

JENNIFER WADA COMMUNICATIONS CO.

Tel 718.855.7101 • Fax 718.855.7350 • jennifer@wadacommunications.com • www.wadacommunications.com

OF COLOR BRAIDED ALL DESIRE – MUSIC OF ERIC MOE **THE ALBANY RECORDS DISC FEATURES SOPRANO CHRISTINE BRANDES,** **BRENTANO STRING QUARTET, MANHATTAN STRING QUARTET, AND TALUJON** **IN FIVE CHAMBER WORKS FEATURING VOICE, STRINGS, AND PERCUSSION**

Moe's Season Also Includes a Workshop of His New Chamber Opera, ***The Artwork of the Future***

*Tossed
by the muscular sea,
we are lost,
and glad to be lost
in troughs of rough
love.*

-from "Swimmers" by May Swenson, in *Of Color Braided All Desire*

Composer Eric Moe's music has been described as "wonderfully inventive...highly rhythmic, frequently irreverent, absolutely eclectic, and always high-octane" (Fanfare), and as coming out of a "fantastical imaginarium, a headspace that ties together the free-flowing atonality of Alban Berg with the guttural rumblings of Samuel Barber's Medea, adding in a healthy dose of superhuman strength" (WQXR). And The New York Times has said that Moe "subversively inscribe[s] classical music into pop culture."

These qualities are on vivid display and given new expression in ***Of Color Braided All Desire***, a new Albany Records disc (the composer's fifth with the label) featuring a stellar lineup of artists performing five of Moe's new and recent chamber works for voice, strings, and percussion that center around the revered musical tradition of the quartet.

The title work, ***Of Color Braided All Desire***, written for and performed by soprano Christine Brandes and the Brentano String Quartet, embodies Moe's "eroticizing" of the classical string quartet – a fast movement, a slow, introspective movement, a scherzo, and a finale. He has set four love poems ("Swimmers," "Four Word Lines," "Fireflies," and "Incantation") by the American poet May Swenson that Moe calls "marvelously steamy and yet rigorously artful," to music he has written to be "as passionate and as brainy as they are." This is the second collaboration between Brandes and Moe; the soprano also recorded Moe's *Sonnets to Orpheus*, also on Albany Records. *Of Color Braided All Desire*, commissioned by South Mountain Concerts, was premiered on that series in Pittsfield, MA, in 2011.

Spirit of Four

Moe says, "Four musicians breathing and singing together, tussling and racing one another, sighing as one – the medium demands the deepest, fiercest, most intimate expression. Four is a magic number for musical collaboration – from outbursts of thunderous, joyous raucousness (***Danger: Giant Frogs***, 2011, performed by four members of the percussion ensemble Talujon) to heartbreaking laments (***The Salt of Broken Tears***, 2012, performed by the Manhattan String Quartet). The title work adds the human voice to the quartet, but this intensifies the intimacy rather than attenuates it. The smaller works on this disc aspire to quartetness. In ***And Life Like Froth Doth Throb*** (1997, performed by Jessica Meyer, viola, and Karen Ouzounian, cello) I require the duo partners – the lower half of a string quartet - to fill the extremes of register of their instruments with utmost energy to cast the shadow of a larger ensemble. Even the severe solo percussion piece ***Gong Tormented*** (2007, performed by Dominic Donato, percussion) aspires to the condition of the quartet – four different metallophones (three gongs and a cymbal), four basic kinds of beaters (hard, soft, metal, friction), four beating spots on the larger instruments, at least two rhythmic strands going on at all times.

"I delight in extremes – comic, tragic, erotic, ascetic –" says Moe, "and this CD has examples of them all. Yet they share a common chamber music sensibility of intimate interaction and expression."

Visit the home page of www.ericmoe.net to listen to excerpts from these works, to read the CD booklet, and more.

Opera Workshop, Performances in 2015

This disc is one milestone in a year in which Moe will also mount a workshop for a chamber opera, *The Artwork of the Future*, on which he is collaborating with librettist Rob Handel. A fantastical tale of love, art, time travel, and the future of humanity, the work is scored for four voices and a chamber ensemble of four to six players augmented by electroacoustic tech. In addition, three new works by Moe will have their world premieres presented by the Beyond Microtonal Music Festival in Pittsburgh and the New York-based composer/performer collective counter)induction, among others. (*See schedule highlights below.*)

Eric Moe

The music of Eric Moe (b. 1954) has been variously described as "maximal minimalism," "Rachmaninoff in hell," and "music of winning exuberance." Although the surfaces and genres are varied, his works share a concern for rhythmic propulsion and a disregard for stylistic orthodoxies. Sometimes tonal, sometimes not, harmony (generally crunchy) and melody (often angular) play privileged roles in his work.

