

NEXTET

The New Music Ensemble of the 21st Century

Charles Halka and Cynthia Lee Wong, music directors

Featuring the music of Arthur Gottschalk, composer-in-residence

PROGRAM

Hodgepodge (2009) from *Piece-A-Day Project*

Cynthia Lee Wong
(b. 1982)

Descent to Bells (2016) – *World Premiere Performance*

Brooke Herndon
(b. 1995)

1. Friday
2. Saturday
3. Sunday
4. Monday (The Bells)

Wei Wei Le, violin
Tim Hoft, piano

Variations in Free Fall (2015)

Diego Vega
(b. 1968)

Jae Ahn-Benton, piano

“Four Interiors” from Beat (1998)

Arthur Gottschalk
(b. 1952)

1. SOS (Brodwick)
2. The Mystic Trumpeter (Whitman)
3. Who is Now (Whitman)
4. All About Connections (Brodwick)

Ashley Stone, mezzo-soprano
Jae Ahn-Benton, piano

-- INTERMISSION --

Shoreline (2017) – *World Premiere Performance*
Commissioned by Stephen Caplan

Cynthia Lee Wong

Stephen Caplan, oboe
Tobias Roth, viola
Kim Glennie, harp

Nocturnal No. 5 (1980)

Virko Baley
(b. 1938)

Laura Spitzer, piano

Barbara Hull, trumpet
Juiling Hsu, piano

Wednesday, April 19, 2017

7:30 PM

Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas**COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE**

A man whose music has been described as “rapturous, argumentative, and prickly” (Gramophone Magazine), and “fascinatingly strange” (BBC Music Magazine), award-winning composer **Arthur Gottschalk** is Professor of Music Composition and Theory at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music. He was a student of renowned American composers William Bolcom, Ross Lee Finney, and Leslie Bassett. He is a Professor at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music, in Music Theory and Composition, where he founded and directed the school’s electronic music laboratories until 2002, and chaired the composition and theory department from 1997 to 2010. Additionally, he co-founded Modern Music Ventures, Inc., a company which held a recording studio complex, a record production division, four publishing firms, and an artist management division, and for whom he produced records for the PolyGram and Capitol labels, among others. He continues to work as an expert witness and forensic musicologist in music business trials, and serves as a judge for many prominent competitions, including CINE (the Marvin Hamlisch Award), CINTAS (Cintas Foundations Awards), and the University of Louisville (the Grawemeyer Award), among others. He is a recipient of the Charles Ives Prize of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, annual ASCAP Awards since 1980, and has been a Composer-in-Residence at the famed Columbia/Princeton Electronic Music Center, the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, and a Visiting Artist at the American Academy in Rome. He has recently been awarded the Gold Medal and Record of the Year in Music Composition from the Global Music Awards, for his *Requiem: For the Living*, and honored with a prestigious Bogliasco Fellowship, the First Prize of the *Concorso Internazionale di Composizione Originale* of Corciano, Italy for his *Concerto for Violin and Symphonic Winds*, and completed the presentation of an experimental music series in Havana, Cuba. And the Association of Rice Alumni honored him with their 2016 Meritorious Service Award, the highest honor given to a non-graduate of Rice University. With his catalog approaching two hundred compositions, his music is performed regularly and frequently, domestically and internationally, and is recorded on Navona, New Ariel, Ravello, Crystal, Summit, Capstone, Beauport Classical, ERMMedia, Ablaze Records, AUR recordings, Golden Crest, MSR Classics, and Amirani Records (Italy), and is published by Subito Music, Shawnee Press, European American Music Distributors, Potenza Music, Alea Publishing, TrevCo Music, The Spectrum Press, and Delage Music (France) (ASCAP). His book, *Functional Hearing*, now entering its second edition, is published by Scarecrow Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield.

MEET THE COMPOSERS

Cynthia Lee Wong has attracted international acclaim for her “shamelessly beautiful” music and devotion toward “not only the avant-garde audience, but all classical enthusiasts or indeed all music lovers” (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*). Wong’s creative output encompasses a range of genres, including works for orchestra, chamber ensemble, dance, voice, narrator, musical theatre, and piano improvisation.

Wong recently received a Discovery Grant from Opera America to develop her musical comedy *No Guarantees* with librettist Richard Aellen. She is also a finalist for a *Song of Houston* commission at the Houston Grand Opera. From 2013-2015, Wong was the selected composer for New Voices, a multi-organizational initiative through which she received mentorship from Boosey & Hawkes as well as chamber and orchestral commissions from New World Symphony and San Francisco Symphony. Previously, Wong received a 2010 Orpheus Project 440 commission in which her work *Memoriam* was premiered at Carnegie Hall. Other commissions include pieces for the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra del Teatro Olimpico, Portland Symphony, New York State Music Teachers Association, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, La Jolla Music Society, Tanglewood Music Festival, and the Tokyo String Quartet.

