

# ensemble sans maître

tenri cultural institute

may 31, 2014 • 8:00 pm

## program

*9 rubai\**

Turkar Gasimzada

*"...le paysage est rien, mais une impression..."*

Drake Ralph Andersen

*El Descanso del Guerrero\**

Lewis Nielson

Nicholas DeMaison *conductor*

PAUSE

Discussion and Demonstration of INDRA

*Spring Flow\**

Drake Ralph Andersen

Soloist: Kallie Ciechowski *viola*

\*denotes world premiere

## ensemble sans maître

Martha Cargo *flutes*

Kallie Ciechowski *viola*

Jordan Dodson *guitar*

Charlotte Mundy *voice*

Yumi Tamashiro *percussion*

ensemble sans maître is committed to the performance of unusual repertory and the commissioning of new works from young emerging composers. The unique timbre of the ensemble's instrumentation - flute, viola, guitar, percussion, and voice - lends itself not only to Boulez's serial masterwork *Le marteau sans maître* but also to contemporary works of indeterminate instrumentation.

### **special thanks to:**

Drake Andersen, Lewis Nielson, Nick DeMaison, and to all of our supporters and colleagues.

## program notes

**9 rubai** is composed for flute and guitar. *Rubai* is a poetry style. It is used to describe a Persian quatrain, or it is derivative form in English and other languages. The plural form of the word, *rubaiyat*, is used to describe a collection of such quatrains. The most commonly used form of *rubai* is AABA form. In this work, nine musical quatrains are composed and separated from one another by silences. The essential thing in the form of *rubai* is its rhyming aspect: all the lines have the same rhyming ending except the 3rd. The similar form is followed in this piece: the endings of the phrases of all the lines except the 3rd are similar to each other, which also provokes a unique listening experience. This work was written for the composer's DMA recital at University of Cincinnati in November 2013. This performance marks the work's world premiere.

"...**le paysage est rien, mais une impression...**" was composed in 2013 for guitarist Jordan Dodson. The titular quote is attributed to Monet: "the landscape is nothing but an impression". The piece is inspired by his series of paintings of the Houses of Parliament in London. Despite confining himself to a single perspective, he captures an extraordinary range of colors and textures, owing to the play of the light and clouds in different weather conditions and at different times of day.

On ***El Descanso del Guerrero***, Lewis Nielson writes:

This work joins a large number of contrasting and conflicting musics through the medium of the voice using a largely conventional and beautiful tone colour. My purpose in doing this derives directly from the plebian, inclusive folk character of the poetry of Lorca selected here and the typically popular style of Dalton, whose connection to real people and life goes well beyond the appreciation of them and flows from his enormous personality and commitment to human liberation and freedom. That core of the work has many wedges driven into it by the instrumental ensemble, the truncated and diverse aspects of the structure both closing in and opening out to permit many ways of taking in and attending to the material and conceptualizations inherent in the work. However, the brutal, needless, and tragic deaths by assassination of both Lorca and Dalton form this core and, I hope, create a central focus around which the rest of the material rotates.

**Indra** is a new software platform for real-time music composition for live performers created by composer Drake Andersen. A conductor at a central interface manipulates broad musical parameters such as density, pitch and volume, which are translated into notation for an ensemble reading from tablet screens. This software is revolutionary in its integration of traditional, improvisatory and aleatoric performance practices. To learn more, please visit [creativeinteraction.org](http://creativeinteraction.org)

**Spring Flow** is a composition for solo viola and ensemble, to be performed using the Indra software system. It was composed in 2014 for Kallie Ciechowski and is the result of two years of collaborative compositional work, including a preview performance in April 2014 at New World Symphony on their Inside the Music series.

Unlike in a traditional concerto, the soloist is not always the center of attention in this piece. Most of the music explores subtle changes in timbre and sound production techniques unique to the viola, within a

limited palette of notes. Long sustained tones demarcate sections of the piece in the background, often climaxing energetically to bring the soloist back to the fore. Fragments of the soloist's part are passed throughout the ensemble along with more abstract gestures, resulting in a constantly changing texture and a rich network of relationships between the instruments.

