

Five composers set to coach

By **Mary Kunz Goldman**

NEWS CLASSICAL MUSIC CRITIC

Five composers are in residence this week at June in Buffalo, the University at Buffalo's annual conference on avant-garde music. They will be coaching 26 students from around the world.



*Portrait of Professor David Felder in the Music Department
Photographer: Douglas Levere*

“We not only select the composers based on the work that they produce, but also their abilities as a teacher,” says J.T. Rinker, the festival’s managing director. The student composers are a diverse group. “We have one from Turkey, one from Australia, a couple from Western Europe, and we have some students studying currently in the United States who originated in Asia and Europe.”

The five composers are:

David Felder, 58, head of UB’s music department and June in Buffalo’s creative director. A native of Cleveland, Felder studied at the University of California at San Diego with composers Bernard Rands, Roger Reynolds and Donald Erb. His compositions have been known to explore subtle gradations of pitch, and many of them are vivid, electronically enhanced soundscapes, some of them augmented by video.

Robert Beaser, 58, received his master of music, M.M.A. and doctor of musical arts degrees from the Yale School of Music. He studied conducting with Otto-Werner Mueller and former BPO Music Director William Steinberg, and his composition teachers included Earle Brown, a composer associated with June in Buffalo's early days. Beaser has been described as one of the first composers to explore the "new tonality," a return to tonal writing as opposed to atonal and abstract music.

Julia Wolfe, 53, was born in Philadelphia and earned her doctorate at Princeton. In 1987 she co-founded, with her husband and another composer, the vigorous new music ensemble and festival Bang on a Can. Her work has been called "clangorously dissonant" – sometimes even deafening – and often involves repetitive figures and tones. One piece on her 2009 CD, "Dark Full Ride," is scored for a group of bagpipes. June in Buffalo is performing Wolfe's "Impatience" which involves a screening of the movie of the same name by 1920s film experimentalist Charles De Keukeleire.

Steven Stucky, 62, was born in Hutchinson, Kan., and has taught at Cornell University since 1980. He was awarded the 2005 Pulitzer Prize in Music for his Second Concerto for Orchestra. In September, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Music Director Gustavo Dudamel will be performing a symphony commissioned from him. Stucky's "Silent Spring" was premiered early this year by the Pittsburgh Symphony.

Fred Lerdahl, 69, was a Pulitzer finalist three times: for "Time after Time" in 2001, String Quartet No. 3 in 2010 and "Arches" in 2011. He is the Fritz Reiner Professor of Musical Composition at Columbia University. Lerdahl is known for his "spiral form," which suggests a circling repetition. Born in Madison, Wis., he studied with Milton Babbitt, Edward Cone, Roger Sessions and Earl Kim at Princeton University.

Here is the schedule for June in Buffalo events that are open to the public.

Afternoon concerts: All start at 4 p.m. and are free.

Monday, Lippes Concert Hall:

UB Percussion Ensemble

Tuesday, B1 Slee Hall: Ensemble Signal

Wednesday, Baird Recital Hall:

The New York New Music Ensemble

Thursday, Lippes Concert Hall:

Ensemble Interface

Saturday, Baird Recital Hall:

Chamber Music

Evening concerts are at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Admission is \$12 (\$9 for UB alumni, \$5 for students). The exception is the Monday concert, which is free.

Monday, Baird Recital Hall: Roberto Fabbriciani, flutes, in music by Cavallone, Ferneyhough, Nono and others.

Tuesday, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall: Slee Sinfonietta/UB Percussion Ensemble, in music by Felder, Wolfe and Xenakis.

Wednesday, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall: Ensemble Interface in music by Andriessen, Feldman, Furrer, Lerdahl and Stucky.

Thursday, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall: New York New Music Ensemble, led by James Baker, in music by Beaser, Druckman, Felder, Lerdahl and Stucky. Also, Eliot Fisk plays Beaser's "Shenandoah."

7 p.m. Friday, Burchfield Penney Art Center: Genkin Philharmonic. Program to include works by Schoenberg, Webern, Stravinsky and others.

Saturday, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall: Signal, in music by Andriessen and Wolfe.

2:30 p.m. next Sunday, Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall: The BPO, led by Music Director JoAnn Falletta, play music by Beaser, Felder, Lerdahl and Stucky.

For more information, call 645-2921.