New Music from Davis
All New Works by UC Davis Graduate Composers

7 pm, Monday, 1 June 2009
Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center

6 pm, "Demystifying the Music," a pre-concert talk with Mika Pelo

Performers
Hrabba Atladottir, violin
Tod Brody, flute
Leighton Fong, cello
Peter Josheff, clarinet
Loren Mach, percussion
Scott Macomber, trumpet
Thalia Moore, cello
Karen Rosenak, piano
John Russo, conductor

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NEW MUSIC FROM DAVIS
7 pm, Monday, 1 June 2009
Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center

EMPYREAN ENSEMBLE
Mika Pelo, Laurie San Martin, and Kurt Rohde, directors
Ching-Yi Wang, student production manager

PROGRAM

Humilis
Hendel Almétus
Tod Brody, flute; Peter Josheff, clarinet; Loren Mach, marimba

In Do
Davide Verotta
Hrabba Atladattir, violin; Leighton Fong, cello

Nuclear Fission
Andy Tan
Tod Brody, flute; Leighton Fong, cello; Loren Mach, percussion

Dust Devil
Ben Irwin
Peter Josheff, bass clarinet; Leighton Fong, cello; Loren Mach, percussion

Intermission

Lamour
Ching-Yi Wang
Peter Josheff, clarinet; Scott Macomber, trumpet; Hrabba Atladottir, violin; Thalia Moore, cello; Loren Mach, percussion
John Russo, conductor

Piano Trio No. 1
Garrett Ian Shatzer
Hrabba Atladottir, violin; Leighton Fong, cello; Karen Rosenak, piano

Quintette
Sue-Hye Kim
Peter Josheff, clarinet; Scott Macomber, trumpet; Hrabba Atladottir, violin; Thalia Moore, cello; Loren Mach, percussion
John Russo, conductor

Please join the musicians and composers in the lobby following the performance for a brief reception.

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.
Hendel Almétus is a first-year doctoral student in composition at UC Davis. He was born in Haiti, where he began his musical training at the age of twelve. He earned a bachelor’s degree in music from Houston Baptist University and a master’s in composition from the Eastman School of Music. At Eastman, he developed an interest in computer music, particularly in the area of synthesis. In 2007, he collaborated with a filmmaker and a choreographer in a multimedia work that was performed at the Rochester Institute of Technology. In addition, he has written for ensembles of various sizes that occasionally include electronics.

The cadenza-like section at the beginning of *Humilis* merges with the fast overlapping gestures in the rest of the ensemble, which slow down gradually until a reiteration of some of those gestures in the marimba gives the inclination of a return to the beginning just before the end of the piece. The overlapping gestures reduce the perception of a slow harmonic rhythm and give the impression of interaction of completely unrelated musical fragments, even though they are rhythmically and harmonically related. In the middle section of the piece, the bass clarinet and the piccolo provide a much-needed registral and timbral contrast that makes effective the return of the alto flute toward the end.

Davide Verotta was born in a boring Italian town close to Milano and moved to the very much more exciting San Francisco in his late twenties. He studied piano and music in Milano and in San Francisco, but composition is a more recent endeavor. His interest in music is intertwined with a lifelong academic occupation in mathematical modeling. Although this might generate the familiar reaction (“Ah! Musicians and math!”), he admits that the relationship of music and mathematics eludes him. For more information, visit his Web site at http://davide.gipibird.net/.

In *Do* is a duo for violin and violoncello that is divided in five short sections played *attacca*. It is a tonal piece, but it uses a C scale composed of thirty-six pitches spanning five octaves, instead of traditional scales spanning one octave. With few exceptions, such as chromatic alterations, only the pitches belonging to the scale are used in the piece. Emotionally the piece alternates between the quite aggressive, the somewhat whimsical, the lyrical, and the quick, and it ends, almost necessarily, with a sort of a question mark.

Andy Tan was born in 1984 in the People’s Republic of China. He began studying the violin at age six and immigrated to the United States at fifteen. He earned his bachelor’s degree in music composition at UC Davis and currently is finishing his master’s. His music has been performed by the Arianna String Quartet, New York New Music Ensemble, and Empyrean Ensemble. His recent work *Sonata Breve* is published by J. B. Elkus and Son. He has also written an original score to the documentary *Out of the Past*, conducted by David Moschler and the UC Davis Summer Symphony.

In *Nuclear Fission*, the nucleus of an atom continuously splits into smaller parts, which gives off energy and creates a chain reaction. Inspired by its continuous and endless nuclear activity, *Perpetual Motion* is a programmatic piece that narrates the story of a splitting atom.

Ben Irwin holds master’s degrees in composition and clarinet performance from the University of Wisconsin at Madison and a bachelor’s degree in music from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. He currently is pursuing a doctoral degree in composition and theory at UC Davis. His compositional interests include dense counterpoint, rhythmic-metric dissonance, proportionality, and the incorporation of improvisation into textures that also feature a high degree of compositional specificity. This summer, he will participate in the Music09 Festival in Blonay, Switzerland, as both composer and clarinetist. His duo, *Sacrosanct*, for flute, violin, and percussion will be premiered.

