



Augusta Read Thomas

June in Buffalo promises best in new music

BY MARY KUNZ GOLDMAN

News Classical Music Critic

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From the 1970s into the 1980s, Buffalo became known as a hotbed for experimental thought, art and music. The Albright-Knox Art Gallery gained a reputation as a center for contemporary art, and the Buffalo Philharmonic — led by Lukas Foss and Michael Tilson Thomas — was performing compositions so freewheeling and lawless that some audience members left the hall, baffled.

June in Buffalo

Monday through June 6

Various locations at the University at Buffalo North Campus, Amherst

Admission: Free to \$20. Call 645-2921

At the University at Buffalo, the avant-garde music momentum was carried forward by the Creative Associates, a group of experimental musicians. In recent years, the UB music department, anchored by the new Robert and Carol Morris Center for 21st Century Music, has again moved to emphasize the avant-garde. Recitals throughout the year reinforce UB's reputation as a center for experimentation.

And since 1975, June in Buffalo — the annual new-music festival founded by composer Morton Feldman — has reminded the world of the cutting-edge audacity that continues to put Buffalo on the map.

June in Buffalo is unusual for an academic conference in that the public is welcome to participate, at little or no cost. Thus the casual listener can come into contact with globally recognized exponents of the avant-garde and, occasionally, more mainstream figures. Past faculty has included Philip Glass, John Cage, Earle Brown and Samuel Barber.

This year the festival welcomes back Steve Reich, the minimalist composer whose “Double Sextet” won the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for music. “Double Sextet” will be performed during “An Evening with Steve Reich” at 7:30 p. m. Monday in the UB Center for the Arts Drama Theatre. Other guest composers whose works will be heard are Augusta Read Thomas, Bernard Rands, Olivier Pasquet, Roger Reynolds and David Felder.

Daytime concerts feature the works of emerging composer participants.

Guest performers represent the elite of the cutting edge. Performing this challenging music this year will be the Arditti String Quartet, Ensemble SurPlus, Ensemble Laboratorium and Signal, described as a New York new music “supergroup.” A special highlight is an appearance by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, winding up the festival next weekend.

Generally, daytime concerts are free, while the evening concerts carry a modest admission charge of \$20 at the door, \$12 in advance.

Here is the schedule:

Daytime concerts:

- 4 p. m. Monday, Center for the Arts Black Box Theatre, Signal Ensemble performs works of Ashley Wang, Shiuan Chang, Matthew Heap, Emily Koh and Peter Van Zandt Lane.
- 4 p. m. Wednesday, Center for the Arts Black Box Theatre, Ensemble SurPlus plays works of Juan Garcia Escudero, Ray Evanoff, Jacob Gotlib, Jordan Kuspa, Huck Hodge, Joe Lake, Mischa Salkind-Pearl and David Wightman.
- 10 a. m. Thursday, Baird Recital Hall, the Arditti Quartet plays works of Daniel Bassin, Carl Christian Bettendorf and Chun Ting Pang.
- 10 a. m. next Friday, Baird Recital Hall, Arditti Quartet plays works of Felipe de Almeida Ribeiro, David Hudry and Benjamin Scheuer.
- 4 p. m. next Friday, Center for the Arts Drama Theatre, Ensemble Laboratorium plays works of John Bacon, Matthew Goodheart, Joshua Groffman, Hannah Lash, Diana Soh, Gabriele Vanoni, Christopher Walczak, Stephen Wilcox.

Evening concerts

- 7:30 p. m. Monday, Center for the Arts Drama Theatre, “An Evening with Steve Reich,” with Reich’s “Sextet” and “Double Sextet,” performed by the Signal Ensemble, Brad Lubman, conductor.
- 7:30 p. m. Tuesday, Center for the Arts Black Box Theatre, Ensemble SurPlus. Concert featuring works of June in Buffalo senior faculty. On the program: “Euterpe’s Caprice” by Augusta Read Thomas, “Music for Six” by Lukas Foss, “The Viola in My Life II” by Morton Feldman, “Fidelio Trio” by Alvin Lucier, “Spinoff Violin, Contrabass and Congas” by Charles Wuorinen and “Coloratura” by Brian Ferneyhough.
- 7:30 p. m. Wednesday, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall, Slee Sinfonietta, James Baker, conductor; Tom Kolor, percussion; Irvine Arditti, violin. “Tweener” by David Felder, “Kasper” by Olivier Pasquet, “6 Piano Etudes” by Augusta Read Thomas and “Aspiration” by Roger Reynolds.

- 7:30 p. m. Thursday, the Center for the Arts Drama Theatre, Ensemble Laboratorium performs “Transparente” by Oscar Bianchi, “Glint” by Jacob Druckman, “Influence Liquide from Laboratorium” by Vinko Globokar, “Assonance VI” by Michael Jarrell, “De ja” by Bernard Rands and “From Behind the Unreasoning Mask” by Roger Reynolds.

- 9:15 p. m. Thursday, Center for the Arts Screening Room, screening of “Haxan,” with soundtrack by Mauro Lanza and Olivier Pasquet.

7:30 p. m. next Friday, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall, Slee Sinfonietta, Brad Lubman, conductor, Julia Bentley, mezzo-soprano soloist and Yuki Numata, violin soloist, perform “New Millennium Memo” by Harvey Sollberger, “Partial [Dist]res[s]toration” and “Canzone XXXI” by David Felder, “Carillon Sky” by Augusta Read Thomas and “Now again-fragments from Sappho” by Bernard Rands.

- 7:30 p. m. June 5, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall; Arditti Quartet plays String Quartet No. 2 by Jonathan Harvey, “Not Forgotten” by Roger Reynolds, “Third Face” by David Felder, “Structures” by Morton Feldman and “Tetras” by Iannis Xenakis.

- 2:30 p. m. June 6, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall; Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and JoAnn Falletta play “Terpsichore’s Dream” by Augusta Read Thomas, “La Tambourin Suite No. 2” by Bernard Rands and “Six Poems from Neruda’s ‘Alturas’ ” by David Felder.

e-mail: mkunz@buffnews.com



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