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## Guest Artist Recital: Verdehr Trio

Verdehr Trio

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*Verdehr Trio*

ETHACA

# Verdehr Trio

Walter Verdehr, violin  
Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr, clarinet  
Silvia Roederer, piano

*Ithaca College*  
March 4, 2009

*Music Of The 21St Century*  
*Commissioned By The Verdehr Trio*  
*& Michigan State University*

*Dash (2002)*

*Jennifer Higdon*

*Commedia (2001)*

*David Liptak*

*Entrada (Harlequin and Columbine)*

*Intermezzo (Pierrot)*

*Intermezzo (Pulcinella)*

*Finale (Scaramouche)*

*Rock Valley Trio (2007)*

*Lee Hoiby*

## INTERMISSION

*Ricordando una melodia olvidada (2008)* *Roberto Sierra*

*Sketch Book (2007)*

*Gernot Wolfgang*

*Green Island*

*Night Breeze*

*Chromatic Train*

*Dancing Helix Rituals (2006)*

*Augusta Read Thomas*

## *Program Notes*

### ***Dash (2002)***

***Jennifer Higdon***

"Dash" comes at the beginning of the 21st 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

Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962, Brooklyn, New York) is active as a freelance composer. She is the recipient of awards, including a Pew Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and two awards from the American Academy of Arts & Letters. Her works are recorded on over 2 dozen discs, including the Grammy winning, "Higdon: Concerto for Orchestra/City Scape". Commissions have included pieces for the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, National Symphony, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, eighth blackbird, and the Lark, Ying and Tokyo String Quartets, as well

as such artists as Gary Graffman and Carol Wincenc. Her work, "blue cathedral" was the most-performed work for orchestra by a living American composer during the '04-'05 season. She is on the composition faculty at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

### ***Commedia (2001)***

***David Liptak***

"I wrote my trio for clarinet, violin and piano as a four-movement 'comedy' that used the figures from the traditional Commedia dell'Arte, the 16th-century form of improvised comedy that created the characters that are still with us. The first movement is an 'Entrada', and, after the 'actors' burst onto the stage, presents the coquettish dance of Harlequin and Columbine. The middle movements are called 'Intermezzo', and the first of these is about Pierrot, the melancholic and meditative dreamer. The second 'Intermezzo' is Pulcinella, the dwarfish humpback with a crooked nose, the cruel bachelor who chases pretty girls. This is the character also found as Punch in the Punch and Judy puppet shows. The last movement is the 'Finale', and presents Scaramouche, the bold, swaggering soldier dressed in black and brandishing a sword. The piece ends with a retreat of all the actors from the stage in a reversal of the beginning of the work.

Commedia was commissioned for the Verdehr Trio."

-David Liptak

David Liptak's music has been performed by ensembles such as the Montreal Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the New York New Music Ensemble and by many soloists and chamber ensembles. Much of his work is for chamber music ensembles, and he has been awarded the Elise L. Stoeger Prize, given by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York, in recognition of distinguished achievement in the field of chamber music composition. Mr. Liptak is Professor of Composition at the Eastman School of Music.

***Rock Valley Trio (2007)***

***Lee Hoiby***

"My latest piece is always my favorite, but even now, a year after I finished it, I feel that the long melody of the Rock Valley trio is one that I can never hope to top. It seems that the challenges inherent in the combination of violin, clarinet and piano could best be overcome by my creating a strongly involving, singing melody that any instrument would want to play. So taken was I with my melody that I have snipped it out of the Verdehr's trio and transformed it into a short encore piece with appropriate transpositions for other solo instruments with piano. Coming full circle, it has recently been performed by bassist Allan von Schenkel, who first introduced me to the Verdehrs.

I decided to call the short Rock Valley Trio but an alternative title could be "You Verdehr and suddenly my heart stopped beating"."

LH

Lee Hoiby was born in Wisconsin in 1926. He studied composition at the Curtis Institute. His works have been recognized by awards and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the Ford Foundation, the Fulbright Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. In 1989 his work was the subject of a retrospective concert at the Kennedy Center on the American Composer Series, and a two week festival of his work was presented by the music department of the University of California at Long Beach. Mr. Hoiby is also a noted pianist who appears in recitals featuring the standard repertory as well as his own works. He has appeared as soloist in his own concertos, and frequently as an accompanist to singers and instrumentalists who perform his music. His principal works include the operas *The Scarf* (1958), *A Month in the Country* (1964), *Summer and Smoke* (1971), *The Tempest* (1986), and *Romeo and Juliet* (2004). He is also the composer of nearly 100 songs, as well as chamber music, music for orchestra, solo instruments, chorus and the theater. He lives in upstate New York.

