

The University of New Mexico
College of Fine Arts
Department of Music

Presents

Faculty Spotlight Concert Two Worlds

With

Dr. Kristin Ditlow, piano
Dr. Michael Hix, baritone
Prof. Christian Newman, piano
Prof. Valerie Potter, flute
Dr. Christoph Wagner, cello

Music by Frédéric Chopin
Christian Newman
and Dr. Beth Ratay
Lyrics by Aleš Navrátil

Sunday, September 8, 3:00pm
Center for the Arts
Keller Hall

PROGRAM

Introduction and Polonaise brillante in C major, Op. 3 Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)
Arr. Emanuel Feuermann

Christoph Wagner, cello
Kristin Ditlow, piano

Impressions Momentanées de Polyommatinae à Albuquerque* (2024) Christian Newman
Prélude- "Un kaléidoscope de polyommatinae dans le pourpier"
Fantasia- "Un chat traque les plus gros papillons dans les parterres de fleurs de souci"
Tombeau- "Le défunt Arctic Blue consommé par les fourmis sur Coal Ave. Pont"
Rondo- "Les Polyommatinae s'abritent dans les plants de guimauve contre la crue soudaine qui
approche"

Christian Newman, piano

Dva světy (Two worlds)* (2024) Beth Ratay

Sung in Czech with English supertitles

Michael Hix, baritone
Valerie Potter, flute
Kristin Ditlow, piano

**world premiere*

PROGRAM NOTES

Impressions Momentanées de Polyommatinae à Albuquerque (Momentary Impressions of Polyommatinae (Arctic Blue Butterflies (Agridades glandon)) in Albuquerque

In the manner of the French Impressionists- These works depict moments in the life of the Arctic Blue, a dime-sized species of gossamer-winged butterfly, which thrives in dense swarms, or kaleidoscopes, around low-lying plants in the harsh Albuquerque sun. Around the viny purslane, the long-armed white sage, or the frantic marshmallow plant, one can see them glittering like vibrating jewels in the brightest summer heat, strangely unfazed by, and even reveling in the blasting rays. Like impressionist compositions from the previous century, these works are meant to depict the mood, and atmosphere evoked by the subject in a specific moment with less emphasis on a strict, evolving musical progression. This is hard for a long-winded person like me, and a fun exploration, to dwell on the subject with less drive to a progression, cadence or conclusion. While some devices and compositional tendencies are borrowed from arrangements by Debussy, et al. these works proceed through a broad harmonic language which avoids some of the musical 'tropes' of whole-tone scales, or inverted diatonic chords from the late 19th Century repertoire. These pieces are effectively 'new wine in old bottles' as they differ radically from the harmonic, and melodic approaches of those composers, yet utilize a similar sectional style as that given by the impressionists, along with aspects of the piano timbre, and modernist, extended instrumental playing techniques. These works are built on small snippets, and much of the musical interest may lie in these details of combined notes and resonant qualities. Much like when one views the Arctic Blues in flight, the beauty of that instance seems to encapsulate the beauty and structure that comprises the whole of their brief existence. The proportions and behavior of the details reflects that of the complete structure.

Christian Newman, 2024

Dva světy (Two worlds)

In 1922 my paternal grandfather, Vlad F. Ratay undertook a voyage from Prague to America to begin a new life here in the United States. He was 19 years old when he left Prague. My mother, Nancy Ratay, the keeper of family records, found a letter among his papers. It was entirely in the Czech language with no diacritical markings whatsoever. She believes it to be a first draft or a copy of the letter he sent home to Prague at Christmas in 1922. My mother undertook the project of transcribing and translating the letter for the family in 2021. After reading this letter, I knew I had to make a song cycle out of the content. Luckily, I was able to connect with Aleš Navrátil who agreed to create poems for the cycle from the contents of this letter. Aleš and I have been working together on this project for over a year, and it has been a pivotal point in my creative journey. Spending the time walking in my grandfather's shoes through his letters and descriptions has meant the world to me.

