

*National Association of Composers U.S.A., Los Angeles Chapter*

*presents*

# ~ New String Quartets ~

by

## ~ California Composers ~

~ Sunday, June 26, 2022 3:00 PM ~

Burbank Music Academy

4107 West Burbank Boulevard, Burbank, CA 91505

The Seagull, movement I: “Konstantin” Allen W. Menton

Corona Sketches for String Quartet Michelle Green Willner  
I. Fear “Avoiding death but certainly not living”  
IV. End Meet “The world has never felt smaller”

Lament for String Quartet Elizabeth Cochran-Bryan

The Sunset Quartet David Raiklen  
*Pause*

Emily Lake: Ann Marie Kurrasch  
I: Twilight  
III: Sunrise

Piece for String Quartet: Blue Matthew Hetz

Lament for String Quartet Anthony J. Wardzinski

Quickening Deon Nielsen Price

**Luke Santonastaso and Daphne Tsao, violins.**  
**Nancy Roth, viola. Shaul Kofler, cello.**

## Composer Biographies and Program Notes

**Elizabeth Cochran-Bryan** is a classically trained pianist for over 12 years. She is currently a graduate student with the highest of honors from California State University, Stanislaus with a study in music and a concentration in composition. Over the past year, she has furthered her evolving passion for composition and has expanded to writing for other instruments. Currently, she has written for string and brass quartets, percussion ensembles, solo instruments (violin, piano, horn), and orchestra. Her main genres of inspiration for compositions derive from Film Scores, Romantic and Contemporary styles.

*Lament* (2021) is a piece that represents the mourning of a loved one. The feeling of grieving for those you have lost. Throughout, the piece transitions from the grieving person yearning for their person back, to finally the acceptance of loss. As humans, we tend to only cherish the happy times, but there are times when we must cry and hurt. This is needed in order to rise again. This is what lament represents: pain, acceptance, and rebirth.

**Matthew Hetz** is a Los Angeles native. His works have been performed nationally and recorded with Parma Records. Hetz's work for cello and piano, "Sarajevo Cello," was featured in Parma Records 2021 CD, *Moto Eterno*, with Trio Casals. The work was reviewed in *Gramophone* by Guy Rickards: "Evocation of a very different type occurs in the opening duo for cello and piano, Sarajevo Cellist by Matthew Hetz, inspired by the anonymous player who performed in the bomb-laden streets of the Bosnian capital in the 1990s. Its driving momentum is gripping, making it all the more maddening that only the first movement is recorded here"; and in *Jazz Mania*: "this fifth Moto in a series features a dozen tracks with very varied tempos and climates. It opens with the magnificent 'Sarajevo Cellist' by a certain Matthew Hetz who is unknown to me. Other works can be found at [matthewhetz.com](http://matthewhetz.com)

In my older years I am drawn increasingly towards tonality. For some reason I associate colors with key signatures-synesthesia. While this is very personal, and highly subjective, for me, A Major is **Blue**, and this string quartet is basically in A Major. This work could be a bright blue.

**Ann Marie Kurrasch** is an American composer, arranger and songwriter. She has written over 425 vocal and instrumental pieces, including commissioned and published works, and as a pianist, has produced fourteen albums. She studied composition with Jim Flaherty, Pitzer College; Clark Eastham, Detroit; and Lettie Alston, Oakland University, Michigan, where she earned her Master's Degree in Composition. As an educator, she used her music creatively to develop curricula for private and instrumental students in the Detroit and Maui school systems and her music business, MyHeartSongMusic.com. She also has published print and downloadable e-book versions of her book *Let's Play! 12 Piano Solos for All Occasions*. Her work can be streamed at Spotify, Apple, Amazon, Pandora, YouTube and SoundCloud.

*Emily Lake* (2019) is a descriptive work that was inspired by hearing the song of the White Throated Sparrow at a campground in Northern Michigan. It begins with "Twilight," full of bugs and mosquitos. Then into "Slumber," a peaceful nocturne. Then finally "Sunrise," with the lilting song of the sparrow and other birds joining in, ending with a golden sunrise.

The music of **Allen W. Menton** reflects his many cultural interests, encompassing literature, history, religion, dance, theater, and the visual arts. His orchestra works have been performed by many ensembles, ranging from youth and school groups to community and professional orchestras. His works for theater have been performed at venues throughout southern California, and his chamber music has been performed across the country and recorded professionally. A dedicated and innovative teacher, Allen Menton is Professor of Music Theory and Composition at Fullerton College in California. Previously, he taught at Pomona College, Charles University in Prague (as a Fulbright Scholar), and at the Long Beach and San Bernardino campuses of California State University. He holds degrees in Music Composition and Comparative Literature from Stanford, Cornell, USC, and UCLA. Hear more of his music at [www.allenmenton.com](http://www.allenmenton.com)

The music of *The Seagull*, Movement I: “Konstantin” (2022) first emerged as incidental music for a performance of Chekhov’s play *The Seagull*. After the theatrical run, I assembled and rearranged various fragments and snippets into a set of four movements for string quartet, each movement bearing the name of one of the four principle characters. The first movement is built around my leitmotif for the tormented young playwright Kontantin Treplev.

