

Sybarite5

string quintet

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Gorell Recital Hall, John Sutton Hall

Sami Merdinian, violin
Sarah Whitney, violin
Angela Pickett, viola
Laura Metcalf, cello
Louis Levitt, bass

Winner, 2011 Concert Artists Guild

Victor Elmaleh Competition

Winner, 2011 Sylvia Ann Hewlett

Adventurous Artist Prize

*The program will be announced
from the stage*

Sybarite5

The following information has been provided, unedited, by the artists.

“Their rock star status...is well deserved. Their classically honed technique mixed with grit and all out passionate attack transfixes the audience...”

That is how *The Sarasota Herald Tribune* described Sybarite5, the first string quintet ever selected as a winner of the Concert Artists Guild International Competition in its 60 year history. Comprised of Sami Merdinian and Sarah Whitney, violins; Angela Pickett, viola; Laura Metcalf, cello; and Louis Levitt, bass, Sybarite5 has taken audiences by storm all across the

US, forever changing the perception of chamber music performance. From the moment their bows hit the strings, this quintet of talented, diverse musicians takes the audience on an exciting ride that engages the senses and redefines the rules.

From Mozart to Radiohead, Sybarite5's eclectic repertoire and dynamic performance style is turning heads throughout the music world: “[Sybarite5] excelled at the exquisite... [playing] with relish, a sense of comfort, and a frisson of missionary zeal” (*The Washington Post*). The Quintet's debut EP disc *Disturb the Silence*, featuring music by Radiohead and Piazzolla, plus two original works written for Sybarite5, was released in spring 2011 and quickly reached the top ten on the *Billboard* charts. The group's follow-up CD, *Everything in its Right Place*, is a continuation of the *Radiohead Remixed Project* and was released in November 2012 on the CAG Records label.

The group visits sixteen states and the US Virgin Islands during the 2013-14 season, with featured performances for the Washington Performing Arts Society (DC); Strings in the Mountains Festival (CO), including a collaboration with Daniel Bernard Roumain; UTC Fine Arts Center (TN); South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center (FL); Fairbanks Concert Association (AK); and Weis Center at Bucknell University (PA), University of Dayton and Ohio University (OH); University of Wyoming Cultural Arts (WY); Johns Hopkins University (MD), as well as Sybarite5's own New York series at the cell theatre. Fall 2013 also

includes a week-long educational residency with Quad City Arts (IL), culminating in a concert co-presented by the Quad City Symphony (IA).

Recent performance highlights include Sybarite5's Carnegie Hall debut at Zankel Hall on the CAG series, Library of Congress, Aspen Music Festival, UC San Diego, University of Arizona, Sun Valley Center for the Arts, University of Nevada/Reno, Chautauqua Institution, Tuckamore Chamber Music Festival, and in New York at Lincoln Center, Time Warner Center, Tishman Auditorium and Bohemian National Hall. The Quintet has also performed at such diverse NYC locations as Galapagos Artspace, the Apple Store, the Museum of Sex, the Core Club and the Cutting Room. The group has also performed on the CBS Early Show and for his Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Ongoing programs include the *Radiohead Remixed* Project, *The Shuffle Effect* and *New Music IDOL* (featuring a series of short newly-commissioned works by student composers, in collaboration with University composition departments). Also at the 2011 CAG Competition, Sybarite5 was awarded the Sylvia Ann Hewlett Adventurous Artist Prize, which was used to com-

mission new pieces for *Radiohead Remixed* and to produce the CD, *Everything in its Right Place*. In spring 2015, the Quintet looks forward to premiering the world's first concerto for string quintet and orchestra by the acclaimed American composer Dan Visconti.

Formed at the Aspen Music Festival, Sybarite5 was the first string quintet admitted to the Aspen Advanced String Quartet Studies program, where the group worked with Earl Carlyss of the Juilliard Quartet, bassist Edgar Meyer and the Cavani, American and Ying Quartets. Currently the ensemble continues its tenure at the Aspen Music Festival in a new capacity as the AMFS Alumni Ensemble.

Musicians

Argentinian violinist **Sami Merdinian** has received worldwide recognition for his outstanding performances as a soloist and chamber musician. Sami has recently appeared as a soloist with the Montevideo Philharmonic, the Argentinian National Symphony, The Charlemagne Orchestre, Symphony Pro Musica, The Gagneung Philharmonic in South Korea, and Philharmonia of the Nations at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. As chamber musician, Mr. Merdinian has performed in Spoleto, Italy, The Perlman Chamber Music Workshop, The Festival of The Hamptons, Bargemusic, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Concertgebouw, among other venues. Also a member of Sejong Soloists since 2008, Sami has performed throughout the United States and Asia, including a West Coast Tour with Gil Shaham, and has recorded for Universal Records. Mr. Merdinian has been prize winner in several



international competitions including Gold Medal in the XII International Young Solo Instrumentalists Competition in Argentina and the New Talent Competition in Slovakia organized by the European Radio. He has also received the Rising Star Award by Tiffany & Co. and was named Outstanding Artist of the Year by the Argentinian Press. While at The Juilliard School and Yale University, Mr. Merdianian was a pupil of Dorothy Delay, Naoko Tanaka and Peter Oundjian, and has participated in master classes for artists such as Itzhak Perlman, Ruggiero Ricci, Emmanuel Ax, Pamela Frank and members of the Tokyo, Cleveland and Guarneri String Quartets.