Symphonieorchester Vorarlberg (Austria) and Oesterreichische Kammer-symphoniker (Austria). His chamber music CD "Common Ground" was released in August 2006 on AlbanyRecords/TROY854). His music can also be heard on the Polygram, Universal, Koch, Crystal Records, Capstone and Extraplatte labels.

As a guitarist with the Austrian jazz ensemble "The QuARTet" he has recorded two critically acclaimed CD,s for Extraplatte and toured extensively throughout Europe.

From 1990-93 Gernot was a lecturer for Jazz Composition and Harmony at the University of Music in Graz. He has guest lectured at the University of Music in Vienna and at the festival Instrumenta Verano in Oaxaca, Mexico. Gernot Wolfgang is active in the film and TV music industry as a composer, arranger and orchestrator. He is currently composer in residence with the Beverly Hills International Music Festival where he curates the concert series „Voices of Hollywood%“, featuring the chamber music of film and television composers. He has written original music for the animated TV series Zorro, the motion picture The Process and has arranged music for the soundtrack album of the motion picture Rounders, starring Matt Damon and Edward Norton.

### **Dancing Helix Rituals (2006)**

**Augusta Read Thomas**

"Commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University and dedicated with admiration to the Verdehr Trio, Dancing Helix Rituals for violin, clarinet, and piano, was composed in 2006 and premiered by the Verdehr Trio on October 21 at the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC..

Although I feel this music stands fully on its own as art music, this composition could be performed along with dancers. The early Stravinsky ballets are works I hold in great reverence, have studied, love, follow, etc. - and as a result, I tend to hear and feel all of my music, in particular my orchestral works, as music suitable for dance. As I compose, I sing, dance, move, and conduct at my drafting table. The process is visceral. My ears and mind are both analytical as well as intuitive- and I "feel" and "hear" every note and rhythm and color clearly. (I hope you can sense that precision.)

This is music composed with the whole ear and whole body: not a cerebral, overly analytical exercise in pushing 12-tone rows --or spectra --or rearranged quotes of borrowed ethnic phrases-- around a computer screen, for instance! There is a highly refined logic to every nuance which stems from the sound, in context, on its own terms. The sounds are varied, colorful, crosscut, unexpected, and yet hopefully sound inevitable in the way that a jazz improvisation sounds spontaneous and unpreventable.

This 10-minute trio was inspired by the generosity of spirit, energy, and dedication of the Verdehr Trio. The score is marked with words including: passionate, bright, driving, with flair and ritualistic energy, clock-like and mechanical, scurrying and playful, majestic and stately, funky, syncopated, jazzy, colorful, fanfare-like, romp-like, light and bouncy. It required a great deal of energy to compose this piece because it is basically 10 minutes of fast music. (Lots of notes! No "LARGO" chorales.) And it requires the same force of the virtuoso players today, to which I offer my heartfelt gratitude." Augusta Read Thomas

Augusta Read Thomas (born in 1964 in New York) was the Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1997 through 2006 for whom she composed nine works. She was an associate professor of composition at the Eastman School of Music (1993-2001) and the Wyatt Endowed Professor of Music at Northwestern University (2001-2006) and currently she is composing full-time. In 2007, her *ASTRAL CANTICLE* was one of the two finalists for the Pulitzer Prize in Music.

G. Schirmer, Inc. is the exclusive publisher of Thomas's music, and her discography includes 36 commercially recorded CDs. Please visit [www.augustareadthomas.com](http://www.augustareadthomas.com) Her music has been conducted by: Barenboim, Sir Andrew Davis, Rostropovich, Boulez, Ozawa, Salonen, Robertson, Maazel, Eschenbach, Alsop, Knussen, Slatkin, Nelson, Stenz, Kahane, Boreyko, Lintu, and Pionneck.

She was a Junior Fellow in the Society of Fellows at Harvard University (1991-94) and a Bunting Fellow at Radcliffe College (1990-91), and taught composition at Tanglewood during the summers of 2003, 2004 and 2005. Thomas has also been on the Board of Directors of the American Music Center ([www.amc.net](http://www.amc.net)) since 2000, as well as on the boards and advisory boards of several chamber music groups. Recently she was elected Chair of the Board of the American Music Center, a volunteer position that runs from 2005 to 2008.

Augusta Thomas has received prizes and awards from the Siemens Foundation in Munich; ASCAP; BMI; National Endowment for the Arts (1994, 1992, 1988); American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters (2001, 1994, 1989; in 2001 she received the American Academy of Arts and Letters lifetime achievement award, its highest honor for music composition); John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; Koussevitzky Foundation; and the New York Foundation for the Arts.

