



ARLENE SIERRA

ARLENE SIERRA | VOL. 1

BRIDGE 9343

ARLENE SIERRA



VOL 1

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- 3-7). BIRDS AND INSECTS, BOOK 1 (2007) *for solo piano* [15:50]
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- 8-10). SURROUNDED GROUND (2008) *for sextet* [12:49]
Charles Neidich, clarinet | Stephen Gosling, piano | Daedalus Quartet
- 11-12). TWO NERUDA ODES (2004) *for soprano, cello and piano* [10:54]
Susan Narucki, soprano | Raman Ramakrishnan, cello | Stephen Gosling, piano
- 13). COLMENA (2008) *for 14 players* [7:10]
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- 14). BALLISTAE (2001) *for 13 players* [10:24]
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ARLENE SIERRA | VOL. 1

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(b. 1970)

CICADA SHELL (2006) *for chamber ensemble* [14:47]

1. Marziale [7:23]
2. Misterioso, espressivo [7:16]

International Contemporary Ensemble

Eric Lamb, flute | Joshua Rubin, clarinet | David Byrd-Marrow, horn | Nathan Davis, percussion
Jacob Greenberg, piano | David Bowlin, violin | Kivie Cahn-Lipman, cello
Jayce Ogren, conductor

BIRDS AND INSECTS-BOOK 1 (2007) *for solo piano* [15:50]

3. I. Sarus Crane [2:11]
4. II. Cornish Bantam [1:43]
5. III. Cicada Sketch [1:39]
6. IV. Titmouse [1:13]
7. V. Scarab [9:01]

Vassily Primakov, piano

SURROUNDED GROUND (2008) *for sextet* [12:49]

8. I. Preamble [3:12]
9. II. Feigned Retreat [6:03]
10. III. Egress [3:25]

Charles Neidich, clarinet | Stephen Gosling, piano

Daedalus Quartet

Min-Young Kim, violin 1 | Ara Gregorian, violin 2 | Jessica Thompson, viola | Raman Ramakrishnan, cello

TWO NERUDA ODES (2004) *for soprano, cello and piano* [10:54]

11. I. Oda al plato [4:40]
12. II. Oda a la mesa [6:14]

Susan Narucki, soprano | Raman Ramakrishnan, cello | Stephen Gosling, piano

13. COLMENA (2008) *for 14 players* [7:10]

International Contemporary Ensemble

Claire Chase, flute | Eric Lamb, flute | James Austin Smith, oboe | Joshua Rubin, clarinet
Pavel Vinnitsky, clarinet | David Byrd-Marrow, horn | Erik Carlson, violin | Alison Zlotow, violin
Maiya Papach, viola | Katinka Kleijn, cello | Bradley Aikman, contrabass | Cory Smythe, piano
Nuiko Wadden, harp | Nathan Davis, percussion | Ian Antonio, percussion

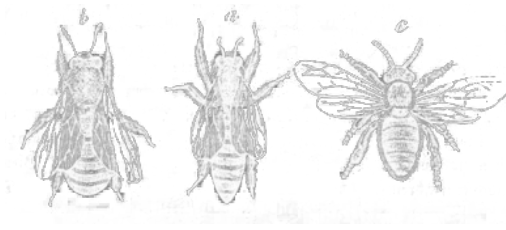
Jayce Ogren, conductor

14. BALLISTAE (2001) *for 13 players* [10:24]

International Contemporary Ensemble

Eric Lamb, flute | James Austin Smith, oboe | Joshua Rubin, clarinet | Pavel Vinnitsky, clarinet
David Byrd-Marrow, horn | Jacob Greenberg, piano | Erik Carlson, violin
Alison Zlotow, violin | Maiya Papach, viola | Katinka Kleijn, cello | Bradley Aikman, contrabass
Nathan Davis, percussion | Ian Antonio, percussion

Jayce Ogren, conductor



ARLENE SIERRA (b 1970)

While some composers have burst onto the music scene as if at a stroke, others have come to prominence more gradually as the result not of any specific piece but through their building of a corpus of work whose intrinsic quality is as evident as its consistency of purpose. Such a composer is Arlene Sierra: born in Miami to parents from New York, resident in Berlin before coming to London in the late 1990s, and for the past six years Senior Lecturer in Music Composition at Cardiff University, hers is a voice which puts the components of a music drawn from both sides of the Atlantic (as well as from both sides of the Channel) to distinctive and impressive use.