**Deon Nielsen Price** (BA Brigham Young University; MM University of Michigan; DMA University of Southern California) is a commissioned and published composer and author, award-winning pianist, recording artist, conductor, church musician, veteran educator, and advocate for women in music and for living composers as a former president of NACUSA, NACUSA-LA, and International Alliance for Women in Music. Her Cambria CD recordings, sheet music for her 280 compositions, reviews, performance videos, chamber operas, interviews, along with her book, *Accompanying Skills for Pianists* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., are available at [www.culvercrest.com](http://www.culvercrest.com). As Board member and Resident Composer of the Interfaith Center at the Presidio, she curates the ICP Sunday Concerts, now completing its 5<sup>th</sup> year. In 2017, Deon relocated from a 45-year residence in Culver City, California to the Presidio of San Francisco, where she had lived as a high school student. In 2020, she moved to her new home on the Central California Coast.

Sheltering at home during the pandemic in 2020-2021 and composing my Chamber Symphony, I suddenly felt the need for something more spritely as a relief from the heavy dissonance in the Pathos movement and the sweet serenity of the Compassion that followed. I went to the desk and sketched a new movement. The ideas started tumbling out seemingly more suitable for a small string ensemble than for a full chamber orchestra. By the next day *Quickening* was a draft of a sectional movement of nearly 6 minutes duration: *Allegretto* in 6/8 changing to 5/8, a perky *Maestoso pizzicato* continuing in 5/8, and *Andantino giocoso* again in 6/8.

**David Raiklen** is an American composer, producer, educator, and host. David was mentored by Oscar winner John Williams and Pulitzer Prize winner Mel Powel. Dr. Raiklen studied at USC and CalArts and later taught at those universities. He works for the major studios including Sony, Fox, Disney, Sprint, Mattel, Warner Bros and PBS, plus independents. His projects have starred Elliott Gould, Doug Jones, Blythe Danner, and Martin Sheen. David made the New York Film Critics Top Ten with the documentary *Heist*, short listed for an Academy Award for *Worth*, and *Mia, A Dancer’s Journey* won the Emmy. He loves creating augmented reality and soaring concert music.

*Sunset Quartet* (2022). I've always loved seeing sunsets in different parts of the world, to me they are a high point of the day, not an ending but a new beginning. Here we look out on vistas and think about human action and technology as day transitions to night. And the sounds and textures of nature as the beauty and colors are both intimate, and inspire contemplation of time and space.

A native of California, **Anthony Wardzinski** has composed music for orchestra, wind ensemble, chorus, as well as a wide variety of chamber music. He studied composition with Roger Bourland, Paul Chihara, George Heussenstamm, Daniel Kessner, Ian Krause and David Lefkowitz. Dr. Wardzinski received his B.M. degree, cum laude, and his M.M. with distinction from California State University, Northridge and a Ph.D in Music from the University of California, Los Angeles. He currently teaches music at Moorpark College and Los Angeles Pierce College in Southern California. [L] [SEP]

*Lament* was composed in the winter of 2022 as an expression of sadness following the seemingly never-ending global events that continue to impact our personal lives. I consciously limited my materials to the melodic idea that grows from the opening swell of the quartet. Open strings and harmonics provide a somewhat desolate sound which propels the emotion of the piece. [L] [SEP]

**Michelle Green Willner's** evocative and award-winning works have been commissioned and performed internationally. Her multi-disciplinary works intersect music with dance, prose, film, and art. Her awards include ten ASCAP Plus Awards, two ASCAP Foundation Grants to Young Composers, Society for New Music's Brian M. Israel Prize, SOCAN's Serge Garant Award, Shalsholet's 6th International Festival of New Jewish Liturgical Music, and the WORD Grant: The Bruce Geller Memorial Prize, and fellowships including: Max Helfman Music Fellow, Creative Inquiry Fellowships, June in Buffalo, Wellesley Composers Conference, CSULB, ASCAP/Fred Karlin Film Scoring Workshop, Mellon Foundation and President's Fellow (Columbia University). Dr. Green Willner has given many talks/seminars. Please visit her website to learn more: [www.michellegreenwillner.com](http://www.michellegreenwillner.com) or subscribe to her YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcI2F3KDFyzpxoYMXSJOMLQ>

In 2020, while at home with my husband and four sons for 150 days, four prevalent thoughts/feelings came to mind. Then, in a NY Times editorial, I read six-word statements sent in by random people via Larry Smith's *Six Word Memoir Project*, describing their experiences during this time. Four of those statements inspired these four short movements.

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