

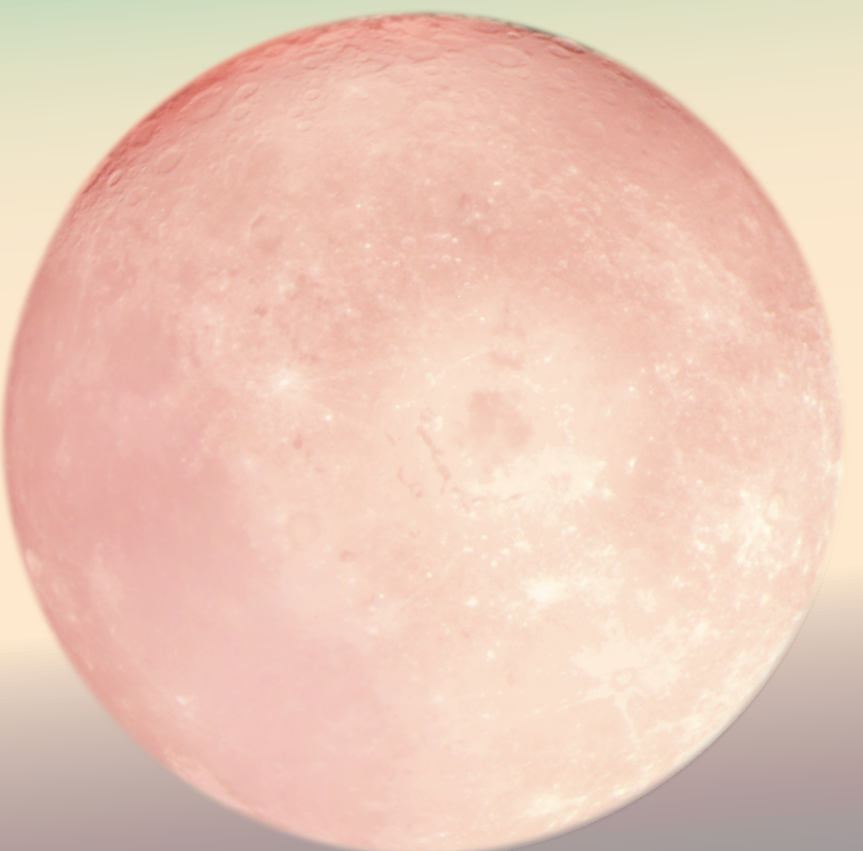


At the edge of the body's night

new works by american composers

John Anthony Lennon Boston Symphony Chamber Players, the National Endowment for the Arts Orchestral Consortium, the Fromm Foundation and many others. In addition to the Rome Prize, Guggenheim, Friedheim and Charles Ives Award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Lennon has been the recipient of numerous prizes, and has held fellowships at Tangiwood, the Rockefeller Center at Bellagio, the Camargo Foundation, Villa Montalvo, Yaddo, the Atlantic Center for the Arts and the MacDowell Colony as a Norlin Foundation Fellow. Heared in Mill Valley, California, Lennon earned a liberal arts degree at the University of San Francisco, and has a master's degree and doctorate from the University of Michigan where he studied with Leslie Bassett and William Bolcom. Lennon is published by C.F. Peters, E.C. Schirmer, Dorn, Mel Bay, Michael Lorimer, Columbia University Press and the Oxford University Press. Recordings are with CRI, Bridge Records, Capstone, and Open Loop. **Program notes:** Hear the messengers who bring new music into the world. **Duo Montagnard** was formed in 2002 and has performed over 100 concerts in 25 states, Canada, Slovenia, Greece, United Kingdom, Thailand, New Zealand and Australia. Festival performances include the Chautauqua Institution, the Hartwick College Summer Music Festival, and the Alexandria Guitar Festival. Commissions include pieces by John Anthony Lennon, John Orfe, George Davellis, Charles Stole, Andrew Walters, and James Crowley.

