

3-21-2016

## Concert: After Dinner Mint: Faculty Recital Series: "The Chamber Music of Dana Wilson"

Dana Wilson

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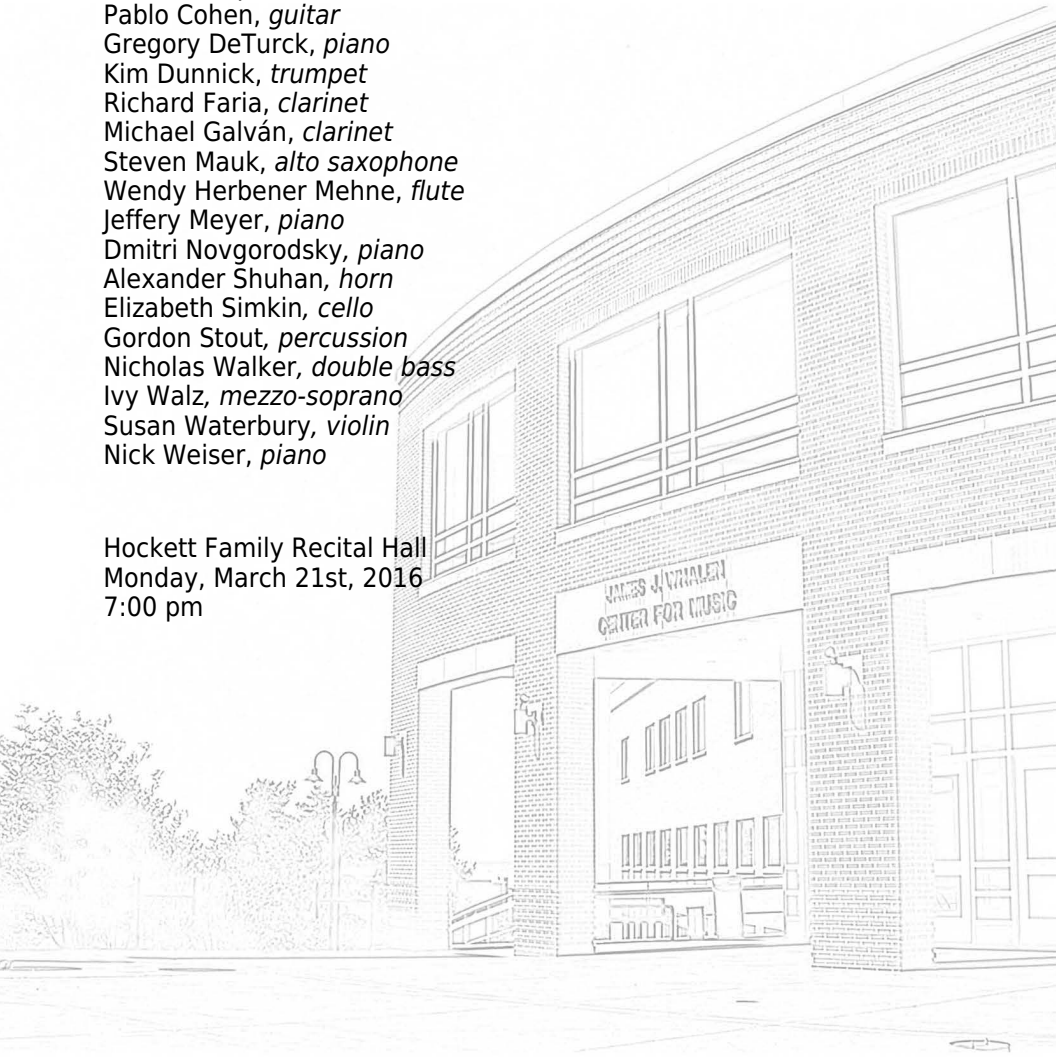
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**After Dinner Mint**  
*Faculty Showcase Recital Series*

