

Artist Series

**Erik Steighner, Saxophone
with Oksana Ejokina, Piano**

Sunday, February 20, 2022 at 3pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

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

Artist Series

**Erik Steighner, Saxophone
with Oksana Ejokina, Piano**

Sunday, February 20, 2022 at 3pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.

Masks must be worn at all times while indoors and for the duration of the performance.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

Tableaux de Provence..... Paule Maurice (1910-1967)

- I. Farandoulo di chatouno*
- II. Cansoun per ma mio*
- III. La boumiano*
- IV. Dis alyscamps l'amo souspire*
- V. Lou cabridan*

Selections from *Songs of Travel* Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

- II. Let Beauty Awake*
- III. The Roadside Fire*
- VII. Whither Must I Wander*
- VIII. Bright Is the Ring of Words*

Walimai..... Michael Djupstrom (b. 1980)

Fuzzy Bird Sonata..... Takashi Yoshimatsu (b. 1953)

- I. Run, bird*
- II. Sing, bird*
- III. Fly, bird*

Program Notes

Tableaux de Provence

Written for French saxophonist Marcel Mule, this suite for alto saxophone and orchestra (performed this afternoon on the baritone saxophone) is an entertaining collection of miniatures depicting different scenes from the Provence region in southeastern France. The first movement is a jaunty *Dance of the Young Girls*, based on a popular Provencale outdoor dance called the farandole. A short *Song for My Beloved* (its introduction based on guitar tuning pitches) leads to *The Bohemian Woman*, followed by the more serious *From the Graveyard Les Alyscamps, a Soul Sighs* (written as a remembrance for Maurice's cousin). The final movement depicts a large, buzzing insect that zooms and buzzes around with perpetual motion recalling *Flight of the Bumblebee*.

Songs of Travel (based on words by Robert Louis Stevenson)

II. Let Beauty Awake

Let Beauty awake in the morn from beautiful dreams,
Beauty awake from rest!
Let Beauty awake
For Beauty's sake
In the hour when the birds awake in the brake
And the stars are bright in the west!
Let Beauty awake in the eve from the slumber of day,
Awake in the crimson eve!
In the day's dusk end
When the shades ascend,
Let her wake to the kiss of a tender friend,
To render again and receive!

III. The Roadside Fire

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night,
I will make a palace fit for you and me
Of green days in forests, and blue days at sea.
I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom;
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.
And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

VII. Whither Must I Wander

Home no more home to me, whither must I wander?
Hunger my driver, I go where I must.
Cold blows the winter wind over hill and heather:
Thick drives the rain and my roof is in the dust.
Loved of wise men was the shade of my roof-tree,
The true word of welcome was spoken in the door—
Dear days of old with the faces in the firelight,
Kind folks of old, you come again no more.
Home was home then, my dear, full of kindly faces,
Home was home then, my dear, happy for the child.
Fire and the windows bright glittered on the moorland;
Song, tuneful song, built a palace in the wild.
Now when day dawns on the brow of the moorland,

Lone stands the house, and the chimney-stone is cold.
Lone let it stand, now the friends are all departed,
The kind hearts, the true hearts, that loved the place of old.
Spring shall come, come again, calling up the moorfowl,
Spring shall bring the sun and rain, bring the bees and flowers;
Red shall the heather bloom over hill and valley,
Soft flow the stream through the even-flowing hours.
Fair the day shine as it shone on my childhood—
Fair shine the day on the house with open door;
Birds come and cry there and twitter in the chimney—
But I go for ever and come again no more.

VIII. Bright Is the Ring of Words

Bright is the ring of words
When the right man rings them,
Fair the fall of songs
When the singer sings them,
Still they are carolled and said—
On wings they are carried—
After the singer is dead
And the maker buried.
Low as the singer lies
In the field of heather,
Songs of his fashion bring
The swains together.
And when the west is red
With the sunset embers,
The lover lingers and sings
And the maid remembers.

Walimai

Much of *Walimai* inhabits the dark, mysterious world that lies concealed beneath the rainforest canopy. This vast, timeless landscape is also the setting for the powerful short story of the same name found in Isabel Allende's fascinating collection *Cuentos de Eva Luna*. Allende's work first provided the inspiration for this piece, and to some extent, suggested its dramatic and emotional trajectory, which traces a path from clarity and freedom through a terrible loss toward an eventual release from suffering and return to peace.

