



AMERICAN
AGGREGATE

inscape*

OBLIVION — Nathan Lincoln-DeCusatis

Oblivion is a chamber symphony in three movements that continues the trend in my music that transitions from inner psychological narratives towards a more outward-gazing contemplation of the external world. As I was composing this piece in late 2013 I was finally coming to terms with the role of the creative musician in what we may one day call The Mid-to-Late Internet Age. The already uneasy relationship between commerce and musical expression seems to have finally ruptured into a chaotic state where the kinds of concrete experiences of music in concert halls, record stores and meticulously organized CD collections, etc., has become sublimated into a digital cloud, always present at your command but never really there – like trying to tie down your own shadow. I had the horrifying realization recently that if my computer suddenly ceased to function, most of my music, by extension, would be gone with it now that all the CDs and records I've gathered over the years are stored in boxes in the closet, outmoded by the seductive convenience of digital files. Now I'm starting to miss this "old media" and the way it affects my listening habits – saving up money, carefully choosing the next record for my collection, giving it my complete attention, and then the feeling over time like the music becomes part of the fabric of my own unique musical personality with a worn-out, cracked jewel case as a kind of artifact of that process. As I'm dusting off the old-fashioned record collection I'm asking myself: How much of the music I listen to on a daily basis actually belongs to me the way these old records belong to me, and how much is just an illusion of ownership sustained by the constant presence of the mp3 cloud floating overhead? In this disorganized, hyperactive, Deleuzian listening environment, how can the individual voice of the composer break through the static to communicate with a sympathetic listener? These are the questions that *Oblivion* explores through a sonic narrative that travels between the concrete and the abstract, the physical and the cerebral, the human and the machine, the real and the illusory.

The three movements of the symphony are each modeled on a specific sonic shape. The first movement, *Ex Machina*, is a straight arrow, propelled by mechanistic repeated notes that thread throughout the movement. Beginning with the entire orchestra on or around A 440 (the traditional tuning note), the piece slowly unfolds through several tableaux including sections of light chatter, muscular polyrhythms, brittle nattering, and a few tidal waves of sound that eventually recede back to the opening repeated-note gesture. The ending is the most connected to my music-as-illusory-cloud allegory: the repeated-note mechanism slowly deteriorates into non-pitched sounds of stopped strings, key-clicks, and muted piano creating a sensation of erosion into the distance.

If *Ex Machina* is a straight line, then *Into Thin Air* is a circular, timeless movement. Long held notes throughout the orchestra create a hazy tapestry against a lament in the English horn that for me represents the singular human element of the composer's voice against calling out against background static in the orchestra. The overall sensation is one of constant evaporation – harmonic glissandi, sul ponticello whorls, the omnipresent upper-register diatonic shards in the piano and harp that continually rise into nothing. Towards the end, the orchestra tries to surge out of this Nietzschean time-circle only to crash back down to the same static sound cloud shaded into a minor-esque ambience. In this movement I wanted to metaphorically evoke the actual phenomena of sound itself as moving air particles in the spectral voicings of the harmonies, the use of natural harmonics in the strings and harp, and engaging the overtone series as a kind of phantom chord-scale that lurks behind the counterpoint.

The final movement, *The Reckoning*, merges the straight line and the circle into a their logical combination: a spiral. The swirling arpeggio gestures in this movement seem to always slip past the ear before they can be pinned down – and here we've reached this piece's final evolution from mechanized physicality (*Ex Machina*), evaporation (*Into Thin Air*), and now the downward spiral: sound sliding through space like a mirage, or a shadow of itself, perched on the edge of oblivion. The ending gesture was probably rewritten about fifty times as I swung between differing opinions on how I felt about the outcome of this narrative. But the very fact that you are reading these words means that you are listening to a album you bought, or you are sitting at a live concert, both of which constitute a small victory over the disillusion of music into disembodied cloud commodity. So the last six pounding E-flats (the opposite end of pitch-space from the opening A) marked "snarling; defiant," represent a kind of refusal to sink away into oblivion, but to rush out of it into the daylight and say "We are still here, now listen:....."

WIDE OPEN SPACES — Armando Bayolo

While I certainly respect our natural world, I have never, save for a brief period in my childhood when I belonged to the Boy Scouts of America, been a recreational nature lover. So, when Bill Ryan approached me to write a short piece based on our National Parks for a tour by his Grand Valley State University New Music Ensemble, I took on the task with a bit of trepidation. Not long after receiving the commission from Bill, however, I heard National Parks Service director Jonathan Jarvis speaking on public radio about the impact of climate change on our National Parks. I decided, then, to compose a work that addressed these concerns.

