticycle. There's some angst before the peppy little vehicle rides off into memory, along with our deposits.

Jeffery Quick holds degrees from the University of Michigan and Cleveland State University. Until his recent retirement, he was assistant music librarian at Case Western Reserve University, and has been a paid church chorister for about 30 years, currently at St. Sebastian Parish in Akron. He lives in Windham OH, on 6 acres with his wife Rusty and assorted livestock. Further information on his works can be found at www.jeffreyquick.com.

Mell Csicsila has been an active member of Cleveland's music scene for over 30 years, performing at Playhouse Square, Severance Hall, churches, bars, and street corners and also theaters and concert halls across the United States. More at www.strikingthings.com and @strikingthings on Instagram.

Randall Fusco is an active collaborative pianist who has performed with members of the Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. He earned his degrees in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music and was Professor of Music at Hiram College from 1988-2018.

The four movements of *Four Fractals* are each derived from a mathematical fractal. "Apollonian Net" portrays a concept of concentric circles ad infinitum. "Sierpinski Triangle" plays around with rapid overarching sequences while implying a sense of falling. "Koch Snowflake" uses several triangular gestures to depict a solitary snowflake gently falling. "Mandelbrot Set" uses an escalating set of arpeggios to depict perhaps the most famous fractal.

Gabriel Stossel is a young composer currently attending the Cleveland Institute of Music studying under Keith Fitch. As a composer, Gabriel likes to explore the relationship between broad overarching shapes and musical structure. Gabriel has previously studied with Nicholas Landrum, Jennifer Merkwitz, and Paul Coleman. He is the first prize winner of the 2021 Cleveland Composer's Guild Collegiate Composition Contest and recipient of the 2020 John Phillip Sousa award.

Maya Ito Johnson is a twenty-two-year-old violinist from Atlanta, Georgia. She is currently an undergraduate student at the Cleveland Institute of Music studying violin performance under Ilya Kaler and Olga Dubossarskaya Kaler.

Humoresque is a work originally composed in 2005 for viola and piano. Since then, it has been reorchestrated for flute and piano and, now, for vibraphone and marimba. The work contains a fair amount of two-part counterpoint which results in a mix of both consonant and dissonant harmonic content throughout. In addition, it travels between major and minor modes while pairing some less-often heard non-chord tones.

Composer, educator, and bassist **Stephen Stanziano** holds a doctorate in music theory and composition from Kent State University. His works have been performed by the Cleveland Chamber Collective, Grammy-award winning guitarist Jason Vieaux, baritone Andrew White, flautist Peter Bloom, several Cleveland Orchestra members including violist Lisa Boyko, the Gruca White Ensemble, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, and the Almeda Trio, among others. He serves on the music faculty at Cleveland State University, Hiram College, and Lakeland Community College.

Andrew Pongracz is the timpanist with the Cleveland Pops Orchestra and principal percussionist with both the Cleveland Chamber Symphony and Youngstown Symphony. Andrew earned degrees in music from Hiram College and Cleveland State University. Andrew lives in Lakewood with his wife Brenda and their two sons Alexander and Christopher.

Drugged by the Relish of Fear was written during the pandemic. The title comes from a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson that sums up how I feel about the quarantine experience bringing us all together: "We still throb at the recollection of days when happiness was not happy enough, but must be drugged with the relish of pain and fear." My intent was to compose sound versus composing music with imagery invoking ballistics, lazerfire, revving engines, and rockets.

Ryan Charles Ramer is an active composer/producer. In 2020, he organized a Zoom concert of his work performed by local musicians. The score for each piece fit on the front of a postcard mailed to the performers in a show of support for the United States Postal Service. Last year he also co-produced a gallery show with Context Fine Arts Services featuring nine local artists who painted works based on Ramer's Sonata #5, and is at work on a similar project for his Sonata #6.

Conductor, cellist, and viola da gambist, **David B. Ellis** performs repertoire from Renaissance to contemporary. David directs the Case Camerata Chamber Orchestra and is the Executive and Artistic Director for Earth and Air: String Orchestra. He is a native of Solon, Ohio, and currently resides in Cleveland.