With a background in the fine arts and dance, and who worked primarily with electronic media at the outset of her composing, Sierra draws upon an unusually diverse range of influences. Although she has studied with several composers of note, Jacob Druckman is immediately apparent in the pristine clarity of her music's textures, in rhythms that ensure a supple forward movement without claiming unnecessary prominence, and in harmonies whose poise is never at the expense of more pungent qualities. The influence of Berio, of whom she has spoken of admiringly, is evident in the tendency for her works to fall into self-contained groups whose inter-connections are as much conceptual as musical.

Principal among these groups is the *Art of War* series, in progress now for over a decade and including the ensemble works *Ballistae* and *Surrounded Ground*. The former piece outlines the preparation and launching of the eponymous medieval weapon in music whose allotting of strategic roles to groups and specific members within the ensemble is galvanized by the music's evocative immediacy, while the latter piece draws upon an ancient Chinese treatise on military strategy for the titles as well as formal trajectory of its three sections. *Cicada Shell* also belongs to this series: the two movements juxtapose a march-like dissipation of

activity with its more spontaneous accumulation in a process of transformation and illusion that finds its likely culmination in the piano concerto itself entitled *Art of War*, whose ground-plan of capture and release offers a pertinent renewal of the relationship between soloist and orchestra as well as of the concerto as a genre.

Different in conception though related in intent, a further of group of pieces focuses on the qualities of evolution and natural selection. Thus the first book of *Birds and Insects* is a sequence (or not, if the performer so wishes) at once imaginative and concrete, while *Colmena* incorporates the sound of swarming bees as a rhythmic device that underpins music whose long-term motivic transformations are of the greatest finesse. Nor is vocal music absent from Sierra's output - witness the substantial song-cycle *Neruda Settings*, which draws on four of the Chilean poet's *Elemental Odes* in music whose understated conjuring of the visionary out of the mundane is a parallel to the verse that inspired it.

With recent commissions including works for the New York Philharmonic, the Carducci Quartet and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and several important upcoming premieres (including an opera Faustine supported by Royal Opera's Genesis Project and NY City Opera's VOX), Arlene Sierra has clearly arrived as a contemporary composer of proven individuality and substance: a composer, more to the point, who is in absolute control of her craft.

Richard Whitehouse



CICADA SHELL (2006) *for chamber ensemble*

Cicada Shell belongs to a series of pieces exploring principles of military strategy including the sextet *Surrounded Ground* (2008), the piano concerto *Art of War* (2010), the piano trio *Truel* (2004) and the large ensemble piece *Ballistae* (2001).

The Thirty-Six Strategies, an ancient collection of Chinese battle tactics, provided impetus for this work. "Strategy 21: Slough off the cicada's shell," advises that false appearances mislead enemies. Transformation and illusion are key to avoiding capture and defeat.

Cicada Shell is in two movements of equal length: the first is a series of *diminuendi* derived from a ritornello theme, while the second is a series of *crescendi* based on the same materials. Both movements feature a number of cyphers based on the title of the work as well as a central motif transcribed from the call of cicadas in nature.

Commissioned by The New Music Players with funds from the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust. The first performance was given by The New Music Players, Roger Montgomery, conductor, at The Warehouse, London on 2 November 2006.

BIRDS AND INSECTS—BOOK I (2007) *for solo piano*

The piano album *Birds and Insects, Book I* was composed from 2003 to 2007. The pieces may be performed separately or together in any order. Of the five movements, *Scarab* is the most substantial work and more suited to stand alone, while the first four pieces work well as a set.