Wide Open Spaces is cast in three sections. The first aims to evoke the feelings of a walk in the woods with an expansive passacaglia in the piano and vibraphone, over which the flute and bass clarinet sing a plaintive melody. After some time, this gives way to a melody in the cello which, rather than lead to a contrasting "B" section is, instead, interrupted all too soon by the pervasive and increasingly unavoidable sound of an F# which has been sounding, quietly, from the very beginning of the piece and gradually taking over the texture: the proverbial elephant in the room. Nothing but the F# is heard in the next section, "Waste Land," which suggests barren emptiness as the result of inaction at the changes visible in the world around us. The piece ends with a "Marche au supplice" (a march to the scaffold) over the F# drone, representing our mindless motion towards environmental catastrophe.

Wide Open Spaces was written in Alexandria, Virginia and Chicago, Illinois in June, 2013. It was commissioned by Bill Ryan and Grand Valley State University and is dedicated to Bill Ryan and the GVSU New Music Ensemble.

BLACK BEND — Dan Visconti

Black Bend begins with a spacious collage of distant, mournful sounds with the flavor of limpid summer landscapes and the slow drawl of rural vernacular; from this texture a slow blues emerges and accelerates in a wailing frenzy, only to dissolve into nothing as quickly as it materialized.

This imagery was inspired, in part, by certain local legends surrounding the collapse of a railroad bridge over a meandering stretch of the Cuyahoga River. While I don't particularly believe in ghost stories, the thought of the deceased victims' eerie moans rising up from the river suggested to me the painful, almost supernatural power of expression which often inhabits the voice of the blues singer, and I reacted to the emotional complexity of the story with a musical language flagrantly lifted from the American blues tradition but persistently shrouded in an ominous aura that foreshadows the inevitable conclusion: a train accelerating out of control and careening into an abyss.

Black Bend was originally commissioned by the Cleveland Museum of Art and first presented in a version for string quartet; the present orchestra version was made possible with a Composer Assistance Grant from the American Music Center and premiered at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music.

WORDLESS CREATURES — Julia Adolphe

Wordless Creatures, for mixed ensemble, imagines a community of small, scurrying characters. They move through a series of scenes, portrayed through shifting soundscapes of color and texture. While there is no set story, different combinations of instruments capture certain dispositions. The clarinet and piano juggle the main motif, an active, jittery gesture that permeates the environment. They dance against a glittering background, an atmospheric sound world colored by the harp, vibraphone, and strings. A third character, that of the trumpet, functions as a mediator, a voice of reason that inserts itself into the texture and tries to stabilize the music's harmonic language. Bamboo wind chimes strike during periods of agitation while glass wind chimes smooth the surface and restore calm.

Musically, Wordless Creatures is an exploration of short, dislocated motifs – a furtive, slightly aggressive gesture with a kick juxtaposed with a soft, lyrical, expanding line. These two ideas "argue" and attempt to control, embrace, or synthesize one another. The colors and temperatures shift like a kaleidoscope, highlighting certain instruments for brief moments in time before moving onto the next.

Like musicians in their element, the creatures portrayed in this piece do not communicate with words. They express their dreams, fears, and triumphs through an unknown language that we can only intuit. Wordless Creatures grapples with the fleeting nature of sound, the ephemeral quality of music, and strives to capture the beauty of disappearance.

Wordless Creatures was originally composed in 2012 for guitarist Mak Grgić, who premiered the work for clarinet, trumpet, guitar, percussion, violin, and bass with the USC Thornton Contemporary Music Ensemble, conducted by Donald Crockett. In 2013, Inscape Chamber Orchestra commissioned a major revision of the work to fit the instrumentation heard in this recording.

THE EXTRAORDINARY GRYSSANDRA WYCKE — Joseph Hallman

I have long held a fascination with witchcraft and witches. In this piece, I tried to dream an ambient type of story of a witch, The Extraordinary Gryssandra Wycke, who is relatively new to her powers and the world of witchcraft. The piece is in some sense a sort of tone poem in the form of the spells she learns and employs. Those three spells are levitation, reanimation and death. I wanted to leave the details of the story to the imagination of the listener. Loosely, in my own hazy version of the story, I dreamed her using the reanimation spell after an evil character has killed her friend. She is later forced to use the death spell which she has only just taught herself against the same evil character. Ultimately, I hope that the listener will dream up their own story.

