UC DAVIS DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC PRESENTS THE
empyrean ensemble
Mika Pelo,
Laurie San Martin
& Kurt Rohde,
directors

AMERICANA—
AMERICAN THEMES in
MUSIC and FILM

7 pm, Sunday, 25 January 2009
Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center

6 pm, “Demystifying the Music,”
a pre-concert talk with Pablo Ortiz

Performers
Tod Brody, flute
Peter Josheff, clarinet
Gloria Justen, violin
Ellen Ruth Rose, viola
Thalia Moore and Vanessa Ruotolo, cello
Michael Seth Orland and Karen Rosenak, piano
Chris Froh and Loren Mach, percussion
David Moschler and Vincent Russo, conductors

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Directors
Mika Pelo
Kurt Rohde
Laurie San Martin

Core Players
Hrabba Atladottir, violin
Tod Brody, flute
Chris Froh, percussion
Peter Josheff, clarinet
Thalia Moore, cello
Karen Rosenak, piano
Ellen Ruth Rose, viola

Guest Performers
Gloria Justen, violin
Loren Mach, percussion
Michael Seth Orland, piano
Vanessa Ruotolo, cello
David Moschler, conductor
Vincent Russo, conductor

Pre-Concert Speaker
Pablo Ortiz

Administrative & Production Staff
Philip Daley, events & publicity manager
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Jessica Kelly, writer
Christina Acosta, editor
Rudy Garibay, graphic designer
Ching-Yi Wang, Empyrean student production manager

ABOUT THE EMPYREAN ENSEMBLE
Through compelling performances and diverse programming, Empyrean Ensemble offers audiences an opportunity to hear original works by emerging and established composers alike. It has premiered more than 200 works and performed throughout California, including appearances at many prominent music festivals and concert series. Empyrean has released two full-length CDs on the Centaur and Arabesque labels and has been the featured ensemble on other recordings. Founded in 1988 by composer Ross Bauer as the ensemble-in-residence at UC Davis, Empyrean Ensemble now consists of a core of seven of California’s finest musicians with extensive experience in the field of contemporary music. The ensemble is co-directed by composers Laurie San Martin, Mika Pelo, and Kurt Rohde.
PROGRAM

Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean (1843)**
T. Becket and D. Shaw (arr. Pablo Ortiz)

Tod Brody, flute • Peter Josheff, clarinet
Gloria Justen, violin • Ellen Ruth Rose, viola
Vanessa Ruotolo, cello • Karen Rosenak, piano
David Moschler, conductor

Dasal for clarinet, violin, viola, cello, and piano (2008)**
Robin Estrada (b. 1970)

Peter Josheff, clarinet • Gloria Justen, violin
Ellen Ruth Rose, viola • Vanessa Ruotolo, cello
Karen Rosenak, piano • David Moschler, conductor

Largo (1901, arr. for trio in 1934)
Charles Ives (1874–1954)

Gloria Justen, violin • Peter Josheff, clarinet
Michael Seth Orland, piano

TRIO for alto saxophone (clarinet), piano, and percussion (2007)*
Aaron Travers (b. 1975)

Peter Josheff, clarinet • Michael Seth Orland, piano • Chris Froh, percussion

INTERMISSION

California Dreamin’ for cello, piano, and percussion (2008)**
Derek Keller (b. 1971)

Thalia Moore, cello • Michael Seth Orland, piano
Chris Froh, percussion • Vincent Russo, conductor

Buffing the Gut for solo cello (1995)
Benjamin Boone (b. 1963)

Thalia Moore, cello

Ramona film (1910)***
original score (2008)**
by Pablo Ortiz (b. 1956)

Tod Brody, flute • Peter Josheff, clarinet
Gloria Justen, violin • Ellen Ruth Rose, viola
Vanessa Ruotolo, cello • Karen Rosenak, piano • Chris Froh, percussion
David Moschler, conductor

*World Premiere, **Empyrean commission, World Premiere,
*** Courtesy of the National Film Preservation Foundation,
with special thanks to Professor Scott Simmon

This concert is being recorded professionally for the university archive. Please remain seated
during the music, remembering that distractions will be audible on the recording. Please
deactivate cell phones, pagers, and wristwatches. Flash photography and audio and video
recording are prohibited during the performance.
Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean is one of the great American patriotic songs from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was first published in 1843 and is credited to T. Becket and D. Shaw.

