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Felder Times Four

by Jan Jezioro

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UB composer David Felder premieres his *Les Quatre Temps Cardinaux*

The Tuesday, April 23 premiere at 7:30pm in Slee Hall of UB professor of composition David Felder's *Les Quatre Temps Cardinaux* is the focal point of a two-day program that marks the start of a new university tradition called the Signature Series, celebrating UB's legacy of innovation and distinction in arts and letters.

Les Quatre Temps Cardinaux is a complex song cycle for two solo voices, a 35-piece orchestra, and 12 channels of electronics. Commissioned in 2011 for the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress, the work is dedicated to the memory of Serge and Natalie Koussevitzky, and it was written for Ensemble Signal, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and the Slee Sinfonietta, and two soloists, Ethan Herschenfeld and Laura Aikin, a UB graduate who has established an outstanding operatic career in Europe, including numerous appearances at Milan's famed La Scala opera house.

A poem by the 20th-century mystic French author René Daumal is at the heart of Felder's work, which also incorporates poems by Robert Creeley, Dana Gioia, and Pablo Neruda. "The texts are present in every way that I could imagine," Felder says, "from literal reading through the structural. Text settings range from through-composed to verse/refrain, and more traditional song form, all the way to deconstructing components of the sound of the text on both the micro and macro level in the electronic transformations and in the orchestra. There are 12 movements, and Dumal's poem is present literally in either six or seven movements, depending on one's point of view, Creeley in two movements, Gioia in one movement, while Neruda is present in fragments in the fifth movement, with one purely orchestral wheel at the center."



Opera singer Laura Aikin (photo by L. Caputo)

The program will open with *Tweener*, a 2010 Felder composition for solo percussion, electronics, and large chamber ensemble, featuring UB's master percussionist Thomas Kolor as soloist.

Monday, April 22, 2pm: Open rehearsal of *Les Quatre* in Slee Hall, open to the public, RSVP requested.

Tuesday, April 23, 1pm: Slee Hall Lobby, a luncheon dialogue with Felder and others: "Inside the Making of *Les Quatre Temps Cardinaux*." Open to the public, registration limited to 60, RSVP required. A complimentary light lunch will be provided for all registered participants.

3:30pm: Baird Hall 250, "Textural Signatures," a panel discussion open to the public, RSVP requested. Faculty and student, joined by a biographer of the poet René Daumal, will explore the relationship between texts and the arts, with attention to the poems featured in Felder's composition.

5:30pm: Black Box Theater in the Center for the Arts, pre-concert reception with drinks and hors d'oeuvres, with remarks by Felder and E. Bruce Pitman, Dean of UB's College of Arts and Sciences, a ticketed event limited to 100, RSVP required.

UB Symphony Orchestra

It's now official: Daniel Bassin is the most innovative music director that the UB Symphony Orchestra has ever had as its leader. Now in his third season as music director, Bassin has helped the student orchestra evolve into a continuously improving organization that has managed to successfully stage Buffalo premieres of neglected masterpieces by major classical composers, with the stellar performance of Lutoslawski's cello concerto last February as the most recent example. In their next performance in Slee Hall, on Wednesday, April 24 at 7:30pm, the UBSO will be joined by the UB Chorus and Choir in a performance that will include the Buffalo-area premiere of Franz Schubert's 1822 *Missa Solemnis*, his *Mass No. 5 in A-flat Major*, featuring a quartet of talented soloists that includes a Buffalo favorite, soprano Colleen Marcello. This *Mass* was one of the rare works that Schubert, an incredibly prolific composer, ever revised, with the resulting "Gloria" section now being "massive, nearly 200 measures long, which is completely astounding," says Bassin.

The program includes Saint-Saëns's *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, in a transcription for solo flute and orchestra with soloist Ya-Ju Wen, the winner of this year's UBSO's Concerto Competition. The concert will also feature the first ever American performance of Anton Bruckner's *Symphonic Prelude in C Minor*, edited by Bassin, who says, "I came to Bruckner as a concert pairing, because I've always felt a direct line to Schubert in his music. For me the terms 'monumental' and 'sublime' are simultaneously the material focus and aesthetic goals of both composers." Editing this complicated transcript was a challenge, Bassin says. "There is no way I would have been able to take on this project without the help of head music librarian Nancy Nuzzo and the remarkable music library at UB."

Admission to the concert is free.