

**Karen Bentley Pollick, violin & viola**  
**SPECTRUM Female Composers Festival**  
**Sunday, June 3, 2018 at 7:00 pm**

**Faye-Ellen Silverman: *Memories* for solo viola (Spring, 1974)**

- I Lyrical
- II Playful
- III Melancholic
- IV Angry

**Marga Richter: *Darkening of the Light* for solo viola (1978)**

- I Lento doloroso
- II del movimento precedente
- III Allegro risoluto
- IV Adagio
- V Allegramente
- VI Allegro con passione
- VII Allegro fervente
- VIII Allegro con fuoco
- IX Lento cantando

**Adrienne Elisha: *Inner Voices* for solo viola (2008)**

Forcefully - Wild, Presto - Dolce - Espressivo - Grave/Legato

**Rain Worthington: *Mixed Times of Yearning* for solo viola (2014)**

*After Thought* for solo violin (2012)

*Frost Vapor* for solo violin (2013)

**Victoria Bond: *Jasmine Flower* for solo violin (2011)**

**Žibuoklė Martinaitytė: *Serenity Diptychs* for violin, electronic voices and video (2015)**

**Karen Bentley Pollick: *Für HELEN{G}A* for solo violin (January, 2018)**

**Milica Paranosic: *Al'Airi Lepo Sviri* for violin, electronics and video (2005)**

**Melanie Mitrano: *Remember Who You Are* for violin and tape (2015)**

***Memories* (1974) by Faye-Ellen Silverman**

*Memories* is a work in four movements: I Lyrical, II Playful, III Melancholic, and IV Angry. The mood of each movement is established by tempo (alternating slower and faster movements), characteristic rhythms, and coloristic techniques typical of strings. The first movement uses string harmonics, the second has double stops, and the third, played muted and without vibrato, uses the special color of the lowest string as well as bent pitches, quarter note trills, and occasional harmonics and double stops. The last movement, with its tremolo and ponticello colors and its wider melodic leaps, exploits the entire range of the viola.

The first movement begins with a three-note motif that is expanded to form longer lines. The

second movement contains shifting rhythms. In the third movement the end is the reverse of the beginning. The fourth movement uses repeated notes on ponticello strings, accents, and shifting meters to establish its angry mood.

***Darkening of the Light* for solo viola (1962) by Marga Richter (b. 1926)**

*Darkening of the Light*, written in 1962 for renowned violist Walter Trampler, is a work with nine short interconnected movements. Each segment, from I-VIII, has its own character, from yearning to turmoil, even rage. Then, in movement IX, (a resolution of movement IV), comes quiet acceptance and peace. Six of the movements follow one another without a perceptible pause, making the work, in essence, one entity.

The light has sunk into the earth:  
The image of Darkening of the Light.  
Wounding of the Bright.  
The Light is veiled, yet still shines.

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***Inner Voices* for solo viola (2008) by Adrienne Elisha (1958 - 2017)**

Adrienne Elisha, a native of Glen Cove, New York, studied violin and composition at Indiana University; she later earned an Artist Diploma in Viola Performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music and a doctorate in composition at the University of Buffalo. She composed *Inner Voices* in 1998, at the request of composer Ofer Ben-Amots, and performed the world premiere in the summer of the same year, during a festival of new music at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. Subsequently, Adrienne played the piece many times, both in the United States and in Europe.

*Inner Voices* is a true tour de force in that the violist is required to sing and play simultaneously. The work is framed by a special chord progression where the voice and instrument blend together to produce a mysterious timbre. The chords are played powerfully at the beginning, and in a more subdued form in the middle and at the end. There is a highly virtuosic section, where the bow moves closer and closer to the bridge until it finally ends up on the other side, and finally dissolves into eerie, fluttering noises. Later an *espressivo* melody in harmonics leads to another fast section played with half finger pressure to create what the composer called "multi-overtones". A dreamy, almost transfigured version of the opening chords concludes the work.

***Mixed Times of Yearning* – a miniature for viola (2014) by Rain Worthington**

Originally composed in response to a call for viola miniatures – It is an interesting challenge to compose a work that is meant to fit within a very short timeframe, and have it stand as a complete piece of music that moves through a sense of emotional depth and development. The title refers not only to the mixed time signatures within the music, but also to a brief expression of mixed poignancies of yearnings encountered at different times in one's life. I am delighted that Karen Bentley Pollick will perform the premiere of this work.



**After Thought:** An emotional reflection – surfacing after a thought just a moment past.

**Frost Vapors:** This short piece attempts to convey the ethereal beauty of frost and cold vaporous air. Originally written for Icelandic violinist Eva Ingolf as a tribute to her homeland, a land of mystery.

***Jasmine Flower (Moli Hua)* for solo violin (2011) by Victoria Bond**

Using a traditional Chinese folksong, Moli Hua or Jasmine Flower as a point of reference, the piece contrasts the pure, simple flowing melody with a desire to break free of the orderly and explore the complex, asymmetrical, chaotic elements that contrast the song.