The Extraordinary Gryssandra Wycke is scored for clarinet, bassoon, percussion, harp and string quartet and was written for the Inscape Chamber Orchestra in 2013.

WHAT I DECIDED TO KEEP— Stephen Gorbos

As a composer with one foot in academia, I work at a far less frantic pace during the summer: with my teaching obligations in mothballs until September, I've got so much more time to consider compositional issues that I just don't have the mental space to hang out with for the other nine months. I started writing What I Decided to Keep during the summer of 2012, while packing up for a year-long stay in New Haven, CT, teaching in the department of music at Yale. In addition to considering my output while a resident of Washington, DC for the previous four years, I also found myself reflecting back on my time as a masters student at Yale: specifically, the year I studied with Martin Bresnick. At the time, I had one of my most formidable cases of writers block. I had such little music to show in my lessons, that Martin and I may have in fact spent more time talking about other people's music. Remembering those lessons, I came back to one composer and piece in particular: Béla Bartók's 5th string quartet. What I decided to keep owes a great debt to this piece, in its linear succession of events, and use of certain musical materials.

Truth be told, very little is a direct quote from ol' Béla, but I'd like to think he and I share a similar affinity for musics not typically heard in a concert hall (in my case, funk and prog rock). The piece itself is dedicated with admiration and affection to Martin, who was consistently patient with my compositional hesitance that year. As I reflect back on my four years so far at Catholic University, I can also see that many of the ways I try to create a positive environment for my own students owes much to Martin's example.

THE BEAR AND THE DOVE— Gregory Spears

The Bear and the Dove was commissioned to accompany Christopher Williams' choreographic staging of Prokofiev's ballet Trapeze at the Bard Spiegeltent in the summer of 2008. Originally for six instruments, the piece was revised and arranged as a nonet for Inscape in 2013. The work is an exploration of a musical texture punctuated by animal cries in the clarinet and straining dissonances in the strings. Two musical references are associated with the high-lying clarinet line: a take-off gesture in the form of a rising glissando, a nod to Gershwin, and a final falling phrase, quoted from Mahler's Eighth Symphony

PERFORMERS

Oblivion - Nathan Lincoln-DeCusatis

Susanna Loewy - flute & piccolo | Bethany Slater - oboe & English horn | Evan Ross Solomon - clarinet & bass clarinet | Benjamin Greanya - bassoon | Michael Hall - horn | Brandon Almagro - trumpet | Joseph Rodriguez - trombone | R. Timothy McReynolds - piano | Cara Fleck - harp | Eric Plewinski - percussion | Jonathan Richards - violin | Sarah D'Angelo - violin | M. Bryce Bunner - viola | Doug Jameson - cello | David George - bass

Wide Open Spaces - Armando Bayolo

Susanna Loewy - flute | Evan Ross Solomon - bass clarinet | R. Timothy McReynolds - piano | Eric Plewinski - vibraphone | Sarah D'Angelo - Violin | Jessica Nilles - cello

Black Bend - Dan Visconti

Susanna Loewy - flute | Bethany Slater - oboe | Evan Ross Solomon - clarinet & bass clarinet | Benjamin Greanya - bassoon | Michael Hall - horn | Kevin Gebo - trumpet | Joseph Rodriguez - trombone | Eric Plewinski - percussion | Rebecca Racusin - violin | Sarah D'Angelo - violin | M. Bryce Bunner - viola | Doug Jameson - cello | David George - bass

Wordless Creatures - Julia Adolphe

Susanna Loewy - flute & alto flute | Evan Ross Solomon - clarinet & bass clarinet | Brandon Almagro - trumpet | R. Timothy McReynolds - piano | Cara Fleck - harp | Eric Plewinski - percussion | Sarah D'Angelo - violin | Kacy Clopton - cello | Ali Cook - bass

The Extraordinary Gryssandra Wycke - Joseph Hallman

Evan Ross Solomon - clarinet | Benjamin Greanya - bassoon | Cara Fleck - harp | Eric Plewinski - percussion | Rebecca Racusin - violin | Sarah D'Angelo - violin | Megan Yanik - viola | Jessica Nilles - cello

