

# Program Notes

*Tête à tête* is a piece in three movements for violin and piano written during the summer 2007 for the Nez/Wolfe duo. The first movement, slow and mysterious, features large leaps in the piano and sharp rhythmic contrasts with alternating long and short values. The second movement is lyrical with quasi-romantic harmonies and melodic contours. The third movement is very contrasted to the second movement due to its rhythmic and aggressive characteristics. A piano solo passage softens its overall abrupt contour.

*Triumphant Gems* is a piece for horn and tuba where I explore extremes in terms of registers, moods, speed, and technical difficulties. The piece is in eight movements named after semi-precious stones and is meant to evoke a ride in a virtual land of gems.

## *Sans Faiblir La Nuit Attend le Soleil*

The title Without weakening the night awaits the sun- a line from a poem by Marina Tsvetaieva – refers to war (night) and to the spurt of art (and literature) after the war (sun). The first movement has a changing and hesitant pulse to convey the idea of “lost” steps in the night. The sobbing and scorched harmony confers this movement its plaintive feel. Various melodies are looking for one another, carrying hope: they find one another and disappear again. The second movement is more assertive in character. Harmonies are more open, and musical figures often play hide and seek. However, the memory of night doesn’t leave us: a few notes, D, E, G and A \* (open strings of the violin) often appear in both movements, like little harassing musical objects. In the middle of the second movement the piano imitates the clear sound of small bells in the high register. This sound brings a sunray to the color of the music.

## *Un Anneau Couleur de Lune*

Excerpt from the Little Prince by Antoine de Saint Exupéry. “On what planet did I fall?” asked the Little Prince. “On Earth, in Africa,” answered the serpent. “Ah... So isn’t there anybody on Earth?” “Here it is the desert. There is no one in the desert. Earth is big, said the serpent. Why did you come here?” “I have some difficulties with a flower,” said the Little Prince. “Ah, said the serpent. And they were silent. In this piece, the singer performs three roles: the narrator, the serpent, and the Little Prince. The serpent has sinuous chromatic motifs, the Little Prince is given more diatonic lines and harmonies, while the narrator is often punctuated by brief ‘comments’ on the piano. The gestures of the piano consist of swooping arpeggios, melodic lines in fourths interrupted by serpentine chromatic motifs.

## *Tziltzulim (tuba and electronics)*

Tziltzulim (ringings in Hebrew), for tuba and electronics was written during the Spring and Summer 2002 for Gary Buttery. The tuba writing makes use of advanced techniques such as multiphonics, overblowing, and glissandos, and explores all registers, sometimes at great speed. The electronics is drawn mainly from an early recording of the tuba part that has been subsequently digitally manipulated to create a ringing ghost of the tuba.

That ghost will echo the tuba, precede it, distort it, or challenge it with bell-like sounds and phone-loke ringings. The electronic portion of Tziltzulim was realized at the Cummings Electronic and Digital Sound Studio of Connecticut College in New London. I am very thankful to Noel Zahler and the staff in the music department at Connecticut College for letting me use the equipment in the studio and helping me with various production details.

The Title *Grisailles Vaporeuses* means Misty Grayness. The work is in three movements: Pensive, Lyrical, Joyful (and rapid) Each movement is representing a different mood and making use of different techniques, such as tremolando, arpeggios in pizzicato, and glissandi. The compositional emphasis is on the melody, and on a certain modality (octatonic and pentatonic idioms), with a few motivic imitations. The title refers to the white mist and gray fog in early morning hours during Rhode Island typical autumns. The work also represents seasonal colorful trees and foliage.

*Bas et Hauts Bois* is a piece in three movements exploring the three members of the oboe family: the oboe (Wooden Quests), the English horn (Amber Trails), and the oboe d’amore (Elegance). The first and second movements are notated without barlines, which confers the feeling of metric freedom. Throughout the piece, there is an evolution from metric and rhythmic freedom toward metric and rhythmic organization. The first movement has no meter and no rhythmic values per se. The second movement however includes rhythmic values without metric constraints. The third movement is notated in standard notation, with meter and rhythmic values.