There are nine songs in the cycle. Song one describes his voyage across the ocean and his feelings of excitement on this journey. Song two described his arrival in New York and the overwhelming feeling of the city so different from his home. Song three details his first invitation to dinner at a suburb of New York. The fourth song talks about the work he did to begin to earn money. Song five describes his mixed feelings about comparing the new world with the old in his letters to his family. The sixth song describes his typewriter which he saved up money to buy, and used to type his letter home. The seventh song describes his exhilarations and excitement being in an American city. The eighth song describes the Christmas gifts that he sent home to his family. The final song recalls the opening journey on the ocean as he watches a similar story at the cinema.

Thank you to Aleš for being such a wonderful collaborator! Thank you to Michael Hix for supporting this artistic endeavor.

Beth Ratay, 2024

1. Oceáne široký

Dva světy a dvě slunce v tobě oceáne vidím,
oceáne široký,
Tam za obzorem děláš můj život, děláš ho veliký,
Vlna za vlnou, modř se zelenou, každým dnem,
neseš mne dál,
Za mou milenkou, mou Amerikou, se sluncem
nad hlavou, kdo by se bál.

Dva světy a dvě slunce v tobě oceáne vidím,
oceáne široký,
Jeden míří do hlubin a ten druhý k výšinám,
smělý a divoký,
V neskutečné kráse tvých hlubin se dnem i nocí
se prolínám.
U zábradlí na palubě sedím a tuším, probouzím
se a usínám.

Dva světy a dvě slunce v tobě oceáne vidím,
oceáne široký,
Tam za obzorem děláš můj život, děláš ho veliký.
Jsi znělkou mé změny, jsi taktem mých snů,
Jsi předělem mé pouti, zrcadlem mých dnů.

Dva světy a dvě slunce v tobě oceáne vidím,
oceáne široký.

2. New York a mrakodrapy

V dále Socha svobody a za ní mrakodrapy se
tyčí,
tak velmi malé z dálky lodě jsou, jak domečky
myší.
Však až já přijdu blíže k nim, to jistě velké
budou, to vím.

New York, New York!
Po úzkém můstku z lodi pryč,
a první krok na jües půdu!
Ani se mi tomu věřit nechce!
Jsem tu, dýchám, však vidím dobře přece!

A tu kolem mne policisté oblečení tak,
jak promítal jen na Žižkově náš starej biák,
a vůbec vše kolem je
úplně a zcelička
jako ta Amérika, moje nová matička!
Tak tomu budu muset věřit, že to Amerika je!
New York, New York!

Tu přijíždíme k mrakodrapům a k překvapení
mému,
Není to strmá výška, co vyvolá závrať, mou
trému,
Však to, že staré známé se mi zdají býti.
Tolikrát jsem o nich vyprávěl, aby byly, stačilo
jen snít.

1. Ocean Wide

Two worlds and two suns in you ocean I see,
ocean wide,
There over the horizon you make my life, you
make it big,
Wave after wave, blue and green, every day, you
carry me on.
Behind my lover, my America, with the sun
overhead, who would be afraid.

Two worlds and two suns in you ocean I see,
ocean wide,
One goes to the depths and the other to the
heights, bold and wild,
In the incredible beauty of your depths, I merge
with day and night.
I sit by the railing on the deck and wonder,
wake up and fall asleep.

Two worlds and two suns in you ocean I see,
ocean wide,
There over the horizon you make my life, you
make it big,
You're the soundtrack to my change, you're the
beat of my dreams
You are the dividing line of my pilgrimage, the
mirror of my days.

Two worlds and two suns in you ocean I see,
ocean wide,

2. New York and skyscrapers

In the distance, the Statue of Liberty and the
skyscrapers towering behind her,
So very small in the distance from the ship they
are, like the houses of mice.
But when I come near them, they'll be big, I
know that.

New York, New York!
Down the narrow gangway out of the ship,
and the first step onto the US land!
I can't believe it!
But I'm here, breathing and I can see well !

And there are policemen around me dressed in
a way,
as our old cinema used to screen in Zizkov,
and everything around them
completely and utterly looks like that Amérika,
my new mother!
So I'll have to believe it's America!
New York, New York!

Here we come to the skyscrapers and to my
surprise,
It's not the steep height that makes me dizzy,
feel butterflies in the stomach,
But it's how old and familiar they seem to me.
I've spoken of them so many times, all I had to
do was dream of them, so that they become
reality.