O Columbia! the gem of the ocean,
The home of the brave and the free,
The shrine of each patriot’s devotion,
A world offers homage to thee;
Thy mandates make heroes assemble,
When Liberty’s form stands in view;
 Thy banners make tyranny tremble,
When borne by the red, white, and blue,
When borne by the red, white, and blue,
 Thy banners make tyranny tremble,
When borne by the red, white, and blue.

When war wing’d its wide desolation,
And threatened the land to deform,
The ark then of freedom’s foundation,
Columbia rode safe thro’ the storm;
With her garlands of vict’ry around her,
When so proudly she bore her brave crew;
With her flag proudly floating before her,
The boast of the red, white, and blue,
The boast of the red, white, and blue,
The boast of the red, white, and blue,
With her flag proudly floating before her,
The boast of the red, white, and blue.

The Union, the Union forever,
Our glorious nation’s sweet hymn,
May the wreaths it has won never wither,
Nor the stars of its glory grow dim,
May the service united ne’er sever,
But they to their colors prove true?
The Army and Navy forever,
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue,
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue,
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue,
The Army and Navy for ever,
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue.

(A slightly different third verse)

The star spangled banner bring hither,
O’er Columbia’s true sons let it wave;
May the wreaths they have won never wither,
Nor its stars cease to shine on the brave.
May thy service united ne’er sever,
But hold to the colors so true;
The army and navy forever,
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue!
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue!
The army and navy forever,
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue!

Filipino composer Robin Estrada earned his bachelor’s degree in music from the University of the Philippines, where he studied composition under Josefino Toledo and Ramon P. Santos. He completed his master’s degree at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying with Dan Becker and David Conte. Estrada presently is pursuing his doctoral degree at UC Berkeley. He has been composer-in-residence for the Ateneo Chamber Singers and the San Francisco Choral Artists. Estrada’s works have been performed at numerous international settings, such as the 19th Conference and Festival of Asian Composers’ League in Taiwan, the Nagano Music Festival 2000 in Japan, and the Federation Music Week-Contemporary Music of Australia and Asia Pacific in Australia. His Pangadi for alto, violin, oboe,
percussion, and saron was the Philippines’ entry to the Asian Composers’ League Young Composer Award, *Awit ni Solomon* for 16 female voices won the Musica Nova award in the I Concurso Coral de Ateneo, and *Aire de Nocturno* won first place at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Fourth Annual Choral Composition Contest.

“At dawn’s rising, the Muezzin’s voice stirs a slumbering village to *Dasal* (prayer). Silence gives way to the drone of melismatic melodies, beckoning the faithful to movement. Within moments, sacred intonations are drowned by the morning’s labors. Animals groan in anticipation; women, men, and children scurry about their quotidian tasks. But *dasal* persists, sustaining the day’s chaos with its haunting calm.”

Born in Danbury, Connecticut, in 1874, **Charles Ives** pursued what is perhaps one of the most extraordinary and paradoxical careers in American music history. Businessman by day and composer by night, Ives’s vast output gradually brought him recognition as the most original and significant American composer of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Inspired by transcendentalist philosophy, Ives sought a highly personalized musical expression through the most innovative and radical technical means possible. A fascination with bitonal forms, polyrhythms, and quotation was nurtured by his father, whom Ives later would acknowledge as the primary creative influence on his musical style. Studies at Yale University with Horatio Parker guided an expert control of overlarge-scale forms. Ironically, much of Ives’s work would not be heard until his virtual retirement from music and business in 1930 due to severe health problems. The conductor Nicolas Slonimsky, music critic Henry Bellamann, pianist John Kirkpatrick, and the composers Lou Harrison and Henry Cowell played key roles in introducing Ives’s music to a wider audience. In 1947 Ives was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his Symphony No. 3, according him a much deserved modicum of international renown. By his death in 1954, he had witnessed a rise from obscurity to a position of unsurpassed eminence among the world’s leading performers and musical institutions.