What I Decided to Keep - Stephen Gorbos

Susanna Loewy - flute & piccolo | Bethany Slater - oboe & English horn | Evan Ross Solomon - clarinet & bass clarinet | Benjamin Greanya - bassoon | Justin Drew - horn | Kevin Gebo - trumpet | Joseph Rodriguez - trombone | R. Timothy McReynolds - piano | Jonathan Richards - violin | Rebecca Racusin - violin | M. Bryce Bunner - viola | Kacy Clopton - cello | Ali Cook - bass

The Bear and The Dove - Gregory Spears

Bethany Slater - oboe | Evan Ross Solomon - clarinet | R. Timothy McReynolds - piano | Eric Plewinski - percussion | Rebecca Racusin - violin | Sarah D'Angelo - violin | Megan Yanik - viola | Jessica Nilles - cello | Ali Cook - bass

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RICHARD SCERBO

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



In 2004, Artistic Director Richard Scerbo founded Inscape with the intent of introducing audiences to diverse chamber and ensemble repertoire. This unique brand of programming has made Inscape one of the most exciting ensembles in the Washington Metropolitan area. Under Mr. Scerbo's leadership, Inscape has commissioned and premiered numerous new works. In 2012, Mr. Scerbo conducted members of Inscape in a performance of Dominick Argento's opera *A Water Bird Talk* for the composer as part of a month-long festival celebrating his music at the University of Maryland. In 2013, he led Inscape in multiple performances at the National Gallery of Art, including a program highlighting the music of the Ballets Russes featuring Igor Stravinsky's *Renard* and Manuel de Falla's *El corregidor y la molinera*.

Mr. Scerbo co-founded his first orchestra, The Philharmonia Ensemble, in 2000 with violinist Dale Barltrop while studying at the University of Maryland. As Music Director, he led the orchestra in a series of diverse and exciting programs that included collaborations with artists such as pianist Rita Sloan, soprano Carmen Balthrop, and the Prism Brass Quintet. In 2003, he made his operatic debut conducting Dominick Argento's *A Water Bird Talk* with The Philharmonia Ensemble and G.F. Handel's *Xerxes* with the Maryland Opera Studio. That same year he conducted Igor Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du soldat* in a fully staged production at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. Mr. Scerbo helped launch the Londontowne Symphony Orchestra (Maryland) in 2003 when he was invited to conduct their inaugural concert, and returned again in 2004 to conduct their season opening concert.

Mr. Scerbo is a graduate of the University of Maryland where he studied conducting with James Ross and bassoon with Daniel Matsukawa, Sue Heineman, and Linda Harwell. He has attended conducting programs in Austria and the Czech Republic working both with the International Festival Orchestra, Kromeriz, and the Bohuslav Martinu Philharmonic. He has also been guided in his studies by classes with Leonard Slatkin, Heinz Fricke, Gustav Meier, and with Johannes Schlaefli at the Musikhochschule Zurich.

In addition to his work with Inscape, Mr. Scerbo is the Associate Artistic Director and General Manager of the National Orchestral Institute, a training program for orchestra musicians on the threshold of their professional careers. He serves concurrently as Assistant Director for Artistic Planning and Operations at the University of Maryland School of Music.

Founded in 2004 by Artistic Director Richard Scerbo, Inscape creates compelling concert experiences that aim to engage audiences and provide exciting, accessible ways to explore both standard and non-standard repertoire. Inscape's performances have been praised by The Washington Post for their "guts and musical sensitivity," and their 2014 Grammy nominated album *Sprung Rhythm* was singled out as "brilliant" and "gorgeously recorded" by The New York Times.

Inscape has worked joyously and often with emerging American composers and is committed to presenting concerts featuring the music of our time. Since its inception, Inscape has commissioned and premiered over twenty new works. Its members regularly perform with the National, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Detroit, Virginia, Richmond, and Delaware symphonies, the Washington Opera Orchestra, and are members of the premiere Washington service bands.

In 2012 Inscape signed a multi-disc recording contract with Sono Luminus, with their debut album *Sprung Rhythm* (DSL-92170) released in July, 2013. This aurally stunning CD, nominated for a 2014 GRAMMY® Award for Best Surround Sound Album, is an exciting collection of works from three composers that express new and diverse voices in American music.