New York. New York!
New York. New York!
New York. New York!

Tak známý, tak nový,
tak svázan, tak volný,
tak všech, tak můj?
Tak pojd', tak stůj!

Tak přímý, tak kolmý,
tak vzdálen, tak zdojný,
tak cizí, tak můj,
tak pojd', tak stůj!

New York!

3. První pozvání na večeři

Dvanáct mil z New Yorku,
vlakem půl hodiny,
chůzí pak do vrchu
do místní rodiny.

Vyhliídka na Hudson,
když slunce zapadá,
taková nádhera,
i hlad můj přestává!

Pididomek, pididomek,
na české poměry
vila však jistě
hezké to pan Shedd má
na tomto místě.

Pididomek, pididomek,
na české poměry
vila však jistě
praktický luxus
říct je na místě.

Práce hospodyňky,
jak se mi zdá,
snazší je, rychlejší,
než u nás má.

Nejsou tu duchové
sloužící, služky,
vše jde jak po másle,
elektricky bez fušky.

... A když se mě zeptáte,
co jsem vše jed
neumím říci Vám,
nové to bylo a
vše jsem hned sněd

New York. New York!
New York. New York!
New York. New York! New York!

So familiar, so new,
so bound, so free,
so of all, so mine?
So - Come on, so stand still!

So straight, so perpendicular,
So far, so far, so able,
so foreign, so mine,
So come, so stand still!!

New York!

3. First Invitation to Dinner

Twelve miles from New York,
half an hour by train,
then walk up the hill
to a local family.

A view of the Hudson,
as the sun sets,
so beautiful,
even my hunger stops!

A wee-house, a wee-house,
by Czech standards a villa, though,
what a nice place for Mr. Shedd.

A wee-house, a wee-house,
by Czech standards a villa, though,
honestly, practical luxury
I must say

The work of a housewife,
it seems to me,
is easier, faster,
than she has it at our's.

There are no ghost
servants, maids,
everything's going like clockwork,
electrically without a hitch.

... and if you ask me,
what I ate,
I can't tell you,
it was new and
I ate it all up quickly!

4. První dolar

Vydělal jsem, vydělal
první dolar svůj!
Při sobě jej v kapse nosím,
je mi vzácný, můj!

V sobotu jsem stříhal trávu,
nikdy jsem to nedělal.
Horko bylo na umření,
vzduch i v plicích stál!

Dvě hodiny uplynuly,
ze mně potu tak,
že jsem myslel, že je po mně
hello, mister, funebrák!

Po obědě šel jsem znovu,
tu se to již zlepšilo,
a večer odcházel domů,
bohat, jak se patřilo!

Tři dolary a dvacepět centů!
Tři dolary a dvacepět centů!
Tři dolary a dvacepět centů!
To byly nějaké peníze na koruny české!

Neutratím, neutratím
první dolar, svůj!
Bude mojí připomínkou,
dělal jsem jak vůl!

Tři dolary a dvacepět centů!
Tři dolary a dvacepět centů!
Tři dolary a dvacepět centů!
To byly nějaké peníze na koruny české!

5. Snad jen někdy tu a tam

Se-be-se-be-se-be-se-be-se-be
Se-be-vě-do-mí
Se-be-vě-do-mý být

Vy-cho-vy-cho-vy-cho-vy-cho-vy-cho
vy-cho-vá-ní
vychování mít

Snad jen někdy
tu a tam
můžete si myslet,
že Ameriku chválím příliš,
a haním to,
co vlastně je
Praze a Čechám.

Čer-čer-čer-čer-čer-čer-čer-čer-čer
Čers-tvý vzduch
Ach, dý-chat čers-tvý vzduch

Už-už-už-už-už-už-už-už-už-už
U-ží-vat si,
U-měť si u-žít

4. First Dollar

I made, oh, I made
my first dollar!
I carry it in my pocket,
It's precious, it's mine!

On Saturday I cut the grass,
I'd never done it before.
It was too hot to die,
the air was in my lungs!

Two hours passed,
I was sweating so much,
I thought I was dead
hello, mister, undertaker!

After lunch I went again,
this time it was better,
and in the evening I went home,
rich, as was fitting!

