

SUSAN KANDER**HERMESTÄNZE** [29:56]*for violin and piano* (2013)

COMMISSIONED BY JACOB ASHWORTH

1	Hermes, Messenger of the Gods	1:27
2	Zeus	3:35
3	Maia	1:59
4	The Lyre	2:28
5	Baby Hermes	2:01
6	Styx I	2:41
7	Hermes, Inventor of Music	1:22
8	Baucis and Philomon	2:02
9	Styx II	1:52
10	Prometheus	1:25
11	Pan-Syrinx	3:11
12	Apollo	2:56
13	Styx III	1:41
14	Hermes, Messenger of the Gods (reprise)	1:21

SOLO SONATA [18:50]*for violin-viola-violin* (2002)

COMMISSIONED BY YUVAL WALDMAN

15	I. Capricciosa	4:58
16	II. Lament*	7:47
17	III. (Malevolent) Dances	6:06

A GARDEN'S TIME PIECE [12:47]*for soprano and violin* (2011)

COMMISSIONED BY COLUMBIA FOUNDATION

18	I. Today's the day	1:56
19	II. April rain	2:22
20	III. There are glories	1:33
21	IV. The end of summer	1:52
22	V. There is a madness	1:08
23	VI. A feather pierces the snow	0:57
24	VII. Oak leaves sit in snow	1:01
25	VIII. Today's the day (reprise)	2:01

JACOB ASHWORTH *violin* (**viola*)**LEE DIONNE** *piano***JESSICA PETRUS** *soprano*

The viola Jacob Ashworth plays in *Lament** is on generous loan from its maker, David Segal.
All works published by Notevole Music Publishing / Subito Music Corp.

HERMESTÄNZE *for violin and piano*

In 2013, violinist Jacob Ashworth pin-pointed a serious hole in the violin repertoire: he went looking for something to match the great piano cycles and song cycles written in the 19th century by composers like Beethoven, Schumann, Schubert, Chopin and so many others, but found nothing comparable for violin. In response, he commissioned me, his mother, knowing my passion for character and theatricality in chamber music, to write "a song cycle for violin and piano." After much discussion, we settled on Hermes, a first-rank Greek god of so many parts and responsibilities and tales that an extended batch of movements would be great fun to compose. *Hermestänze* is the result. The fourteen movements depict Hermes, his extended family of great gods and mortals, and a few of the stories in which he figures. Hermes was the messenger of the gods, and the god of travelers; he was a renowned trickster; he invented music (though his brother, Apollo, was the god of music) and he invented the first string instrument: the lyre. First and foremost, however, was his sacred and compassionate task of escorting the souls of the dead down to the edge of the River Styx, which they would cross over into Hades. One of the most complex fellows ever, he has proven to be a perfect subject for a cornucopia of musical tableaux.

SOLO SONATA *for violin-viola-violin*

Though I did not know it at the time, the *Solo Sonata* was the coming together of two disparate but major events in my life: the infamous 9/11/2001, and my first opportunity to write for a virtuoso musician. Shortly after the World Trade Center towers went down, violinist Yuval Waldman came to me with the concept of a three-part solo work with viola featured in the middle movement. While thinking about the piece I would compose, I read an article referring to the phenomenon of "feast-famine-feast": a cycle in which we are complicit in creating a disaster, experience a period of mourning and self-examination, then re-engage with almost a blind vengeance in the behavior that triggered the disaster in the first place. My outline for the piece comes from this idea. Unifying the movements are the same five notes, very differently deployed, to be sure. These pitches, as an opening gesture, came to me while looking at a collection of small Paul Klee watercolors at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The first movement, *Capricciosa*, is the more-or-less innocent dance of a young girl in rondo form, followed by *Lament*, in which the viola describes the immediate aftermath of something horrific. Both these movements make significant use of the five-note gesture. Finally, *(Malevolent) Dances* unleashes the furious denial of a dangerous, unresolved reality and, after the opening howl, throws it away forever.

A GARDEN'S TIME PIECE for soprano and violin

A Garden's Time Piece was commissioned to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of artist-poet Leslie Laskey. Choosing text from his 2010 collection *In Bright Light and Dark Shadow*, I enjoyed using just the two voices – soprano and violin – to set his clean, evocative lines of nature, life and love across time and space. The voice of the violin expresses the underlying emotional complexity of the soprano's deceptively simple lines.

I.

Today's the day
I wanted to call.
Today's the day
there are crocuses.

II.

April rain
puddles
of violets
splashed
on walks
tattooed
with shadows
of new leaves...
memories
for other seasons.