1. *Sarus Crane* (2007)
2. *Cornish Bantam* (2005)
3. *Cicada Sketch* (2004)
4. *Titmouse* (2005)
5. *Scarab* (2003)

Each piece features distinct characteristics to fit its title: spelling the name in pitches, employing a transcription of the animal's song from nature, or recalling its physical movement in various ways.

Sarus Crane was written in honor of Henri Dutilleux's visit to Cardiff University in 2007. *Cornish Bantam* was written for pianist Daniel Becker. *Cicada Sketch* was originally written as a children's piece and later became a source for the chamber ensemble work *Cicada Shell*. *Titmouse* was commissioned by Clive Williamson and first recorded by him as part of the Cadenza Music One Minute Wonders project. It also featured as a test piece for the 7th British Contemporary Piano Competition. *Scarab* was commissioned by the German pianist Thorsten Kuhn, who has performed the work in Weimar, Hamburg, Vienna and New York.

In ancient Egyptian theology, the scarab is a symbol of creation and resurrection, night and day, and the rebirth of the Sun. A colossal granite sculpture of a scarab in the British

Museum, one of the largest still extant, is a monumental representation of these ideas. It prompted the composition of this work. The initial chord and motto for the piece spells "scarab" in pitches. The motto develops into distinct sections of music, suggesting the following: 1) the skittering action of an insect, 2) the Egyptian idea of the Sun being rolled across the sky to the underworld as symbolized in the foraging of scarab beetles, and 3) the wavering motion of the scarab navigating by polarized moonlight (a discovery new to science in 2003). Throughout the piece unity is maintained by the scarab motto, resulting in a rondo form, toccata-like in its vitality and virtuosity.

SURROUNDED GROUND (2008) *for sextet*

S*urrounded Ground* was originally conceived as a companion to Aaron Copland's Sextet of 1933–37. Copland has remained an important figure in American music since his death in 1990; he taught many composers of succeeding generations including my teacher Jacob Druckman. Copland's Nationalist style of the 1930's may still represent the best of American ideals, but present-day American militarism and its consequences for the world are another artistic challenge entirely. *Surrounded Ground* is an attempt to address these issues in my own work.

The title *Surrounded Ground* is from the ancient Chinese treatise by Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*. In this seminal book of military strategy, surrounded ground is described as "where the entrance is narrow, the exit circuitous, allowing the enemy to attack his few to our many." This and other excerpts from the text are used to determine the musical interactions of instruments throughout the three-movement sextet.

I. Preamble: The ensemble is divided into several opposing forces, often a disparate minority against a homogenous majority whose drive to prevail is overwhelming at first but later

begins to disintegrate. The mass seems to lose its will to dominate for a time, but no resolution is offered as the threat of further conflict remains.

II. Feigned Retreat: The two violins are pitted against the remaining instruments, and their virtuosic interaction with the ensemble hints at the Sun Tzu quotation, "Do not follow a feigned retreat. Do not attack crack troops."

III. Egress: The precision, aggression and great speed demanded from the ensemble in this movement was suggested by Sun Tzu's advice that, "A surrounded army must be given a way out" and the commentary "Surround them on three sides, leaving one side open, to show them a way to life." Different pairs of instruments struggle through a frenetic, syncopated texture, melodically asserting a way forward until finally, after a last statement from the first violin, the ensemble makes a sudden, surreptitious escape. Commissioned by Chroma with funding from the Performing Right Society Foundation, the first performance was given at Park Lane Chapel, Norwich, England on 8 June 2008.

TWO NERUDA ODES (2004) *for soprano, cello and piano*

Pablo Neruda wrote four volumes of Elemental Odes between 1954 and 1959. The Odes pay homage to common objects; fusing brilliant, concise description and profound reflection, at once personal and philosophical. My settings of *Ode to the Plate* and *Ode to the Table* are concerned with imagery, motion and rhythm in the language as well as the many double meanings in the texts of these poems. *The Ode to the Plate* sparkles with celestial metaphors for the perfect disk of a plate, as well as the urgency and necessity of its place in daily life. *The Ode to the Table* describes the object affectionately as a "titanic quadruped", and moves through the different roles this simple but vital piece of furniture can play. But to Neruda, at last the world is a table: we must take our place, in times of fear we must choose

sides, between love and hate. It is time to decide, and they are calling us, “to the table!”