Composed in summer 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, *I Cry – Summer 2020* is a reaction to the gnawing burden of isolation, self-imposed loss of mobility, and a restricted life that shows no signs of abating. I cry for people who are hurting, who are killed for no reason, who are diminished because they are different, and for those who are narrow and afraid to broaden their vision of life.

Margaret Brouwer's honors include Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Meet The Composer Commissioning/USA award, Guggenheim, Ohio Council for the Arts Individual Fellowship, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Her work has been performed by the Detroit, Dallas, Seattle, Liverpool, Rochester, Cabrillo, ACO, Royal Scottish National Orchestras, and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Dr. Brouwer served as head of the composition department at the Cleveland Institute of Music from 1996 to 2008. Recordings of Brouwer's music can be found on Naxos, New World, CRI, Crystal, Centaur, and Opus One labels.

Violinist **Mari Sato** has enjoyed a rich and varied career as a chamber musician based in Cleveland. For twenty-four years, she was the second violinist of the award-winning Cavani String Quartet. During her tenure with the Cavani Quartet, Mari gave concerts on major stages throughout the world. Ms. Sato is on the faculty at the Oberlin Conservatory.

Born in Tianjin, China, pianist **Dr. Shuai Wang** is recognized as an accomplished soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician who has performed extensively in major venues throughout the world including Lincoln Center and the Kennedy Center among others. She holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music where she is currently a faculty member.

Jeux de quarantaine à deux ("Quarantine Games for Two") was written during the pandemic and for a pair of performers living in a "bubble." I picked the clarinet and cello as they both have very large ranges and can produce a variety of different timbral colors. The title refers to some of the positive aspects of the quarantine such as spending more time with family and playing and making music within our bubbles. Each movement explores different ways of developing twos and threes.

Sebastian Anthony Birch, a native of Ohio raised in Italy, holds graduate degrees from Cleveland State University and the Cleveland Institute of Music. Dr. Birch has composed numerous works for the stage including the opera *Ligeia* and the musical, *Cricket on the Hearth. The Hidden City*, was commissioned by the city of Cleveland. *Argentum*, a work for "flutes and silverware" was commissioned by the Cleveland Museum of Art and first performed by Mary Kay Fink and Mel Csicilla. The string quartet, *Life in a Day*, has been performed by the Cavani and Efferus quartets. Dr. Birch is associate professor of music at Kent State University at Stark.

Charlie King is a senior at Cleveland Heights High School, and plans to pursue a degree in clarinet performance following his graduation. He currently studies clarinet with Afendi Yusuf at the Cleveland Institute of Music Young Artist Program. A member of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, Charlie has also served as principal clarinet in ensembles such as the Kinhaven Symphony Orchestra, 2020 Ohio All-State Orchestra, and Contemporary Youth Orchestra, with whom he also performed Artie Shaw's Concerto for Clarinet in January 2020.

Cellist **Julie Myers King** is a member of the Akron Symphony, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the Blossom Festival Orchestra, the Cleveland Pops Orchestra and the Athena String Quartet. She holds degrees in cello performance from Indiana University and Louisiana State University. She performs frequently with Blue Water Chamber Orchestra and Playhouse Square. She has been on the faculty of The Music Settlement since 1993. She resides in Cleveland Heights with her husband, Richard, and their children Charlie and Amelia.



Upcoming Performances

60th Anniversary Season Concert

Sunday, April 11, 2021 | 3pm

Free Livestream from the Bop Stop
(Rescheduled from March 2020)

Chamber works by Larry Baker, Ty Alan Emerson, Karen Griebing, William Rayer, and Dolores White, plus "Moonlit Seascape" by Maxwell Lowery, winner of the 7th Annual Collegiate Composition Contest.

Creativity: Learning Through Experience XXIX

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Innovations!

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Don't miss Mark Satola's weekly radio program of music by local composers.

Acknowledgements

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