**"The Chamber Music of Dana Wilson"**

Conrad Alexander, *percussion*  
Laura Amoriello, *piano*  
Diane Birr, *piano*  
Pablo Cohen, *guitar*  
Gregory DeTurck, *piano*  
Kim Dunnick, *trumpet*  
Richard Faria, *clarinet*  
Michael Galván, *clarinet*  
Steven Mauk, *alto saxophone*  
Wendy Herbener Mehne, *flute*  
Jeffery Meyer, *piano*  
Dmitri Novgorodsky, *piano*  
Alexander Shuhan, *horn*  
Elizabeth Simkin, *cello*  
Gordon Stout, *percussion*  
Nicholas Walker, *double bass*  
Ivy Walz, *mezzo-soprano*  
Susan Waterbury, *violin*  
Nick Weiser, *piano*

Hockett Family Recital Hall  
Monday, March 21st, 2016  
7:00 pm



**ITHACA COLLEGE**

School of Music

# The Chamber Music of Dana Wilson

Fanfare (2010)

*Kim Dunnick, trumpet; Steven Mauk, alto saxophone; Diane Birr, piano*

Sati (1985)

*Steven Mauk, alto saxophone; Elizabeth Simkin, cello; Gordon Stout and  
Conrad Alexander, percussion*

Persona (2008)

V. Warm and colorful, but insistent

*Dmitri Novgorodsky, piano*

Shallow Streams, Deep Rivers (2007)

II. With great warmth and intimacy

*Alex Shuhan, horn; Susan Waterbury, violin; Gregory DeTurck, piano*

Liquid Ebony (2002)

I. Call

*Richard Faria, clarinet; Diane Birr, piano*

Concerto for Double Bass (2010)

I. My voice goes after what my eyes cannot reach

*Nicholas Walker, double bass; Nick Weiser, piano*

How Very Close (2012)

I. The sweet murmur (text by Sappho)

V. We've made a great mess of love (text by D.H. Lawrence)

*Ivy Walz, mezzo-soprano; Laura Amoriello, piano*

Luminescence (1998)

*Wendy Herbener Mehne, alto flute; Pablo Cohen, guitar*

Dancing with the Devil (1997)

*Wendy Herbener Mehne, flute; Michael Galván, clarinet;*

*Susan Waterbury, violin; Elizabeth Simkin, cello; Jeffery Meyer, piano*

## Program Notes (by the composer)

**Fanfare** is a short rouser, written for the ensemble “Troica” for their Australian tour.

**Sati** was written many years ago for Steve Mauk and Gordon Stout. *Sati* is a Sanskrit word referring in one sense to “being”—in personal, social, and possibly cosmological ways. The piece draws upon textures and linearity of Indian classical music, but is also infused with aspects of other idioms and is not intended to be a replication of Indian styles.

**Persona** is a Latin term referring to an actor's face mask (literally from *per sonare* which means “to sound through”). The words “person” and “personality” are derived from this term. In the early 20th Century, the psychologist Carl Jung used the term to suggest that people put on various psychological masks to express who they are in different settings and to fulfill the social roles of child, parent, friend, adversary, and the like—sometimes appearing to have very different personalities as a result. The various movements of this piece are an exploration of this phenomenon. *Persona* was commissioned by the Nebraska Music Teachers Association, and premiered by pianist Jonathan Sokasits.

### **Shallow Streams, Deep Rivers**

The horn-violin-piano trio is such a wonderful and challenging combination, in that each of the instruments has a unique musical personality and technical approach to articulation, sustain, dynamics, and movement from one pitch to the next. This work, then, is constantly pulled in different directions: at one point thorny and disjunct, while at another warm and flowing—as one instrument’s basic nature interacts with and influences with that of another. The work might also represent an accumulation of thoughts and events wherein friendships deepen and change over time. Since this work was one of seven commissioned by the incredible horn player Gail Williams (member of the Chicago Chamber Musicians and former associate principal with the Chicago Symphony), in writing the piece I wanted to honor our friendship in some way.