Oda al plato was composed at the Britten-Pears School and premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival in 2001. It was rescored for trio at the encouragement of the music series of Kettle’s Yard, Cambridge with a setting of *Oda a la mesa*. Both are movements of a larger work, *Neruda Settings*, a Paul Jacobs Award Commission from the Tanglewood Music Center.

COLMENA (2008) for 14 players

Colmena, which means ‘beehive’ in Spanish, explores accumulation and change from micro to macro levels. Having read of the nature of beehives, and how their societies depend on a fine balance of outgoing and less enterprising individuals, my initial impetus for the piece was one of hidden changes bringing about a transformation of the whole. Coloring this idea is a subtle nod to the stylized Franco-Iberian sound of early 20th-century scores, with simmering energy and sweeping gestures. Finally, the idea of a mass of insects hibernating, as beehives do each year, brought about the music of the last section of the piece—an exploration of a kind of buzzing repose.

Colmena was commissioned by the Miller Theatre at Columbia University with funds from the Cheswaty Foundation. The first performance was given by the International Contemporary Ensemble, Jayce Ogren, conductor, at Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York on 13 March 2009.

BALLISTAE (2001) for 13 players

In a classical treatise *The Ten Books of Architecture* by Vitruvius, the Roman architect/engineer provides detailed instructions for building many ancient machines of warfare, both for attack and defense. The Roman *ballista* was a double-armed artillery machine; essentially a large, mounted crossbow whose cord of twisted sinew or hair was pulled back by a winch. It could hurl heavy rocks with great force and for considerable distances.

The circumstances, construction and operation of *ballistae* shape all aspects of this work. The aggression and fear necessary for waging war, the organization and effort required of soldiers who built such machines, and the preparations of the distant enemy are all ideas that contribute to the piece. In a more concrete manifestation of a *ballista*, twelve instruments of the ensemble are divided to constitute each “arm” of the machine while the largest and heaviest instrument (in effect, the stone) is moved into its central place with considerable effort. The strings provide the appropriate sinews which are tightened and tuned, finally achieving sufficient tension to launch the heavy missile. After following the journey of the missile, the work concludes with its violent and sudden impact.

Ballistae was first performed by the London Sinfonietta, Pierre-Andre Valade, conductor, at the 2001 State of the Nation Weekend at the South Bank Centre, London.

—Arlene Sierra

Arlene Sierra's music is, by turns, urgent, poetic, evocative, and witty. She has a keen appreciation of instrumental sonorities and the inherent drama of successive musical atmospheres. Intriguing, passionate, mysterious, her recent work, Cicada Shell, confidently announces the arrival of a significant composer.

—The American Academy of Arts and Letters



An American based in London, ARLENE SIERRA was one of the first composers to be commissioned by the New York Philharmonic in its opening season under Music Director Alan Gilbert in 2009. The press responded, “The new age of classical music in New York couldn’t be more aptly heralded than with Arlene Sierra’s *Game of Attrition*. ... At turns spry, savage, sly and seductive, *Game of Attrition* is a Stravinskian play among brass and strings, piano and

percussion ...so enrapturing.” (*Time Out New York*)