EVAN ROSS SOLOMON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Evan Ross Solomon is widely-known for his versatility, depth of tone, and technical brilliance on both clarinet and bass clarinet. He has performed in recital at the Kennedy Center, Strathmore, National Gallery of Art, The Smithsonian Institute, and Montgomery College. He is a freelance artist in the Washington DC area and appears frequently with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra. He has also performed with The National Symphony Orchestra, The Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra, and the Mid-Atlantic Symphony. Mr. Solomon has performed under such conductors as Valery Gergiev, Leonard Slatkin, Eri Klas, and Michael Stern. Last season, Mr. Solomon appeared as soloist in John Adams' *Gnarly Buttons*. He has worked with eminent composers such as Dominick Argento and Bruce Adolphe.



Mr. Solomon holds the BM degree from The Peabody Conservatory of Music, and the MM from the University of Maryland. His principal teachers include Anthony Gigliotti, Loren Kitt, and Paul Cigan. He is currently on the faculty of Montgomery College in Rockville, MD.

Since 2005, Mr. Solomon has served as Executive Director of Inscape. During this tenure, he has worked exhaustively to commission, promote, and perform new works by emerging American composers. This has resulted in over 20 world premieres.

NATHAN LINCOLN-DECUSATIS



Nathan Lincoln-Decusatis is a New York City-based composer and jazz pianist whose music synthesizes a wide array of influences from popular, minimalist and jazz idioms with a deep grounding in classical forms and traditions. His work is often guided by psychological narratives that unfold through references to past musical traditions, communal improvisation, cult films, iconic works of art, and the ambient sounds of the urban landscape. In this way, his music produces a dense network of post-modern meanings that the listener is invited to unravel through their own interpretation. His music has been described in the Washington Post as “a kind of kaleidoscope...each moment bringing a shift in the harmonic feel and flow, from jazzy licks to piled-up counterpoint to independent chords.”

This inclusive musical voice has resulted in a wide range of recent works and commissions that encompass evening-length improvised multi-media suites, electro-acoustic pieces and traditional chamber and orchestral music. His work has been performed nationally by such groups as The Chesapeake Orchestra, Inscape Chamber Orchestra, Pikes Falls Chamber Players, The Left Bank Quartet, and saxophonist Noah Getz. Recent awards and accolades include an American Music Center CAP award, the Walsum Prize, an SCI commission regional finalist, an Atlantic Center for the Arts residency, and the Smadbeck Prize. Originally from Rising Sun, MD, Nathan Lincoln-Decusatis holds degrees in composition from Ithaca College and University of Maryland. His primary teachers have included Henry Threadgill, Dana Wilson, and Robert Gibson. Currently he serves as Assistant Professor of Music at Fordham University in New York, NY where he teaches jazz,

composition and music theory.

ARMANDO BAYOLO



Born in 1973 in Santurce, Puerto Rico to Cuban parents, composer Armando Bayolo began musical studies at the age of twelve. At sixteen he went on to study at the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, Michigan, where he first began the serious study of composition. He holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music (B.M. 1995), where his teachers were Samuel Adler, Joseph Schwantner and Christopher Rouse; Yale University (M.M. 1997), where he studied with Roberto Sierra, Jacob Druckman, Ingram Marshall and Martin Bresnick; and the University of Michigan (D.M.A. 2001) where he studied with Michael Daugherty, Bright Sheng and Evan Chambers.

Mr. Bayolo has been hailed for his “suggestive aural imagination” (El Nuevo Día) in works that are “full of lush ideas and a kind of fierce grandeur, (unfolding) with subtle, driving power” (The Washington Post). His “music combines the audacity of popular music, the verve-filled rhythmic language of Latin America, and the pugnacity of postmodern classicism into a heady, formidable concoction” (Sequenza21), and “deserves to be heard many more times, and in many more places. It is new, it is fresh, and it gets its message across” (The Charlotte Observer) “with quite a high degree of poetic expressiveness” (Music-Web International).

Mr. Bayolo’s music has been commissioned and performed throughout the world by some of today’s most important musicians and ensembles including National Symphony Orchestra and Peabody Institute bassist, Jeffrey Weisner, violinist Cornelius Dufallo, cellist Natalie Spehar, violist Jason Hohn, guitarist D.J. Sparr, flutist Rowland Sutherland, clarinetist Katherine Kellert; conductors Mei-