Wong graduated from the accelerated 5-year B.M./M.M. program at Juilliard and received her Ph.D. as an Enhanced Chancellor’s Ph.D. Fellow at the Graduate Center at the City of New York. Wong is a composition faculty member at the

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and serves on the board at the League of Composers, the nation's oldest organization dedicated toward new music. For more information, visit www.cynthialeewong.com.

Brooke Herndon started her musical training at age four with piano studies; she later expanded her interests to music composition during her third year at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. As an avid chamber music composer, Brooke was recently asked to write for the Beo String Quartet for their upcoming residency at the Charlotte New Music Festival. Brooke is a piano student of Dr. Timothy Hoft, and a music composition student of Dr. Jennifer Bellor.

Diego Vega is a Colombian-American composer. His music has been performed in some of the most important concert halls in the United States, Europe and Latin America by ensembles such as the Cuarteto Latinoamericano, Eighth Blackbird, Ensemble X, the Colombian National Symphony, the Bogotá Philharmonic, the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, the Norwegian Radio Orchestra, the Maîtrise de Notre-Dame de Paris, the Quintet of the Americas, the Soli Chamber Ensemble, and internationally acclaimed soloists and chamber groups. Diego has written commissioned works for the Colombian National Symphony, Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, France, the Cornell Symphony and the Cornell Chorus, and the Salvi Foundation and the Cartagena International Music Festival. Vega has also been awarded the National Prize of Music in Composition in 2004, the Ensemble X composition competition in 2004, Alea III 20th anniversary prize in 2002, and prestigious scholarships such as Fulbright and the Sage Fellowship at Cornell University.

Vega holds degrees from Cornell University (DMA), University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music (MM), and Universidad Javeriana (BM) in Bogota, Colombia, and has served as faculty at Syracuse University and Universidad Javeriana. Currently he is professor of composition and theory at UNLV. Among his composition teachers are Guillermo Gaviria, Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, Joel Hoffman, Roberto Sierra, and Steven Stucky.

Diego Vega has written music for soloists, a variety of chamber groups, symphony orchestras, wind ensembles, choral ensembles, computer and electronic music. He has incorporated elements of Colombian traditional music into some of these works.

Virko Baley is a Jacyk Fellow at Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, and Distinguished Professor of Music, Composer-in-Residence and co-director of NEON, an annual composers' conference, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He received a 2007 Grammy® Award as recording co-producer for TNC Recordings and the prestigious Academy Award in Music 2008 from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The citation read: *"A highly cultured, polyglot intellectual, brilliant pianist and a dynamic and accomplished conductor, the Ukrainian-born Virko Baley composes music which is dramatically expansive of gesture, elegant and refined of detail and profoundly lyrical. It is music which 'sings' with passionate urgency whether it embraces (as in his more recent work) folkloric elements from his origins or finds expression in a more universal style of modernism typical of his earlier music. It is always a singular voice and a deeply felt and acutely heard music."*

In the spring of 2013, his magnum opus, the opera *Holodomor (Red Earth. Hunger)* (begun in 1985) received two performances in a special chamber concert version in Las Vegas and New York, and was repeated in Kyiv, Ukraine at the Shevchenko Opera in November of that same year, this time with an orchestra. Plans are now being made to have a fully staged production done in the 2017-18 season.

Virko Baley was born in Ukraine in 1938, but has spent his creative life in the United States and considers himself a citizen of the world. Multi-lingual and multi-disciplinary, he infuses his music with themes of contemporary and traditional motifs. Shirley Fleming, reviewing a concert of his music given by CONTINUUM, in the New York Post called his music *"vibrant, dramatic, communicative, much of it framed by extra-musical allusions that place it in a solid context."* The New York premiere of Concerto No. 1, *quasi una fantasia* for violin by the New Juilliard Ensemble, Joel Sachs conductor, Tom Teh Chiu, soloist, prompted the Village Voice critic Kyle Gann to describe it as full of *"sonic images memorable enough to take home."* His Symphony No. 1: "Sacred Monuments" was described by David Hurwitz in Classics as, *"Powerfully imagined, clearly articulated, and quite moving... It's a very serious ambitious statement by a gifted artist, and I wouldn't be a bit surprised if it turns out to have more staying power than many other contemporary works by today's trendier composers."* In 2010, reviewing a recent CD released of Virko Baley's music, Robert Schulslaper wrote that *"Baley's music [is] deeply lyrical and emotively powerful in equal measure. Recommended,"* while American Record Guide pronounced, *"These are exceptional compositions and fantastic performances. The language in these pieces is a part of a larger context of exploration for new sounds in the world of instrumental music."* In reviewing Baley's monumental chamber cycle *Treny* in Gramophone, Ken Smith wrote *"The strength of the piece lies in its highly - and unapologetically - emotional content, dispensed artfully with the utmost thematic discretion...Hearing nearly 73 minutes of brooding Slavic ruminations on death may not inspire much toe-tapping, but Baley does arrive at an effective catharsis. The vocal line, whose wordless hum soon blooms into a text reconciling itself to human morality, descends on the earthiness of the cello like a message from above..."*

