

TIFFANY TOWNSEND

Soprano Tiffany Townsend is pursuing her third year of postgraduate studies at the Curtis Institute of Music. She received her Bachelor of Arts from Millsaps College studying under James C. Martin and Master of Music from the Juilliard School studying under Marlana Malas. At Millsaps, she was seen as Lucy Lockit in Benjamin Britten's *The Beggar's Opera* and performed Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* in scenes. At Juilliard, Ms. Townsend performed scenes from Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz* and Charpentier's *Louise*. At the Chautauqua Institution, she performed First Lady in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. At Curtis, Ms. Townsend has performed Female Chorus in Britten's *Rape of Lucretia* and Tatiana in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. She has performed in concerts with the Mississippi Chorus, Millsaps College Singers, the New York Festival of Song, and Juilliard Wednesdays @ 1 in Alice Tully Hall. Upcoming engagements include Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Brenda in Rene Orth's *Empty The House*—both with the Curtis Opera Theatre.

NATHAN WALKER

The Rev. Dr. Nathan C. Walker is executive director of 1791 Delegates. Named after the year the Bill of Rights was ratified, 1791 Delegates are constitutional and human rights experts that work on issues of religion and public life. He is the author of four books including *Cultivating Empathy*, which *Publishers Weekly* deemed as one of the top “six books for a post-election spiritual detox.” His website is www.religionandpubliclife.com.

HYUNAH YU

South Korean-born American soprano Hyunah Yu first gained recognition in 1999 as a soloist in *St. Matthew Passion* with the New England Bach Festival. She was a prize-winner in the 1999 Walter W. Naumburg International Competition and a finalist in the Dutch International Vocal Competition and the Concert Artist Guild International Competition in New York. At the 2000 Marlboro Music Festival, Ms. Yu was discovered by eminent pianist Mitsuko Uchida, who in 2003 nominated the soprano for a Fellowship from the Borletti-Buitoni Trust. She made her successful New York City recital debut in 2004 at Carnegie Hall. Her recent engagements include the *Mass in B Minor, Magnificat*; and solo cantatas at the New England Bach Festival; and recitals at Jordan Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and Benjamin Franklin Hall.

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

Wednesday • October 17 • 7:30 pm
Perelman Theater • Kimmel Center



Musical Fund Society Series

THE ANCHORESS *An evening of music by David Serkin Ludwig*

PRISM QUARTET

Ali Wright, *soprano saxophone*
Zachary Shemon, *alto saxophone*
Matthew Levy, *tenor saxophone*
Taimur Sullivan, *baritone saxophone*

PIFFARO, *The Renaissance Band*

Priscilla Herreid, *recorders, dulcian, shawm, krumhorn*
Greg Ingles, *sackbut, recorder, krumhorn*
Joan Kimball, *dulcian, shawm, recorders, krumhorn*
Arash Noori, *theorbo, lute*
Erik Schmalz, *sackbut, recorder, krumhorn*
Robert Wiemken, *dulcians, recorders, krumhorn, percussion*

HYUNAH YU, *soprano*

TIFFANY TOWNSEND, *soprano*

MIMI STILLMAN, *flute*

KAREN KIM, *violin*

SUSAN NOWICK, *piano*

NATHAN C. WALKER, *moderator*

*Major support for The Anchoress has been provided by
The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage,
with additional support from The Independence Foundation.*

Josquin Microludes [2012]

- I. Mille regetz de vous abandonner...
- II. et d'eslonger vostre fache amoureuse
- III. jay si grand dueil et paine doloureuse...
- IV. quon me verra brief mes jours definer...
- V. ...brief mes jours definer...