Ann Chen, Harlan Parker, Mark Scatterday, John Gordon Ross, Robert Geary, Julian Wachner, Robert Ponto, and Maximiano Valdés; the Society for New Music in Syracuse, NY, the Grand Valley State University New Music Ensemble, Trio Montage, the Bleeker ST Quartet, Volti, Janus Trio, Orfeón San Juan Bautista, the American Modern Ensemble, Third Coast Percussion, The Percussion Plus Project, London’s Ensemble Lontano, Amsterdam’s Hexnut, the South Jutlands Symphony of Denmark, the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra, Western Piedmont Symphony, Delaware Valley Symphony Orchestra, Wabash Valley Youth Symphony, Columbia Civic Orchestra, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the National Gallery of Art Orchestra and Vocal Arts Ensemble, the Washington Chorus and Washington Choral Arts Society, Great Noise Ensemble and the wind ensembles of Oregon State University, the University of Oregon, Arizona State University, the University of New Mexico, The Ohio State University and the Eastman School of Music.

DAN VISCONTI



Dan Visconti (b. 1982) composes concert music infused with the directness of expression and maverick spirit of the American vernacular. His compositions often explore the rough timbres, propulsive rhythms, and improvisational energy characteristic of jazz, bluegrass, and rock—elements that tend to collide in unexpected ways with Visconti’s experience as a classically-trained violinist, resulting in a growing body of music the Plain Dealer describes as “both mature and youthful, bristling with exhilarating musical ideas and a powerfully crafted lyricism.”

Recent concert seasons have showcased several Visconti premieres and commissions from top ensembles, and Visconti’s music continues to receive performances by some of the top interpreters of contemporary music

His compositions have been honored with the Rome Prize and Berlin Prize fellowships, the Bearn Prize from Columbia University, the Leonore Annenberg Fellowship in the Performing Arts, the Barlow Prize, and the Cleveland Arts Prize; awards from BMI and ASCAP, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Society of Composers, and the Naumburg Foundation; and grants from the Fromm Foundation, Meet the Composer, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Chamber Music America. He has also been the recipient of artist fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, Copland

House, the Lucas Artists Program at Villa Montalvo, and the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

Visconti studied composition at the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Yale School of Music, primarily with Margaret Brouwer, Aaron Jay Kernis, Ezra Laderman, and Zhou Long. As an educator his commitment to engaging new audiences often involves unconventional venues and approaches; past projects have included interactive videoconferencing presentations on the social history of music and civil rights in America as well as appearances at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Visconti’s music was recently performed in Pakistan at concerts presented by Cultures in Harmony, an outreach organization promoting cross-cultural communication through music.

Visconti’s online journal (hosted by Dartmouth’s Hopkins Center for the Arts) detailed the compositional process in a multimedia experience, sharing images and streaming audio of works-in-progress including a new work commissioned through the Kronos Quartet’s Under 30 Project. Since 2008 he has written a weekly column for NewMusicBox, the web magazine of the American Music Center. His articles have also appeared in ArtsJournal and Symphony Magazine. He is a 2014 TED Fellow and speaker at the 2014 TED Conference.

JULIA ADOLPHE

Julia Adolphe is a composer, writer, and soprano whose music embraces diverse artistic and sociological influences, unfolding intricate emotional narratives. Adolphe has been described as “prodigiously gifted...a major new composer” (Jayson Greene, eMusic) with music that is “confident, penetrating” (The Washington Post) and “gives a singing voice to the silent.” (Out West Arts.) Her music has been recorded on the Sono Luminus label, to be released in 2014 on Inscape Chamber Orchestra’s album American Aggregate. Adolphe’s work has received performances across the United States and abroad in New York City, Los Angeles, Washington D.C., Paris, Berlin, and Pavia, Italy.



In March 2013, Bargemusic, New York City’s “floating concert hall” presented the World Premiere concert performances of Adolphe’s chamber opera, *Sylvia*. Adolphe composed and produced a workshop of *Sylvia*, which is based on her original story and libretto, in April 2012 at The Lost Studio theatre in Los Angeles. An excerpt of the one-act opera was subsequently performed at the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust as part of the Yom HaShoah Commemoration. *Sylvia* was hailed as “a short, sharp, powerful opera...searingly vivid,” (eMusic) “ambitious and defiantly audacious,” (Out West Arts) communicating with “great clarity” (cityArts). In collaboration with playwright Nahal Navidar, Adolphe is working on a new opera set in present-day Iran.

As part of the 2013 Benjamin Britten Centennial, Adolphe was Co-Producer of *The Prodigal Son*, conducted by Maestro James Conlon, at the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles. Directed by Ken Cazan, *The Prodigal Son* featured members of LA Opera’s Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program and the USC Thornton School of Music. Adolphe serves as the Primary Research Assistant for Maestro Conlon’s Orel Foundation, advocating the music of composers suppressed during the Third Reich.