This transcription of Ives’s *Largo* originated from an early violin sonata that he had begun while still at school. It was catalogued by Ives’s friend and biographer Henry Cowell as the “Pre-”First Sonata. Ives placed it within a movement based on the popular song *The Old Wooden Bucket*. In 1902 Ives transformed the piece yet again into the *Largo* for violin, clarinet, and piano and probably incorporated it into a larger trio for those instruments; this trio has vanished. (Ives favored this kind of multigenerational music-making.) Though it displays none of overt nationalism that characterizes many of his works, Ives’s *Largo* reveals the modern stylistic idiom of its day. The Largo is also decidedly progressive in not only its idiom but also its single long arc of formal conception, which begins and ends quietly, with a solo violin in an extended melody over a gentle, ostinato piano accompaniment, and at its center, it rises with expressive vigor, after the clarinet entry. As Richard E. Rodda
described, the *Largo,*” like the man who created it, is flinty and rough hewn and uncompromising, a miniature masterwork by the figure Leonard Bernstein called ‘our first really great composer—our Washington, Lincoln, and Jefferson of music.”

**Aaron Travers** was born in Portsmouth, Virginia, in 1975. He has received commissions from such institutions and ensembles as the Fromm Foundation, the Howard Hanson Institute for American Music, the Third Coast Percussion Quartet, the Collide trio, the Hamilton College Orchestra, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Tarab Cello Ensemble, the Barlow Endowment, the University of Rochester, and the South Dakota Symphony. He has also received numerous awards, including the AGO/ECS Publishing Award in Choral Composition, the Chicago Symphony First Hearing Award, the Barlow Prize from the Barlow Endowment of Brigham Young University, the Lili Boulanger Memorial Fund Award, and a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He currently is writing a concerto for cello and wind ensemble for cellist Ashley Garritson.

Although *TRIO* for alto saxophone, percussion, and piano (the version heard tonight substitutes clarinet for saxophone) was based originally on Thierry Dedieu’s story “The Boy Who Ate Words” (about a boy who gorges himself on words before deciding to choose them more carefully), the piece quickly became something more abstract. The piece is instead rooted in the gradual distillation of its materials to the “essence,” as it were. The *TRIO* unfolds as a series of descending lines in the piano, above which the clarinet spits out a series of short motives that gradually elongate into full-fledged melodies before the music begins to slow to a more moderately paced transition. The languid middle section features an elastic clarinet solo (based on a simple motive) over a series of slowly descending strands in the piano and percussion, gradually layering on top of each other, until the music buckles under its own weight and rushes upward into the stratosphere.

**Derek Keller** is an award-winning composer and guitarist. His music keenly explores the myriad of sonorous possibilities to be found in the coexistence, intermingling, and hybridity between modern classical, jazz, and rock. Keller has received commissions from John Zorn (Tzadik), Fondation Royaumont, RedFishBlueFish, NOISE, the Cantoria Choir at Truman State University, Cappella Gloriana, the Athens Master Chorale, violinist Mark Menzies, and percussionists Aiyun Huang and Morris Palter. His music has been performed in the United States, Mexico, France, Germany, and Brazil, and most recently in Australia.

This is the fourth piece in a series of works that Keller is composing to explore the musical materials and themes for a forthcoming opera based on a late-19th-century short story “The Haunted Valley,” by journalist and author Ambrose Bierce. Through sound, spoken word, and dance, *California Dreamin’,* for piano, percussion, and cello
is a critical interrogation of the rampant racist sentiments during the mid- to late 19th century in California. The work explores the connections of earlier attitudes toward anti-immigration policies to those of our contemporary moment. It also develops the material supporting and musically representing one of the characters in Bierce’s short story, Whisky Jo Dunfer, performed by Empyrean’s percussionist, Chris Froh. This project is aimed at counteracting the continuing historical amnesia that actively “forgets” that California was once Mexican land occupied, farmed, mined, and worked by Mestizo, Native, Chinese, Chilean, Peruvian, French, German, and African American peoples.

This piece would not have been possible without the help of several key people. I would like to thank Victoria Bradshaw at the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum, Daryl Burley of the California Valley Miwok Tribe, and metal worker Ryan Lambert. Also my sincere thanks go to Chiang, Dennis Yep, S. N. Kwong, Sarah Macy (Zhaohua Xiào), and Nan Siu Xiao for their recitation, interpretation, and instructive pronunciation of Cantonese poetry.

Translation of Cantonese poem and “Joaquin Murrieta” (all reprinted by permission):

Stay at home and lose opportunities;
A hundred considerations lead me to sojourn
in Mexico.

Political parties are like wolves and tigers eliminating
each other;
Prejudice and hatred against foreigners take away our
property and many lives.

