

Erik Steighner, *saxophone*

Sunday, April 18, 2021 at 3pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
School of Arts and Communication / Department of Music presents

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We look forward to the day when we can safely welcome audiences to Lagerquist Concert Hall.
In the meantime, we are pleased to offer a series of concerts via live stream.
We hope that you enjoy the performance!

PROGRAM

- Caprice en forme de valse** **Paul Bonneau (1918-1995)**
- From Stillness** **Gregory Youtz (b. 1956)**
- Syrinx** **Claude Debussy (1862-1918)**
- Six Metamorphoses after Ovid** **Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)**
- I. Pan, who played upon the reed pipe which was Syrinx, his beloved*
 - II. Phaeton, who rode upon the chariot of the sun for one day and was hurled into the river Padus by a thunderbolt*
 - III. Niobe, who, lamenting the death of her fourteen children, was turned into a mountain*
 - IV. Bacchus, at whose feasts is heard the noise of gaggling women's tattling tongues and the shouting of boys*
 - V. Narcissus, who fell in love with his own image and became a flower*
 - VI. Arethusa, who, flying from the love of Alpheus the river god, was turned into a fountain*

INTERMISSION

- Introduction, Dance and Furioso**..... **Herbert Couf (1920-2011)**
- Mirage** **Dorothy Chang (b. 1970)**
- Improvisation and Caprice** **Eugene Bozza (1905-1991)**
- Volatility Index**..... **Erik Steighner (b. 1981)**

Program Notes

Many performers have been forced to work in isolation during the past year, and this program of works for solo instrument are certainly emblematic of that experience. Half of today's program is comprised of unaccompanied works and transcriptions from the saxophone standard repertoire. While I worked on these pieces by Bonneau, Bozza, Britten, Couf, and Debussy during my undergraduate years, I have never performed them on a formal recital since finishing my studies. After teaching them for so many years, it has been rewarding to return to them as a performer.

Dorothy Chang's *Mirage* is a newer work originally composed for solo flute, and newer still are works composed by PLU faculty member Gregory Youtz and myself earlier this year. They were premiered last weekend at the North American Saxophone Alliance Region 1 Conference (held online). Youtz writes, "*From Stillness* is both a response to the strange stasis we found ourselves in awaiting the end of the pandemic, and an exploration of new aspects of a pitch-class system I have been using for many years. The stasis afforded the unexpected time to write the piece and thus the piece emerged from stillness. Of course, the piece itself mirrors that, beginning with mostly silence and gradually finding phrases and gestures, haltingly, parenthetically, and rising in a series of arcs from the lowest range to the highest—before falling quickly back to—a stillness—that contains possibility..."

Regarding *Volatility Index*, my program notes read, "The previous year was a time of tumult and stress on many fronts, and the pitch content of the work's opening theme was derived from the weekly closing value of the Chicago Board Options Exchange's VIX Index for each week in 2020. Nicknamed the "Fear Index," VIX tracks the volatility of the stock market in real-time. Other themes were derived from the 2020 charts of the S&P 500, TSLA, NKLA, and KODK (the meteoric rise of GME during early 2021 makes a cameo in the coda). While the stock market made a strong recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic, many Americans faced a continuous struggle to make ends meet. *Volatility Index* reflects on these stories in relation to each other."

About the Performer

Praised by the *Tacoma News Tribune* for his "effortless lyricism" as well as his "smooth tone and fluid virtuosity," saxophonist **Erik Steighner** has performed with ensembles including the Austin Symphony Orchestra, the Federal Way Symphony, the Northwest Sinfonietta, the Pacific Northwest Ballet Orchestra, the San Antonio Symphony, and Symphony Tacoma. Steighner teaches at Pacific Lutheran University and Tacoma Community College. He is also on faculty at the University of Puget Sound Community Music Department and is founder and conductor of the South Sound Saxophone Ensemble.

Steighner has premiered dozens of solo and chamber works and appears on CD releases from labels including Albany Records, Alea Publishing, Mark Custom, Naxos, Reference Recordings, and Vienna Modern Masters. Steighner holds bachelor's degrees in music and English from the University of Puget Sound and master's and doctoral degrees in saxophone performance from The University of Texas at Austin. While living in Austin, he served on the faculty at Texas State University. Steighner is a Conn-Selmer artist and plays on Selmer Paris saxophones and mouthpieces.