"William Neil's compositions present the listener with an intense brilliant effect." (Farrake Magazine) and "represents contemporary writing at its most intellectual probing and his extremely characteristic harmonic world is fundamental to the unfolding of his music." (Chicago Tribune) In 1984 Neil was appointed as the first composer-in-residence with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the first residency of its kind with a major American opera company. He then went on to produce award winning concerts and events at the New Music Chicago Spring Festival for several years. WJMT Radio in Chicago has produced several live broadcast premieres of his works including The Water Ape Swims, The Moon and At the Edge of the Body's Night. He and soprano Barbara Ann Martin. He has been commissioned by the Arts Association of Denmark, the Katherine Abelson Foundation and Northern Kentucky University Albany Records, Newport Classic and Tiger Tunes have recorded performances of his works. Neil earned his baccalaureate and masters degree through the Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Institute of Music joint music program and he completed his doctoral work at the University of Michigan. His primary composition teachers have been Donald Erb, Leslie Bassett and William Bolcom. The Rome Prize and the Charles Ives Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters are among his honors and his work has been recognized through grants from the National Endowment of the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, fellowships from the Fulbright Commission, the American Symphony Orchestra League and awards from ASCAP and BMI. Most recently he served as a 2008 McKnight Visiting Composer with the American Composers Forum for Mark Strand. We met while we were both in residence in Rome at the America Academy in the 1980's. Strand's poetry has had a very profound and powerful impact on me and his ability to juxtapose ideas, thoughts and images is truly magical. These poems inspired compositions of contrasting sonorities that suspend lyrically in space. In Sleep, I have imagined music that explores the resonance of sleep through an unending progress of motives and phrases. In The Room, I have explored dark and compressed sonorities in the guitar creating an aural landscape that frames the transparent voice of the soprano. At the Edge of the Body's Night is a setting of Strand's Seven Poems, seven haiku like poems that I have set as six separate pieces each capturing a distinct mood and atmosphere suggested by the character and emotion in these words. **Duo Sureño** presents the hidden masterpieces of the song repertoire with the unique combination of voice and guitar. Featured works by Britten, Rodrigo, Argenito, Villa-Lobos



and Handel create an intimate performance experience reminiscent of the 19th century musical gatherings in the salons of Vienna and Paris. Also dedicated to new music, this duo has recently commissioned works by Christopher Gable, Helmut Jasbar, William Neil, Jing-jing Luo, Tim Mitchell, and a transcription of William Bolcom's Cabaret Songs by Michael Lorimer. Well-known to North Carolina audiences, guitarist Robert Nathanson and soprano Nancy King have been collaborating since 1999, and are currently on the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. **David Kechley**, following the example of his father, Gerald Kechley, began composing at an early age. His music draws from a variety of sources including classic works of the twentieth century as well as many forms of vernacular, poplar, and ethnic music. Although these influences are generally integrated into a consistent style, the resulting musical narratives often create sharp contrasts between lyricism, virtuosity, and dramatic gesture. Kechley's work has been recognized by the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, North Carolina Arts Council, Massachussetts Cultural Council, Barlow, Whiting and Rockefeller Foundations, and his music has been performed by major orchestras, chamber groups, and on college campuses throughout the USA and beyond. Five Ancient Lyrics on Poems by Sappho was first prize winner of the 1980-81 Shreveport Symphony Composers' Competition and Concerto for Violin and Strings won the 1979 Opus 1 Chamber Orchestra Contest for Ohio Composers. In The Devil's Garden, a work for guitar and alto saxophone, was a winner of the 1995 Lee Etelson Prize. He was most recently awarded a residency at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, NH for August, 2009. Born in Seattle, Kechley was educated at the University of Washington, Cleveland Institute of Music, and Case Western Reserve University. His teachers include Paul Tutts, Robert Suderburg, William Bergsma, James Beale, and Donald Erb. His music is available and released on the Liscio Recordings, Albany Records, Reference Recordings, and others. **Program notes:** BOUNCE: Inventions, Interludes, and Interjections was commissioned by The Ryoanji Duo, Robert Nathanson, guitar and Frank Bongiorno, saxophone for premiere at the 2006 World Saxophone Congress in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The title BOUNCE refers to the character of the opening musical idea. Although the subtitle, Inventions, Interludes, and Interjections seems to imply a number of small and separate pieces, in fact, the music is played without pause shifting between the characteristic gestures implied by each of these designations. An invention typically takes a simple musical idea, such as the opening motive, and builds a structure by exploring it various forms. An interlude by definition tends to be in the middle of things and here they are also identified by their long phrases and more lyrical character. Interjections might even be called "interruptions" in this case and tend to stop the flow of the music briefly at various strategic points making us stop and take a breath. As the music progresses the form become more continuous, more intense, and more organic in nature as the opening motive continues to evolve and expand before it eventually returns quite precisely to its original form. **Ryoanji Duo:** Although each performer has established a solo career, Frank Bongiorno and Robert Nathanson have performed as a duo since their debut performance at the Tenth World Saxophone Congress in Pesaro, Italy, in 1992. Frequently invited to perform at saxophone, guitar, and composer conferences, the duo has also toured throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe, with performances in Berlin, Valencia (Spain), Montreal, San Francisco and Chicago. As champions of new music, the Ryoanji Duo has commissioned award-winning composers such as David Kechley, Marilyn Shlude, Daniel Worely, Ernesto Garcia de Leon, and others to write for this unique chamber group. In addition, in their searching for the duo, they have have transcribed and published select well-known "classics" by Mozart, Handel, Villa-Lobos, Ravel, Faure and other significant composers of the past. They have collaborated on two recordings and recently released a new CD of saxophone and guitar music written for them on the Liscio Recordings label entitled Inves. (http://www.lisciorecordings.com). Both are currently on the faculty in the Department of Music at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington where they teach saxophone and classical guitar respectively, among other courses.