He has received numerous grants and awards for his work, including the Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a Guggenheim Fellowship; commissions from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the Barlow Endowment, Meet-the-Composer USA, and New Music USA; fellowships from the Wellesley

Composer's Conference and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; and residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Bellagio, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the UCross Foundation, the Camargo Foundation, the Aaron Copland House, the Millay Colony, the Ragdale Foundation, the Montana Artists Refuge, the Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians, the Hambidge Center, and the American Dance Festival, among others.

Tri-Stan, his sit-trag/one-woman opera on a text by David Foster Wallace, premiered by Sequitur in 2005, was hailed by the New York Times as "a blockbuster" and "a tour de force," a work of "inspired weight" that "subversively inscribes classical music into pop culture." In its review of the piece, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette concluded, "it is one of those rare works that transcends the cultural divide while still being rooted in both sides." The work is available on a Koch International Classics compact disc. *Strange Exclaiming Music*, a CD featuring Moe's recent chamber music, was released by Naxos in July 2009 as part of their American Classics series; *Kick & Ride*, on the bmop/sound label, was picked by WQXR for album of the week. Other all-Moe CDs are available on New World Records (*Meanwhile Back At The Ranch*), Albany Records (*Kicking and Screaming, Up & At 'Em, Siren Songs*), and Centaur (*On the Tip of My Tongue*).

As a pianist and keyboardist, Moe has premiered and performed works by a wide variety of composers. His playing can be heard on the Koch, CRI, Mode, Albany, New World Records and Innova labels in the music of John Cage, Roger Zahab, Marc-Antonio Consoli, Mathew Rosenblum, Jay Reise, Ezra Sims, David Keberle, Felix Draeseke, and many others in addition to his own. His solo recording *The Waltz Project Revisited - New Waltzes for Piano*, a CD of waltzes for piano by two generations of American composers, was released in 2004 on Albany. Gramophone magazine said of the CD, "Moe's command of the varied styles is nothing short of remarkable." A founding member of the San Francisco-based EARPLAY ensemble, he currently co-directs the *Music on the Edge* new music concert series in Pittsburgh.

Moe studied composition at Princeton University (A.B.) and at the University of California at Berkeley (M.A., Ph.D.). He is currently the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Pittsburgh and has held visiting professorships at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania. More information is available at his website, www.ericmoe.net.

Soprano **Christine Brandes** brings her committed artistry to repertoire ranging from the 17th century to newly composed works, which in addition to *Of Color Braided All Desire* have recently included Jennifer Higdon's *In the Shadow of Sirius*, based on poetry of former American Poet Laureate, W.S. Merwin with the Cypress String Quartet. Her 2014-15 season includes performances of György Kurtág's *Scenes from a Novel* with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, and Bach's Mass in B minor with the American Classical Orchestra at Lincoln Center.

http://imgartists.com/artist/christine_brandes

In addition to performing the entire two-century range of the standard quartet repertoire, the **Brentano Quartet** has a strong interest in both very old and very new music. It has performed many musical works pre-dating the string quartet as a medium, among them madrigals of Gesualdo, fantasias of Purcell, and secular vocal works of Josquin. Also, the quartet has worked closely with some of the most renowned composers of our time, among them Elliott Carter, Charles Wuorinen, Chou Wen-Chung, Steven Mackey, Bruce Adolphe, and György Kurtág. <http://brentanoquartet.com>

Hailed by the Boston Globe as “a national treasure,” the **Manhattan String Quartet** is celebrating its 45th season. Well known for their performances of 20th-century “classics,” the Manhattan Quartet has established a significant international reputation, and is especially acclaimed for its landmark recording of the complete Shostakovich string quartets. www.manhattanstringquartet.com

Described by the New York Times as an ensemble possessing an “edgy, unflagging energy”, **Talujon** has been mesmerizing audiences since 1990. Talujon is thoroughly committed to the expansion of the contemporary percussion repertoire as well as the education and diversification of its worldwide audience. Over the past 20 years, Talujon has commissioned dozens of new works for percussion quartet. www.talujon.com

Dominic Donato is active as a percussion soloist, chamber musician, and teacher. He is a member of the Talujon Percussion Quartet and Newband and performs regularly with many New York new music groups and orchestras, including Ensemble 21, the ST-X Ensemble, Washington Square Chamber Music Society, League of Composers/ISCM, American Composers Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Eos Orchestra, and Riverside Symphony.

