

**Wednesdays@7 presents**

# **Palimpsest**

**Aleck Karis, conductor**

Wednesday, February 22, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

Conrad Prebys Concert Hall

Divertimento for 8 “Ambiguous Symmetries” (2014)

Mario Davidovsky

Unnerve (2022) *\*world premiere*

Erin Graham

Michael Matsuno, Flute  
Grace Talaski, Clarinet  
Liam Gooding, Piano  
Kosuke Matsuda & Camilo Zamudio, Percussion  
Batya MacAdam-Somer, Violin  
Greg Perrin, Viola  
Robbie Bui, Cello  
Matthew Henson, Contrabass

Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte (Lord Byron), Opus 41 (1944)

Arnold Schoenberg

Myra Hinrichs, Batya MacAdam-Somer, Violins  
Greg Perrin, Viola  
Peter Ko, Cello  
Mari Kawamura, Piano  
Jonathan Nussman, Recitation

Carmen Arcadiae Mechanicae Perpetuum (1981)

Harrison Birtwistle

Michael Matsuno, Flute and Piccolo  
Emilia Lopez-Yanez, Oboe  
Grace Talaski, Clarinet in  $\flat$  and Bass Clarinet  
David Savage, Bassoon and Contrabassoon  
Ryan Beard, Horn  
Rachel Allen, Trumpet  
Eric Starr, Trombone  
Ashley Zhang, Piano  
Kosuke Matsuda, Percussion  
Myra Hinrichs & Batya MacAdam-Somer, Violins  
Greg Perrin, Viola  
Robbie Bui, Cello  
Andrew Crapitto, Contrabass



# *Unnerve* (2022)

## **Program Notes:**

*Unnerve* is an expansion of a trombone solo I wrote for Berk Schneider in 2021. The piece focuses on a frustrating oscillation between E and E flat, which originally acted as a metaphor for broken and doomed mechanisms like a stuck zipper or a marble gaining momentum as it spirals downward in increasingly smaller circles. However, in the idea's ensemble form, I wanted to focus more on conveying a kind of lighthearted ominousness, similar to the experience of suddenly waking in the middle of the night and enjoying the momentary thrill of being startled by something mundane like the shape of your jacket on a chair or an unexpected shadow.

## **Artist Bio:**

**Erin Graham** (she/they) is a composer of contemporary classical music and an active percussionist. A fourth-year PhD student in Composition at UC San Diego, Erin has worked with highly-regarded artists such as King Britt, Stalina Villarreal, Lee Vinson, Amy Williams, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and the Houston Symphony. Erin's recent projects include a collaboration with Lee Vinson as part of Intersection's LISTEN project as well as projects with percussionist Oliver Xu, trombonist Berk Schneider, and percussionists Yongyun Zhang and Rebecca Lloyd-Jones.

In 2021, Erin was a composition fellow at the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's Edward T. Cone Composition Institute, where they worked with Steven Mackey and Ludovic Morlot. Erin received Rice University's Paul and Christiane Cooper Prize in Music Composition for their orchestra piece, *Increase* in 2019. In 2015, Erin won an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award for their chamber work, *Five Poems of Edward Lear*. Erin's composition teachers include Lei Liang, Pierre Jalbert, Karim Al-Zand, David Liptak, Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, Robert Morris, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, and Patrick Long.

# Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte

By Lord Byron (1788–1824)

'TIS done—but yesterday a King!  
And arm'd with Kings to strive—  
And now thou art a nameless thing:  
So object—yet alive!  
Is this the man of thousand thrones, 5  
Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones,  
And can he thus survive?  
Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,  
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind 10  
Who bow'd so low the knee?  
By gazing on thyself grown blind,  
Thou taught'st the rest to see.  
With might unquestion'd,—power to save,—  
Thine only gift hath been the grave, 15  
To those that worshipp'd thee;  
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess  
Ambition's less than littleness!

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach 20  
To after-warriors more  
Than high Philosophy can preach,  
And vainly preach'd before.  
That spell upon the minds of men  
Breaks never to unite again,  
That led them to adore 25  
Those Pagod things of sabre sway  
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph and the vanity,  
The rapture of the strife— 30  
The earthquake voice of Victory,  
To thee the breath of life;  
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway  
Which man seem'd made but to obey,  
Wherewith renown was rife—  
All quell'd—Dark spirit! what must be 35  
The madness of thy memory!