PRISM

Three Anchoress Songs [2018]

- I. Virelai
- II. Ballade
- III. Rondeau

Levy • Stillman

Three Pieces by Guillaume de Machaut
[c. 1300-1377] [Arr. by D. S. Ludwig]

- Puis que ma dolour
- Je ne cuit pas
- Doulz viaire gracieus

Piffaro

Our Long War [2012] *

Townsend • Kim • Nowicki

INTERMISSION

*Discussion with David Serkin Ludwig and Katie Ford
about The Anchoress moderated by Rev. Dr. Nathan C. Walker*

The Anchoress [World Premiere] [2018] *

Yu • PRISM • Piffaro

* Poetry by Katie Ford

education since its inception in 1980 and has been honored twice for its work by Early Music America, receiving the "Early Music Brings History Alive" award in 2003 and the Laurette Goldberg "Lifetime Achievement Award in Early Music Outreach" in 2011. In June 2015, the American Recorder Society honored Piffaro with its Distinguished Achievement Award.

PRISM QUARTET

Intriguing programs of great beauty and breadth have distinguished the PRISM Quartet as one of America's foremost chamber ensembles. PRISM has performed in Carnegie Hall on the Making Music Series, in Alice Tully Hall with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and throughout Latin America, China, and Russia. PRISM members have also been presented as soloists to critical acclaim with the Detroit Symphony and Cleveland Orchestra and conducted residencies at the nation's leading conservatories including the Curtis Institute of Music and the Oberlin Conservatory. Two-time recipient of the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, PRISM has commissioned nearly 300 works, many by internationally celebrated composers, including Pulitzer Prize-winners Julia Wolfe, William Bolcom, Jennifer Higdon, Zhou Long, and Bernard Rands, and MacArthur "Genius" Award recipients Bright Sheng, Tyshawn Sorey, and Miguel Zenón. PRISM's discography includes releases on Albany, BMOP/Sound, ECM, innova, Koch, Naxos, New Dynamic, New Focus, and its own label, XAS Records. *The Fifth Century*, PRISM's ECM recording with The Crossing under Donald Nally, was awarded a 2018 Grammy for Best Choral Performance. In 2016, PRISM was named by its alma mater, the University of Michigan, as the first recipient of the Christopher Kendall Award in recognition of its work in "collaboration, entrepreneurship, and community engagement."

MIMI STILLMAN

Mimi Stillman has appeared as soloist with orchestras and as recitalist and chamber musician at top venues here and abroad. She can be heard on several recordings and she has taught masterclasses for various institutions. She celebrates the canon while deeply exploring new music and Latin genres. Her recent *Syrinx Journey*, honored Claude Debussy on his 150th birthday by making a video of his three-minute masterpiece *Syrinx* every day for one year. She is founding artistic director of Dolce Suono Ensemble. At age 12, she was the youngest wind player ever admitted to the Curtis Institute of Music where she studied with the legendary Julius Baker and Jeffrey Khaner. She received an MA and PhD in history at the University of Pennsylvania and is a published author on music and history. Her *Música en tus Manos* project to introduce chamber music to the Latino community of Philadelphia won the Knight Arts Challenge Grant. She is on faculty of Curtis Summerfest, Music for All National Festival, and the University of Pennsylvania.

KAREN KIM

Grammy Award-winning violinist Karen Kim is widely hailed for her sensitive musicianship and passionate commitment to chamber and contemporary music. She has performed in such prestigious venues and series as Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium and Zankel and Weill Recital Halls; the Celebrity Series of Boston; the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society; the Vienna Musikverein; London's Wigmore Hall; the Musée d'Orsay in Paris; the Seoul Arts Center; and Angel Place in Sydney, Australia. She received the Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance in 2011 for her recordings of the complete quartets of György Ligeti. Esteemed for her versatility across a broad spectrum of musical idioms and artistic disciplines, Ms. Kim has collaborated with artists ranging from Kim Kashkashian, Paul Katz, Roger Tapping, Jörg Widmann, and Shai Wosner to Questlove & The Roots and the James Sewell Ballet. She is a member of the Jasper Quartet, Talea Ensemble, and Deviant Septet, and is a founding member of Third Sound. Ms. Kim also performs frequently with such groups as the East Coast Chamber Orchestra, Ensemble Échappé, and NOVUS NY.