## biographies

**Turkar Gasimzada** is a composer from the Republic of Azerbaijan. His recent achievements include: a finalist in ALEA III International Composition Competition, Boston University, Boston, USA, 2012; a winner of the International Composition Competition "Unique Forms of Continuity in Space" held by the Italian Institute of Culture, Melbourne, Australia, 2010; a winner of the Jordan Berk Memorial Prize for saxophone quartet, Manhattan School of Music (MSM), New York, USA, 2009; winner of the 5th "Crystal Kamerton International Contest for Young Composers named after Andrey Petrov held by the Union of Composers of Russia," the Moscow State Conservatory named after P.I. Tchaikovsky Moscow, Russia, 2005. His music has been performed throughout Europe and in the United States. Gasimzada holds a Masters degree in composition from the Manhattan School of Music (MSM), New York, where he was a student of Reiko Fueting. Currently he is pursuing his DMA in composition at the University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music in the studio of Mara Helmuth.

**Lewis Nielson** (b. 1950) studied music at the Royal Academy of Music in London, England, Clark University in Massachusetts and the University of Iowa, receiving a Ph.D. in Music Theory and Composition in 1977. His music appears through American Composers Edition and recordings from Albany, Mode, Capstone, Centaur, and Innova Recordings. He has received numerous grants and awards for his works, including from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Delius Foundation, Meet the Composer, NewMusic America, the Georgia Council for the Arts, the Ohio Arts Council, the Groupe de Music Expérimentale de Bourges in France, the Ibla Foundation, Sicily, and the International Society of Bassists; and more recently as the 2007 Cleveland Arts Prize laureate, in 2010-11 was a prize winner in the BCMCC, the Italy PAS Society, and the Boston Modern Competitions. Recent commissions include from the JACK Quartet, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, *red fish blue fish*, *Trio Enid*, *Duo Echoi*, *Florilegium*, *Fluidot*, *Opera Cabal*, *Ensemble sans maître*, *counter)induction*, and *Talea*. He served as Professor of Music Theory and Composition at the University of Georgia, where he directed the University of Georgia Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, for 21 years. In 2000, he joined the composition faculty of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music where he is currently Professor of Composition.

**Drake Andersen** is a composer of acoustic and electroacoustic music for diverse performing forces of all sizes and categories, including works for orchestra, opera, theater, film and dance as well as site-specific installations and interactive electronic environments. Through frequent collaborations with artists from other disciplines, his creative work explores the confluence of musical expression and extra-musical inspiration. His compositions have been performed at venues throughout the United States and Europe, including Symphony Space, the Park Avenue Armory, New World Symphony Center, Teaterhuset Avant Garden (Trondheim), Dixon Place and the Irondale Center. As a flutist Andersen has performed throughout the United States and Latin America.

Drake Andersen is the founder of Creative Interaction. He is frequently engaged as a sound designer for theater and dance, an electronic music specialist for contemporary music ensembles and an improviser with live electronics. He is currently Technical Director and Artistic Adviser for Ensemble Sans Maitre and an editor and staff writer for New Music World. Andersen's principal composition teachers include Nils Vigeland, Joel Chadabe and Marjorie Merryman. He has also studied flute with Robert Dick. Andersen holds degrees from Macalester College and the Manhattan School of Music.

[www.drakeandersen.com](http://www.drakeandersen.com) | [www.creativeinteraction.org](http://www.creativeinteraction.org)

**Nicholas DeMaison** is a New York-based conductor and composer. His performances, including dozens of premieres of new instrumental, operatic and choral works, have been described as "consistently invigorating" (New York Times), "spine tingling" (Feast of Music) and "enchanted" (Seen and Heard International). His work has been performed by the New York Philharmonic, Iktus Percussion, and Florilegium Chamber Choir, among others, and has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, Time Out New York, Time Out Chicago and Chicago Magazine. Nicholas is currently the Director of the Rensselaer Orchestra and Rensselaer Concert Choir at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY.