Three dollars and twenty-five cents!
Three dollars and twenty-five cents!
Three dollars and twenty-five cents!
That was some money in Czech crowns!

I won't spend, I won't spend
the first dollar, mine!
It will be my reminder,
I've been working my ass off!

Three dollars and twenty-five cents!
Three dollars and twenty-five cents!
Three dollars and twenty-five cents!
That was some money in Czech crowns!

5. Maybe just now and then

Self-self-self-self-self-self-self-self-self-self
Self-confidence
To be self-confident

man-man-man-man-man-man-man-man-man-man
manners
to have good manners

Maybe just sometimes
now and then
you may think,
that I'm praising America
too uncritically,
and I'm finding faults
with Prague and Bohemia.

clean-clean-clean-clean-clean-clean-clean-clean
clean air
To breathe clean air

en-en-en-en-en-en-en-en-en-en-en-en-en
to enjoy
To be able to enjoy yourself

Ky příkladu dobrý čerstvý vzduch,
v Čechách jeho hodnotu neznají.
Nebo zde, zde lidé skutečně žijí!
Pracují, když mají,
a po práci si užívají, umí to,
zbaví se šedi a hrají si, žijí...

Přeji si, ať je Praha Prahou a
Čechy Čechami
a jen trochu, ať se věci napraví,
jen trochu stačí a
lépe by, lépe by
bylo v Čechách nám.

žit, žit, žít!, žít!, žít!, žít!, žít!, žít!, žít!, žít!

6. Psací stroj

á es dé ef jé ká el ů
píšu psaní, píšu domů
á es dé ef jé ká el ů
letí slova, letí domů

Přál bych si
uchovat
všechny nové dny a chvíle,
momenty a ušlé míle
zhusta Vám je
povyprávět
na stroji mém psacím
ve stručnosti, s láskou
na stroji mém hracím.

Á es dé ef jé ká el ů
O všech těch li-dech
Á es dé ef jé ká el ů
o všech těch mís-tech
á es dé ef jé ká el ů
o všech těch zá-žit-cích
á es de ef jé ká el ů
o všech mých pro-žit-cích

Amerika nebude
nikdy naší Evropou
a ta naše Evropa
nikdy mou Amérikou

Ten veliký rozdíl,
který jsem tu vnímal,
stále jej vidím,
už si ale zvykám, zvykám si tu (milí mí)
Ten veliký rozdíl,
který jsem tu vnímal,
stále jej vidím,
ale už si zvykám, zvykám si tu (milí mí)

á es dé ef jé ká el ů
píšu psaní, píšu domů
á es dé ef jé ká el ů
letí slova, letí domů

In Bohemia, for example, they don't know
the value of good fresh air, oh,
or here people actually know how to live.
They work when they have to,
and after work they enjoy themselves, they live
their lives, they know how to live their lives..

I wish Prague to be Prague and
Bohemia to be Bohemia
and just a little bit, things would get better,
just a little bit is enough and
it would be better, better, better,
it would be, would be, would be in Bohemia for
us.
Live, live, live, live, live, live, live, live!

6. Typewriter

á es dé ef jé ká el ů
I'm typing, I'm typing home
á es dé ef jé ká el ů
Words fly, words fly home

I wish
to keep
all the new days and moments,
the moments and the miles I've walked
and tell you about them densely
through my typewriter
In brief and with love
through my playing typewriter

Á es dé ef jé ká el ů
Of all those people
Á es dé ef jé ká el ů
♪ Of all the places ♪
Á es dé ef jé ká el ů
♪ Of all the experiences ♪
Á es dé ef jé ká el ů
♪ of all my experiences I felt ♪

Amerika will not be
will never be our Europe
and our Europe
will never be my América (repeat?)

The big difference,
that I have perceived here,
I still see it,
but I'm getting used to it, I'm getting used to it,
my dears.
The great difference,
that I have perceived here,
I can still see it,
but I'm getting used to it, I'm getting used to it,
my dear

á es dé ef jé ká el ů
I'm typing, I'm typing home
á es dé ef jé ká el ů
Words fly, words fly home

7. Americká ulice

Americká ulice,
těch světél, reklam tisíce!
Pohyblivé obrazy,
jsem jak ve filmu, mí draží!