The Desolator desolate!  
The Victor overthrown!  
The Arbiter of others' fate  
A Suppliant for his own! 40  
Is it some yet imperial hope  
That with such change can calmly cope?  
Or dread of death alone?  
To die a prince—or live a slave—  
Thy choice is most ignobly brave! 45

He who of old would rend the oak,  
Dream'd not of the rebound:  
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke—  
Alone—how look'd he round?  
Thou, in the sternness of thy strength, 50  
An equal deed hast done at length,  
And darker fate hast found:  
He fell, the forest prowlers' prey;  
But thou must eat thy heart away!

The Roman, when his burning heart 55  
Was slaked with blood of Rome,  
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,  
In savage grandeur, home—  
He dared depart in utter scorn  
Of men that such a yoke had borne, 60  
Yet left him such a doom!  
His only glory was that hour  
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway 65  
Had lost its quickening spell,  
Cast crowns for rosaries away,  
An empire for a cell;  
A strict accountant of his beads,  
A subtle disputant on creeds,  
His dotage trifled well: 70  
Yet better had he neither known  
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand  
The thunderbolt is wrung— 75  
Too late thou leav'st the high command  
To which thy weakness clung;  
All Evil Spirit as thou art,  
It is enough to grieve the heart  
To see thine own unstrung;  
To think that God's fair world hath been 80  
The footstool of a thing so mean;

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,  
Who thus can hoard his own!  
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,  
And thank'd him for a throne! 85  
Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,  
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear  
In humblest guise have shown.  
Oh, ne'er may tyrant leave behind  
A brighter name to lure mankind! 90

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,  
 Nor written thus in vain—  
 Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,  
 Or deepen every stain:  
 If thou hadst died as honour dies, 95  
 Some new Napoleon might arise,  
 To shame the world again—  
 But who would soar the solar height,  
 To set in such a starless night?

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust 100  
 ` Is vile as vulgar clay;  
 Thy scales, Mortality! are just  
 To all that pass away;  
 But yet methought the living great  
 Some higher sparks should animate, 105  
 To dazzle and dismay:  
 Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth  
 Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,  
 Thy still imperial bride; 110  
 How bears her breast the torturing hour?  
 Still clings she to thy side?  
 Must she too bend, must she too share  
 Thy late repentance, long despair,  
 Thou throneless Homicide? 115  
 If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,—  
 'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem!

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,  
 And gaze upon the sea;  
 That element may meet thy smile— 120  
 It ne'er was ruled by thee!  
 Or trace with thine all idle hand  
 In loitering mood upon the sand,  
 That Earth is now as free!  
 That Corinth's pedagogue hath now 125  
 Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage  
 What thoughts will there be thine,  
 While brooding in thy prison'd rage?  
 But one—'The world was mine!' 130  
 Unless, like he of Babylon,  
 All sense is with thy sceptre gone,  
 Life will not long confine  
 That spirit pour'd so widely forth—  
 So long obey'd—so little worth! 135

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,  
 Wilt thou withstand the shock?  
 And share with him, the unforgiven,  
 His vulture and his rock!  
 Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst, 140  
 And that last act, though not thy worst,  
 The very Fiend's arch mock;  
 He in his fall preserved his pride  
 And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

There was a day—there was an hour, 145  
 While earth was Gaul's—Gaul thine—  
 When that immeasurable power  
 Unsated to resign,  
 Had been an act of purer fame  
 Than gathers round Marengo's name, 150  
 And gilded thy decline  
 Through the long twilight of all time,  
 Despite some passing clouds of crime.

But thou forsooth must be a king,  
 And don the purple vest, 155  
 As if that foolish robe could wring  
 Rememberance from thy breast.  
 Where is that faded garment? where  
 The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,  
 The star—the string—the crest? 160  
 Vain froward child of empire! say,  
 Are all thy playthings snatched away?

Where may the wearied eye repose  
 When gazing on the Great;  
 Where neither guilty glory glows, 165  
 Nor despicable state?  
 Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—  
 The Cincinnatus of the West,  
 Whom envy dared not hate,  
 Bequeath'd the name of Washington, 170  
 To make man blush there was but one!

