

## Classically Speaking/June events put Buffalo on the map

BY PETER R. RECZEK

With two internationally acclaimed events occurring simultaneously this month, June is a big month for Buffalo's classical music scene. In the city, the JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition takes center stage at Kleinhans, June 6 to 9. And in the 'burbs, the University at Buffalo (UB) Center for 21st Century Music will present June in Buffalo at UB's Amherst campus, June 4 to 10.

June in Buffalo is one of our city's crown jewels. Presented by the UB Music Department and the Robert and Carol Morris Center for 21st Century Music, June in Buffalo is a festival and conference dedicated to composers, both young and old. Founded in 1975 by composer and UB professor Morton Feldman, June in Buffalo joins Tanglewood New Music and the Aspen Festival as one of the first, and most influential, new music festivals in the country. Its mission is a simple one, according to June in Buffalo music director David Felder, a UB professor and world-renowned composer: "to bring together young composers with more established composers in a mentoring relationship that promotes the composition and performance of new music."

This series gives new meaning to contemporary music by presenting music that's been written to explore and



June in Buffalo runs from June 4 to 10.

experiment rather than simply entertain. What is music? How do sounds communicate ideas? Are there new ways to make sounds and connect with audiences in meaningful ways? Performance is critical to finding these answers. Says Felder, "Nothing is more important for young composers than to hear their music performed by professional ensembles committed to playing it."

A typical day at the festival starts

with lectures by senior mentor composers on aspects of composing or their own music—what they are trying to achieve, or how they are trying to achieve it. After lunch, the students break into small groups to work with their mentors and prepare for a 4 p.m.

concert of the students' work. Each evening features a concert of works by the senior composers—including Robert Beaser, David Felder, Fred Lerdahl, and Steven Stucky—at 7:30 p.m.

This year's theme, "competing world views," will bring together musical styles from all parts of the globe. A complete list of programs can be found on the center's website ([www.music21c.org](http://www.music21c.org)) site, and most are open to the public. One concert of note occurs Friday, June 8, when UB's own Genkin Philharmonic will be joined by classical guitarist Eliot Fisk at the Burchfield Penney in a performance of the works of Beaser, Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, Igor Stravinsky, and others. Fisk is perhaps best known for his recordings of Johann Sebastian Bach and Joaquin Rodrigo, but he has also been a vocal proponent for, and accomplished performer of, contemporary composers.

On Sunday, June 10, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO), under the baton of music director JoAnn Falletta, will appear in Lippe Concert Hall on the UB campus to perform major works by each of the senior composer mentors in attendance. Other performing ensembles at the festival include Ensemble Interface, an exciting European group specializing in works by contemporary composers; the New York New Music Ensemble, a Manhattan-based group that has championed new music for more than thirty years; Signal, under the direction of percussionist/composer Brad Lubman; UB's own versatile Snee Sinfonietta; and the UB

The JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition runs from June 6 to 9.



Photos courtesy of the JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition and June in Buffalo

## On the Town

Percussion Ensemble.

As fortunate as we are to have a world-class event in our backyard, funding is always limited. Many past participants, such as Steve Reich and Phillip Glass, regularly support June in Buffalo because of the important role it plays in the future of serious music. It is a role we can all support through attendance and sponsorship. This is new and exciting music, but it is experimental. Come with an open mind prepared to be challenged and moved in ways you didn't know were possible.

The second of Buffalo's musical crown jewels in June is the biennial JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition ([www.fallettacompetition.org](http://www.fallettacompetition.org)). Inaugurated in 2004 as a joint project of the BPO and WNED-FM, this event garnered international attention as the first ever guitar concerto competition. Under the direction of Niagara Falls-based guitarists Joanne Castellani and Michael Andriaccio, the competition attracts classical guitarists from around the globe who gather to compete for cash awards, a recording contract, national and international broadcast exposure, and a return engagement with the BPO. In 2010, more than forty competitors representing eight countries met to vie for the titles of overall winner, Audience Favorite, and Musicians' Choice.

Competing in the Falletta Competition is a multiphase process. The preliminary round requires each entrant to submit a formal application and unedited CD performance recording. Possible performance selections comprise Concerto No. 1 by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Concierto Antillano* by Ernesto Cordero, Manuel Ponce's *Concierto del Sur*, the *Concierto de Aranjuez* and the *Fantasia para un Gentilhombre* by Joaquin Rodrigo, *Folias* by Roberto Sierra (a former judge of the competition), and Concerto for guitar and small orchestra by Heitor Villa-Lobos.

From among the preliminary entrants, a team of judges selects eight guitarists to advance to the semifinal phase. This year, the semifinal public performances will take place on June 6 and 7 at the WNED studios. Semifinalists will perform their entry selections, after which the judges will choose three finalists to perform with the BPO at Kleinhans on June 9. Those performances will include all movements of the selected concertos. Immediately after the concert, the winners will be announced. We, the audience, are the winners as well, because we get to hear the next potential member of Los Romeros before anybody else. SMITH

Peter R. Reczek is a scientist and longtime follower of WNY's classical music scene.

## THE ALBRIGHT-KNOX ART GALLERY INVITES YOU TO A MASSIVE SUMMER CELEBRATION



PARTICIPATE

THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2012  
7-11 PM  
ALBRIGHT-KNOX ART GALLERY

"RETRO GOURMET" FARE  
OPEN BAR 7-8 PM  
\$150 PER TICKET  
PUNK, FUNK, ROCK, DISCO—THE '70S HAD IT ALL

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO PURCHASE TICKETS, CALL  
716.270.8204, OR VISIT [WWW.ALBRIGHTKNOX.ORG/COLLISION](http://WWW.ALBRIGHTKNOX.ORG/COLLISION).

CATCH WISH YOU WERE HERE: THE BUFFALO AVANT-GARDE  
IN THE 1970S BEFORE IT CLOSURES ON JULY 8.

All proceeds benefit the Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

**K One Fifty**  
Albright-Knox Art Gallery 1862 • 2012

PRESENTING SPONSORS

**FIRST  
NIAGARA**

**RICH'S  
CATERING**