### ***Liquid Ebony***

Many instruments can express both exuberant joy and dark pathos, but the clarinet has the ability to express both almost at once, moving instantly with liquid grace from one to the other. It seems that is why it is such a perfect choice for Eastern European folk traditions, including Klezmer music: it implores, not to forget about or deny life's difficulty, but to sing and dance joyously and defiantly in its midst.

*Liquid Ebony* was commissioned by Larry Combs, principal clarinetist with the Chicago Symphony, and premiered at the 2003 Clarinet Fest in Salt Lake City, Utah. The work has received hundreds of performances, and there are also now versions with wind ensemble and orchestra.

### ***Concerto for Double Bass***

When bassist Nicholas Walker first approached me about writing a concerto for bass and orchestra, I became concerned. How could I get such a low instrument to project in the orchestral context? How could this instrument, whose strings are so long and relatively slow to speak, generate the enormous musical energy that an entire concerto requires?

Then, of course, I thought about Nicholas' special approach to the instrument and his excitement about its possibilities. What resulted was a piece that I hope matches his unique musical sensibility while also exploring his boundless technique. The movement's title is from "Song of Myself #25" by Walt Whitman. Nicholas and Nick Weiser gave the first performance of this version with piano in 2012.

### ***How Very Close***

The topic of love has always served to inspire composers for the reasons that we all know so well: love can be inspiring and frustrating, endearing and troubling, familiar and overwhelming, and sometimes all of these at once. It is perhaps the most complex human emotion.

So this set of six meditations on the subject draws upon aspects of love very different from each other, at least on the surface, and from very different lands and historical periods. It was commissioned by the University of St. Thomas and premiered by soprano Carrie Henneman Shaw in Minneapolis. There are also versions with orchestra and wind ensemble.

### ***Luminescence***

*Luminescence* was intended as a sort of valentine for friends who had played a good deal of my music. It therefore is a rather intimate, gentle piece, with perhaps an element of pathos. It harks back to my jazz roots simply in the fact that it is based on a rather straightforward tune constructed over somewhat traditional jazz chords. It has been performed in several versions: for flute, alto flute, soprano saxophone, double bass, clarinet, and violin—with either guitar or piano.

### ***Dancing with the Devil***

“Dancing with the Devil” is a common exhortation that suggests that someone is flirting with sin, corruption, or disaster. It is therefore a common dance that everyone revels in from time to time, but to my knowledge no music has ever been written to accompany it. Hence this piece. The work was commissioned and premiered by the Society for New Music with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

## **About the composer**

The works of Dana Wilson have been commissioned and performed by such diverse ensembles as the Chicago Chamber Musicians, Formosa String Quartet, Xaimen Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Memphis Symphony, Dallas Wind Symphony, Voices of Change, Netherlands Wind Ensemble, Syracuse Symphony, and Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra. Solo works have been written for such renowned artists as Gail Williams, Larry Combs, James Thompson, Rex Richardson and David Weiss. Most recently, his trombone concerto was commissioned by thirty-five soloists and ensembles around the country, and will receive many performances in 2015-16. He has received grants from, among others, the National Endowment for the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, Arts Midwest, and Meet the Composer.

The compositions of Dana Wilson have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, East Asia and Australia, and are published by Boosey and Hawkes and Ludwig Music Publishers. They have received several awards, including the International Trumpet Guild First Prize, the Sudler International Composition Prize, and the Ostwald Composition Prize, and can be heard on, among others, Klavier, Albany, Summit, Centaur, Innova, Gasparo, Meister Music, Potenza, Ongaku, Elf, Open Loop, Mark, Redwood, Musical Heritage Society, and Kosei Recordings.

Dana Wilson holds a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music, and is currently Charles A. Dana Professor of Music in the School of Music at Ithaca College. He is co-author of *Contemporary Choral Arranging*, published by Prentice Hall, and has written on diverse musical subjects, including his own compositional process in *A Composer's Insight* and *Composers on Composing for Band*. He has been a Yaddo Fellow (at Yaddo, the artists' retreat in Saratoga Springs, New York), a Wye Fellow at the Aspen Institute, a Charles A. Dana Fellow, and a Fellow at the Society for Humanities, Cornell University.