

NAKEDEYE AT ZOETROPOLIS

PITY THE NATION

Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 7PM

PROGRAM

Eine Kleine Mitternacht Musik (2001)

George Crumb

(Ruminations on *'Round Midnight* by Thelonious Monk)

1. Nocturnal Theme
2. Charade
3. Premonition
4. Cobweb and Peaseblossom (Scherzo)
5. Incantation
6. Golliwog Revisited
7. Blues in the Night
8. Cadenza with Tolling Bells
9. Midnight Transformation

amplified piano

The Secret of Growth (2022)

Theresa Wong

1. light
2. food
3. flowers
4. water
5. lineages

clarinet, cello, e.guitar, percussion, piano, and video

— INTERMISSION —

Glim (2022, excerpt, world premiere)

Rusty Banks

piano and synthesizer

I Am Waiting (2020)

Jerome Kitzke

1. Preamble: The Death of Wonder
2. Interlude One
3. Pity the Nation
4. Interlude Two
5. I Am Waiting – Stanza 1
 - 5A. American Breath 1 — Stanza 2
 - 5B. American Breath 2 — Stanza 3
 - 5C. American Breath 3 — Stanza 4
 - 5D. American Breath 4 — Stanza 5
 - 5E. American Breath 5 — Stanza 6
 - 5F. American Breath 6 — Stanza 7
 - 5G. American Breath 7
6. Interlude Three
7. Postlude: The Resurrection of Wonder

full ensemble and Lisa Karrer, actor/singer

NAKEDEYE ENSEMBLE

Matthew Angelo, flutes
Christy Banks, clarinets
Ryan Kauffman, saxophones
Peter Kibbe, cello
Chad Kinsey, e.guitar
Mike Bitts, e.bass
Andy Thierauf, percussion
Ju-Ping Song, piano
Lisa Karrer, guest actor/singer

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

Rusty Banks: *Glim* (2022)

Glim is an excerpt (ca 7min) from an evening-length work-in-progress for piano and synthesizer. 'Glim' is an archaic word meaning a light, or torch, or lantern. The bulk of the harmonic material, sound design, and spacious rhythm tends towards heaviness and darkness. Occasionally, there is an optimistic *glimmer* that pokes through momentarily, but not quite blossoming.

Rusty Banks

George Crumb: *Eine kleine Mitternachtsmusik* (2001)

George Crumb, the grand poet of magical sound worlds, passed away on February 6, 2022, in his home in Media, PA. Although not unexpected (he was 92), his passing felt like the loss of the possibility of more. As recently as 2020, at the ripe age of 91, he finished composing Metamorphoses Book II, a cycle of ten pieces for piano, each paired with a painting he loved. Tonight's tribute is a piece that is in itself a tribute to another musician he greatly admired. Below is Crumb's own notes on Eine Kleine Mitternachtsmusik, which he wrote in Media, PA and Lochau, Austria.

I have long been an admirer of Thelonious Monk's famous Jazz melody 'Round Midnight. Monk's tune was also a favorite of the Italian pianist Emanuele Arciuli and he conceived the idea of commissioning several composers to write a short piano piece containing some reference to it. I was immediately attracted to the idea of an homage to Monk but found my conception expanding to include a whole suite of short pieces. The result was *Eine Kleine Mitternachtsmusik* ("A Little Midnight Music"), completed in 2001, and subsequently premiered and recorded by Mr. Arciuli.

In the beginning and concluding movements of my suite I quote entire phrases of Monk's theme (while retaining his dark e-flat minor tonality and his exquisite and almost Debussyesque harmonic colorations) and the listener will also recognize isolated melodic fragments of the tune at various other points in my score. As a compliment to Monk's world I have evoked two immediately recognizable genres of American popular music – "ragtime" and "blues." In the piece entitled "Golliwog Revisited" I offer a kind of surrealistic parody of

Debussy's "Golliwog's Cakewalk" (from his *Children's Corner*). I even include Debussy's mordantly saccharine reference to Wagner's *Tristan* (which gave me the eerie sense of "quoting a quotation), and for good measure throw in a motif from *Till Eulenspiegel*! My little piece in "blues" style, with the borrowed title "Blues in the Night," is an attempt to fuse that idiom with my own harmonic language.

Towards the end of my *Mitternachtmusik* suite the pianist is required to ring in the midnight hour by chanting the Italian numerals one through twelve, accompanied by the ringing, bell-like sonorities of the piano. Then a mysteriously and portentously uttered *mezzanotte* ("midnight") prefaces the final reference to Monk's melody.

The style of piano writing in *Eine Kleine Mitternachtmusik* utilizes (as in all of my earlier piano works) the resources of the "extended piano." The use of pizzicato effects, glissandos, muted tones, production of harmonics, and even in several passages, striking the metal structural beams of the piano with a percussionist's beater, greatly enlarges the coloristic possibilities of the instrument.