Arlene Sierra’s darkly energetic compositions are inspired by unusual sources including game theory, blueprints for ancient weapons, Darwinian evolution, and historical and mythical conflicts. This is music in and of the world, wrought with conviction and logic as well as an intricate sense of color, drama, and momentum. Movement is a continuing

preoccupation that has grown out of Sierra’s lifelong interest in dance, a physicality of music through rhythm, syncopation, and kinetic energy. Early training in electroacoustic composition remains an influence, notably through the use of densely layered, flexible ostinato patterns and virtual samples from nature that feature in pieces including *Birds and Insects*, *Cricket-Viol*, and *Insects in Amber*. A recent series of works, including *Surrounded Ground*, *Cicada Shell*, and the piano concerto *Art of War*, builds musical structures and motivic interactions from the military strategy of Sun Tzu—an expression of protest against present-day conflicts and a plea for rationality and resolution. Natural forces of competition, evolution, and large-scale change, a modern sense of the pastoral as a source of scientific wonder and conscience rather than naive romanticism, have informed works including *Insects in Amber*, *Colmena*, *Hearing Things*, *Aquilo* and the New York Philharmonic commission *Game of Attrition*.

Sierra gained international recognition with her first score for large orchestra, *Aquilo*, which was awarded the Takemitsu Prize at the behest of Oliver Knussen. Her music has been heard worldwide in performances by the Tokyo Philharmonic, the London Sinfonietta,

ICE, Psappha, the Albany Symphony, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Lontano, Collage New Music, the Fidelio Trio, Gemini, Chroma, the Great Noise Ensemble, the Schubert Ensemble and many others. Festival performances include Tanglewood, Aldeburgh, Spitalfields, Pur Oder Plus (Germany), Fontainebleau (France) and dance festivals Jacob’s Pillow and Danspace St. Marks (NY). Her piano concerto *Art of War*, for the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and soloist Huw Watkins, was premiered at the 2010 Vale of Glamorgan Festival and broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Other important commissions have included *Tiffany Windows*—Albany Symphony, *Neruda Settings*—a Tanglewood Paul Jacobs Award commission, *Hand mit Ringen*—Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival commission for Psappha and Sarah Leonard, *Truel I*—Meet the Composer for the Bakken Trio at the Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis, RVW Trust commissions *Cicada Shell* for the New Music Players and *Streets and Rivers* for Jeremy Huw Williams, *Surrounded Ground*—Chroma and the PRS Foundation, *Colmena*—a Miller Theatre Cheswaty Foundation commission for the International Contemporary Ensemble, and *Insects in Amber*—commissioned for

the Carducci Quartet with support from the Cheltenham International Festival. A major work for the Anita Cheng Dance Company, *Truel (Complete)*, had several performances at the Danspace Series of contemporary choreography in New York City, and a solo piano album *Birds and Insects, Book I* has had numerous international performances and featured as a test piece in the British Contemporary Piano Competition. Sierra has been the subject of a Composer Portrait series concert at the Miller Theatre, New York (2009), Spotlight on: Arlene Sierra, an hour-long show and podcast on New York Public Radio (2006), and a Showcase concert at the Crush Room, Royal Opera House, London (2007). She was awarded a Charles Ives Fellowship by the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2007.

Arlene Sierra (b. 1970) grew up in Miami and New York and attended Oberlin (B.A., B.Mus.), Yale (M.Mus.) and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (D.Mus.) Her principal teachers were Martin Bresnick, Michael Daugherty and Jacob Druckman. A scholarship to the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau was crucial to her development (where she studied with Betsy Jolas and Dominique Troncin), as were fellowships and

residencies including Aspen, Bowdoin, June In Buffalo, and the MacDowell Colony. As a student she lived and worked in Berlin for two years and subsequently won fellowships to attend Tanglewood, Aldeburgh, and Dartington working with Louis Andriessen, Magnus Lindberg, Colin Matthews, and Judith Weir. Dr. Sierra taught composition at Cambridge University in 2003–4 before her current appointment as Senior Lecturer and Programme Director in Composition at Cardiff University School of Music.

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www.ArleneSierra.com

American soprano SUSAN NARUCKI has earned international acclaim for her warm, clear timbre, superb musicianship and depth of expression, and is one of today's outstanding interpreters of contemporary music. In a career that has spanned two decades, she has appeared as a soloist with conductors James Levine, Pierre Boulez, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Michael Tilson Thomas, Reinbert de Leeuw and Oliver Knussen, with the Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, MET Chamber Ensemble, Netherlands Opera, on the Great Performers Series at Lincoln Center, and at Carnegie Hall.