Splitting her time between Miami and New York, violist **Kallie Ciechomski** is a member of New World Symphony and active participant in NY's new music scene. Recent engagements include her solo debut with New World Symphony as part of their John Cage festival, concerts in Austria at the Ensemble Modern festival, a European tour with Aldeburgh World Orchestra and 33 premieres of new compositions. Kallie's 2013-2014 season engagements include a lecture/recital tour featuring unaccompanied contemporary viola works, concerts as guest violist of Friction Quartet in San Francisco, and a Carnegie Hall debut with new music ensemble Hotel Elephant as part of David Lang's residency.

**text for *El Descanso del Guerrero*:** Federico García Lorca, from *Poema del Cantejondo*, trans. Lewis Nielson

"Puñal"

El puñal  
entra en el corazón  
como la reja del arado  
en el yermo

No  
No me lo claves.  
No.

El puñal,  
como un rayo de sol  
incendia las terribles  
hondonadas

No  
No me lo claves.  
No.

"Café Cantante"

Lamparas de cristal  
y espejos verdes

Sobre el tablado oscuro,  
la Parrala sostiene  
una conversación  
con la Muerte.  
La llama  
no viene,  
y la vuelve a llamar.  
Las gentes  
aspiran los sollozos  
Y en los espejos verdes,  
largas colas de seda  
se mueven.

"El Silencio"

Oye, hijo mío, el silencio.  
Es un silencio ondulado,  
un silencio,  
donde resbalan valles y ecos  
y que inclina las frentes  
hacia el suelo.

"Knife"

The knife  
enters the heart  
like a plow blade  
cutting the earth

No  
Don't stab me  
No

The knife  
like a sunbeam  
firing the terrible  
hollows

No  
Don't stab me  
No.

"Café Song (Flamenco)"

Lamps of crystal  
and green mirrors.

On the darkened stage,  
Parrala carries on  
a conversation  
with Death.  
but Death never comes,  
and she calls out again.  
The people are  
inhaling her sobs.  
And in the green mirrors,  
her long, silk train  
sways back and forth.

"The Silence"

Listen, my son: the silence.  
It's a rolling silence,  
a silence  
where valleys and echoes slip,  
and it bends foreheads  
down towards the ground.

**text for *El Descanso del Guerrero*** (continued)

Roque Dalton, trans. Lewis Nielson

"El descanso del guerrero"

Los muertos están cada día más indóciles.

Antes era fácil con ellos:

les dábamos un cuello duro una flor

loábamos sus nombres en una larga lista:

que los recintos de la patria

que las sombras notables

que el mármol monstruoso.

El cadaver firmaba en pos de la memoria

iba de nuevo a filas

y marchaba al compass de nuestra vieja música

Pero qué, va

los muertos

son otros desde entonces.

Hoy se ponen irónicos

preguntan.

Me parece que caen en la cuenta

de ser cada vez mas la mayoría!

"El Capitán"

El capitán en su hamaca el capitán

dormido bajo los chirridos de al noche

la guitarra ahorcada en la pared

su pistola depuesta su botella

esperando la furia como una cita de amor

el capitán el capitán

--debe saberlo--

bajo la misma oscuridad de sus perseguidos

"The Warrior at Rest"

The dead become more disobedient every day.

Earlier it was easy to deal with them:

we gave them starched collars, flowers

we honoured their names in a long list:

we buried them,

these honoured spirits,

encasing them in a giant marble hone.

The corpse had reenlisted,

forming new columns

and marching to the beat of our old music

But what happened,

the dead

have become quite different.

They're ironic now,

taunting us.

It seems to me that they've discovered

they are increasingly in the majority!

"The captain"

The captain in his hammock the captain

asleep beneath the chirpings of the night

the guitar hung on the wall

his gun laid down beside his bottle

waiting for battle in the same way as for a  
romance]

the captain the captain

--I have to say it--

in the same darkness as those he pursues.