Připadám si tak, tak statický,
jak kolem mne vše víří, září,
jak rychlostí světla se tu
jména firem v noci páří.
Z neonových vodotrysků
zde stříká úspěch společností,
vše se dme pýchou zisků
A já toužím tady, teď vše pojmout
neb můj život říká, velí hned
jen se rozběhni, Vlade, leť!

A to je zkrátka báječné!

Jet takovou ulicí,
ty nápisy pozorovat, číst!
To zkrátka můžu dál a stále!
O půlnoci si kravatu
zde koupit můžu, taky límec,
deštník či jako dárek blůzu.
Do krámu jen stačí jít a
vše si tu můžu nakoupit,
komplet oblek a štěstí celé
jsem tu, cítím se tak skvěle!

A to je zkrátka báječné!

Když to tak vše pozoruji,
vše na vlastní kůži cítím,
klape to svým smělym chodem,
nic do sebe nenarazí,
nějak se tu sobě víc líbím,
A teď zde bydlím, teď tu jsem,
vydělávám si na chleba
i pár věcí, které byly sen.
Doma jste se tak strachovali,
jak vyjdu, ale daří se mi.

A to je zkrátka báječné!

Zvládám to tu, a moc dobře,
stavím si svůj nový svět.
Učím se tu, rostu, vnímám,
nevím, zda se vrátím zpět.

7. American Streets

American Street,
those lights, thousands of city lights!
Moving pictures,
I'm like in a movie, my dear ones!

I feel so, so static,
as everything is swirling around me, shining,
the names of companies mating in the night.
From the neon water fountains
Here the success of companies splashes,
All aglow with the pride of profits
And I long to be here, now to take it all in
For my life says, commands now just run, Vlad,
fly!

And that's just wonderful!

Going down that street,
Watching the signs, reading them!
I can just go on and on!
At midnight I can buy a tie here,
a collar too, an umbrella
or a blouse as a gift.
All you have to do is go to the shop and
I can buy everything here,
a complete suit and all the happiness
I'm here, I feel so good!

And that's just wonderful!

Looking at it all,
I can feel it all in my own skin,
it's all going on in its bold way,
nothing crashes into each other,
somehow I like myself more here,
And now I live here, now I'm here,
I'm earning my bread
and even a few extra things that were a dream.
And you were so worried at home,
how I'm gonna get along, but I'm doing fine!

And that's just wonderful!

I'm doing very well,
building my new world.
I'm learning, growing, taking it all in,
and I don't know if I'll come back.

8. Vánoční dárky

Vždyť on zas přijde čas,
ten společný čas,
čas vánoční a
vynahradí všechny svátky,
kdy nemohli jsme spolu být.

Jen si máti přej cokoli chceš,
vím, že Ty toho moc nežádáš,
tak jsem si pomyslel,
že Ti pošlu ananasy,
které tak ráda jíš,
že Ti přijdou k chuti nejvíc
Takové ananasy
Takové ananasy
Takové ananasy
se k Vánocům nesmírně hodí.

Jen si táto přej cokoli chceš,
ztratil jsem Ti plnicí pero,
tak jsem si pomyslel,
že Ti pošlu nové, lepší,
užívej jej hodně,
až s ním budeš psát, vzpomeň na mne,

Jen si Miládko přej cokoli chceš,
líbila se ti moje tužka,
tak jsem si pomyslel,
že ti ji v dívčí verzi dám,
užívej ji hodně,
nosí ji na stužce na krku.

Jen si teto přej cokoli chceš,
nezapomněl jsem na Tebe,
tak jsem si pomyslel,
vím, že ti vždycky chutnaly,
také ananasy,
posílám jich celou krabici.
Takové ananasy
Takové ananasy
Takové ananasy
se k Vánocům nesmírně hodí.

Posílám všem žvýkací gumu
a něco pražených burských oříšků,
říká se jim peanuts
jsou zde velmi populární.
Všichni vespolek
si na nich můžete dobře pochutnat

Vždyť on zas přijde čas,
ten společný čas,
čas vánoční a
vynahradí všechny
všechny Vánoce
kdy nemohli jsme spolu být.