George Crumb

Theresa Wong: The Secret of Growth (2022)

The Secret of Growth is an audio-visual piece conceived as an ancestral altar honoring past generations of family members through the framework of film and sound. The five movements draw upon traditional Chinese symbols of veneration including offerings of light, food, flowers, water, and imagery associated with various individuals. While honoring ancestors in my bloodline, this piece also acknowledges the disjunction with the traditions and heritage of my past as a result of my family's diasporic trajectory. I began first by composing the music with the offerings as seeds to the sounds, then created the visual imagery as a continuation of the sound.

The first movement is an offering of light, inspired by the practice of burning joss paper or 'spirit money', which is burned to provide wealth to the deceased in the afterlife. The second movement symbolizes an offering of food through the imagery of steam, one of the main elements of Chinese cooking and known to preserve the vitality and nutrition of prepared food. The third movement presents an offering of flowers through the act of looking at a lily. The imagery juxtaposes my act of observing lilies with a black and white photograph of a lily taken by my maternal grandfather, a gifted photographer who was unable to fully realize his talents. Though I remember him mostly for his acerbic and rough personality, I chose to mirror his act of regarding these delicate flowers in homage to the lineage of his artistic spirit. The fourth movement combines the element of water with a playful re-animation of my maternal great-grandmother and grandmother's faces. Through filming the slow examination of my Manchurian great-grandmother's facial features, I connected to her enigmatic expression in unexpected ways. Her features, which previously seemed worn from a hard life, revealed a kind of grace and artfulness in living 'close to the bone', and her warm and nurturing character was indeed confirmed by my mother's recollections. Towards the end of this movement, a subtle overlay of video 'generations' (filming a projection of something filmed) offers a visual connection to how our visages transform through multiple generations in a family. As altars are also typical places of *reflection*, this piece serves as a literal one – reflecting elders of my own heritage, which I saw little to none of in filmed media

while growing up. The fifth movement serves as a recapitulation of all these offerings in collage with actual photographs of my ancestors, going back four generations to my paternal great-great-grandfather. In part, my impetus for this piece is to recognize the immutable elements within oneself that resist dissolution in the great experimental 'melting pot' of American culture. My deepest gratitude to Ju-Ping Song and NakedEye Ensemble for commissioning and performing this piece.

Theresa Wong

Jerome Kitzke: I Am Waiting (2020)

I Am Waiting is the second piece I have written in response to the results of the 2016 General Election. The first was 2018's "A Lament and Cry for These United States". That title says it all. Having lived in New York City for 36 years and thus being aware of Donald Trump's criminal tendencies and moral failings long before he entered politics, I had no hope that anything good could possibly come from his being president. My only hope was that we would get through 4 years without any major crisis occurring where his ineptitude would put the people of the United States in immediate peril. Alas, then came the Covid-19 pandemic. One could argue that the president's failure to believe in the pandemic and promote safety protocols at the beginning caused hundreds of thousands of deaths. "I Am Waiting" was completed just before the pandemic hit and is intended to be a piece that keeps a light shining on the abominable and dangerous failings of the Nation's 45th president. To do so, I have used two poems by the great American poet and activist, Lawrence Ferlinghetti that are separated by nearly 50 years. "Pity the Nation" (2007) points a laser at the dangers of having a person like Trump as president. In "I Am Waiting" (1958) Ferlinghetti provides a litany of some of the ills plaguing society in 1958 and his general hope that a recognition of wonder will provide a groundwork for positive change. Though written 64 years ago, the poem still exudes relevance and perhaps does more so now with a man like Donald Trump having been in power. And even though he is no longer in the White House, my piece is meant as a reminder for us all to remain ever vigilant because the toxins he released while in office are still in the national air and the noises he is making about running again are now clanging in the collective ear. "I Am Waiting" is dedicated with love to my dear friend, the great American Composer/Accordionist, Guy Klucsevsek. Gramercy to NakedEye Ensemble, Ju-Ping Song, Artistic Director; the great actor/singer/composer/interdisciplinary artist Lisa Karrer; and to Amy Binder and the Thomas A. and Gina T. Russo Foundation for their generous support.

Jerome Kitzke

NAKEDEYE ENSEMBLE

NakedEye is an electro-acoustic group with classical, rock, and jazz DNA on the forefront of cutting-edge and crossover music that defies conventional labels. Founded in 2013 and based out of Lancaster, PA, NakedEye has developed a fluid repertoire reflective of its DNA, commissioning projects, institutional and artistic collaborations, and its mission of musical exploration and innovation.