Allende's *Walimai* is one of the Children of the Moon, a tribe of indigenous people who live deep in the forest, just beyond the reach of the outside world – a world with which contact is fleeting and often violent. In the course of the story, Walimai is responsible for the death of a woman, thus violating the first fundamental law of his people. As she dies, the woman's soul enters his body, forcing Walimai to carry with him the tremendous weight of her earthbound spirit and the knowledge of his actions.

For more than a month, the two are bound to one another, and with each day, the woman's spirit weighs more heavily upon Walimai. As they move deeper into the forest, talking, singing to each other, sharing their histories and legends, a powerful love develops between them, only increasing Walimai's suffering; he knows that very soon, he must help her to leave the earth. Finally, they arrive at the appropriate site, and in the dense, black stillness of the jungle, Walimai begins the ritual fast.

As his strength slowly deteriorates, their spiritual connection weakens, and the woman's soul begins to break away from his embrace. Days later, she takes her first steps alone, returning quickly but venturing farther out with each successive attempt. On the twelfth day of the fast, when the pain of their separation has reached a terrible intensity, Walimai dreams she is flying, soaring high above the forest canopy, and he wakes, his body shaken and nearly weightless. She is gone. All around him, the eternal forest waits in silence.

Walimai rises and walks for hours until he arrives at a small river. After snaring a fish, he goes to hunt, so as not to return to his village empty-handed.

– Michael Djupstrom

Fuzzy Bird Sonata

Written by the Japanese composer Takashi Yoshimatsu, *Fuzzy Bird Sonata* blends classical and contemporary saxophone techniques with hints of jazz and rock. One of several “bird” pieces by Yoshimatsu, this is not a “fuzzy bird” sonata; rather, it is a fuzzy (as in blurry, or blue) “bird sonata.” The first movement employs rapid technical passages and shifting time signatures, followed by the calm lyricism of the second movement. The third movement drives to a final climax (with a brief improvised cadenza thrown into the mix).

About the Performers

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, where his course load has included saxophone, chamber music, music appreciation, ear training, music theory, and digital music. 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.

Russian-born pianist **Oksana Ejokina** is Chair of the Piano Faculty and Associate Professor of Music at Pacific Lutheran University. An artist of great breadth and versatility, she appears frequently as guest recitalist and chamber musician on concert series across the United States and abroad. She has soloed with the Seattle Symphony, St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic in Russia, Tacoma Symphony, and performed in venues such as the Phillips Collection in Washington DC, Benaroya Hall in Seattle, Davies Orchestra Hall in San Francisco, and Klassik Keyifler Festival in Turkey. A dedicated performer of new music, she has premiered works by Marilyn Shrude, Wayne Horvitz, Bern Herbolzheimer, and Laura Kaminsky, among others. She has been featured on multiple live radio broadcasts on such stations as WFMT-Chicago, KUOW and KING FM in Seattle, Maine Public Radio and NPR Performance Today. Her collaborations have included concerts with the Seattle Chamber Players, Avalon String Quartet, violinists Ian Swensen and Andrew Jennings, and cellists Johannes Moser and Anthony Elliott.

Ejokina holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano performance from Stony Brook University. She is the pianist of the Volta Piano Trio, whose recordings for Con Brio label received accolades in multiple international music magazines, such as *The Strad*, *Gramophone* and *American Record Guide*.

A sought-after teacher, she has given piano and chamber music masterclasses in colleges and universities across the US and is in demand as an adjudicator. Additionally, Ejokina is Artistic Director of several flagship classical music programs at the Icicle Creek Center for the Arts, including the International Chamber Music Festival/Institute and Winter Piano Festival, which annually welcomes advanced pianists from the most prestigious colleges and conservatories in the US and Canada.

