

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
FACULTY
CONCERT SERIES

GUITARWORKS

The Music of David A. Jaffe

GUITARWORKS PLAYERS:

ALEXANDER DUNN GUITAR

DAVID A. JAFFE MANDOLIN, 5-STRING BANJO, ELECTRONICS

ALEXEI PAISH CONDUCTOR

SUSAN YOUNG SOPRANO

GUYONNE LE LOUARN VIOLA

ALEX JANG MANDOLIN

DOUGLAS HENSLEY GUITAR

JOSH HERRETT HARPSICHORD

UVIC GUITARS BRIAN DESJARLAIS, MICHAEL CHAMBERS,
NATASHA PASHCHENKO, GRAEME CRUICKSHANK, NOLAN KRELL,
JORDAN CHARETTE, BYRON MCINTOSH, JOSHUA AMENDT-MOYLAN

Saturday, November 9, 2013, 8:00 p.m.

Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

MacLaurin Building, University of Victoria

Adults: \$17.50 / Students & seniors: \$13.50

PROGRAM

CITY LIFE

for 5-string banjo, mandolin, guitar, & harpsichord

A LITTLE KID SEES A SKYSCRAPER

for two guitars tuned a quarter-tone apart

GRASS VALLEY FIRE, 1988

for two mandolins & two guitars

I N T E R M I S S I O N

(Beverages and snacks available at the
concession located in the lounge)

THREE MUSICIANS for viola and guitar

Fanfare for the First Musician

Philadelphia Version (with Dog)

Fanfare for the Second Musician

New York Version (without Dog)

Fanfare for the Third Musician and Dog

MAY ALL YOUR CHILDREN BE ACROBATS

for soprano, electronics, & eight guitars

PROGRAM NOTES

David Jaffe's music is at once familiar and erudite, drawing on recognizable folk, jazz and popular idioms, filtered through a prism of modernism. From direct quote to multi-layering, these styles are blended or compounded into a global language where recognition and obscurity form a dual basis for Jaffe's musical persona. Sometimes the comfort of a known style will be affirmed, only to give way to different ideas sounding simultaneously. Other times, discordant clusters will be pronounced with the same rhythmic gestures. In dense textures, snippets from a folk or jazz idiom will be buried underneath or within, creating a kind of cultural clutter or musical Tower of Babel. Furthermore, a sense of wryness provides a sheen over starkness. Jaffe often juxtaposes antiquity with modernity - with a unique ability to write well for instruments combined with a sense of larger structures – manifests itself in a music both engaging and demanding.

- Alexander Dunn

CITY LIFE is based on the idioms of the five-string banjo. The piece expresses something of the frenetic pace of modern life. While the banjo is the protagonist, harpsichord, mandolin and guitar provide supporting texture and color in this unorthodox quartet.

A LITTLE KID SEES A SKYSCRAPER is based on daring and death-defying expeditions on the island of Manhattan taken by the composer and his father long ago. It is scored for two guitars, one tuned a quarter-tone below the other. Between the two, all twenty-four tones of the quarter-tone scale are available, opening a fresh, rich harmonic domain. The first and third movements explore quarter-tone harmony, while the second is primarily polyphonic.

THREE MUSICIANS (after the Picasso paintings) was inspired by the two paintings by that name, one hanging in the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the other in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. One of these paintings includes a dog. The piece is in five movements, each incorporating elements of a particular style of American folk music, although these styles are often abstracted to a bizarre extent. The styles are: old-time fiddle style, blues, bluegrass style, jazz and country music style.

GRASS VALLEY FIRE, 1988 for mandolin quartet commemorates the 1988 fire that burned 49 square miles around Grass Valley, California, including the home of the composer's sister. The piece's three continuous sections loosely follow the progress of the fire---the opening suggests the pastoral quality of the grasslands before the fire, the middle evokes the fire as it takes hold in earnest and the conclusion is a stark desolate reworking of the opening, depicting the charred remains the fire left behind. The fire itself is represented as an intensity of rhythm, derived from the composer's experience playing Afro-Cuban charranga music on the violin. This piece, written for the Modern Mandolin Quartet, was the first original piece in their repertoire that was designed expressly for their instrumentation. The Quartet gave the premier performance in 1989 at Merkin Concert Hall in New York and have toured the work extensively. The work also exists in a version for string quartet, which was premiered in Buenos Aires by the Quartet of Argentina in 1991. For this program, a new version for two mandolins and two guitars was prepared by the composer and Alexander Dunn.