Ms. Narucki's extensive discography includes a Grammy award for George Crumb's *Starchild* (BRIDGE 9095) and a Grammy nomination (Best Classical Vocal Performance) for Carter's *Tempo e Tempi* (BRIDGE 9111), both on Bridge Records. Her most recent solo CD, *The Light that Is Felt: Songs of Charles Ives* (New World) with pianist Donald Berman was praised internationally and was selected as Editor's Choice of BBC Music Magazine. Susan Narucki has given over one hundred world premieres, including Louis Andriessen's opera *Writing to Vermeer*,

and has a close association with the music of György Kurtág, Elliott Carter and Claude Vivier. She has appeared at festivals across the globe with numerous contemporary music ensembles including Askó/Schoenberg, ICE, London Sinfonietta, Ensemble Modern, and ELISION.

Ms. Narucki serves as Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego

The **International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)** is dedicated to reshaping the way music is created and experienced. With a flexible roster of 33 leading instrumentalists performing in forces ranging from solos to large ensembles, ICE functions as performer, presenter, and educator, advancing the music of our time by developing innovative new works and pursuing groundbreaking strategies for audience engagement. In an era of radical change, ICE redefines concert music as it brings together new work and new listeners.

Since its founding in 2001, ICE has premiered over 500 compositions, the bulk of them by emerging composers, in venues ranging from New York's Lincoln Center and Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art to galleries,

bars, clubs, and schools around the world. The ensemble has released acclaimed albums on the Bridge, Naxos, Tzadik and New Focus labels, with forthcoming releases on Nonesuch, Kairos and Mode.

JAYCE OGREN is rapidly developing a reputation as one of the finest young conductors to emerge from the States equally at home in both symphonic and operatic repertoire.

Ogren received a bachelor's degree in composition from St. Olaf College in 2001 and a master's degree in conducting from the New England Conservatory in 2003. He has been invited to participate in conducting courses and master classes in both the U.S. and Europe, including two summers at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen. His principal teachers have been Steven Amundson, Jorma Panula, Charles Peltz, and David Zinman. Ogren is a published composer whose music has been premiered at venues including the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music, the Brevard Music Center, the Midwest Clinic in Chicago, the American Choral Directors Association Conference, and the World Saxophone Congress. His work titled *Symphonies of Gaia* has been performed

The Daedalus Quartet has won plaudits for its adventurous exploration of contemporary music, most notably the compositions of Elliott Carter, George Perle, György Kurtág and György Ligeti. Among the works the ensemble has premiered is David Horne's *Flight from the Labyrinth*, commissioned for the Quartet by the Caramoor Festival; Fred Lerdahl's *Third String Quartet*, commissioned by Chamber Music America; and Lawrence Dillion's *String Quartet No. 4*, commissioned by the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts. The 2010-2011 season features the premiere of Richard Wernick's *String Quartet No. 8*, commissioned for the Daedalus Quartet by the Bay Shore Schools Arts Education Fund and the Islip Arts Council. Daedalus will premiere a new quartet from Joan Tower, commissioned for them by Chamber Music Monterey Bay, in April 2012. The Quartet has also collaborated with some of the world's finest instrumentalists: these include pianists Marc-André Hamelin, Simone Dinnerstein, Awadagin Pratt, Joyce Yang, and Benjamin Hochman; clarinetists Paquito D'Rivera, David Shifrin, and Alexander Fiterstein; and violists Roger Tapping and Donald Weilerstein.

The Daedalus Quartet's debut recording,

by ensembles on three continents and serves as the title track on a new DVD featuring the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra.