Spring Events

at Pacific Lutheran University

ALL MUSIC EVENTS ARE IN MARY BAKER RUSSELL MUSIC CENTER, LAGERQUIST CONCERT HALL AT 8PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

FEBRUARY

6 Sunday, 3pm

Benefit Concert for ORS of Tacoma, free admission (donation suggested)

13 Sunday, 3pm

Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Mark Brombaugh, Organist
Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU community; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

15 Tuesday, 8pm

PLU Student Showcase, an AMP fundraising event. Free admission, \$5 suggested donation

16 Wednesday, 8pm

Artist Series: Sheely Alves, Voice; Cassio Vianna, Piano & Wagner Trindade, Bass, free admission

20 Sunday, 3pm

Artist Series: Erik Steighner, Saxophone with Oksana Ejokina, Piano, free admission

MARCH

15 Tuesday, 8pm

University Symphony Orchestra: Student Showcase

18 Friday, 12pm

Artist Series: Bradley Howard, Tenor with Lee Thompson, Piano, free admission

19 Saturday, 1pm

Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission

19 Saturday, 5pm

Artist Series: Guitar Faculty Recital

19 Saturday, 8pm

Choral Union. Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU community; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

20 Sunday, 3pm

University Wind Ensemble

21 Tuesday, 8pm

University Jazz Ensemble with Guest Artist Greg Gisbert, Trumpet
Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center

24 Thursday, 8pm

Keyboard Students Recital, free admission

27 Sunday, 5pm

PLU Honor Orchestra for Strings, free admission

APRIL

2 Saturday, 5 and 6:30pm

Northwest High School Honor Band, free admission

5 Tuesday, 8pm

Golden West Winds, free admission

6 Wednesday, 8pm

Artist Series: Jennifer Rhyne, Flute

12 Tuesday, 8pm

University Symphony Orchestra: KammerMusikeren

20 Wednesday, 8pm

Keyboard Students Recital, free admission

24 Sunday, 3pm

Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Paul Tegels, University Organist. Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU community; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

24 Sunday, 8pm

Artist Series: The Goldberg Variations by J. S. Bach, free admission

28 Thursday, 8pm

University Chorale

30 Saturday, 1pm

PLUtonic/Gold Rush, MBR Amphitheater, free admission

30 Saturday, 5pm

University Singers & Knights Chorus, free admission

MAY

1 Sunday, 12pm

Sølvvinden Flute Ensemble, free admission

MAY, Cont.

1 Sunday, 5:30pm

Second City Chamber Series: Viennese Finesse. Tickets: \$30, purchased through Second City Chamber Series only, by phone at 253-572-8863 or at their website: www.schamberseries.org

1 Sunday, 8pm

Viennese Piano Masterclass, free admission

3 Tuesday, 5:30pm

Saxophone Quartets & Jazz Combos. The Cave, Anderson University Center, free admission

3 Tuesday, 8pm

Choir of the West

6 Friday, 1pm

Pierre Vallet Voice Masterclass, free admission

6 Friday, 8pm

Steel Band & Percussion Ensemble, free admission

7 Saturday, 8pm

PLU Ringers

8 Sunday, 3pm

Woodwind Students Recital, free admission

8 Sunday, 4:30pm

Brass Students Recital, free admission

10 Tuesday, 8pm

University Symphony Orchestra

12 Thursday, 8pm

Keyboard Students Recital, free admission

14 Saturday, 3pm

Piano Ensemble, free admission

14 Saturday, 8pm

Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission

15 Sunday, 3pm

University Wind Ensemble

17 Tuesday, 6pm

Chamber Music Kaleidoscope, free admission

17 Tuesday, 8pm

String Kaleidoscope, free admission

18 Wednesday, 8pm

University Concert Band, free admission

19 Thursday, 8pm

University Jazz Ensemble. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center

20 Friday and 21 Saturday

Opera Scenes. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center.

22 Sunday, 3pm

Composers Forum, free admission

22 Sunday, 5:30pm

Songwriters Workshop. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission

JUNE

25 Thursday, 8pm

Choral Union Tour Preview Concert. Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU community; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

To Order Tickets:

On Line: www.plu.edu/music/tickets

At the Concert: Lobby Desk in Mary Baker Russell Music Center

CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

All ticket sales are final - no refunds

MUSIC EVENT TICKET PRICES: \$10 GENERAL; \$5 SENIOR CITIZENS (60+), MILITARY, PLU ALUMNI, & PLU COMMUNITY; FREE TO PLU STUDENTS & 18 AND UNDER UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND SOME CONCERTS MAY BE ADDED AFTER PUBLICATION.

www.plu.edu/music/calendar (updated February 7, 2022)