8. Christmas Gifts

After all, the time will come again
♪ That time together, ♪
♪ the Christmas time and ♪
♪ it will make up for all the holidays ♪
that we couldn't be together.

Just wish whatever you want, Mother,
♪ I know you don't ask for much ♪
so I thought,
I'm gonna send you pineapples,
that you love to eat,
that you'd like them best
Such pineapples
Such pineapples
Such pineapples
...matches Christmas so well.

Just wish whatever you want, Dad.
I lost your fountain pen,
so I thought,
I'd send you a new, better one,
Use it a lot,
When you write with it, remember me,

Just wish whatever you want, Miládka.,
You liked my pencil,
so I thought,
I'd give it to you in a girl's version,
use it a lot,
You wear it here on a ribbon around the neck.

Just wish whatever you want, Auntie,
I haven't forgotten you
so I thought,
I know you always liked them,
So, pineapples for you too,
I'm sending a whole box of them.
Such pineapples
Such pineapples
Such pineapples
...match Christmas so well.

I'm sending everyone a chewing gum
and some roasted nuts,
they call them peanuts
they are very popular here.
Everybody together
can enjoy them

After all, the time will come again,
that time together,
Christmas time and
it will make up for
All the Christmases
When we couldn't be together

9. Po čem ještě toužit smím

Po čem ještě toužit smím
a co je už troufalé,
kde obraz realitou jest
a realita jen sněním poddaných?

Ty obrazy oceánu ve filmu skvělém,
tak krásné a tak známé!
Ty vlny, ty noci, kdy na palubě jsem stál...

Ohromné spousty vody, které přehlížel jsem
s velkým očekáváním
a sny širokými jak oceán samotný!

Po čem ještě toužit smím
a co je už troufalé,
kde obraz realitou jest
a realita jen sněním poddaných?

Já jsem ten film.
Ten film jsem já.

9. What Else Can I Desire

what else can I desire
and what too bold is
where the image is reality
and reality is only the dreams of subjects

The images of the ocean in a movie so great,
so beautiful and so familiar
The waves, the nights when I stood on the deck

Vast expanses of water that I overlooked
With great expectations
And dreams as wide as the ocean itself.

what else can I desire
and what too bold is
where the image is reality
and reality is only the dreams of subjects

I am the movie.
The movie is me.

BIOGRAPHIES



Aleš Navrátil is a Czech producer and lyricist dedicated to fostering classical music and emerging talent. He holds a certificate in solo singing from Lidová konzervatoř Ostrava. In 2021, he founded the chamber festival "Klasika u Wericha" (Classical Concerts at Werich's) in Prague providing a platform for young artists during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The festival has since expanded also internationally with "Echoes" programs in Iceland, the USA and this September also in Lithuania.

His most significant upcoming project is the "Czech and Slovak Echoes" at the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, celebrating its 50th anniversary from October 28 to November 3, 2024.

Aleš wrote most of the lyrics for Voj & 3ska's indietronica album *Places*, including the award-winning track "A Toast," recognized as the best "Music" by the SAE Awards in 2021. Lyrics to Beth Ratay's classical song cycle "Two Worlds" are Aleš's first lyrics in the world of classical music. He is now working on his first English libretto for a Croatian composer Marko Jukic.

Aleš lives and works in Prague, Czech Republic.



Czech-American composer Beth Ratay is a versatile musician who is able to craft music using a wide variety of styles and techniques. From music possessed of a quiet, understated grace, to music based on mathematical concepts, to emotive and hilarious opera, Ratay's music is engaging, charming and beautiful.

Dr. Ratay received her Doctor of Musical Arts in World Music Composition from the University of California, Santa Cruz and has had works performed around the world by ensembles such as Earplay, West Edge Opera, Coalescence Percussion Duo, the Phoenix Symphony Chorus, Ninth Planet, The Hartford Opera Theater, and the Oregon Bach Festival Composer's Ensemble. Her studies on the relationship of text to music in the work of Leoš Janáček and symmetric or layered musical structures in the music of Harrison Birtwistle strongly inform her own compositions. Ratay is a vigorous supporter of new music as the President of the Boston New Music Initiative.