SUSAN NOWICKI

Susan Nowicki has performed throughout the United States as a soloist and as a collaborator with prominent singers and instrumentalists. She also performs regularly with members of the Philadelphia Orchestra. In addition, Ms. Nowicki has toured with Community Concerts under the auspices of Columbia Artists Management, Inc., and has served on the music staffs of the Philadelphia Singers, Opera Philadelphia, and Opera Festival of New Jersey. An active member of the Network for New Music ensemble, Ms. Nowicki has recorded contemporary music for the Albany, Capstone, De Haske, and North-South labels. She teaches privately in Philadelphia and in Lawrenceville, NJ, and was a faculty member of the Dorothy Taubman Institute of Piano from 1997 to 2002. She is an instructor and clinician for the Well-Balanced Pianist programs. Ms. Nowicki has been on the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music since 1987.

PIFFARO, THE RENAISSANCE BAND

Piffaro delights audiences with highly polished recreations of the rustic music of the peasantry and the elegant sounds of the official wind bands of the late Medieval and Renaissance periods. Its ever-expanding instrumentarium includes shawms, dulcians, sackbuts, recorders, krumhorns, bagpipes, lutes, guitars, harps, and a variety of percussion—all careful reconstructions of instruments from the period. Under the direction of Artistic Directors Joan Kimball and Bob Wiemken, the world renowned pied-pipers of Early Music present an annual subscription concert series in the Philadelphia region; tour throughout the US, Europe, Canada and South America; and appear as performers and instructors at major Early Music festivals. Recordings are a significant part of the ensemble's work, and 18 CDs have been released since 1992, including four on the prestigious label Deutsche Grammophon/Archiv Produktion. Piffaro has been active in the field of

PROGRAM NOTES

by David Serkin Ludwig

Josquin Microludes [2012]

I am often inspired by great music of the past, and much of my composing these days involves taking the clay from an older piece and reworking it into my own new musical sculpture. *Josquin Microludes* is a set of miniatures that incorporates Josquin's *Mille Regretz* into its musical language. Each miniature features this famous "chanson" framed by some variation or transmutation of it. The piece is played continuously, as if channel surfing between ancient music and contemporary sounds. I thought the medium of the saxophone quartet would be fitting for this project that is based on a choral work, as it is its own choir of voices, sustained by breath and line. *Josquin Microludes* was written for the PRISM Quartet.

Three Anchoress Songs [2018]

Three Anchoress Songs imagines the sounds of the world of a medieval anchoress—a Christian mystic who permanently sequestered herself into a small cell to induce visions and spiritual wisdom. Anchorism as a movement lasted throughout early Christianity to about the time of Shakespeare; and though it was not specifically a practice of women, at its height women anchoresses outnumbered men four to one.

This work came about as I was in the process of writing the monodrama about this world with poet Katie Ford, and our anchoress comes from around the time of Machaut. To that end, the strains of Machaut's music are heard, but from the point of view of the mystic, listening to these distant sounds wafting into her cell from the outside, filtered by the time, space, and vivid places of her isolated imagination.

Three Anchoress Songs was written for the AWEA duo of flute and saxophone.

Puis que ma douleur; Je ne cuit pas; Doulz viaire gracieus

[Arr. by David Ludwig]

GUILLAUME DE MACHAUT

Born c. 1300, in Reims, France
Died there on April 13, 1377

No program note

Composers keep certain poems in their mental spaces like those important parts or tools one keeps in a safe place in the home where one won't forget them; even though they might not be used every day. The poems have to be there waiting for just when you need them—when a commission for vocal music comes, we often search through the cupboards of our minds where lives all of the wonderful poetry we've encountered, looking for a text to set.

But around the time of the commission for *Our Long War*, a mutual friend introduced me to what was new work to me in the extraordinary poetry of Katie Ford. I eagerly read through several of her books, but it was the poem she brought to a coffee meeting one day that focused my thoughts and feelings. Ford's *Our Long War* felt to me like work made in the time of war, and it combines ancient religious imagery with a sentiment and words that are absolutely contemporary to us. Her message and messaging hit me in the gut the first time I read it and every time after. I knew this was the text to set; artists must speak out with their art, and Katie gave me an opportunity to join with her voice in writing this piece.