Unable to stay on—
I sneak across the border to the American side,
But bump into an immigration officer who sternly
throws the book at me
And orders my expulsion back to China.

“Joaquin Murrieta” (verses 3, 4, 5, 10–12)

I came from Hermosillo
in search of gold and riches.
I defended the poor and simple
Indian with fierceness.
And the sheriffs put a good price
on my head.

From greedy rich,
I took away their money.
With the humble and the poor,
I took off my hat.
Oh, what unjust laws
to label me an outlaw.
Murrieta doesn't like to be falsely accused. I come to avenge my wife, and I say again, how they made my lovely Carmelita suffer so much.

I'm neither Chilean nor a foreigner to this land I tread. California belongs to Mexico because God wished it so. And in my stitched sarape I carry my baptismal certificate.

How beautiful California is with its streets aligned, where Murrieta passed by with his well-trained troops, with his pistol loaded and his silver-plated saddle.

I have traveled in California around the year '50 [1850] with my silver-plated saddle and my pistol loaded. I am that Mexican known as Joaquin Murrieta.

**Benjamin Boone** was born in Statesville, North Carolina, in 1963. The youngest of five sons, he studied jazz and music theory as an undergraduate and went on to receive master's and doctoral degrees in composition. Since completing his graduate degree, he has worked in a variety of settings, including recording rhinoceros vocalizations in Zimbabwe and working as a music manager in New York and as a Fulbright Senior Specialist Scholar in Moldova. Boone has performed as a saxophonist throughout America and Europe, and his compositions have been performed internationally. His compositions have appeared on 19 recordings and he has been featured on NPR's *Weekend Edition* and received numerous national and international honors and awards for composition. He currently teaches composition and music theory at California State University, Fresno.

**Buffing the Gut** begins with a showy cadenza-like section in which the cellist plays very aggressively. The conceptual image is of a cellist sitting alone on a stage, in an empty auditorium (having earlier given a full classical concert)—playing for the sheer joy of playing. After this introduction, the piece settles into a groove that periodically shifts rhythmically or is briefly interrupted. The work ends as it began, with rapid cadenza-like material. *Buffing the Gut* was commissioned by Buffi Jacobs in 1995. The title was inspired by Jacobs's name and the image of a cellist bowing so ferociously while playing this piece that the strings on the cello begin to smolder and look completely buffed.

**Pablo Ortiz** was first trained in his native Buenos Aires, where he received a degree from the Universidad Catolica Argentina. At 27, he moved to New York to study at Columbia University. At present, he is a professor of composition at UC Davis. His compositions have been performed by the Buenos Aires Philharmonic, the Arditti String Quartet, the Ensemble Contrechamps of Geneva, the Helsinki Cello Ensemble, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and the Theatre
of Voices. His music has been heard at international festivals in Salzburg (Aspekte), Geneva (Extasis), Strasbourg (Musica), Havana, Frankfurt, Zurich, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, and Mexico City. He has received numerous awards and commissions from organizations including the Fromm Foundation, the Centro Experimental Teatro Colon, the Koussevitzky Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. In 2000 he received a grant from Fideicomiso para la cultura Mexico-U.S. to write children’s songs based on poems by Francisco Alarcón, renowned Chicano poet and Mission artist. In 2008 he received an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Recordings of his works can be heard on Albany Records and the Petal Label (Finland). His works include chamber and solo music, vocal, orchestral, and electronic compositions and music for plays and films.