NakedEye commissions work from young emerging composers such as Angélica Negrón, Molly Joyce, Florent Ghys, and Monica Pearce, as well as established composers like Jerome Kitzke, Randall Woolf, and Zack Browning. NakedEye is also fortunate to count among its core members the multi-talented composers Richard Belcastro and Rusty Banks.

Two albums reflect the group's stylistic diversity. *Storylines Crossing* (Starkland, 2018) explores the group's blues and jazz expressions. This CD received Global Music Awards' Best Debut Album and Best Ensemble Album of 2018. The more recent album *Toy* (New Focus Recordings, 2019) takes the group's focus in an entirely different direction, in both instrument and style: original works featuring the toy piano solo take center stage, exploring the vast range of the diminutive instrument.

In addition to its regular season concerts in the Northeast, NakedEye has been featured at New Music Gathering, Queens New Music Festival, The Chamber Music Society of St Louis, The DCCC New Music Series, Pikes Falls Chamber Music Festival, Tribeca New Music, as well as schools and universities in PA and DE. NakedEye Ensemble is led by pianist Ju-Ping Song.

Follow @nakedeyemusic on Facebook and Instagram and get on our mailing list at nakedeyeensemble.com.

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LISA KARRER

Lisa Karrer is an interdisciplinary artist, composer, vocalist and ceramicist with an international background in live performance, opera and music-theatre works, video, sound, and museum installation. Her projects are inspired and motivated by focused studies of literature, historical fiction and current events, examining topics such as cultural migration and displacement, evolutionary science, dissociative behavior, and global myths and archetypes. She frequently collaborates with visual and performing artists on her own works, as well as theirs. Karrer has received many funding awards to support her projects, most recently an Individual Artist Grant from NYSCA (New York State Council on the Arts) for her large-scale installation, SHELTER. This exhibit chronicles the narratives of refugees and their resettlement in American cities, and was premiered at Burchfield Penney Art Center in Buffalo, New York, December 2020 through June 2021 <https://www.burchfieldpenney.org/exhibitions/exhibition:12-11-2020-03-28-2021-lisa-karrer-shelter/>. Plans for touring SHELTER to other U.S. venues are currently in the works. Karrer is also a visiting artist and educator, lecturing on topics such as Cultural Anthropology, the theory of Hauntology, and hands-on approaches to installation and multi-arts practice. She holds an MFA in Digital and Interdisciplinary Art Practice from The City College of New York.

lisakarrer.com

RUSTY BANKS

Rusty Banks is a composer/guitarist born in Jasper, Alabama and living in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. His compositions have been performed in China, Taiwan, France, Italy, Belgium, Croatia, Germany, The Netherlands, Iceland, Canada, and Mexico, as well as throughout the United States. Besides writing concert music for ballet, orchestra, wind ensemble, and other acoustic ensembles, Rusty designs pieces that use traditional performers, user-end electronics, and video within dynamic audio/video installations.

rustybanks.org

THERESA WONG

Theresa Wong is a composer, cellist and vocalist active at the intersection of music, experimentation, improvisation and the synergy of multiple disciplines. Bridging sound, movement, theater and visual art, her primary interest lies in finding the potential for transformation for both the artist and receiver alike.

Following inquisitive paths into song forms, video, just intonation, movement and visual media, her works include *As We Breathe*, an installed song commissioned by Long Beach Opera for the 2020 Songbook, *She Dances Naked Under Palm Trees*, commissioned by pianist Sarah Cahill for The Future Is Female project, and *Harbors*, co-composed with Long String Instrument inventor Ellen Fullman and chosen as one of *The Wire's* top 50 releases of 2020. Her multi-media piece, *The Unlearning* (Tzadik), 21 songs for violin, cello and 2 voices inspired by Goya's Disasters of War etchings premiered in 2013 at Roulette in Brooklyn and was also presented at the 2016 New Frequencies Festival at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. Current and past commissions include works for The San Francisco Girls Chorus, McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, Splinter Reeds, Vajra Voices, and Del Sol String Quartet.

She collaborates with many singular artists, including Fred Frith, Luciano Chessa, Annie Lewandowski, Chris Brown, Frantz Loriot, John McCowen, Søren Kjærgaard, Carla Kihlstedt, and filmmaker Daria Martin. In 2018, Wong founded *fo'c'sle*, a record label dedicated to adventurous music from the Bay Area and beyond, featuring inaugural releases by Ellen Fullman with David Gamper and Stuart Dempster, Chris Brown, Powerdove and the Lijiang Quintet.