If we are at war let the orchards show it,
let the pear and fig fall prior to their time,
let the hounds freeze over their meat,
let the balconies crack their planked backs as we recline,
let the horses pulling at the fields
wither beneath us.

Let each year decay, and each decade:

to receive report is not enough,
the equations of the mathematician must
each come wrong, strangely, inexplicably,
the remedies must run dry,
the violet must let no more tincture
and the waters let no more cool.
When, at mudtimes, we trek to the waterfall,
there it should no longer be—
nothing should be where the guidebook says,
not the orchids, not the taro,
not the market, not the fishmonger thrashing carp against rock
where once we bought it bloody on the board.

If we are at war with a holy book in our hands let it shrivel
to slag; its teachings cannot survive the drone
and will not gleam while villagers drink the ditch.

BIOGRAPHIES

DAVID SERKIN LUDWIG

David Serkin Ludwig is “a composer with something urgent to say” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*). His music has been described as “arresting and dramatically hued” (*The New York Times*) and “supercharged with electrical energy and raw emotion” (*Fanfare*). Ludwig has written for many prominent artists, including Jonathan Biss, Jennifer Koh, the Dover and Borromeo Quartets, Eighth Blackbird, ECCO, and orchestras including the Philadelphia, Minnesota, Pittsburgh, and National Symphonies. He was awarded the 2018 Pew Center for Arts and Heritage Fellowship in the Arts. In 2013, his choral work, “The New Colossus,” was selected to open the private prayer service for President Obama's second inauguration. NPR Music selected him as one of the Top 100 Composers Under Forty in the world in 2012. Recent highlights of his work include a concerto written for his wife, violinist Bella Hristova, commissioned by a consortium of eight orchestras across the US. Other recent commission and performances include *Spiral Galaxy* for the Morgenstern Trio, *Swan Song*, commissioned by Carnegie Hall, and *Pictures from the Floating World* commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ludwig is the recipient of the First Music Award, a two-time winner of the Independence Foundation Fellowship, and a Theodore Presser Foundation Career Grant, as well as awards from New Music USA, American Composers Forum, American Music Center, and the National Endowment for the Arts. He has had multiple residencies at the Yaddo and MacDowell artist colonies, the Isabella Gardner Museum and Marlboro Music. Born in Bucks County, PA, Ludwig comes from several generations of eminent musicians including grandfather Rudolf Serkin and great-grandfather Adolf Busch. He holds degrees from Oberlin, the Manhattan School of Music, the Curtis Institute, the Juilliard School, and a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. Ludwig serves as the chair of the composition faculty of Curtis and is the Gie and Lisa Liem Artistic Advisor and director of the Curtis 20/21 Contemporary Music Ensemble.

KATIE FORD

Katie Ford is the author of *Deposition*, *Colosseum*, *Blood Lyrics*, and *If You Have to Go* (August 2018), all published by Graywolf Press. *Colosseum* was named among the “Best Books of 2008” by Publishers Weekly and the Virginia Quarterly Review and led to a Lannan Literary Fellowship and the Larry Levis Prize. She completed graduate work in theology and poetry at Harvard University, and, following that, received her M.F.A. from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Her poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, *The Paris Review*, *The American Poetry Review*, *Ploughshares*, and in *The Norton Introduction to Literature*. She is Professor of Creative Writing at the University of California, Riverside.

V.

One night in particular I dreamt I stole from the isolate into the forest. In a vision I'd seen a tent of sticks and linden in which burned an amber light that was our Lord's voice saying *there was more I wished to say before [...] and correction must [...]*. I took the danger at its word, setting into the woods filled with blister, bandit fire [...] once an arrow. So many shed by war and wasting then. First my vow, then a departure, which made of me [...] the way of God to go against Him just how a silversmith takes a piece of hollowware, fills it with hot metal, leaves behind swage blocks and hammer, and pours silver over a sapling found dead one day past, simply to preserve a beauty in the horror-woods. And so I left the cell for the linden of my vision, but it was not there as it had appeared to me—all I felt was peril and very far from the promises and [...] no interspersing God. Then, not from the linden but from the terror, I heard the Lord depart these words: [...] *Not for, but because. I was tortured by [...] I meant to [...]* And that was all. A unlocking silence fell over the trees and I embarked to my cell in which I wrote swiftly this letter to you, who remain [...] your own terror.