Virko Baley joined UNLV's Department of Music (as it was known then) in 1970 and during his tenure, in addition to founding the composition area, established an Annual Contemporary Music Festival (1971-1985), was honored with the

first NEA music grant given to Southern Nevada, created the Las Vegas Chamber Players (1975-1995), was Music Director and Conductor of the Nevada Symphony (1980-1995), the Music director of NEXTET (2001-2016), and co-founded with Jorge Grossmann of N.E.O.N. (2007-2009, 2016), the annual composers' conference, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. For information, visit <http://www.virkobaley.com/>.

MEET THE FACULTY PERFORMERS AND GUEST ARTISTS

Described by the legendary violinist Yehudi Menuhin as "one of the most talented young musicians I have ever seen", Associate Professor **Wei-Wei Le**, a native of Shanghai, graduated high school from Yehudi Menuhin School in England. She then went on and received her Bachelor of Music from Oberlin Conservatory of Music, a Master of Music degree from Cleveland Institute of Music, and a Graduate Diploma from New England Conservatory of Music. Le has firmly established herself as one of the most gifted violinists in her generation. She has won many important international competitions, including the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition (England), the Kloster Schontal International Violin Competition (Germany), and the Starling International Violin Competition (USA), among others.

Le's studies have taken her to the renowned violin pedagogues, such as Yehudi Menuhin, Donald Weilerstein, Almita and Roland Vamos, and Dorothy DeLay. As a solo performer, Le has given recitals and concerts all over the world, performing solo concertos with noteworthy orchestras such as the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (London), Queensland Symphony (Australia), Bermuda Symphony Orchestra, and the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra. As a devoted chamber musician, Le has collaborated with great musicians and quartets in North America, Europe, and Asia, including Richard Stoltzman, William Preucil, Sara Chang, and Eliot Fisk, as well as the Ying Quartet and St. Petersburg Quartet. Prior to her appointment at UNLV, Le served on the faculty at Emory University and Georgia State University in Atlanta.

Timothy Hoft has given performances in concert halls in the U.S. and Europe including the Phillips Collection, Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, the John F. Kennedy Center, the Yamaha Piano Salon, and the Smith Center. A graduate of the University of Michigan and the Peabody Conservatory, Hoft holds Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral Degrees in piano performance. In 2012, Hoft joined the piano faculty at the University of Nevada- Las Vegas. Hoft is currently exploring and performing repertoire of 20th and 21st century Ukrainian composers for a series of forthcoming recordings for release on TNC Recordings (Troppe Note/Cambria).

Ashley Stone received her Doctorate of Music in Vocal Performance from Indiana University where she studied with Costanza Cuccaro. During her time at Indiana University, she taught studio and class voice as well as performed the roles of Dame Quickly in *Falstaff*, The Old Lady in *Candide*, The Principessa in *Suor Angelica*, and Meg in Mark Adamo's *Little Women* with IU Opera Theater. She received her Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with Katherine Ciesinski. While in Rochester, NY, she performed as the Principessa in Eastman Opera Theater's *Suor Angelica* and was a soloist with the Voices Choral Ensemble, the Gregory Kunde Choral, and the Eastman Chorale. Stone completed her undergraduate studies at Texas State University in San Marcos, her hometown. While in Texas, she was a frequent finalist in the NATS regional and district competitions, a Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions regional finalist, and performed as Kate in San Antonio Opera's production of *The Pirates of Penzance*. She is Visiting Lecturer at the UNLV School of Music.

Jae Ahn-Benton began studying piano under Mr. Roger Bushell, and continued his studies with him for seven years. Currently, Jae is a Music Performance major in piano at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) studying under Professor Mykola Suk. As a solo and chamber artist, Jae has performed in many different venues around Las Vegas including the music halls at UNLV, Historic 5th Street School, Starbright Theater in Summerlin, Christ the King Church, Green Valley Presbyterian Church, and the Mountain View Presbyterian Church. He has collaborated with local orchestras such as the UNLV Symphony Orchestra and the Henderson Symphony Orchestra.

