

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Marlisa Monroe

212-875-5776

mmonroe@chambermusicsociety.org



**THE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER  
DAVID FINCKEL AND WU HAN, ARTISTIC DIRECTORS  
PRESENTS**

*NEW MUSIC*

**WORKS BY**

**DAVID DZUBAY, & BRETT DEAN,  
PLUS WORLD PREMIERE BY  
SEBASTIAN CURRIER**

**WITH**

**SOPRANO TONY ARNOLD,  
& THE ORION STRING QUARTET**

**TWO PERFORMANCES**

**6:30 & 9:00 PM**

**JANUARY 25**

**ROSE STUDIO**

**9:00 PM CONCERT STREAMED LIVE TO COMPUTERS & MOBILE DEVICES**

**[www.ChamberMusicSociety.org/watchlive](http://www.ChamberMusicSociety.org/watchlive)**



The Chamber Music Society continues its series of *New Music* concerts on January 25. The popular series in the intimate Rose Studio presents identical programs of innovative works performed twice in the same evening. Audiences have the choice of attending the 90 minute concert at either 6:30 PM or 9:00 PM. The January 25 concerts feature David Dzubay's Quartet No. 1 for Strings, "Astral," Brett Dean's Quartet No. 2 for Strings and Soprano, "And once I played Ophelia," and the world premiere of a CMS commission by Sebastian Currier, *Etudes and Lullabies* for Strings and Soprano. The performers include soprano Tony Arnold and the Orion String Quartet. [Pictured: Tony Arnold; photo: Claudia Hansen.]

**David Dzubay** (b. 1964) earned a D.M. in Composition at Indiana University. Additional studies included a fellowship in composition at Tanglewood (1990) and two summers as co-principal trumpet of the National Repertory Orchestra (1988, 1989). His principal teachers were Donald Erb, Frederick Fox, Eugene O'Brien, Lukas Foss, Allan Dean and Bernard Adelstein. David Dzubay's music has been performed by orchestras, ensembles and soloists in the U.S., Europe, Canada, Mexico, and Asia. Dzubay is currently Professor of Music, Chair of the Composition Department and Director of the New Music Ensemble at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington.

Dzubay's Quartet No. 1 for Strings, "Astral," was written for and dedicated to the Orion String Quartet. In a program note he wrote:

Beginning work on a piece for the Orion String Quartet, and taking a cue either from the group's name or perhaps from gazing upwards on evening strolls around the MacDowell Colony in rural New Hampshire, I decided to focus on the stars, composing an "Astral" quartet, movements of which would look at stars and space in various ways. Though the movements are somewhat independent, they do share musical elements and together are balanced on the curious middle movement.

Recipient of the prestigious Grawemeyer Award in 2007, **Sebastian Currier** (b. 1959), has received many other awards including the Berlin Prize, Rome Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship,

a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Currier's music has been enthusiastically embraced by violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, who commissioned and premiered his violin and piano piece *After-song*, and violin concerto, *Time Machines*. Members of the Berlin Philharmonic dedicated a full evening to Currier's extensive chamber music output in October 2005.

Currier's *Etudes and Lullabies* is an ongoing string quartet project for which he has composed 12 short works – six etudes and six lullabies. While different quartets will premiere a specific etude and lullaby pairing, the pieces in the collection can eventually be performed separately, or together in any combination. Currier writes of the project:

For me, these two forms [etudes and lullabies] perfectly complement each other, representing two fundamental and opposing aspects of music: the ability to energize and to soothe. An etude projects struggle, intensity, energy, and triumph over difficulty. A lullaby represents the polar opposite: It projects calm, quiet, intimacy, and letting go. The etude embodies defiance, the lullaby surrender. The piano repertoire has many collections of short pieces: etudes, preludes, nocturnes, preludes and fugues, and so forth. The string quartet, strangely, does not. I wrote this collection with that in mind.

Following studies in Australia, **Brett Dean** (b. 1961), moved to Germany in 1985 and became a member of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra as a viola player. In 1988 he began composing, initially as an arranger, working in improvisation for radio and film projects in Australia. He became established as a composer in his own right through worldwide performances of the ballet *One of a Kind* (Nederlands Dans Theater, choreographer Jiri Kylian) and by the clarinet concerto *Ariel's Music*, which won an award from the UNESCO International Rostrum of

Brett Dean wrote of his Quartet No. 2 for Strings and Soprano “And once I played Ophelia,” (text by Matthew Jocelyn after Shakespeare):

Matthew Jocelyn's text utilizes not only Ophelia's own words from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* but also words directed towards, or said about her, from the confronting invective of Hamlet's ‘Get thee to a nunnery’ or his exalted love poem, ‘Doubt thou the stars are fire’ through to the condescending life directives handed out by her father, Polonius (‘Best safety lies in fear’; ‘Do not believe his vows’) and Gertrude's lyrical description of her suicide. (‘There is a willow...’)

Through a suite of five short movements performed without a break, a concise portrait of Shakespeare's troubled and elusive young character emerges. As we discussed the shape of the work, Matthew and I saw it increasingly as an examination of what remains in our memory and understanding of this secondary, yet utterly pivotal role ‘after all the Ophelias have played Ophelia.’

Though traditionally portrayed as a meek, even weak character, often dressed in flowing white robes and unable to defend herself before the pressures of Elsinore cause her to

snap, I've often felt that much of what she says betrays a feistier personality than the one we often are presented. ('And I that sucked from his musicked vows...')

And perhaps, just perhaps, Ophelia drowns not from a romantically-fed whim or madness, but simply because of the pure weight of the words others say about her caught irrevocably in her pockets.

Hence I sensed the drama of a string quartet complemented by a high soprano voice, at times in combat with the forces around her, at times lulled, accompanied, even defeated by them, formed a suitable musical metaphor for this 'ministering angel' and the strange, beguiling spell she casts over us.

**Listing Information:**

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

Thursday, January 25, 6:30 PM & 9:00 PM

Rose Studio (165 W. 65<sup>th</sup> St., 10<sup>th</sup> Fl.)

Tickets: \$35 available at box office; by calling 212.875.5788;

on-line: [www.ChamberMusicSociety.org](http://www.ChamberMusicSociety.org)

Free live stream at 9:00 PM: [www.ChamberMusicSociety.org/watchlive](http://www.ChamberMusicSociety.org/watchlive)

*NEW MUSIC*

Tony Arnold, soprano; Orion String Quartet (Daniel Phillips, Todd Phillips, violin; Steven Tenenbom, viola, Timothy Eddy, cello)

DAVID DZUBAY                      Quartet No. 1 for Strings, "Astral" (2008)

SEBASTIAN CURRIER              *Etudes and Lullabies* for String Quartet (World Premiere, CMS Commission) (2017)

BRETT DEAN                        Quartet No. 2 for Strings and Soprano, "And once I played Ophelia" (2013)

\*\*\*\*\*