Ramona was written to follow loosely the style of early silent film music. In silent movies, a pianist or organist would have a repertoire of pieces intended for certain types of scenes (the storm scene, the hot pursuit scene, the kiss) that s/he would use for different films. Here, this notion is revived to an extent by alluding and freely quoting works from the repertoire. For example: A baby dies, and I allude in my music to Mahler’s *Kindertotenlieder*; the luck of Ramona and Alessandro changes overnight, and I allude to Schoenberg’s *Transfigured Night*. I had a lot of fun writing these allusions into the work, and even if the listener is unable to detect them in the piece, they still provide a certain context. The project started with an idea by Alan S. Taylor, professor of history, who imagined a concert of patriotic songs and American-themed compositions played by Empyrean Ensemble (that also explains *Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean*). I proposed the concept to Laurie San Martin and Kurt Rohde, who were receptive and enthusiastic. I then contacted Scott Simmon, who gave me a copy of one of his collections to work with. I chose Ramona.
**Tod Brody**, flutist, has enjoyed a career of great variety. He was a member of the Sacramento Symphony for many years, where he was a frequent soloist on both flute and piccolo. He currently teaches flute and chamber music at UC Davis, where he performs with Empyrean Ensemble. As a member of Empyrean, Earplay, and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Brody has participated in many world premieres and has been recorded on the CRI, Centaur, Arabesque, New World, Capstone, and Magnon labels. When not performing contemporary music, he often can be found in the orchestras of the San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Ballet, as well as in other chamber and orchestral settings throughout Northern California. In addition to his activities as a performer and teacher, Brody is the director of the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the American Composers Forum, an organization dedicated to linking communities, composers, and performers, encouraging the making, playing, and enjoyment of new music.

**Chris Froh** is a San Francisco freelance percussionist specializing in new music written for solo and chamber settings. He began his training as a fellow with the National Symphony Orchestra as a section percussionist. He studied with John Beck at the Eastman School of Music and in Japan with Keiko Abe. He completed his studies and obtained his master’s degree at the University of Michigan, where he studied with Michael Udow and Julie Spencer. Froh is a core member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Empyrean Ensemble, and new music/improvisation ensemble sfSound Group. As a guest artist, he has performed with a broad array of ensembles, including Alarm Will Sound, Earplay, the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, and Gamelan Sekar Jaya. Festival appearances include the Festival Nuovi Spazi Musicali (Rome), Festival of New American Music, Pacific Rim Festival, Other Minds Festival, and ICMC. He continues his close ties to Japan, tours with marimbist Mayumi Hama, and performs as a soloist with Keiko Abe and the Galaxy Percussion Group. Froh teaches percussion at UC Davis.

Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, **Peter Josheff** is active as both a composer and clarinetist. Over the past 20 years, he has established himself as a leading advocate for contemporary music. Josheff has appeared as soloist and chamber musician on many recordings, in concert series, and at festivals devoted to new music, and he has had numerous works written for him. He performs with the San Francisco-based new music ensemble Earplay, which he cofounded in 1985. He is also a member of the Paul Dresher Ensemble, Empyrean Ensemble, and the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, and he appears frequently with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and Composers, Inc. As a composer, Josheff has received grants from the Zellerbach Family Fund, Meet the Composer, and the American Composers Forum and has been in residence at the MacDowell Colony. For more than a decade, Josheff has been involved in a collaboration with poet and librettist Jaime Robles, with whom he has created many works.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Gloria Justen**, composer and violinist, lives and works in Philadelphia and San Francisco. She is the concertmaster of the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and has been a frequent performer with the Philadelphia Orchestra and new music ensembles in that city. This season she will be playing with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and the Magic*magic Orchestra and touring internationally with the Philip Glass Ensemble. Justen composes both traditionally and by creating electronic sound collages, and she has created pieces in collaboration with dancers and visual artists.

**Loren Mach** is passionate about the arts as they relate to our 21st-century world and all who inhabit it. A graduate of the Oberlin and Cincinnati Conservatories of Music, he has premiered countless marimba and percussion solos, as well as chamber and orchestral works. Mach is a member of ADORNO Ensemble, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, and Worn Chamber Ensemble. He has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Empyrean Ensemble, sfSound, the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, and many of the area’s regional symphony and opera orchestras. In the summer, he performed at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music and was guest artist with Dawn Upshaw and eighth blackbird at the 2006 Ojai Music Festival. Mach has enjoyed recent collaborations with Lucy Shelton, Gino Robair, and David Tanenbaum.

**Thalia Moore**, cellist, is a native of Washington, D.C. She began her cello studies with Robert Hofmekler, and after only five years of study appeared as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall. She attended the Juilliard School of Music as a scholarship student of Lynn Harrell, receiving her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in 1979 and 1980. While at Juilliard, she was the recipient of the Walter and Elsie Naumberg Scholarship and won first prize in the National Arts and Letters String competition. Since 1982, Moore has been associate principal cellist of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra. In 1989, she joined the cello section of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra. She has continued to concertize extensively, appearing as soloist at Avery Fisher Hall, Carnegie Recital Hall, Kennedy Center Terrace Theater, Herbst Theater, and San Francisco’s Legion of Honor. She has also performed as guest artist at the Olympic Music Festival in Seattle and the Lake Tahoe Summer Music Festival.

