

Muhlenberg College
April 17, 2018

Pharos Quartet

Jennifer Bill, soprano saxophone	Amy McGlothlin, alto saxophone
Emily Cox, tenor saxophone	Zach Schwartz, baritone saxophone

Unquiet Spirits (2012)

John Mackey (b. 1973)

- I.
- II.

Songs for Tony (1993)

Michael Nyman (b. 1944)

- I.
- II.
- III.
- IV.

Intermission

Thinking in Four Places (2018)

Justin Casinghino (b.1978)

- 1. southeastern western coast
- 2. a city in two worlds
- 3. just 90 miles south
- 4. boroughs, blocks and bridges

Peace (2012)

David Maslanka (1943-2017)

Jesus Is Coming (2004)

Jacob Ter Veldhuis (b. 1951)

Based in Boston, the **Pharos Quartet** is a stirring musical collaborative formed by four New England saxophonists. Their unique combination of ideas, styles, and expressions brings the sound of the saxophone quartet to a new apex. With a vivid repertoire, balanced between notable pioneers as well as visionaries of tomorrow, Pharos maintains a steady appetite for today's most demanding saxophone quartet literature. Their concerts are stimulating, entertaining, and unpredictable. Its members bring together their own international performance experience and fuse it into a distinct chamber music event.

Pharos, the great lighthouse of antiquity and often considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World was built by the Ptolemaics in c.280 BC in the port city of Alexandria on the coast of Egypt. This great beacon of light that stood for around 1,000 years inspires the quartet to be a guiding light in chamber music performance of the 21st century.

Please visit www.pharosquartet.com

PROGRAM NOTES:

Unquiet Spirits reflects the unsettled and unsettling moods evoked in the three movements. The restless first movement propels the ensemble to a climactic bout of raucous rhythmic gestures. The second movement is an off-kilter dance, featuring acrobatic counterpoint throughout the ensemble and an eerie, waltz-like middle theme. Finally, the third movement (not being performed today) is a fiendish moto perpetuo, described by the composer as a "barn burner."
-John Mackey

John Mackey holds degrees from the Juilliard School and the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with John Corigliano and Donald Erb, respectively. John has received commissions from the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Parsons Dance Company, the New York Youth Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, the Dallas Theater Center, New York City Ballet, the Dallas Wind Symphony, the American Bandmasters Association, and many universities, high schools, middle schools, and military bands. He has received performances by the Dallas Symphony, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Bergen (Norway) Philharmonic, as well as thousands of middle school, high school, university, and military concert bands and wind ensembles.

Songs for Tony

"I began writing a saxophone quartet on New Year's Eve 1992. In the early afternoon of 5th January 1993, I was informed that my friend and business manager, Tony Simmons, had died after a long and heroic fight against cancer. I immediately sat down and wrote the music which became the fourth song, in what became a 'memorial' quartet. The previously composed music was scrapped as I decided to give each player, in turn, an 'aria' of [their] own.

The first song is a transcription of an actual song - 'Mozart on Mortality' - which I wrote for the Composers Ensemble in the spring of 1992. The text, by Mozart himself, is all too appropriate: 'I

may not see another day'. The second song is adapted from the music for the scene in Jane Campion's film *The Piano*, where the mute Ada (Holly Hunter) pushes her chief means of communication, her piano, overboard. This film was the last major deal that Tony negotiated on my behalf. The third song, a soprano sax solo, is based on a tune I composed some years ago, but was saving for a special occasion.”

-Michael Nyman - April 1993

Michael Nyman is undoubtedly one of the UK's most innovative and celebrated composers. His reputation is built upon a substantial body of work written for a wide variety of ensembles, not only for his own band, but also for symphony orchestra, choir and string quartet. In addition to his prolific output as a composer, Nyman is also a conductor, pianist, writer, musicologist, photographer and film-maker- his restless creativity and multi-faceted career making him one of the most dynamic and influential figures in contemporary culture.

Each movement of *Thinking in Four Places* is inspired by a place and a drum: Southeastern Western Coast – Senegal and the djembe; A City in Two Worlds – Istanbul and the dumbek; Just 90 Miles South – Cuba and the conga; and Boroughs, Blocks and Bridges – New York and the “boombap” drum sample. The “percussion” in the piece is controlled via a patch in the software Max/MSP, with the sounds therein being created from saxophone samples. The patch allows the ensemble to control play speed in real time – like drum machine, allowing for a more flexible rehearsal and performance process than a tape” would offer.

-Justin Casinghino

Justin Casinghino composes in a variety of genres, striving to create works that are lyrical, harmonically rich and sound in structural integrity. His studies of composition include work with Gunther Schuller, Lukas Foss, Theodore Antoniou and Richard Cornell. Casinghino's music has received premieres at Carnegie Hall (NY), Walt Disney Hall (LA), Chicago's Symphony Center and Seiji Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood. Casinghino is a Lecturer in the Department of Composition and Theory at Boston University, Associate Director of the Young Artists' Composition Program at BUTI, and teaches at the Rivers School Conservatory.

www.jdcas.com

Peace was made as an encore for the 2012 Tokyo Masato Kumoi Sax Quartet premiere concert of my *Songs for the Coming Day*, and my transcription of the Bach Goldberg Variations. The music for Peace is a slight recomposition of the “song” that ends the first movement of my Concerto for Saxophone Quartet and Wind Ensemble. This “song without words” is an evolution of the Chorale melody *Christum wir sollen loben schon*. *Peace* may seem like simple music, but it requires an exquisite balance of tone and dynamic control.

-David Maslanka

David Maslanka was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1943. He attended the Oberlin College Conservatory where he studied composition with Joseph Wood. He spent a year at the

Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, and did masters and doctoral study in composition at Michigan State University where his principal teacher was H. Owen Reed.

Maslanka's music for winds has become especially well known. Among his more than 150 works are over 50 pieces for wind ensemble, including eight symphonies, seventeen concertos, a Mass, and many concert pieces. His chamber music includes four wind quintets, five saxophone quartets, and many works for solo instrument and piano. In addition, he has written a variety of orchestral and choral pieces. He served on the faculties of the State University of New York at Geneseo, Sarah Lawrence College, New York University, and Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York, and was a freelance composer in Missoula, Montana from 1990 until his death in 2017.

The work (*Jesus Is Coming*) was inspired by the post 9 -11 trauma and the role of religion in the history of mankind: Is Jesus really coming? Isn't it about time?

The composition is based on sound bytes from the streets of New York: an angry street evangelist on Times Square and a small Salvation Army choir. The groove is based on looped baby talk from 2 Dutch girls: 18 months old Welmoed and 2 year old Amber.

-JacobTV

Dutch 'avant pop' composer **JacobTV** (Jacob Ter Veldhuis, 1951) started as a rock musician and studied composition and electronic music at the Groningen Conservatoire. He was awarded the Composition Prize of the Netherlands in 1980 and became a full time composer who soon made a name for himself with melodious compositions, straight from the heart and with great effect. 'I pepper my music with sugar,' he says. The press called him the 'Andy Warhol of new music' and his 'coming-out' as a composer of ultra-tonal, mellifluous music reached its climax with the video oratorio Paradiso, based on Dante's Divina Commedia.

JacobTV's so called boombox repertoire, works for live instruments with a grooving sound track based on speech melody, became internationally popular. With about a 1000 performances worldwide per year, he is one of the most performed European composers. JacobTV is still an outlaw in the established modern classical music scene, and was accused of 'musical terrorism'. According to the Wall Street Journal some of his work 'makes many a hip-hop artist look sedate'.