Adolphe has received numerous awards for her compositions, including grants from the American Composers Forum, New Music USA, Sam Spiegel Foundation, Anna Sosenko Assist Trust, and Puffin Foundation. She received the Theodore Front Prize from the International Alliance for Women in Music, the Jimmy McHugh Composition Prize, John James Blackmore Prize, and John S. Knight Prize. Adolphe is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the USC Thornton School of Music studying composition with Stephen Hartke. Prior teachers include Steven Stucky, Donald Crockett, and Frank Ticheli. Adolphe holds a Master of Music degree in music composition from USC and a Bachelor of Arts degree in music composition and literary theory from Cornell University.

JOSEPH HALLMAN

Joseph Hallman is a prolific young composer based in Philadelphia who has worked with some of today’s most talented musicians and artists. Known for his generosity of collaboration and joy for composing, he is quickly becoming a noted name on concert programs both nationally and internationally. In addition to teaching a studio of young composers, he has been invited to conduct master classes and lectures, sit on panels, and serve as an adjudicator at home and abroad. He has been named, by NPR, as one of the Top Composers under 40. He has also been named Best Musician by several Philadelphia magazines and newspapers.



Joe is the Composer-in-Residence of the Pikes Falls Chamber Music Festival and has served in similar roles at the Rosenbach Museum in Philadelphia, The Traverse Arts Project, Strings Music Festival, and many Universities and Colleges domestically and internationally.

Among his most prominent collaborations, Hallman has composed multiple concerti and chamber and solo works for the internationally acclaimed cellist Alisa Weilerstein, winner of a 2011 MacArthur “Genius” Grant. Hallman’s series of chamber concerti were composed for members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, and Cleveland Orchestra.

Inscape recorded and released *Three Poems of Jessica Hornik* and *imagined landscapes: six Lovecraftian elsewheres*, which appeared on the GRAMMY® nominated album *Sprung Rhythm*. Cultivating his special love for chamber music, Hallman has worked with the Avian Ensemble, Chamber Music Now, Network for New Music, Dolce Suono and several chamber groups.

Joe has also worked in the non-classical music world with GRAMMY®-winning and platinum artists as diverse as Patti LaBelle, Jeff Bradshaw, Tweet, Kim Burrell, Marsha Ambrosius, Dokaka, and more.

STEPHEN GORBOS

Stephen Gorbos composes concert music for a range of ensembles and soloists, as well as music for film, theatre, and dance. His music, described by the Washington Post as “lyrical...warm and richly drawn,” and by Chicagomusic.org as “pulsating with a sense of urban life,” navigates a wide palette of genres and influences, creating a synthesis between styles as diverse as American rhythm & blues, western classical music, and Javanese gamelan. Whether composing for traditional ensembles, electronic media, or a mixture of both, Stephen tries to create an expressive music that connects with an audience.



Stephen has had his works performed in concert halls across the US and in Europe by organizations such as the Minnesota Orchestra, the Albany Symphony, and the NOW Ensemble. Recent projects include *Passage through the city*, a new string quartet composed for Chicago’s Spektral Quartet, and *Such sphinxes as these obey no one but their master*, a new work for the New York-based vocal octet Roomful of Teeth. During the summer of 2012, Stephen was composer-in-residence at High Concept Labs, a multidisciplinary arts space in the heart of Chicago. Stephen’s music has received recognition and support from BMI, ASCAP, Meet the Composer, and the American Music Center. In 2008, Stephen was awarded a Subito Grant from the American Composers Forum, and, as a recipient of the Aaron Copland Award, was composer-in-residence at Copland House. Stephen has also been a fellow at both the Tanglewood Music Center and the Aspen Music Festival’s composition masterclass, and his music has been featured at Ostrava Music Days, the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium, the Chamber Music Academy and Composers Forum of the East, and the Bowdoin summer music festival.

Active as an educator, Stephen also teaches composition, theory, and music technology, having served as an assistant professor of composition and theory at the Catholic University of America in the Benjamin T Rome School of Music since the fall of 2008. For the academic year 2012 – 2013, Stephen taught as a visiting assistant professor in the department of music at Yale University. Stephen holds a BFA from Carnegie Mellon University, an MM from the Yale School of Music, and a DMA from Cornell University.