Known for her “polish, focus, and excitement” and “expressive, luscious sound” (The New York Times), violist and composer **Jessica Meyer** is a versatile performer who has been featured as a soloist and chamber musician throughout the world. <http://jessicameyermusic.com>

Cellist **Karen Ouzounian** has performed as chamber musician, recitalist and soloist throughout North America and Europe. Ms. Ouzounian has performed with such ensembles as Trio Cavatina, the Tessera String Quartet, The Knights, the East Coast Chamber Orchestra (ECCO), A Far Cry, and the String Orchestra of New York City (SONYC).

Of Color Braided All Desire – Music of Eric Moe

Of Color Braided All Desire – Christine Brandes, soprano; Brentano String Quartet

Gong Tormented – Dominic Donato percussion

And Life Like Froth Doth Throb – Jessica Meyer, viola; Karen Ouzounian, cello

The Salt of Broken Tears – Manhattan String Quartet

Danger: Giant Frogs - Talujon

[TROY1539](https://www.newalbanymusic.com/eric-moe-of-color-braided-all-desire)

Eric Moe in 2015 – Highlights

February 18, 2015, at Miami Beach Urban Studios at Florida International University

[New Music Miami ISCM Festival](#)

[Amernet String Quartet and Amy Williams, piano](#)

Program includes *The Salt of Broken Tears* for string quartet, and *Where Branched Thoughts Murmur in the Wind* for solo piano

February 19, 2015, at Frick Fine Arts Auditorium, University of Pittsburgh

[Eric Moe's Mellon Inaugural Lecture](#)

"*Danger: Giant Frogs*; Some Recent Music with Remarks by the Composer"

A lecture/concert with performances of *Grande Étude Brillante*, *The Weasel of Melancholy* (preview performance), and *Gong Tormented*, by Eric Moe, keyboards, and Aaron Trant, percussion.

March 1, 2015, at The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA

[Beyond Microtonal Music Festival](#)

Program includes the world premiere of *The Weasel of Melancholy* for microtonal piano, performed by Aron Kallay, piano

March 12, 2015, at 7:00 PM at Spectrum (121 Ludlow Street), New York, NY

[counter\)induction](#)

Program includes the New York premiere of *Uncanny Affable Machines*, viola & electroacoustic sound, performed by Jessica Meyer, viola

March 20, 2015, at 7:30 pm at CARTA Miami Beach Urban Studios

[New Music Miami ISCM Festival](#)

[Mari Kimura - Works for Violin and Electronics](#)

Program includes *Obey Your Thirst* for violin and electroacoustic sound, performed by Mari Kimura, violin (second performance)

April 18, 2015, at 7:30 pm at Dublin School, Dublin, NH

[Electric Earth Concerts](#)

"Chamber Music with Tony Arnold, Soprano"

Program includes *Lavished Sunlight*, *Frozen Hours*, performed by Tony Arnold, soprano; Gwen Krosnick, cello; Emely Phelps, piano (second performance)

May 4-8, 2015, at New Dramatists (424 West. 44th St.), New York, NY

The Artwork of the Future, a chamber opera - Workshop

Eric Moe, music, Rob Handel, libretto, Ken Russ Schmol, director

May 16, 2015, at 7:30 pm at The Crypt of the Church of the Intercession (550 West 155th St.), New York, NY

[counter\)induction](#)

"Epitaphs: Music in Memoriam"

Program includes the world premiere [???] of a new work in memory of Lee Hyla

October 11, 2015, at Humboldtsaal, Freiburg, Germany

Elliott Riley, saxophone, Eric Moe, piano

Program includes the world premiere of *Demon Theory* for alto saxophone and piano

February 23, 2015