The days are young with spring
and filled with ancient
longings.

Morning glories
the acrobats
climb to the
dizzy heights
clamoring for
the sun.

III.

There are glories
unfelt within each day
unseen hands
that tip the bowl of a leaf
and spill crystal into crowns.
Breath that dances on
fragile stems
to sway the coloured burdens
of summer.

VI.

A feather pierces the snow
what a hard garden this January makes.

VII.

Oak leaves
sit in snow
looking to applaud their
followers -
the new spring buds.

IV.

Time
The end of summer
trumpeted in on the slow winds -
Time
A leaf floating to the earth
races to catch its shadow.
Time
The sun,
A garden's time piece.

VIII.

Today's the day
I wanted to call.
Today's the day
remembering a day
when I could
say there are
crocuses.

V.

There is a madness
to the October winds
a racing, racing
trying to remember,
trying to remember July.
Will we only have order when next we see snow?

The music of **Susan Kander** has been heard throughout the United States and in cities around the world, including London, Paris, Mexico City, Lima, Birmingham, Vancouver, Cape Town, St. Petersburg and Guangzhou. Kander has received numerous commissions from notable ensembles and organizations, including the National Symphony Orchestra, Southampton Chamber Music Festival, Kansas City Chorale, Copland Fund, Columbia Foundation and a variety of instrumentalists and ensembles. In the operatic world, she has received commissions from Opera Minnesota, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Opera Theater of St. Louis and Columbus Opera. Her 2013 work, *Hermestänze*, for violin and piano is a rare example of a large-scale dramatic cycle written for the violin. Kander is especially proud to have had her *Solo Sonata for violin-violin-violin* performed by commissioner Yuval Waldman in the Composers' Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia, during their White Nights festival. A Fellow of the MacDowell Colony, Kander's chamber music has been recorded on the MSR, Navona and Loose Cans labels.

[www.susankander.net]



PHOTO: MICHAEL UPINAK

Across the spectrum of classical music, **Jacob Ashworth** has gained a reputation as a consummate stylist, from his expert attention to the unique characteristics of Baroque period performance to his precise yet expressive interpretations of modern works. In 2012 at the Yale School of Music he founded the ensemble Cantata Profana, for which he serves as Artistic Director, winning the CMA/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming in 2016. He is Co-Music Director of Heartbeat Opera, whose 2016 production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* received widespread critical acclaim with Ashworth leading from the violin. In 2015, his fully staged, memorized performance of György Kurtag's *Kafka-Fragments* with Heartbeat was hailed as a triumph. Based in New York, Jacob has performed extensively with period ensembles, including as concertmaster for Nicholas McGegan with Mark Morris Dance Group, and with Trinity Baroque, the Yale Baroque Ensemble, Juilliard 415, Yale's Schola Cantorum, and New York Baroque Incorporated. Jacob has also been an artist at the Staunton Music Festival, New Haven Festival of Arts and Ideas, Wellesley Composer's Conference, Lake George Music Festival, and Music Mountain. [www.jacobashworth.com]

Pianist **Lee Dionne** is an active soloist and chamber musician. As a soloist, he has appeared in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Philharmonic in Bratislava, and he has performed concertos with the Philharmonia Virtuosi, Yale Symphony Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Bilkent Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber musician, he is a member of Cantata Profana and Ensemble Connect, and has appeared at the Staunton Music Festival, Yellow Barn Music Festival and Norfolk Summer Music. Dionne studied piano at the Yale School of Music and the Hochschule für Musik in Hanover, Germany. His major teachers and influences have been Boris Berman, Wei-Yi Yang, Matti Raekallio, Patricia Zander, Arthur Haas, Michael Friedmann, Paul Berry, and Wilma Machover. Dionne performances have been broadcast live on NPR, Britain's Classic FM, the Netherlands' Classic FM and Portugal's Antena 2. [www.leadionne.com]

Soprano **Jessica Petrus** enjoys a varied career in chamber music, and has received acclaim for her brilliant and agile performances, including her appearance in Unsuk Chin's *Akrastischon-Wortspiel* with Kettle Corn New Music and Cantata Profana in New York, and her Spoleto USA solo debut in 2015 in Johann Sebastian Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. Recent performance highlights include solo engagements with Cantata Profana, the Henry Purcell Society of Boston, Three Notch'd Road and appearances with Skylark Ensemble, Emmanuel Music and Staunton Music Festival. She has recorded on the Delos, MSR Classics and Sono Luminus labels. [www.jessicapetrussoprano.com]