

UCLA WINTER GRADUATE COMPOSERS CONCERT
FEBRUARY 23RD, 2021
8PM, LIVESTREAM

Dante Luna (b. 1995) **Two Butterflies went out at Noon**

*(First of three movements for soprano, flute, and piano
set to Emily Dickinson poems)*

Chloe Vaught, soprano

Elizabeth Van Renterghem, flute

Dante Luna, piano

Giovanni Piacentini (b. 1979) **Adrift in the Garden of Beautiful Things**

I. Prelude

Tim Fain, violin

Giovanni Piacentini, guitar

Andreas Apostolou (b. 1991) **Lekba**

Fugue

Kenneth Glendon Brown (b. 1991) *Three Preludes from Opus Anachronicon*

Prelude No. 2 in f minor

Prelude No. 7 in E-flat major

Prelude No. 15 in G major

Kenneth Glendon Brown, piano

Théo Schmitt (b. 1991)

KENOPSIA

Lavinia Chen, violin

Christopher Ye, violoncello

Choreography: Makena Sekimoto

Videography: Allison Chao

Dancers: James Alcid, Kyleigh Colchico, Hyun Joon Kim,
Devin Mallory, Bella Stenval

Anthony Constantino (b. 1995)

Preview selections from Arcanum Perpetuum

0. The Fool

I. The Magus

IV. The Emperor

IX. The Hermit

XIV. Art

XVI. The Tower

PROGRAM NOTES

Two Butterflies went out at Noon

by Emily Dickinson

Two Butterflies went out at Noon—
And waltzed above a Farm—
Then stepped straight through the Firmament
And rested on a Beam—
And then—together bore away
Upon a shining Sea—
Though never yet, in any Port—
Their coming mentioned—be—
If spoken by the distant Bird—
If met in Ether Sea
By Frigate, or by Merchantman—
No notice—was—to me—

Lekba

by Andreas Apostolou

This work was inspired by the Afro-House style and Haitian Vodou lore. Papa Lekba is the “lua” (spirit) who controls the gateway to the spiritual world. He is depicted as an old man wearing a straw hat and smoking a pipe.

I sampled traditional percussion and vocals from Haiti and Cameroon, as well as sounds of digging and breathing. I also incorporated a TR8s drum machine, analog percussion synthesizer and guitar pedals. My goal for this work was to simulate a state of ritualistic ecstasy.

This track is a contribution to an ongoing project featuring choreographer Clara Augustine (UCLA- PhD) and a team of UCLA dancers and videographers in fulfillment of an MFA capstone project.

Adrift in the Garden of Beautiful Things

I. Prelude

by Giovanni Piacenini

The title of the piece *Adrift in the Garden of Beautiful Things* refers, in a metaphorical way, to a kind of hallucination where we wander through this magical space with an epicurean abandon simply rejoicing in pleasure and instant euphoria, free and without any kind of remorse or sense of guilt. It is as if we were granted the permission that we all seek to simply be completely happy and to satisfy absolutely all our desires. This anarchic and narcissistic metaphor frees us from all responsibility and morality and allows us to live in a constant state of lightness, superficiality, and decadent abandonment.

Each movement transports us to a different moment within this stupor until finally, the absence of negative emotions lead us to shift our attention from receiving to giving and the initial epicurean pursuit evolves into an altruistic and generous one.

The game between the violin and the guitar is a kind of dialogue that narrates this fantastic journey full of abandonment, questioning, reverence, and submission in the face of such beauty.

This work is dedicated to Tim Fain.

Fugue

by Andreas Apostolou

My work explores a fusion of blues and chromaticism in 10/8 meter. It's a three-voice fugue in a strict counterpoint style inspired by Bach, Shostakovich and Dutilleux.

The overall structure of the fugue, when observed as a piano roll (laid out as MIDI data), gives the visual impression of a deep-sea fish!

KENOPSIA

by Théo Schmitt

Kenopsia n. the eerie, forlorn atmosphere of a place that's usually bustling with people but is now abandoned and quiet— an emotional afterimage that makes it seem not just empty but hyper-empty. Writer, John Koenig, invents words like this one in "The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows," to "give a name to emotions we all might experience but don't yet have a word for." Largely inspired by his work, **KENOPSIA** is an improvisation-based choreographic process that researches the question: Through dance and film editing, can the body somehow, miraculously communicate the feelings that words cannot?

Three Preludes from Opus Anachronicon

by Kenneth Glendon Brown

Opus Anachronicon is a cycle of 24 Preludes and Fugues in all major and minor keys. The order of keys proceeds in a unique manner: each major key is followed by its minor subdominant, a pairing which ascends chromatically, like so:

C major

f minor

D-flat major

f-sharp minor

D major

g minor

And so on, till the final prelude and fugue in e minor. This ordering, rather than accentuating harmonic contrast between adjacent movements of the cycle, links the movements tightly through voice leading: each major key functions as a dominant to the following minor key, and in turn, each minor key stands only one accidental away from the following major key. To me, this creates the long-term effect that the cycle, as a whole, is felt as forever "darkening," forever "descending," the major keys always preparing the minor, the minor keys always falling one flat further down— every key pointing to its shadow.

Arcanum Perpetuum

by Anthony Constantino

The idea to base the work on the Major Arcana of the tarot was given to me by my partner who had been practicing reading tarot for several years. I found the Major Arcana to be particularly fascinating, not as an occult or divinatory tool, but as a representation and mirror of the human psyche. As they are most commonly used for fortune-telling or divination, each individual card holds meanings which are general, non-specific indications of events or people in a person's life.

Originally, I planned to write a piece which would examine the tarot as an objective entity and deal heavily with the numerology and symbolism inherent to each card. I soon realized that I could not view such a personal system so impersonally. Each movement of *Arcanum Perpetuum* is about someone, living or passed, who has played an important role in my development as a composer and as a person. Most of these people are indicated with dedications — some are not.

The Major Arcana referenced in *Arcanum Perpetuum* are those from the Thoth Tarot, which are slightly different than most traditional tarot decks. When a new tarot practitioner chooses a deck to use, this decision is based largely on an intuitive connection or admiration of the art in a particular deck variant. My selection of the Thoth Tarot for this work was made with the same sentiment.

0. The Fool (Prologue): Representing the beginning of a journey, The Fool opens the cycle with a simple melody presented within a chorale setting. This theme reappears in various places throughout the entire cycle.

I. The Magus: Indicative of the powers of will and communication, The Magus wastes no time diving into its complex texture. When achieved effectively (sometimes in the form of music), communication can become a powerful magic to wield.

IV. The Emperor: Crowned and throned, The Emperor is a symbol of power and leadership. It serves as a reminder that one must center themselves mentally and spiritually in order to make effective decisions and take action. One must know how to lead themselves before they can lead others.

IX. The Hermit: The secluded Hermit represents the value of contemplation and introspection. At times, one must choose to remove themselves from outside influence to discover their own unique potential. Gaining this wisdom is key in creating a positive impact on the surrounding world.

XIV. Art: An incarnation of beauty, Art is the symbol of synthesis, integration, and balance. It is also an Art for one to cultivate these qualities within themselves.

XVI. The Tower: Often viewed as a symbol of destruction and calamity, The Tower is a herald of awakening and change. It is painful to tear down an existing foundation, but through suffering, one often finds a new, more fulfilling truth.