VI.

A woman of the village wrote to ask if I would visit her stone cottage. How, she wrote, can I advise her soul when I have not seen the wooden crates her children sleep in, or the coarse flour she makes last a week, or how vermin eat her cellar stores. Her request a theology entire. Yet I could make no visit.

VII.

If one comes to you saying *God said* or *God speaks to me in secret*, tread upon such words as a moth treads possible prey—an investigating carnivore who will devour what, for him to live, must be killed. Does God speak now, to us of the earth? I beg this into my own vertebrae. I whisper to my brothers and sisters who say God has instructed them to take up hatchet in battle and hand to infant: be not assured.

VIII.

When I woke up sighing, perceiving myself in the freeze, perceiving my body in the terrifying orchard, sighing and contending, contending and appearing, disappearing into sighing, sighing of ornament and cargo, pulling down what was broken from twilight and broken from dawn, perceiving what in sleep only strengthened its contention, though I mistook night as healer, sleep as erasure, vespers as lumbering dissolution towards matins, matins a leaf made violet since it hangs askance grapes in full sun, since I mistook the leaf for myself, correlating and equating, the determined danger given water and meat, when the mistake pulled down and I woke not arisen but sighing, sighing so the ornaments knew I was nothing to hang upon, no shuttle to loom by, when I could not make a word and the given words of each book failed me into sighing, it was then I could to the Lord say yes.

If we wage it, let the war breach up
into the light, let it unseam our garments
where they hold fast, let each button and string fail
until we run to hide ourselves
in the alleys where at least rats and refuse
and the sleeping poor show some partial ghost
of what's abroad—

If we war there ought to be a sign,
our lives should feel like cut-outs of lives,
our bodies paper dolls drifting to the ground,
ready for chalk outlines . . .

But still our horses ripple their flanks
and the orange grove shakes green in the warm wind it loves.
We laze on the balcony with clear water in the glass.
At the newsstand stacks of cigarettes
with their sure wrappings and that little red pull, candies and juices
made of the wildly thriving corn.
In winter we ornament fountains with Christmas lights,
in spring more falsely and more falsely
the scent of heather and sedge grows rich through the transom.

Before the war
what is called the soul
spoke so clearly
we took it for an imbecile.

But now the war can't know what it wants:
we make meals, pay a tax and dream nothing
hard enough to wake us.

Not once have I dreamt of the war.
I forgot it quietly, unwantingly, and because
there were peaches everywhere,
the bounty in the field so sudden—
it shouldn't have happened—
nor the idea of blessing at sundown,
the orchard lit into an avenue
of torchlight.

The *Anchoress* is a new monodrama set to original texts by Katie Ford for singer Hyunah Yu, the PRISM Quartet, and Piffaro, The Renaissance Wind Band. The anchoress persona, her words, her visions, and her message—all come from Katie, and being able to set into music both voices of poet and character has been a provocative and inspiring journey for me as person and as a composer. To bring these words into musical life with the sounds of a single vocalist set between a duo of ancient and modern ensembles is both a challenge and a dream.

Anchorites (from the Greek *anachōrēō* meaning “to withdraw”) were Christians who chose a life in extreme confinement in a quest for spiritual perfection; a practice that grew in popularity in late medieval Europe—particularly among women. A church would create a small cell looking into the sanctuary, and the anchorite would enter it with no possessions other than coarse clothing and a Bible, and perhaps a few other texts. Members of the church would enclose the anchorite in the space by placing huge stones or bricking up a wall at the entrance. Then a priest would administer last rites for the anchoress living inside...