**David Moschler** is entering his final year as a candidate for the Master of Arts in Conducting from UC Davis, where he studies with D. Kern Holoman and Jeffrey Thomas. Originally from North Carolina, Moschler earned bachelor degrees in music and physics from UNC Chapel Hill in 2005, where he began studying conducting under Michael Votta and Tonu Kalam. In his first year at UC Davis, Moschler stayed active as a conductor in many different settings, conducting performances with the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra, UC Davis Concert Band, and
chamber ensembles, as well as several first performances with Empyrean Ensemble. This past summer, he was principal conductor for the College Light Opera Company in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where he conducted performances of *West Side Story* and *A Little Night Music*. He was also music director for the Davis Summer Symphony, leading performances of Brahms’s *Symphony No. 2* and recording an original score to a feature-length documentary film, *A World of Grazing*, composed by Andy Tan. In addition to working as assistant conductor for the UCDSO and University Chorus this year, he will be musical director for a joint collaboration between the Departments of Music and Theatre & Dance this spring for a fully staged production of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!*

**Michael Seth Orland** studied piano with Margaret Kohn and is a graduate of the UC Berkeley Department of Music, where he studied harpsichord with Davitt Moroney and composition with Gerard Grisey. He later continued his study of composition with David Sheinfeld. Orland has appeared extensively in the Bay Area as a chamber musician, playing with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Earplay, the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, New Music Theater, Other Minds, and Composers, Inc. and in the San Francisco Symphony’s New and Unusual Music series. He has performed modern works throughout California, including UC San Diego, Davis, and Santa Cruz; Sacramento State University; the Crocker Gallery; and Cal Arts. Orland has appeared at the June in Buffalo Festival, and he has performed often as a freelance symphony musician and as a pianist in vocal recitals, including vocal master classes on the Berkeley campus given by Frederica von Stade and Sanford Sylvan. He is on the music faculty at UC Berkeley and also teaches there in the Young Musicians Program.

A champion of contemporary music in the U.S. and abroad, violist **Ellen Ruth Rose** is currently a member of Empyrean Ensemble and Earplay, and she performs regularly with other California ensembles, including the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Left Coast Ensemble, Santa Cruz New Music Works, and the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players. She has worked extensively throughout Europe with Frankfurt’s Ensemble Modern and the Cologne experimental ensembles Musik Fabrik and Thürmchen Ensemble, and she has performed as soloist with the West German Radio Chorus. Over the past several years, she has premiered numerous works by Northern California composers, including Kurt Rohde, Pablo Ortiz, Steed Cowart, Edmund Campion, Aaron Einbond, Cindy Cox, William Beck, Robert Coburn, and Linda Bouchard. Rose holds degrees in performance from the Juilliard School and the Northwest German Music Academy in Detmold, as well as a bachelor’s degree with honors in English and American history and literature from Harvard University. Her teachers have included Heidi Castelman, Nobuko Imai, Marcus Thompson, and Karen Tuttle. She is on the instrumental faculties at UC Davis and UC Berkeley.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Pianist Karen Rosenak is a longtime member of Empyrean Ensemble and a founding member of San Francisco’s Earplay. She has been on the musicianship faculty at UC Berkeley since 1990. She has just returned from a year’s (calendar year 2008) residence at Amherst College, where she held the Valentine Professor Chair in Music. There she taught beginning composition, harmony, species counterpoint, and musicianship and performed in solo and chamber music concerts. She completed her Doctor of Musical Arts at Stanford University in keyboard performance practices and theory, having studied piano with Nathan Schwartz and early piano with Margaret Fabrizio. She admits to a special affinity for the keyboard music from the early classical period, but she also finds the challenge of tackling a piece of fresh new music well nigh irresistible.

Vanessa Ruotolo, cellist, grew up in Palo Alto and began her early studies with Irene Sharp. She later attended the New England Conservatory, Boston University, and San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Bernard Greenhouse, George Neikrug, and Bonnie Hampton. She has performed with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Berkeley Contemporary Players, Left Coast Ensemble, Santa Cruz New Music Works, and Worn Chamber Ensemble. She is the founding member of the Hidden Valley String Quartet in residence at the Hidden Valley Institute of Performing Arts in Carmel Valley, California. She is also a member of the Santa Rosa Symphony, the San Jose Chamber Orchestra, and the Mid-Summer Mozart Festival Orchestra and plays with several other symphonies and chamber ensembles throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond.