At the edge of the body's night

John Anthony Lennon:

1– **Messengers** 9:36

Performed by Duo Montagnard—Joe Murphy, saxophone / Matthew Slotkin, guitar
Commissioned by Duo Montagnard, Ryoanji Duo, Degré21, and Syzygy

William Neil:

2– **Sleep** 6:56

3– **The Room** 7:05

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4– **I** 1:51 7– **V** 1:30

5– **II and III** 1:30 8– **VI** 2:45

6– **IV** 1:57 9– **VII** 2:02

Commissioned and performed by Duo Sureño—

Nancy King, soprano / Robert Nathanson, guitar

SLEEP and THE ROOM © Mark Strand used by permission from the author

AT THE EDGE OF THE BODY'S NIGHT FROM SEVEN POEMS by Mark Strand, used by permission from the author

David Kechley:

10– **BOUNCE: Inventions, Interludes, and Interjections** 14:21

Commissioned and performed by Ryoanji Duo—

Frank Bongiorno, saxophone / Robert Nathanson, guitar

Produced by Robert Nathanson • Recorded by Ian Millard

Edited by Robert Nathanson • Mixed and Mastered by Toby Mountain, Northeastern Digital

Cover Art by Rebekah Rotert • Graphic Design by Rose Michelle Taverniti

Recorded in Beckwith Recital Hall on the campus of

The University of North Carolina Wilmington

after the fact of becoming a musician) teaching music history, I have thought about times that we can

describe as seminal points in music and/or art. One of those points is 1815. Beethoven is at the height

of his fame, Schubert writes the ERLKÖNIG and Shelly FRANKENSTEIN, both 18 years old. People making

art...Schubert needs the musicians to breathe the life into it, Shelley breathes life into a being to

express her art. Romanticism is born. Albeit the thinking a little obtuse, those are the components of our

CD AT THE EDGE OF THE BODY'S NIGHT...poets, composers, musicians, artists, engineers...making art and

breathing life into it. Is this a seminal point in art? Certainly new music today will later be described as

something, maybe post-minimalism, or eclecticism, who knows. But today's "classical" music is a fantastic

blend of everything that came before culminating in something entirely new and original. New music

includes romanticism, impressionism, atonality, polytonality, experiments in timbre, minimalism, ethnic

music, jazz, rock and any other style or kind of music a composer can conceive. If you don't believe me,

listen to William Bolcom's SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND EXPERIENCE.

A new music festival was held on June 3, 2009 at the University of North Carolina Wilmington in

Beckwith Recital Hall, a extraordinarily intimate recital hall. This is a documentation of that event. As I told

the person I was trying to convince to fund the festival, "I'm just bringing together a lot of interesting

artists to make art and party". —Robert Nathanson, January 2010