Originally from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Stephen currently lives and works in Falls Church, Virginia.

GREGORY SPEARS



Gregory Spears writes instrumental and vocal music that blends together stylistic aspects of romanticism, minimalism, and early music. His work has been called “astonishingly beautiful” (New York Times), “coolly entrancing” (The New Yorker), and “some of the most beautifully unsettling music to appear in recent memory.” (The Boston Globe)

Spears' first opera, Paul's Case, recently described as a “masterpiece” and a “gem” (New York Observer) with “ravishing music” (New York Times), was developed by American Opera Projects Composers and the Voice Program. It was premiered last season by Urban Arias in Arlington, VA and was performed again in 2014 at New York's Prototype Festival. It will be presented in a new production for the resident artists of the Pittsburgh Opera in February 2014. His music has also been performed by Houston Grand Opera (HGOco), the American Composers Orchestra, American Opera Projects, Center City Opera Theater, Opera Index, the NOW Ensemble (MATA), Present Music Ensemble, So Percussion, the Sebastian Chamber Players, the Eighth Blackbird Ensemble, and members of the Los Angeles Opera Domingo-Thornton Young Artists Program.

In 1999 he was awarded a First Music Commission to write a piece for the New York Youth Symphony, which was given its premiere at Carnegie Hall. Spears has also collaborated with musicologist Simon Morrison to realize the original score for Prokofiev's ballet Romeo and Juliet, which was premiered by the Mark Morris Dance Group and the Bard Festival in 2008. Spears was commissioned by poet Tracy K. Smith to write two new songs for the 2011 Rolex Arts Weekend at the New York Public Library and by the JACK Quartet to write a piece based on his experience as composer-in-residence at the Buttonwood Psychiatric Unit in New Jersey. Other commissions have come from OPERA America, the Present Music Ensemble, countertenor Ryland Angel, choreographer Christopher Williams and Houston Grand Opera (HGOco). New Amsterdam Records released his The early music-inspired chamber Requiem was released in 2011 to critical acclaim.

Spears has won multiple prizes from BMI and ASCAP as well as grants and honors from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the American Composers Forum, the Fulbright Foundation, and the Vagn Holmboe Competition. He holds degrees in composition from The Eastman School of Music (BM), Yale School of Music (MM), and Princeton University (PhD) and has been an artist-in-residence at Yaddo, the Aaron Copland House, and the MacDowell Colony. Selected chamber works are published by Project Schott NY (PSNY). He lives in Brooklyn.

Recorded at Sono Luminus, Boyce, Virginia - January 14-16, 2014

Producer: Dan Merceruio

Recording, Mixing & Mastering Engineer: Daniel Shores

Editing Engineers: Daniel Shores, Dan Merceruio

Piano Technician: John Veitch

Piano: Steinway Model D Concert Grand —#590904

Cover Photography: Strider Jordan

Session Photography: Strider Jordan

Photo of Inscape (p. 11), : Jennifer White-Johnson

Photo of Richard Scerbo (p. 12): Jennifer White-Johnson

Photo of Evan Solomon (p. 13): Jennifer White-Johnson

Photo of Nathan Lincoln-DeCusatis (p. 14): Kay Gould

Photo of Armando Bayolo (p. 15): Arielle Donneson

Photo of Dan Visconti (p. 16): SnoStudios photograph

Photo of Julia Adolphe (p. 17): Jonathan Adolphe

Photo of Joseph Hallman (p. 18): Lauren Hoagland More

Photo of Stephen Gorbos (p. 19): Emily H. Green

Photo of Gregory Spears (p. 20): Andrew Jordan

Graphic Design: Daniel Shores

Recorded at 24bit, 192kHz in 7.1 Surround Sound

OBLIVION — Nathan Lincoln-DeCusatis

1. I. EX MACHINA [6:32]

2. II. INTO THIN AIR [6:57]

3. III. THE RECKONING [5:21]

4. **WIDE OPEN SPACES** — Armando Bayolo [7:15]

5. **BLACK BEND** — Dan Visconti [6:39]

6. **WORDLESS CREATURES** — Julia Adolphe [12:20]

7. **THE EXTRAORDINARY GRYSSANDRA WYCKE** — Joseph Hallman [15:28]

8. **WHAT I DECIDED TO KEEP** — Stephen Gorbos [15:19]

9. **THE BEAR AND THE DOVE** — Gregory Spears [6:49]

Total Time — 82:40



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