MAY ALL YOUR CHILDREN BE ACROBATS for mezzo-soprano, eight guitars and computer-generated sound is a celebration of folk wisdom, as well as folly. It is based on a text excerpted from 'The People, Yes' by Carl Sandburg and consists entirely of proverbs, sayings and anecdotes from the rich and varied backgrounds of immigrants, natives, fools and others. Complementing this text is a heterogeneous music that draws on such styles as bluegrass, Irish, Jewish and African-American music, as well as American popular and European classical styles. The computer part was created at Stanford University Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics. It is entirely synthesized, yet often resembles voices and plucked strings, using techniques pioneered by the composer and others at Stanford University.

The People, Yes by Carl Sandburg (1878-1967)
Excerpted and assembled by David A. Jaffe

I.

The People, YES!
They have their proverbs, old and new.

II.

We'll see what we'll see.
Time is a great teacher:
Today me and tomorrow maybe you.

Even if your stomach be strong, eat as few cockroaches as possible.

III.

What is bred in the bone will tell.
Between the inbreeds and the crossroads the argument goes on.
You can breed them up as easy as you can down.
"I don't know who my ancestors were", said a mongrel,
 "but we've been descending for a long time."
"My ancestors", said the Cherokee-blooded Oklahoman,
 "didn't come over on the Mayflower but were there to meet the boat!"
"Why," said the Denver Irish policeman as he arrested a Pawnee Indian I.W.W. soap-boxer,
 "why don't you go back to where you came from?!"

IV.

Wedlock is padlock.
We all belong to one big family and have the same smell.
A wife is not a guitar you hang on the wall after playing it.
Take a good look at the mother before getting tied with the daughter.
Let a mother be ever so bad she wishes her daughter to be good.
The man hardly ever marries the woman he jokes about:
she often marries the man she laughs at.
Keep your eyes open before marriage, half-shut afterwards.

V.

Blue eyes say love me or I'll die.
Black eyes say love me or I'll kill you.

Wash a dog, comb a dog, still a dog.

VI.

You don't know enough to come in when it rains.
You don't know beans when the bag is open.
You don't know enough to pound sound into a rat hole.

The white man drew a small circle in the sand
And told the red man, "This is what the Indian
knows," and drawing a big circle around the
small one, "This is what the white man knows."
The Indian took the stick and swept an immense
circle around both circles: "This is where the
white man and the red man know nothing."

All I know is what I hear.
All I know is what I read in the papers.
All I know you can put in a thimble.
All I know I keep forgetting.

VII.

We have to eat, don't we?
You can eat promises, can you?
You can't eat the Constitution, can you?

I can eat crow, but I don't hanker after it.

VIII.

Out of the roots of the earth,
Out of dirt, barns, workshops, timetables,
Out of lumberjack payday jamborees,
Out of joybells and headaches the day after,
Out of births, weddings, accidents,
Out of wars, laws promises, betrayals,
Out of mists of the lost and anonymous,
Out of plain living, early rising and spare belongings:

YES!

They...

An expert is only a damn fool a long way from home.
You're either a thoroughbred, a scrub, or an in-between.
Speed is born with the foal-sometimes.

They have ...

Always some dark horse never heard of before is coming under the wire a winner.
A thoroughbred always wins against a scrub, even though you never know for sure:
even thoroughbreds have their off days: new blood tells: the worn out thorough
breds lose to the fast young scrubs.

They have their ...

The big fish eat the little fish,
the little fish eat shrimps
and the shrimps eat mud.

proverbs old and new!

IX.

The best preacher is the heart.

The best teacher is the time.

The best book is the world.

The best friend is... [God].

GuitarWorks issues 1000 huge thank-you's
to the amazing talent of the musicians
who gave of their time and energy
to realize this project.
I love you Man.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, November 15, 8:00 p.m. (Admission by donation)

GUITAR CLASS RECITAL

Students from the studio of Dr. Alexander Dunn
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Saturday, November 16, 8:00 p.m. (Admission by donation)

SONIC LAB: *Vertical Concert*

Ajtony Csaba, conductor

UVic's new music ensemble performs Pierluigi Billone's *Verticale Muto*,
Dérive I by Pierre Boulez and Elliott Carter's *A Mirror on Which to Dwell*.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Wednesday, November 20, 7:00 p.m. (Admission by donation)

FLUTE CLASS RECITAL

Students from the studio of Suzanne Snizek
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Friday, November 22, 8:00 p.m. (\$14 & \$12)

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA WIND SYMPHONY

In Remembrance

Eugene Dowling, conductor

Performing music of war and music of remembrance, include works by John Williams,
Daniel Bukvich, Sir Edward Elgar, Elliot del Borgo and Stephen Bulla.
University Centre Farquhar Auditorium

Saturday, November 23, 8:00 p.m. (\$17.50 & \$13.50)

FACULTY CONCERT SERIES: *A Britten Celebration*

Alexander Dunn (guitar) and guests

Solo, ensemble and vocal works of the eminent British composer,
Benjamin Britten, commemorating the centenary of his birth.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

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online (www.tickets.uvic.ca) and at the door.

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