**ELSA LUDEWIG-VERDEHR** studied at the Oberlin Conservatory and at the Eastman School where she received a Performer's Certificate and the DMA degree. She has performed, lectured and given master classes at numerous National and International Clarinet Congresses and for several years was a participant in the Marlboro Music Festivals and touring groups. She has appeared frequently in the U.S., Canada and abroad as a recitalist, clinician and soloist with orchestras and as principal clarinetist of the Grand Teton Festival Orchestra. As a member of the Richards Wind Quintet, she played in more than half of the United States, Canada and at the White House. She was awarded a Distinguished Faculty Professorship at Michigan State University and her students occupy numerous university and orchestral positions throughout the US and abroad. She has solo recordings on Grenadilla and Mark labels. Her playing has been called "distinguished and musical" by the NY Times. The Boston Globe noted her "musical tone and elegant sense of phrasing" while the Chicago Tribune wrote of her "virtuosity of a most compelling sort". She recently was awarded honorary membership in the International Clarinet Society for her "lifetime achievements as a performer and teacher".

**SILVIA ROEDERER** was born in Argentina, but her musical training began in the U.S. After graduating from the Eastman School with high honors, she completed her doctoral degree as a student of John Perry at the University of Southern California. A winner of several important competitions, including the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition, she has also appeared as soloist with the Denver Symphony Orchestra and the Jacksonville (FL) Symphony Orchestra. Her Los Angeles debut was an acclaimed recital at the prestigious Ambassador Auditorium, where her "control, introspective poise, and elegantly pointed phrases" drew special praise from the Los Angeles Times. She recently performed for the Myra Hess Series in Chicago. As chamber musician, she has appeared in mainland China and Hong Kong, in Austria, London, Paris, Warsaw, Moscow, and New York's Carnegie Hall. Currently Professor of Music at Western Michigan University, she lives in Kalamazoo with her husband and three children.

## **Recordings By The Verdehr Trio**

"The Making of a Medium" All on Crystal Records

Vol. 1: Works of Mozart, Hovhaness, Frescobaldi, Pasatieri and Bartok, CD 741

Vol. 2: Works of Vanhal, Rorem, David, Musgrave and Liszt, CD 742

Vol. 3: Works of Averitt, Currier and Schuller, CD 743

Vol. 4: Works of Husa, Freund, Niblock and Dickinson, CD 744

Vol. 5: Works of Arutiunian, Schickele and Sculthorpe, CD 745

Vol. 6: Works of Diamond, Corigliano and Sculthorpe, CD 746

Vol. 7: Works of James Niblock written for the Verdehr Trio, CD 747

Vol. 8: Triple Concertos of Skrowaczewski, Sarasate-David, and David:  
Sinfonia Concertante, CD 748

Vol. 9: Triple Concertos of David Ott and William Wallace, CD 749

Vol. 10: Works of Beethoven, Bruch, Larsen, Tchaikovsky, Druckman and  
Bolcom, CD 940

Vol. 11: Works of Gian Carlo Menotti, Constantinides, Bruch and Deak, CD 941

Vol. 12: American Images I: Works of Chihara, Diamond, Satterwhite, Biggs, Erb and  
Kramer, CD 942

Vol. 13: American Images II: Works of Tower, S. Currier, Biggs, Brohn, Hoag and  
Welcher, CD 943

Vol. 14: Austrian Music: Works of von Einem, Erod and David, CD 944

Vol. 15: Double Concertos for Violin and Clarinet by Wallace, Chihara, Niblock  
and Constantinides, CD 945

Vol. 16: International I: Works of Chatman, Higdon, Rihm, Sheng and Wolfgang.  
CD 946

Vol. 17: American Images III: The Michigan Connection: Works of Smith, Ruggiero,  
Liptak, Black/Bolcom, Mann and Hartway, CD 947

To be released in 2008

Vol. 18: Music from Down Under: Works of Sculthorpe, Mills, Conyngham, Knehans  
and Marshall

Vol. 19: American Images IV. Works of Brouwer, Wallace, Freund, Puts and Thomas.

### Other Recordings by the Verdehr Trio

LP Works by Jere Hutcheson and Thomas Christian David, S644, Crystal Records

Works by Joseph Haydn and Karel Husa, S648, Crystal Records

Works by Don Freund and Thomas Christian David (Duo),

LP 1 122 Stereo, Leonarda Records

Triple Concerto, Thomas Christian David, Tonkünstler Orchestra, Amadeo,  
423-733-1

CD Works by Bassett, Bruch, Hoag and Hoover, LE 326, Leonarda Records

Works by Ida Gotkovsky, Musique de Chambre, CC 890680, Corélie

Music from France: Works of Blasius, Jolas, Manoury, Milhaud, Poulenc and  
Saint-Saens, Dux 0525

# *Enduring* MASTERS

This concert is part of the Enduring Masters Series, a partnership of the Ithaca College School of Music and the Gerontology Institute, Linden Center for Creativity and Aging, a member of the Division of Interdisciplinary and International Studies. It is funded by the New York State Music Fund established by the New York Attorney General at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.