Ford writes: “The anchoritic life is one of the earliest forms of Christian monastic living. However, an anchoress was not a part of a monastic community. Instead, she lived in an enclosed cell, an ‘anchorhold,’ attached to a church. She had one small window through which to speak to townspeople coming to her for guidance. Her daily life resembled a prayerful funeral rite. She has withdrawn and chosen a form of death, which, in the eyes of the Church, transformed her into a ‘living saint.’”

The austere anchoritic lifestyle feels so extreme from my modern vantage point, yet its larger goals to find solace and meaning are deeply relevant to me as a person living—like most everyone now—a frenetic digital life. Like Ford, I feel the necessity to respond to the world around me—in a society where both feelings of alienation and overexposure are so prevalent, the ideals of the anchorite’s monastic life are especially appealing to me to explore in my work. I am always looking for *my* community the more intensely I feel disconnected from the greater society; and I know that many feel this so acutely.

In the process of creating *The Anchoress* with Ford, I have gotten to know more about historically isolated populations—groups of people seen as “outsiders” to the larger whole, and I am fascinated by how these groups respond to alienation by looking within themselves and their own traditions for identity and connection, as certainly our anchoress often looks within herself. But does she feel alienation and is compelled to withdraw from the world in order to comment upon it? Or is hermitage inspired by feeling *too much* connection to society and a desire to withdraw to search for deeper meaning, away from distraction?

We live in a time of extremity, where societal values are subjectively shaped by the cruelest self-interest and fear. The *Anchoress* has withdrawn from society and comments upon it as a witness who defiantly speaks her truth—a mighty voice from within a small cell.

I.

What is my life—what composes it. I had promised my body to a man. But in front of the man my soul slid away as the moon fails its own appearing by morning, almost. In face of such a morning, I left one stone-bright burial for another, my other, this cell so dark all of me might make its light. What my life is, I answered this. And then I enclosed it.

II.

Once, a woman walked down the hill towards the anchorhold, her whole body barnacled with what she could not say. *Is it more body?* she asked through the little window. She had heard of the church’s garden of healing almond, aloe, anise, cornsilk. She said she could not bear the thought that this earthly body might rise again. *I cannot believe it occurred for our Lord*, she said. I told her not to [...]. It was the age of great mortality. She had walked from the village with what looked like burrs on the undersides of her feet. I want to say [...] not at all concerning the flesh, and witness to this is the words of James the brother, the contradictions of [...] this manifold silence. Yet I cannot, so she walks away, growing small and ever-smaller through my window. And unhealed.

III.

What, you ask, are we to make of visions lit during fever, thrush, or pox. I have thought of this ever since your letter arrived last season, and have considered it while imagining I walk the orchard with a knife to the apricot frost, all the while kneeling at the rail. I have thought in sleep, thought in illness. You say one of your sisters receives the words of our Lord only when her body is tossed with sweats and confusion. You say she speaks with the authority of one stricken by truth, yet her eyes have the aura of pale smoke or the gray owl. The content of her visions gives you hope, you say, and fills you with new thinkings on our Lord, yet they bear down against the teachings of [...]. Not like an axe they bear down, *understand*, you say, but like a comb, and like a comb brought through your hair by another until you sleep, you feel tended [...] What I am going to say to you now I may not have a mouth to say again, since this is a time of burnings. There is nothing we [...] completely. Not [...]. Not teachings. Not the desert [...], not the fevered disciple. We are humans of a living separation. What, then, will you make of her feverish ongoings? What will you make.

IV.

This is the four burns of the soul: Whether something outside of us can reach in and affect change, aside or beside, beside or thinly away, thinly and unbearably so—God: this is the whether or whether not we cannot know. Whether to believe there is an unbearable distance or to imagine no distance, thereby feeling a proximity lifting oneself into that which is both imagined and is, or is imagined and is not, or not imagined and is, or not imagined and is not. Those are the choices, four. So that is the pain, that choosing is the only region for us. Here where the fires so constantly alternate their burns.