

EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

# VERDEHR TRIO AWARD

*The Wilder Trio*

Angela Kim, violin  
Michael Miller, clarinet  
Matthew Figel, piano

Monday, April 25, 2022  
Hatch Recital Hall  
7:30 PM



UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

Eastman  
School of Music

100 YEARS | 1921-2021

## PROGRAM

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**Dash** (2001)

Jennifer Higdon  
(b. 1962)

**Dream Tracks** (1992)

Peter Sculthorpe  
(1929-2014)

**Trio for Violin, Clarinet and Piano** (1996)

Capriccio: Allegro  
Romanza: Andante espressivo  
Envoi: Allegro

Gian Carlo Menotti  
(1911-2007)

### *INTERMISSION*

**Si: Elegy for Tiananmen Square** (1990)

Ge Gan-Ru  
(b. 1954)

**Slang** (1993)

Libby Larsen  
(b. 1950)

**Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano** (1992)

Introduction: Lento  
Scherzo: Allegretto  
Dialog: Adagio  
Final: Allegro ma non troppo

Alexander Arutiunian  
(1990-2012)

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### **Dash** (2001)

Jennifer Higdon

*Dash* comes at the beginning of the twenty-first century, where speed often seems to be our goal. This image fits well the instruments in this ensemble—clarinet, violin, and piano—because these are some of the fastest moving instruments in terms of their technical prowess. Each individual plays an equal part in the ensemble, contributing to the intensity and forward momentum, as the music dashes from beginning to end.

— Jennifer Higdon

### **Dream Tracks** (1992)

Peter Sculthorpe

Since 1988 I have written a series of works inspired by Kakadu National Park in the north of Australia. Some of these works have melodic material in common, the contours of each line usually being transformed in some way, both within pieces and in successive pieces. I have come to regard these melodies as 'songlines' or 'dreaming tracks'. These are names used to describe the labyrinth of invisible pathways that, according to Aboriginal belief, are created by the totemic ancestors of all species as they sing the world into existence.

*Dream Tracks*, then, sets out to summon up the spirit of a northern Australian landscape. The work is in four sections: *Lontano-Molto sostenuto*—*Lontano-Estatico*. The first section takes as its point of departure the contours of a Torres Strait Island children's song called *Monkey and Turtle*. It's a short morality tale, concerning the fate of a thieving monkey and his partner, a turtle. While there are no monkeys in Torres Strait, they seem to be a part of popular imagination. Like most songs in the area, *Monkey and Turtle* is sometimes accompanied by guitar but more often by traditional skin and bamboo drums. This serves as an introduction to the second section, which is based upon an Arnham Land chant, *Djilile*, or 'whistling-duck on a billabong.' The third section is an extension of the first, its melodic contours also appearing in the fourth section. In this final section, however, *Djilile* is ever-present, both in a much-transformed guise and in its original form. I have dedicated *Dream Tracks* to the Verdehr Trio.

— Peter Sculthorpe

### **Trio for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano** (1996)

Gian Carlo Menotti

The capricious first movement of the Trio combines witty dance-like figures with the composer's innate feeling for drama and melodic line. Skillful voice leading and rhythmic vitality highlight the interplay among the three performers. The expressive slow movement, *Romanza*, displays the true genius of the operatic master as emotionally intense melodies ring forth spontaneously. The third movement, a lively fugato entitled *Envoi*, brings the work to a brilliant exciting close.

— Walter Verdehr

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### **Si: Elegy for Tiananmen Square** (1990)

Ge Gan-Ru

*Si*, for violin, clarinet, and piano, derives its inspiration from the 1989 democratic movement in China and was completed in June 1990, the first anniversary of the Tiananmen Massacre. *Si*, a classical Chinese word, means offering sacrifices to the god or the spirits of the dead. In this piece it reflects not only the composer's deep sorrow for those innocent people who lost their lives in the massacre, but also recollections of the movement.

The piece is in one movement. It begins with an expressive two-note set by the violin and unfolds with the entrance of the clarinet and the low harmonics produced from inside the piano which evokes church bells. Gradually a trill section, evolved from the opening motive, leads to a high point. It is followed by a fast section suggesting the struggle. The middle part is quiet, but graceful with sounds like the *Qin* (the Chinese plucking instrument) as a contrast to the former part. Then, all previous elements are developed until the climax is reached. The whole piece ends very quietly, but its memory of those days will live forever.

– Ge Gan-Ru

### **Slang** (1993)

Libby Larsen

*Slang* is a one-movement work in three sections. Its title refers to the use of both jazz and boogie slang and twentieth-century 'new music' slang throughout the composition. I got the idea for *Slang* while I was working on a ballet for the Ohio Ballet. I was thinking about our American culture with its vast array of musical languages. I'm fascinated by the idea that just as we have developed slang in our speaking language, we have also developed a lexicon of musical slang. This composition explores the idea, asking the performers to freely change performance styles as the musical language dictates.