Vincent Russo is an arranger, composer, orchestrator, and conductor; originally from New York City, he now lives in San Francisco. His genres span classical, jazz, Broadway, fusion, sound design, and media scoring. His orchestral arrangements have been performed by orchestras around the country and abroad. Russo has a doctoral degree in orchestral conducting and a bachelor’s degree in music theory from the Eastman School of Music. He has a master’s degree in orchestral conducting from the Southern Methodist University. He recently earned a Specialist Certificate in Composition and Production for New Media from the Berklee College of Music, and he won Berklee’s prestigious Glenn Ballard Celebrity Online Scholarship. He currently is working toward a Professional Certificate in Sound Design and Electronic Music Production with the Berklee College online division and is enrolled in the Music for the Media film scoring program with Hollywood composer Milton Nelson as his teacher. Read more at http://vincentrusso.blogspot.com.
Swedish composer **Mika Pelo** writes music for soloists, chamber ensembles, and orchestras—both with and without electronics. After finishing studies in Stockholm, Pelo moved to New York to pursue a doctorate in composition at Columbia University under the supervision of French composer Tristan Murail. This fall, Pelo joined the music faculty at UC Davis and is co-directing Empyrean Ensemble with fellow faculty members and composers Laurie San Martin and Kurt Rohde. Pelo gained international attention with the string orchestra piece *Apparition*, which was nominated for the Gaudeamus Prize in Holland in 2000 and performed by the Dutch Radio Chamber Orchestra under the supervision of Peter Eötvös. Appearing on both sides of the Atlantic, Pelo’s music will be performed by the Serbian Radio Orchestra and the Manhattan Sinfonietta in May 2009, and his new string quartet will be performed in Prague and then released on CD with the Swedish string quartet Nya Stenhammarkvartetten. Pelo’s music is published by Peters Edition (Germany).

Composer and violist **Kurt Rohde** lives in San Francisco. Recipient of the Rome Prize and the Berlin Prize, he has also received awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as a Guggenheim Fellowship. Recent commissions include a new work for the San Francisco-based choral group Volti, a new string quartet for the Cypress String Quartet, a new piece for violinist Iris Stone, a piano concerto for Sara Laimon and the New York-based ensemble Sequitur, and a new work for violinist Axel Strauss. Rohde is a graduate of the Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University, the Curtis Institute of Music, and SUNY Stony Brook. He studied composition with Donald Erb, Ned Rorem, and Andrew Imbrie and viola with Karen Tuttle, John Graham, and Caroline Levine. He is artistic director of the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, co-director of Empyrean Ensemble, and teaches composition and theory at UC Davis. He has taught composition at UC Santa Barbara, was composer-in-residence at the Yellow Barn Music Festival, and was guest composer at the Wellesley Composers Conference.

**Laurie San Martin** is an associate professor in the UC Davis Department of Music, where she teaches music theory and composition and co-directs Empyrean Ensemble. Her music has been performed in the U.S. and Italy by such ensembles as Speculum Musicae, eighth blackbird, and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. She has received an International Alliance for Women in Music Award, an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer’s Award, the Margaret Blackwell Memorial Prize in Composition, and a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Her music includes solo, chamber, and orchestral music, and she has collaborated with other artists in multimedia and video.
HOT OFF THE PRESS
Program includes a West Coast premiere of Mario Davidovsky’s *Piano Septet* for violin, viola, cello, contrabass, piano, flute, and clarinet. Also, new works by Sara Doncaster (*Piano Trio*), Petros Ovsepyan, Ed Martin (*Trio for flute, cello and piano*), and UC Davis’s newest faculty member, Mika Pelo.
**Sun, 15 March 2009, 7 pm, Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center**
[$9 student & child, $18 adult]

NEW MUSIC FROM DAVIS—GRADUATE STUDENT COMPOSERS
All new works written for Empyrean by Hendel Almetus, An Tan, Ching-Yi Wang, Ben Irwin, Sue-Hye Kim, and Garrett Shatzer, and Davide Verotta.
**Mon, 1 June 2009, 7 pm, Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center**
[$9 student & child, $18 adult]
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