*Surprisentopie* was completed in the spring of 2005. It is a piece in three movements: Goinfroniphère (Atmospheric Greed), Tointijoncture (Rumfjoncture) and Plurinotiphonte (Multiphontes). Individual movement titles and main title are all invented ‘French’ words. Though the words have no meaning, their sounds are evocative. Here is a tentative translation: ‘The Atmospheric Greed is surprisentopped by the Rumfjoncture of Multiphontes.’ Goinfroniphère has a quasi-continuous – greedily-insistent - rhythmic motion of sixteenth notes, with a brief jazzy feel in the middle, a climax in the very high register. However, the somewhat Ravelian harmonies and mostly high registers reveal the atmospheric part of the ‘greed’. Tointijoncture, the middle movement, is dissonant both at the harmonic and rhythmic level. It is in 5/4 meter, has some ‘out-of-synch’ passages (a 19/16 meter), and is quite fast for a second movement. This movement connects the outer movements only through a couple of unexpected triplets figures with octaves (M 91) found in the first and third movements, and a trille-like motive in the next measure (M. 92). The last movement Plurinotiphonte, contains various motives (among others, the alternating figures), taken from the first movement. These figures undergo many transformations throughout the movement, and the harmonic nature of the movement is very different from that of the first. This explains the ‘multi’ in ‘Multiphontes.’ Manabu Takasawa premiered the piece at the University of Rhode Island (2005).

# Biographies



**Eliane Aberdam** was born in Nancy, France. As a child, she studied piano and theory at the Conservatoire National de Region in Grenoble. She did her undergraduate studies in composition at the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem. In 1989, she entered the graduate program at the University of Pennsylvania where she studied with George Crumb, and obtained her Master degree in 1992. She completed her Ph.D. in Composition at UC Berkeley. In 1998-1999, she taught composition, theory and Music technology at the University of Northern Iowa. Her works are performed in Israel, France and the United States. She attended music festivals such as The Bartok Seminar in Hungary, June in Buffalo, the Académie d'Été in Paris, and Voix Nouvelles in Royaumont (France). In 1995, she was selected by IRCAM for the Annual Course in electronic music, and for the commission of PaRDeS, an electro-acoustic work for chamber ensemble and electronics. In 2000, the Ensemble Intercontemporain (Paris) commissioned and premiered the chamber orchestra piece *Quoi? Ce point* (after Primo Levi's book *Periodic Table*). She has recently completed an opera (libretto by Maurya Simon) premiered in March 2007). She currently teaches composition and theory at the University of Rhode Island (since 2001)



**Gary Buttery** has appeared throughout the U.S. as a soloist and clinician. Formerly the principal tubist in the United States Coast Guard Band, he is co-owner of Whaling Music Publishers and a member of the Atlantic Tuba Quartet. Founder of URI's Traditional Jazz Band, specializing in American jazz and dance music of the early 20th century, he is an accomplished conductor, composer and recording artist who has studied with leading tuba artists Roger Bobo, Don Harry, Gene Pokorny, Jack Robinson and Dan Perantoni. He has performed with the Nebraska Wind Symphony, San Carlo Opera Company, Long Beach Symphony and the NBC Orchestra and has numerous tuba works written for him, including Roger Kellaway's *Arcades I* for Tuba and Piano, George Heussenstamm's *Dialogues* for Alto Saxophone and Tuba, Allen Blank's *Divertimento* for Tuba and Band, Richard Penner's *Sharing*, Boston composer Frank Warren's *Seven Duets* for Tubassoon and Vaclav Nelhybel's *Concerto* for Tuba. Mr. Buttery leads and arranges for several ensembles in southern New England. His most recent composition, *Yves Tanguy – Images In Sound*, is based on the works of the American Surrealist painter, Yves Tanguy. He has a Master of Music in Tuba Performance and Music Theory/Composition from the University of Northern Colorado.



**Margaret Frazier**, soprano, international performer and recording artist, is well known for the expressiveness and clarity of her voice. The Boston Globe wrote: "Ms. Frazier's radiant singing mustered up the virtues of Elly Ameling." The Providence Journal called Margaret Frazier's "the kind of pure, unforced voice you can listen to all afternoon."

She has collaborated and toured with the chamber vocal ensemble, The Boston Camerata since 1990 and has recorded five CD's with the ensemble. A frequent guest soloist with chamber choruses and ensembles in southern New England area, she is also the soprano soloist at the First Baptist Church in America, Providence. A Lecturer at her alma mater, Ms. Frazier teaches studio voice, class voice, and music appreciation courses. She maintains a private voice studio and is a former president and current member of the Rhode Island Chapter of NATS. Summer 2005 included two trips to Finland with The Boston Camerata, and in October she will perform in the music festival *Octobre en Normandie* in France with the ensemble.



**Jean Maxon Carpenter**



**Elizabeth Dean Gates** is a member of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra and the Northeast Chamber Ensemble and also performs with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale Orchestra, the Festival Ballet Orchestra and Opera Providence. She teaches French horn privately. At URI, she teaches applied French horn, and horn ensemble.