Jae currently works as a pianist at the historic Little Church of the West on the Las Vegas Strip, and also as an accompanist at the Nevada School of the Arts. He also runs a piano studio for students of all ages in the Las Vegas area. Aside from piano, Jae is an active self-taught composer. On top of these positions, Jae is a sought-after accompanist throughout the UNLV Music Department for vocalists and instrumentalists as well as university ensembles. His latest works include Twenty-Four Preludes for solo Piano, Capriccio for One Piano, Four Hands, Four Romances for Violin and Piano, Ballade for Viola and Piano, Toccata for Cello and Piano, and Sonata for Bassoon and Piano.

Stephen Caplan is Principal Oboist with the Las Vegas Philharmonic and Professor of Oboe at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. His solo recording of American music for the oboe, *A Tree in Your Ear*, has been featured on NPR's *All Things Considered* and WNYC's *New Sounds*. With the Sierra Winds, Caplan can be heard on five critically acclaimed recordings and has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards including the Nevada Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. Caplan is the 2017 recipient of the Nevada Arts Council's Artist Fellowship Project grant, which will support new recordings of American music. He is the author of *Oboemotions: What Every Oboe Player Needs to Know*

about the Body, and *The Breathing Book for Oboe*. Caplan has a Bachelor of Music from Northwestern University and a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Michigan, and is a Buffet Group USA Performing Artist.

Tobias Kremer Roth, 21st-Century Viola Hero, is constantly seeking innovative opportunities to share the soulful expressions of his instrument with audiences everywhere. Guided by his passion for the contemporary arts, he has premiered viola works from New York City composers Robert Karpay, Matthew Koraus, and Jonathan Koch, with chamber works from several others. A budding composer, himself, Tobias's recent projects include *Titus Andronicus: Incidental Vignettes for Solo Viola*, and a four-movement Trio for Flute, Viola, and Piano, modeled after the musical aesthetic of the Renaissance. A musician of marked versatility, he has delivered "delightful experience[s] in experiences in experimental theater", solo performances "of the highest order [that] would have graced the stage of any concert hall" (Hal de Becker), and classical chamber performances with such acclaimed artists as the American String Quartet. As an orchestral musician, having made his solo debut at age 15 with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, he became the orchestra's youngest member, two years later. The following year, while beginning his conservatory studies, he became the youngest founding member of the Chamber Orchestra of New York. Tobias graduated from the Manhattan School of Music in May 2013 and is currently pursuing a graduate degree at the University of Nevada Las Vegas under the tutelage of Jason Bonham. Past teachers include Lawrence Dutton, Evan Wilson, and Mary Trimble.

Kim Glennie started playing the harp at age 10 in Council Bluffs, Iowa in one of the very few public school harp programs in the nation, studying with Jack Bourdess and Louise Seidl. Her college years were spent studying with Professor Peter Eagle at Indiana University, where she earned her Bachelors and Masters Degrees in harp performance. While at IU, she put herself through school by performing as principal harpist with 5 Midwestern orchestras, recording in area gospel and jingle studios, and traveling with artists such as Johnny Mathis and Henry Mancini. Within a few months of graduation, she played a week of shows in Indianapolis with Wayne Newton, who hired her on the spot to be his full time harpist in Las Vegas and on the road.

Kim has played everywhere from the London Palladium to the Grand Ole Opry, performed for Presidents, played both the dedication of the Vietnam Memorial and the Fourth of July in Washington D.C. on the Mall, and performed in Las Vegas showrooms for artists as diverse as Andrea Bocelli, Natalie Cole, Steve and Edie, Tony Bennett, Merle Haggard, Beyonce, and Lady Gaga. Kim is Principal Harpist with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, and also plays Principal with Nevada Ballet Theater. She is the harp faculty both at UNLV and CSN, and teaches privately.

Kim is currently working with an area hospital to provide harp music for its neonatal ICU, as she was featured doing on a national television spot for Dignity Health.

Janelle M. Evans graduated summa cum laude from Arizona State University with a bachelor's degree in English and Creative Writing. She is currently a teaching graduate assistant at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) while pursuing her Master of Fine Arts degree in Writing for Dramatic Media. In addition to writing novels, Miss Evans is an avid enthusiast of screenplay, and short story writing. She is also an active volunteer, working to improve child literacy, and as a member of UNLV's Research and Mentoring Program. Miss Evans currently has a young adult novel under consideration for publication, and a screenplay under review for the Oscar's Academy Nicholl Fellowship.