*Dust Devil* is named after a type of minor whirlwind, resembling a miniature tornado, that I have admired occasionally when traveling by train through the deserts of Utah and Nevada. The title is reflected in the narrative (formal), textural, and rhythmic structure of the piece. In particular, there is an upward registral expansion over the course of a piece, and there are quick surges and retractions of energy; at times the instrumental voices fall into coinciding but out-of-phase metrical relationships that suggest spinning, and the piece folds in on itself by bringing back short, previously heard segments of music in new configurations, connected in new ways.
Ching-Yi Wang was born in Taiwan and received her bachelor's and master's degrees in theory and composition from Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA). Wang skipped the last year of undergraduate study and graduated from TNUA ranked number one. From 2005 to 2006, she was a piano accompanist for the dance department at TNUA and was hired as lecturer of theory and composition in the applied music department at Tainan National University of the Arts. As a third-year doctoral student at UC Davis, she currently is studying composition with Mika Pelo and has studied with Kurt Rohde and Ross Bauer. Wang has been fascinated by the work of French composers and is doing research on spectral music. One of her compositions, *Strain, Strive, Struggle*, is collected by the Taiwan Composer League.

**L'amour**, as a wedding gift, is dedicated to my fiancé, Ching-Yen Chung. This piece begins with the clarinet's running sixteenth notes, a four-note motif (D–C-sharp–C–F) in reference to our birth months and dates (21/05). Additionally, another motif featured in this piece is based on the letters of CHING (C–B-flat–B–G-sharp–G), the first part of our given names, though I changed the “N” from the note G to G-sharp. In terms of the structure, *L'amour* is divided into three sections, and the second section is for the bass drum solo, which is played entirely with the fingers, nails, palms, and knuckles. *L'amour* is also a response to my fondness of the world of timbre.

Garrett Ian Shatzer was born in 1980 in Detroit, Michigan. He is a first-year graduate student at UC Davis. Holding degrees from the University of Michigan and the University of Miami, he has also had the privilege of studying in Paris, Rome, and Buenos Aires. After concentrating on popular electronic music for many years, his focus is now exclusively on acoustic compositions. Aside from writing for the concert hall, he has also written music for films, dance clubs, rock and metal bands, hip-hop MCs, modern dancers, and theater productions.

I am increasingly interested in the process of reharmonization and reinterpretation of musical events. **In Piano Trio No. 1**, I explore these in two large-scale ways. First, I use the opening gesture to reach two distinctly different sections of music, contrasted via harmony, dynamics, and tempo. Second, I investigate the functional possibilities of the common harmonies within the two main key areas of the piece, B minor and F minor. My musical idiom has been described as “tonal but not really tonal” due to my conflicting uses of tertian harmonies in both functional and non-functional ways, and this piece is no different.

Sue-Hye Kim was born in Seoul, where she began music theory training and composition studies at Seoul National University, studying with Yong-Jin Kim and Gang-Yul Ih and earning bachelor’s and master's degrees. She went to Paris in 1997 and was admitted to the National Superior Conservatory of Paris for Music and Dance, where she studied computer music with Laurent Cuniot, Yann Geslin, and Luis Naon; composition with Allain Gaussin, Guy Reibel, and Frederic Durieux; orchestration with Marc-André Dalbavie and Michele Reverdy; and analysis with Michael Levinas. She received a prix in orchestration (2001) with an honor of jury's unanimity (first place) and a prix in composition (2003) with an honor of jury's unanimity (second place). She has attended several international festivals and has received several prizes. Her music has been performed in South Korea, Thailand, France, Germany, and the United States. She was selected to be a composer-in-residence for the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra in early 2008. She currently is working on her doctoral degree in composition and theory at UC Davis.

**Quintette** offers the experience of the trumpet in ensemble. It is a set of five simple parts that develop and decay from each important note. However, it moves organically in one movement to the final section's reminiscent melody, which is the strongest fragmentary impression for this piece.
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 over 200 works and performed throughout California, including appearances at many prominent music festivals and concert series. Empyrean has two full-length CDs released under the Centaur and Arabesque labels and has been the featured ensemble on others. 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.

**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**
- Scott Macomber, trumpet
- Leighton Fong, cello
- Loren Mach, percussion
- John Russo, conductor

**Pre-Concert Speaker**
- Mika Pelo
Icelandic violinist Hrabba Atladottir studied in Berlin, Germany, with Axel Gerhardt and in Klagenfurt, Austria, with Helfried Fister. After finishing her studies, Atladottir worked as a freelancing violinist in Berlin for five years, regularly playing with the Berlin Philharmonic, Deutsche Oper, and Deutsche Symphonie Orchester. Atladottir has also participated in a world tour with pop artist Björk and a German tour with violinist Nigel Kennedy. In 2004 Atladottir moved to New York and continued to freelance, performing on a regular basis with the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Opera, the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, among other orchestras. She also plays a lot of new music, most recently with the Either/Or ensemble in New York in connection with their Helmut Lachenmann festival.

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 the 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, and 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.