Sarah Whitney, an active solo and chamber musician, has been heard worldwide across stages in Europe, Asia, South America and the United States. As a chamber musician, Ms. Whitney has performed as guest artist on the Cleveland Institute of Music Faculty Concert Series, the Cleveland Composer's Guild and the Memphis Chamber Music Society Solo Concert Series. As a soloist she received second prize in the 2000 Philharmonic Society of Arlington, MA Young Artists Competition. Most recently, Ms. Whitney led the Cleveland Central Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra as concertmaster on tour to Carnegie Hall and again returned to the stage with the New World Symphony. She has participated in festivals in Italy, France, and China as well as the Aspen Music Festival, the Music Academy of the West and the Spoleto Music Festival. She has also collaborated with the Josh Ritter Band and can be heard on their latest album, *The Historical Conquests of Josh Ritter*, produced by Sony Music BMG. Ms. Whitney received her M.M. from the Cleveland Institute of Music and

her B.M. with honors from the University of Michigan. Her teachers include Kathleen Winkler, Aaron Berfosky, Cyrus Forough, Stephen Shipps, Paul Kantor and William Preucil. Ms. Whitney plays on a Luigi Soffritti violin made in 1885.

Angela Pickett has performed as a violist, violinist, and fiddler throughout North America, Europe. A member of the Princeton Symphony, Angela has also performed with Wet Ink Music, Ne(x)tworks, Continuum, and recently premiered a new version of Helmut Lachenmann's *Mouvement* with the Argento Chamber Ensemble. In 2006, Angela performed Ann Southam's *Re-Tuning* for viola and tape at the 34th International Viola Congress, and a subsequent performance of *Re-Tuning* at the 2006 International Sound Symposium was recorded for national radio broadcast. As a fiddler she has performed with Irish tenor John McDermott, the Chieftains, and appeared on numerous recordings of Irish/Newfoundland traditional music. A doctoral candidate in viola performance at the Manhattan School of Music, Angela completed a Masters degree from the Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Music in her hometown of St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. Angela has attended Tanglewood Music Centre, Aldeburgh Festival, Banff Centre for the Arts, Centre d'Arts, Orford, and has twice been a recipient of the Canada Council for the Arts' Grant for Classical Musicians. Angela's principal teachers include Michael Tree, Samuel Rhodes, Karen Tuttle and Karen Dreyfus.

Laura Metcalf is active as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral musician, and teacher, lauded for her "sensitive, melodic touch" (*BlogCritics Magazine*). She is cellist of the Ansonia Trio, who were the Grand Prize Win-

ners of the 2009 Rutenberg Competition. The trio has been praised for its “tremendous musical range” and “consummate skill.” She is a member of Ten O’Clock Classics, a chamber ensemble, with whom she toured 27 cities nationwide in 2010. She is a member of the Tarab Cello Ensemble, a group of 8 cellists dedicated to new music. She has appeared on the Festival Chamber Music series at Weill and Merkin Halls, collaborating with members of the New York Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera. Solo recital engagements include the Hewlett-Woodmere Gold Series, Shandeleer Music Festival, Livingston Music Club, and WMP Strad for Lunch Series. She has also performed chamber music in Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium, the Chateau de Fontainebleau in France, the French Consulate, le Poisson Rouge, the Tenri Institute, and many others. Laura has been a concerto soloist with the Ensemble 212 Orchestra and the Orquesta Sinfonica Sinaloa. She has attended the Aspen, Taos and Sarasota Music Festivals, the London Masterclasses, the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau (France) and the IMS Prussia Cove Masterclasses and Open Chamber Music. Laura has appeared on the Today Show, Conan O’Brien, David Letterman, and the View. Laura received her Master of Music degree from the Mannes College of Music, where she studied with Timothy Eddy and was awarded the James E. Hughes award. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Boston University’s College of Fine Arts, where, as recipient of the prestigious Trustee Scholarship, she was the winner of the 2003 Bach Competition.

Double bassist **Louis Levitt** has recently performed alongside the Grammy nominated Quartet San Francisco, and multiple Grammy winning com-

poser Bob James. In addition to his work with Sybarite5 other chamber music appearances include the Aspen Music Festival, LaSalle Chamber Music Series in Cincinnati Ohio, and the Teluride Music Festival. He has appeared as a soloist performing Frank Proto’s *Carmen Fantasy* with orchestra and Jean Francaix’s *Mozart New Look*. Orchestrally, Levitt has performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony, the New World Symphony, Sarasota Orchestra, Orchestra of the S.E.M. and was principal of the Springfield Symphony. In 2008 he was an inaugural member of the WABASS Institute where he studied with Hal Robinson, Ranaan Meyer, and Eric Larson. Mr. Levitt received his degrees from the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music where he studied with Albert Laszlo. He has also received multiple fellowships to the Aspen Music Festival where he studied with Paul Ellison, Albert Laszlo, Eugene Levinson, Bruce Bransby, and Stuart Sankey. Mr. Levitt is originally from Sarasota Florida, where he studied with John Miller.

www.Sybarite5.org

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In Residence

During their short stay in Indiana, the members of Sybarite5 will also be visiting students at Penns Manor and Purchase Line high schools.