– Libby Larsen

### **Suite for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano** (1992)

Alexander Arutiunian

The *Suite* for violin, clarinet, and piano was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and composed in 1992 in Erevan, Armenia. One notes the vivid Armenian character of the music which is always present in Arutiunian's style. The opening phrases of the *Introduction*, marked *Lento*, create tension with dark intonations in the low registers of the piano in combination with the violin. Though emotionally tense, the prevailing mood in this movement is lyrical. The *Scherzo* is a graceful *fugato*. Next follows the *Dialog* for violin and clarinet—a short intermezzo between the *Scherzo* and *Finale*. The *Dialog* ends with a transition into the *Finale*. This movement contains the elements of Armenian dance rhythms with their capricious pulse and unexpected irregularities in a freely improvised melodic style.

– Walter and Elsa Verdehr

## MEET THE ARTISTS

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### ANGELA KIM, VIOLIN

Violinist **Angela Kim**, a native of New Jersey, made her concerto debut at the age of 15 with the Nova Philharmonic Orchestra, and has appeared since as a soloist with ensembles in N.J., N.Y., and South Korea including the K-Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and the New Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra. Concert venues she has performed in as a soloist include the Alice Tully, Carnegie Weill, LeFrak, and Merkin Concert Halls. She has also been featured at various music festivals such as the Classical Bridge Festival, Great Mountains Music Festival, Heifetz Institute, Meadowmount School of Music, and Mozarteum International Summer Academy. Angela holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Juilliard, where she was a student of Sally Thomas and a Morse Teaching Fellow. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts as a student of Robin Scott at the Eastman School of Music.

### MICHAEL MILLER, CLARINET

**Michael Miller** will receive his Bachelor of Music from the Eastman School of Music, studying clarinet with Michael Wayne. Originally from Sarasota, Florida, Michael has been a featured soloist on multiple occasions with the Sarasota Orchestra and the Anna Maria Island Symphony. Michael is a two-time winner of the Vandoren Emerging Artist Competition, most recently receiving the grand prize in the classical clarinet category. In addition, he has won awards in other national and international competitions such as the International Clarinet Association Young Artist Competition, MTNA Chamber Music Competition, and the American Prize. At Eastman, Michael received the Verdehr Trio Award, consisting of a private recital performing pieces specially commissioned for the Verdehr Trio. In the summertime, Michael has attended music festivals such as the Interlochen Arts Academy, Eastern Music Festival, National Symphony Orchestra SMI, National Orchestra Institute, and National Repertory Orchestra.

### MATTHEW FIGEL, PIANO

“With a tone and approach entrancing from the outset,” (New York Concert Review, Inc.) **Matthew Figel** is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Piano Performance & Literature at the Eastman School of Music, studying under Marina Lomazov. Matthew received his Bachelor's degree in Applied Music and Musical Arts from this institution as well, graduating with Highest Distinction along with admittance into the music honor society, Pi Kappa Lambda. While in his sophomore year, Matthew performed with the Eastman Philharmonia after winning the Eastman Concerto Competition. Additional successes in competitions have included top prizes in the Rosalyn Tureck International Bach Competition and the Harold Protsman Classical Period Competition. Matthew currently serves as the Artist-in-Residence at Valley Manor Living Center, where he performs monthly recitals for the senior community in Rochester. Upcoming summer performances will include a fellowship at the Gilmore Piano Festival, as well as appearances at the Southeastern Piano Festival and a featured recital as part of the Arts at Messiah Summer Concert Series.

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT EASTMAN

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Wednesday, April 27, 2022

### **Eastman Philharmonia**

Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre , 7:30 PM

Free admission

Thursday, April 28, 2022

### **EASTMAN PIANO SERIES**

**Richard Goode, piano**

Kilbourn Hall, 7:30 PM

Free admission

Friday, April 29, 2022

### **Eastman School Symphony Orchestra / Eastman Rochester Chorus**

Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre, 7:30 PM

Free admission

Saturday, April 30 – Monday, May 2, 2022

### **CHAMBER MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA**

Various Locations

Free admission

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*We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the “Great Hill People” and “Keepers of the Western Door” of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people on whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.*

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**Please note:** The use of unauthorized photographic and recording equipment is not allowed in this building. We reserve the right to ask anyone disrupting a performance to leave the hall.

**Restrooms** are located in the Wolk Atrium near the rear doors of Hatch Recital Hall. Fully-accessible restrooms are available on the first floor of the Eastman School. Our ushers will be happy to direct you to them.

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