Laura Spitzer is Associate Professor of Piano at New Mexico State University. A Steinway artist, she has performed under contract with Columbia Artist's Community Concert Association and Canada's Festival Concert Society, and was the recipient of four touring grants from the Nevada State Council on the Arts and the Nevada Humanities Committee. Spitzer traveled with her Steinway grand packed into her truck from 1984 to 2003, bringing classical music to hundreds of rural communities and schools throughout the U.S. and western Canada. In recognition of this contribution, she was honored with the 1986 Nevada Governor's Arts Award. She has been featured on major television networks and in such publications as *People*, *Time*, the *New York Times* and *Clavier*. Laura Spitzer attended Oberlin Conservatory, and completed her undergraduate studies at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, where she was awarded the Bösendorfer Stipend and graduated with distinction. She performed frequently as a member of the Austrian Ensemble for New Music, and recorded numerous programs for Austrian Radio. After taking first prize at the Kurt Leimer Competition, she earned her MM at the Peabody Institute and her DMA from the University of Southern California. Her principal teachers have been Walton Ball, Hans Leygraf, Leon Fleisher, and John Perry. As an adjunct professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, she recorded, performed, and toured with a contemporary music ensemble, the Las Vegas Chamber Players. She teaches each year at the Idyllwild Arts Summer Program in California.

Barbara Hull is Assistant-Professor-in-Residence of trumpet at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Before joining the faculty at UNLV she lived in Rochester, NY where she taught applied trumpet and brass at Nazareth College and was a member of Symphoria (formerly the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra). She also played regularly with the Skaneateles Summer Music Festival, Rochester Chamber Orchestra, Rochester Oratorio Society and the Kunde Chorale. From 2008 through 2013, she taught at the Hochstein School of Music and Dance. Barbara also teaches trumpet and music theory

each summer at the Csehy Summer School of Music, which is held on the beautiful campus of Houghton College in Houghton, NY.

Barbara Hull holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Trumpet Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with James Thompson and was Assistant Conductor of the Eastman Brass Guild. She earned her Masters Degree at Eastman in the studio of Charles Geyer. She is a recipient of the Eastman Performer's Certificate, and, as winner of Eastman's *Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia* Concerto Competition, performed as soloist with the Eastman Wind Ensemble under Donald Hunsberger. Barbara also served as principal trumpet of the Eastman Wind Ensemble during the collaboration between the EWE and the Canadian Brass. The CD for that project, *Manhattan Music*, was released in 2008.

Barbara was tenured as Principal Trumpet with the Albany Symphony Orchestra (1995-1998), recording there under the Decca and Albany Records labels. She played with the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra from 2000-2003. While living in Albuquerque she also performed regularly with the New Mexico Brass Quintet, the New Mexico Symphony Brass Quintet, the Chamber Orchestra of Albuquerque, and Opera Southwest. She has also performed with the Rochester Philharmonic and Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra.

Dr. Hull is co-principal trumpet with the San Francisco Wind Ensemble and principal trumpet with Ensemble Monterey. She has also performed with the Modesto Symphony, Fremont Symphony, Grass Valley Music Festival, the San Francisco Lyric Opera, Opera San Jose and the SF Masterworks Chorale. Barbara's work has also included masterclasses with Barbara Butler, Vincent Cichowicz, Allen Vizzutti, Mark Gould and Niklas Eklund.

A native of Taiwan, Dr. **Juiling Hsu** came to the United States in 2003 and since then has established a career as a collaborative pianist working with instrumentalists, singers and large ensembles throughout the United States, Europe, and Taiwan. She received her DMA on collaborative piano from Arizona State University in 2012 and MM from University of New Mexico in 2005. She had her debut in New York Carnegie Hall in 2012 and has premiered several new works, including *Region III – Refuge* by Richard Cameron (2008) and the song cycle *Insomnia* by Tom Cipullo (2009), which she premiered at the renowned Songfest festival in Los Angeles, California. She was one of only 8 pianists chosen to attend the prestigious Music Academy of the West collaborative piano program in 2010, working with notable artists such as Donald McInnes, Zvi Zeitlin, and Jonathan Feldman. She was one of the official pianists for 2011 International Primrose Viola Competition. During 2011-2016, she appeared as a guest artist for International Saarbùrg Music Festival in Germany and International Vianden Music Festival in Luxemburg in the summers. Dr. Hsu is an active freelance collaborative pianist and currently reside in Las Vegas, Nevada.

What's Next with NEXTET? Stay informed about all our upcoming concerts this season by joining our e-mail list or liking us on Facebook. Our next concert will be **October 2, 2017** and will feature guest composer Paul Chihara along with more new and exciting music!