Praised by *The New Yorker* as "a fresh and vital young participant in what is a golden age of American string quartets," THE DAEDALUS QUARTET has established itself as a leader among the new generation of string ensembles. In the ten years of its existence the Daedalus Quartet has received plaudits from critics and listeners alike for the security, technical finish, interpretive unity, and sheer gusto of its performances. The *New York Times* has praised the Daedalus Quartet's "insightful and vibrant" Haydn, the "impressive intensity" of their Beethoven, their "luminous" Berg, and the "riveting focus" of their Dutilleux. The *Washington Post* in turn has acclaimed their performance of Mendelssohn for its "rockets of blistering virtuosity," while the *Houston Chronicle* has described the "silvery beauty" of their Schubert and the "magic that hushed the audience" when they played Ravel, the *Boston Globe* the "finesse and fury" of their Shostakovich, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* the "thrilling revelation" of their Hindemith, and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* the "tremendous emotional power" of their Brahms.

music of Stravinsky, Sibelius, and Ravel, was released by Bridge Records in 2006. A Bridge recording of the Haydn complete "Sun" Quartets, Op. 20, was released on two CDs in July 2010, as well as an album of chamber music by Lawrence Dillon (Fall 2010), and an upcoming recording of the complete string quartets of Fred Lerdahl (Fall 2011).

The award-winning members of the Daedalus Quartet hold degrees from the Juilliard School, Curtis Institute, Cleveland Institute, and Harvard University. Founding members violinist Min-Young Kim and cellist Raman Ramakrishnan grew up in East Patchogue, Long Island; they met violist Jessica Thompson, a Minneapolis native, at the Marlboro Festival. Violinist Ara Gregorian joined the Daedalus Quartet in early March, 2010.

The meteoric ascent of VASSILY PRIMAKOV'S international career has been the result of competition victories, prizes in honor of his artistry and award-winning recordings. Winner of First Prize in the Young Concert Artist International Auditions and the Audience Prize of the Gina Bachauer competition, Primakov was named the Classical Recording Foundation's "Young Artist of the Year". A series of much-

heralded recordings have garnered National Public Radio's "CD of the Year" (Chopin Mazurkas), American Record Guide's "Best of the Year" (Schubert) and BBC Music Magazine's Music Choice. (Chopin, Brahms, Scriabin). As a teen-aged prizewinner of the Cleveland International Piano Competition, Primakov was praised by Donald Rosenberg of the Cleveland Plain Dealer: "How many pianists can make a line sing as the 19-year-old Moscow native did on this occasion? Every poignant phrase took ethereal wing. Elsewhere the music soared with all of the turbulence and poetic vibrancy it possesses. We will be hearing much from this remarkable musician."

Vassily Primakov's first piano studies were with his mother, Marina Primakova. He entered Moscow's Central Special Music School at the age of eleven as a pupil of Vera Gornostaeva. At seventeen, after a summer at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, he came to New York to pursue studies at the Juilliard School with the noted pianist, Jerome Lowenthal. At Juilliard Mr. Primakov won the a Susan W. Rose Career Grant and the William Petschek Piano Recital Award, which presented his debut recital at Alice Tully Hall. More recently, in October of 2011, Primakov traveled to Oslo to play and record the world

premiere of a new piano concerto by Poul Ruders, commissioned by the Norwegian Radio Orchestra. Vassily Primakov's recordings for Bridge Records include: Beethoven Sonatas (BRIDGE 9251); the Chopin Concertos (BRIDGE 9278); Tchaikovsky: The Seasons & Grand Sonata (BRIDGE 9283); Chopin: 21 Mazurkas (BRIDGE 9289); Schumann: Carnaval, Kreisleriana, Arabeske (BRIDGE 9300); Dvorak: Piano Concerto, Op. 33 (BRIDGE 9309); and Vassily Primakov plays Brahms, Chopin & Scriabin (BRIDGE 9315), Primakov's first DVD. Recent discs include an all-Schubert CD (BRIDGE 9327) and the first three discs of a complete Mozart Piano Concerto cycle with Denmark's Odense Symphony Orchestra (BRIDGE 9328A/B & 9339).

Producer: Adam Abeshouse, David Starobin (*Birds and Insects, Book I*)
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