Leighton Fong is a longtime member of the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble and also serves as principal cello with the California Symphony. He plays regularly with the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players and the Empyrean Ensemble and is an active freelancer in the Bay Area. He has taught at UC Berkeley since 1997. Fong studied at the San Francisco Conservatory, the New England Conservatory, the Bern Conservatory in Switzerland, and the Royal Danish Conservatory in Copenhagen. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 2006.

Peter Josheff has premiered hundreds of solo and chamber works by a wide range of composers and has had numerous pieces composed for him. He has appeared on many recordings, concert series, and festivals, both nationally and internationally. He performs with Earplay, the Paul Dresher Ensemble, the Empyrean Ensemble, the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Also active as a composer, Josheff has been in residence at the MacDowell Colony and has been the recipient of grants from the American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer, and the Zellerbach Family Fund. His most recent compositions have grown out of a decade of collaboration with Bay Area poet Jaime Robles, including Memento (2001), Diary (2002), 3 Hands (2003), and House and Garden Tales (2005). The latter was premiered by Earplay at Herbst Theater in San Francisco and featured bass-baritone Jeremy Galyon. Viola and Mallets (2007) was commissioned by the Empyrean Ensemble and premiered by them in April 2007. Josheff’s most recent work, Inferno (2008), a chamber opera, will be produced by San Francisco Cabaret Opera in June 2009.

Loren Mach is passionate about the arts as they relate to our twenty-first-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 the Worn Chamber Ensemble. He has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the Empyrean Ensemble, sfSound, the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, and most of the area’s many regionalsymphony and opera orchestras. He has 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.

Scott Macomber is principal trumpet of the Napa Valley Symphony, as well as second trumpet of the Santa Rosa Symphony and the Sacramento Philharmonic. Macomber has performed with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Jose Symphony, and the Bay Brass. An avid performer of contemporary music, he has performed in over twenty-five world premieres of solo, chamber, and orchestral music. He holds degrees from Northwestern University, where he studied with Vincent Cichowicz, and from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studied with David Burkhart. Macomber is an active chamber musician, recitalist, and soloist. He has performed with the Empyrean Ensemble, the Sacramento Chamber Music Society, the Worn Ensemble, and the Parallel Ensemble. In 1998 he co-founded the San Francisco Brass Company, a brass quintet devoted to performing an eclectic array of music from many genres. As principal trumpet of the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra, Macomber has appeared as a soloist on many occasions. He is on faculty with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Preparatory Division, UC Davis, and San Francisco State University.

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 and received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in 1979 and 1980, respectively. While at Juilliard, she was the recipient of the Walter and Elsie Naumburg Scholarship and won first prize in the National Arts and Letters String
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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 the San Francisco Legion of Honor. She has also performed as guest artist at the Olympic Music Festival in Seattle, Washington, and the Lake Tahoe Summer Music Festival.

Pianist Karen Rosenak is a longtime member of the Empyrean Ensemble, as well as a founding member of Earplay, the new music ensemble based in San Francisco. She is and has been on the musicianship faculty at UC Berkeley since 1990. She has just returned from a year’s 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 degree 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 also finds the challenge of tackling a piece of fresh new music well-nigh irresistible.

J. 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. From 1993 to 2003 he served as associate conductor of the Canton Symphony in Ohio and guest conducted orchestras around the country. Recently, he earned a Specialist Certificate in Composition and Production for New Media and a Professional Certificate in Electronic Music Production and Sound Design from the Berklee College of Music Online Division, and he won Berklee’s prestigious Glenn Ballard Celebrity Online Scholarship. He currently 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, Sweden, Pelo moved to New York to pursue a doctoral degree in composition at Columbia University under the supervision of French composer Tristan Murail. Last fall, Pelo joined the music faculty at UC Davis and is co-directing the 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. Pelo's music is performed on both sides of the Atlantic, including upcoming performances by the Serbian Radio Orchestra and the Manhattan Sinfonietta in May 2009. In addition to these, 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 the Empyrean Ensemble, and teacher of 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 music department, where she teaches music theory and composition and co-directs the Empyrean Ensemble. Her music has been performed in the United States and Italy by such ensembles as Speculum Musicae, eighth blackbird, and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. She has received awards from the International Alliance for Women in Music, the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer’s Awards, 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 compositions, and she has collaborated with other artists in multimedia and video.

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EMPYREAN ENSEMBLE 2009–10

I. 15 November 2009, Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center
(8 November 2009, Capistrano Hall, Sacramento State)
World premieres by Steve Blumberg, Ross Bauer and Ed Jacobs. Also, Aaron Copland’s Piano Quartet.

II. 24 January 2010, Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center
World premieres by John MacCallum, Pablo Ortiz, and Laurie San Martin. Also, a work by Peter Sculthorpe.

III. 18 April 2010, Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center
World premieres by Philippe Bodin, Jesper Nordin, and Eric Moe, featuring soprano Haleh Abghari, with TV, video, and chamber ensemble.

IV. 24 May 2010, Studio Theatre, Mondavi Center
World premieres by Hendel Almèius, Ching-Yi Wang, Ben Irwin, Scott Perry, Garrett Shatzer, and Liam Wade.

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2007–09 DONORS

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