***Serenity Diptychs* for violin, tape and still images (2015) by Žibuoklė Martinaitytė**

When I first encountered photographic diptychs of Philip Van Keuren, I was struck by the “endless pairs of things” and the unexpected dialogues appearing between the images. According to the artist “often the more “distance” between the sheer physicality of the paired images, light-dark, near-far, etc. results in a stronger emotive resonance, creating the “conversation” between images. The diptychs pair seemingly ordinary but disparate visual, cultural, and historical entities in order to illuminate and amplify their equivalent fictive, numinous, poetic, and emotional qualities. Two realities are placed side by side that would never be adjacent in the real world”.

The idea of pairing became a focal point in “Serenity Diptychs”. The piece itself takes a form of an enlarged diptych consisting of two distinctly different adjacent musical worlds – one of a dynamic nature and another of transcendence, stillness and reflection. The first part with its continuous forward motion resembles a hike up a high mountain. Endless and tireless repetitive patterns are swirling ceaselessly and accumulating energy until the very top of the mountain is reached. There... everything suddenly becomes still. One just stands in awe, mesmerized by the breathtakingly spacious vistas and mountain ranges overlapping each other in a far distance. Thus, the second part reflects this state of heightened sensitivity where stasis bears a somewhat ecstatic quality.

The relationship between music and images can be perceived as a diptych as well. Each of them is governed by unique shaping principles – sounds are following a linear logic of time, whereas images display multidimensional nature of space in a non-linear fashion. Images are changing as flashbacks of memories, randomly appearing in the mind without any emotional involvement or attachment with no particular narrative. Music is independently creating a coherent flow and revealing its own story line.

Another pairing is formed between solo violin and tape part where real acoustic sound is merged with imaginary voices.

***Für HELEN{G}A* for solo violin (January, 2018) by Karen Bentley Pollick**

The initial spark that led to the composition of *Für HELEN{G}A* occurred in the Chapel of Good Shepherd Performance Space while enjoying an inspiring concert by Iranian musician Sahba Sizzdahkhani performing on santour and drums. I was seated behind Helena Hillinga, who elicited a moment of laughter and transcendence after the concert in honor of the ephemeral

nature of life and the creative spirit. The opening musical material derives from the division of the middle of the piano keyboard, which resides between E & F above middle C, vying to be as close as possible beyond the half step distance imposed by the keyboard. The flutter tones achieved on the violin depict the desire for proximity and harmonic expansion. The left hand pizzicati on the open E string mimic the perpetual four syllable proclamations of the hens that reside around my new home in San Pancho, Mexico. The bass line is created from the solfège note names H E L E N A (B E A E G [French system for N] A) with double stop trills à la *Caprice #6* by Niccolò Paganini, harmonics and rhythms, a waltz, and a concluding flourish of arpeggios in a final crescendo as an homage to Arvo Pärt's *Fratres* with a nod to Beethoven en route, before retreating into the primordial E & F via gossamer harmonics.

***Al'Airi Lepo Sviri* for violin, electronics and video (2005) by Milica Paranosic**

The initial grain of inspiration came from traditional Serbian folk-singing tradition; I composed my own tune that leans on that tradition. My goal was to offer a cross between seemingly unrelated traditions and have Airi Yoshioka, for whom the piece was composed, "sing" the tune in her own instrument, and in her own interpretation. Airi is from Japan, I myself am from Serbia, and I wanted to bring those two cultures closer together through music. The title could be translated: "Airi plays so beautifully", said in a peasant, old, somewhat forgotten idiom of Serbian language, not commonly used in modern time, except jokingly or idiomatically. The video is created by Carmen Kordas.

***Remember Who You Are* for violin and tape (2015) by Melanie Mitrano**

*Remember Who You Are* is a vocal trance EDM (electronic dance mix) in which the violin emulates the human voice. The message is self-empowerment; a reminder to value what makes us strong and unique. This was inspired by an animation by Nicole Antebi entitled "Gesture #1," a string of moving pearls, precious gems in motion, my definition of humankind. "Remember Who You Are" was written for and dedicated to violinist Eva Ingolf for the Vox Novus Fifteen-Minutes-Of-Fame Series in conjunction with Circuit Bridges, New York City in 2015. The vocals are performed by the composer.

Program funded in part by a Seed Money Grant from New York Women Composers. Repertoire selected from a call for scores in November, 2017 from NYWC membership. I am honored to represent these jewels of the solo violin and viola repertoire at SPECTRUM Female Composers Festival at tonight.

Please visit these composer websites to discover more about their unique lives and sonic creations:

<http://www.newyorkwomencomposers.org/>

<http://www.victoriabond.com/>

<http://www.fayeellensilverman.com/>

<http://zibuokle.com/>

<http://www.margarichter.com/>

<https://www.milicaparanosic.com/>

<https://www.newmusicusa.org/profile/aelisha/>

<https://www.melaniemitrano.com/>

<https://rainworthington.com/>

<http://www.kbentley.com/>