She has shared her work internationally at venues including Fondation Cartier in Paris, Cafe Oto in London, Festival de Arte y Ópera Contemporánea in Morelia, Mexico, The Stone in New York City and Centennial Hall in Sydney. Wong is a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellow and has also been an artist-in-residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts, Lijiang Studio and Yaddo. She currently works and resides in the San Francisco Bay Area.

theresawong.org

JEROME KITZKE

Jerome Kitzke was born in Milwaukee in 1955 and has lived in New York since 1984. Having written his first piece in 1970, his music arises from the North American landscape and celebrates vitality in its purest forms, thriving on the spirit of driving jazz, Plains Indian song, and Beat Generation poetry, where freedom and ritual converge. It is direct, dramatic, and visceral, always with an ear to the sacred ground. Often political and always topical, his music aims at revealing the heart of what it means to be an American in the mid 20th Century and early in the 21st, especially as it relates to how we live on this land and the way we came to live on it. His music has been performed around the world and is recorded on the New World, Mode, Starkland, and Innova labels. His latest recording is "The Redness of Blood", released in late 2021 on New World Records. Currently he is working on pieces for thingNY and Joel Harrison's Electric Guitar Quartet. His music is published by Peer Music in New York City and Hamburg.

POEMS BY LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI

Pity the Nation (2007)

Pity the nation whose people are sheep
and whose shepherds mislead them
Pity the nation whose leaders are liars
Whose sages are silenced
and whose bigots haunt the airwaves
Pity the nation that raises not its voice
except to praise conquerors
and acclaim the bully as hero
and claims to rule the world
by force and by torture
Pity the nation that
knows no other language but its own
and no other culture but its own
Pity the nation whose breath is money
and sleeps the sleep of the too well fed
Pity the nation Oh pity the people who allow
their rights to erode and their freedoms to be washed away
My country, tears of thee
Sweet land of Liberty!

I Am Waiting (1958)

I am waiting for my case to come up
and I am waiting for a rebirth of wonder
and I am waiting for someone to really discover America and wail
and I am waiting for the discovery of a new symbolic western frontier
and I am waiting for the American Eagle to really spread its wings
and straighten up and fly right
and I am waiting for the Age of Anxiety to drop dead
and I am waiting for the war to be fought which will
make the world safe for anarchy
and I am waiting for the final withering away of all governments
and I am perpetually awaiting a rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for the Second Coming
and I am waiting for a religious revival
to sweep thru the state of Arizona
and I am waiting for the Grapes of Wrath to be stored
and I am waiting for them to prove that God is really American
and I am waiting to see God on television piped onto church altars
if only they can find the right channel to tune in on
and I am waiting for the Last Supper to be served with a strange new appetizer
and I am perpetually awaiting a rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for my number to be called
and I am waiting for the living end
and I am waiting for dad to come home his pockets full of irradiated silver dollars
and I am waiting for the atomic tests to end
and I am waiting happily for things to get much worse before they improve
and I am waiting for the Salvation Army to take over
and I am waiting for the human crowd to wander off a cliff somewhere clutching its atomic umbrella
and I am waiting for the meek to be blessed and inherit the earth without taxes
and I am waiting for forests and animals to reclaim the earth as theirs
and I am waiting for a way to be devised to destroy all nationalisms without killing anybody
and I am waiting for linnets and planets to fall like rain
and I am waiting for lovers and weepers to lie down together again
in a new rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for the Great Divide to be crossed
and I am anxiously waiting for the secret of eternal life to be discovered by an
obscure general practitioner and save me from certain death
and I am waiting for life to begin
and I am waiting for the storms of life to be over
and I am waiting to set sail for happiness
and I am waiting for a reconstructed Mayflower to reach America
with its picture story and tv rights sold in advance to the natives
and I am waiting for the lost music to sound again
in the lost continent in a new rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for the day that maketh all things clear
and I am waiting for Ole Man River to just stop rolling along past the country club
and I am waiting for the deepest south to just stop reconstructing itself in its own image
and I am waiting for a sweet desegregated chariot to swing low
and I am awaiting retribution for what America did to Tom Sawyer
and I am perpetually awaiting a rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for Tom Swift to grow up
and I am waiting for the American Boy to take off Beauty's clothes and get on top of her
and I am waiting for Alice in Wonderland to retransmit to me her total dream of innocence
and I am waiting for Childe Roland to come to the final darkest tower
and I am waiting for Aphrodite to grow live arms at a final disarmament conference
in a new rebirth of wonder

I am waiting to get some intimations of immortality by recollecting my early childhood
and I am waiting for the green mornings to come again
youth's dumb green fields come back again
and I am waiting for some strains of unpremeditated art to shake my typewriter
and I am waiting to write the great indelible poem
and I am waiting for the last long careless rapture
and I am perpetually waiting the fleeing lovers on the Grecian Urn
to catch each other up at last and embrace
and I am awaiting perpetually and forever a renaissance of wonder