**Christine Harrington** is a cellist and orchestra director in the Cranston public schools. She received a B.M. in Music Education from the Hartt School of Music and a M.A.L.S. from Wesleyan University. She is a founding member of the IAJE String Caucus (promoting improvising strings). In addition Ms. Harrington has presented many workshops in Rhode Island and Massachusetts on teaching strings in the public schools. Ms. Harrington was a conductor of the youth orchestra program (RIPYO and OSYO) for nine years and has been a guest conductor of festival orchestras throughout New England and Long Island. Ms. Harrington performed regularly with the Eastern Connecticut Symphony for 20 years and is the cellist on Emmy nominated jazz piano and cello CD, "SandBox" with pianist and composer Joe Parillo and the "Celtic Fiddle Fest – Rendezvous" with Johnny Cunningham and Kevin Burke.



**Eric Mazonson** received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from Boston University, where he studied piano with Anthony di Bonaventura. He has played many recitals in the U.S., Canada and Europe and performed concerti with community orchestras. Eric was a member of the United States Military Academy Band (1979 – 1982) where he founded a touring piano-woodwind sextet. He was affiliated with Bradford College for a number of years, where he taught piano, accompanied the chorus and helped to arrange scores for musical theatre productions. In 2003, Eric performed at Jordan Hall during its centennial celebration. Currently he accompanies the Brandeis University Chorus and the Lexington Master Singers, with whom he has premiered many works. He is music director at the Congregational Church of Harvard, MA and has been music director for scenes staged by the Crittenden Opera Studio. Eric teaches piano at Roger Williams University. He is a piano accompanist at URI.



**Jane Murray** has a Bachelor of Music in Oboe Performance, Boston University, and a Master of Music in Music Education, University of Rhode Island. She teaches Chamber music, woodwind class, applied oboe, pedagogy, and supervises student recitals. Jane Murray, a veteran of both orchestral and chamber music genres, plays principal oboe and English horn in several New England orchestras. She has performed with such diverse groups as The Moody Blues, Sine Nomine, Roger Daltry and Yanni. She has also played for the Broadway tours of South Pacific, Camelot, Fiddler on the Roof, Cabaret, Zorba, My Fair Lady, Sound of Music, Carousel and the world premiere of Rage of the Heart. Long a champion of the English horn, Ms. Murray has performed two rarely heard solo works with the R.I. Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra and has been invited to perform Copland's Quiet City with several well-known trumpet players, including Rolf Smedvig. She has premiered many new works for English horn and was the first English hornist to be selected as a finalist in the Alliance Competition for Solo Instrumentalists. Ms. Murray's special interest is the music of J.S. Bach, which she has performed on oboe, English horn and oboe d'amore at the Bach Aria, Newport, Norfolk and Aspen Music Festivals and at David Kim's Kingston Chamber Music Festival. She is oboist and founding director of the Northeast Chamber Ensemble, whose venues include Seattle's Benaroya Hall, and is Artistic Director of the Northeast Quintet Camp.



As Artist-Director of the Rhode Island Youth Philharmonic Orchestras Since 2003, **Alexey Shabalin** conducts the Symphony (the most advanced group). Having expanded and improved under his leadership, the ensemble performed in Carnegie Hall in May, 2005. He also founded and conducts the Rhode Island Youth Soloists, a chamber orchestra of the top string players. Many colleges take pride in their musical offerings for non-majors, attracting excellent students who play seriously for their own enjoyment. For several years, Shabalin has been the assistant conductor and strings coach of the MIT Symphony, and he led the group as principal conductor in an all Russian program in December 2005. He coaches chamber music at Brown University, and he conducts the symphony orchestra, coaches violin and chamber groups, and teaches music theory at Providence College. In addition, he instructs a large number of private students in the Boston and Providence areas. He created a concert in New York City featuring an eclectic mix of pieces by these young performers. Currently, Shabalin is a member of the Rhode Island Philharmonic. Active as a solo recitalist and chamber player, his busy concert schedule has taken him around the world. Shabalin graduated from Moscow Conservatory in 1995. As a student he won several prestigious prizes in Russia and the USA. From 1992 to 1996, Shabalin toured with the world-renown Moscow Soloists Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Yuri Bashmet, in 32 countries in most of the major concert halls of the world. Moving to the US in 1996, Shabalin has played in many orchestras, at chamber groups, and festivals all over the US.