Ratay is also active as a performer. On her youtube channel she performs works, mostly by living composers, for flute and/or voice. She was also the principal flutist for the University of California, Santa Cruz Orchestra and for the April in Santa Cruz New Music Festival for three consecutive years and is a current member of the New Mexico Symphonic Chorus.

Dr. Ratay also enjoys teaching, and currently teaches theory and composition at the University of New Mexico as well as educational outreach with the Active Learning Through Opera (ALTO) and Opera Storytellers program with the Santa Fe Opera. She has previously taught at Bunker Hill Community College, Roxbury Community College, Hartnell College, Gavilan College, and the University of California, Santa Cruz. Beth currently lives with her amazing family including one husband, two sons, and two cats in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Find out more about Beth Ratay's music at rataymusic.com or follow her on Facebook or Instagram @rataymusic.



Pianist, conductor and coach Kristin Ditlow is enjoying a performance and teaching career throughout the United States and abroad. She has appeared in concert throughout North America, mainland China, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria, and the Czech Republic.

Her solo debut piano CD, *Passages*, has received national accolades. Harry Musselwhite of the *Rome News-Tribune* wrote that “the recording ... is sonically breathtaking and her playing ranges from intimate pianistic thoughts to thundering room-shaking outbursts. She is a consummate interpreter.” In a review by musicologist Ralph Locke, *Boston’s The Arts Fuse* remarks, “I have played this album repeatedly for weeks ... [the performances] are deeply affectionate: I sometimes felt I could hear Ditlow thinking about the (silent) words, noticing a surprising modulation, or responding to the tension-and-release within a musical phrase.”

Travel, wonder and exploration are greatly important to this artist – and her playing reflects it. Critics have hailed her performances as “fiery, with great thrusts of energy” (*Bethlehem Morning Call*), and containing a “burnished color and sense of passion” (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*). Her foundational training has been as a classical pianist. Yet, she has branched out into conducting, artist teaching, arranging, improvising and composing. Her love of musical collaborations dovetails into her solo performances, and her virtuoso technique and musicianship inform her presence at the keyboard and on the podium.

Ditlow holds degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Westminster Choir College, and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the Eastman School of Music, with further training at the Tanglewood Music Center, San Francisco Opera Center (Merola), and the Franz Schubert Institut. She holds the titles of Associate Professor of Vocal Coaching at the University of New Mexico and Music Director of the University of New Mexico Opera Theatre.



Baritone Michael Hix has been praised by critics for his "expressive voice" and "commanding stage presence." His career highlights include performances at Carnegie Hall, Tanglewood Music Center, Boston’s Symphony Hall, and Vienna’s Musikverein.

Hix is a sought-after performer of concert and orchestral works with over 75 oratorio, cantata, and concert roles in his repertoire. He won 3rd Place in the American Prize in Art Song and Oratorio Performance in 2019. Hix has been featured as a soloist in concerts with the Oregon Bach Festival, Arizona Bach Festival, Boston Pops, Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, Georgia Symphony, Santa Fe Symphony, New Mexico Philharmonic, Idaho Falls Symphony, San Juan Symphony, True Concord Voices and Orchestra, Tallahassee Symphony, New York City’s Trinity Lutheran Bach Vespers Series and the Tallahassee Bach Parley among others.

Included among his over 20 stage roles are Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, King George in *8 Songs for a Mad King*, Melchior in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Noye in *Noye’s Fludde*, the Drunken Poet in *The Fairy Queen*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake’s Progress*, and Bertouf in the world premiere of *A Friend of Napoleon* by Pulitzer Prize winning composer Robert Ward. He recently completed a recording of solo bass cantatas by baroque composer Christoph Graupner.

Dr. Hix serves as the Chair of the UNM Department of Music, where he is Professor of Voice.



Christian M. Newman is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, visual artist, author, and music educator based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His compositions for piano, instrumental ensembles, and electronic fixed media emphasize an intensive level of complexity, expressive timbres, and organic quality of gesture. Similarly, his artworks and graphic scores convey a bewildering array of spatial dimensions, striking use of color, and intricate surface details. Some noted performances of his pieces, including numerous commissioned works for solo piano, percussion, electronics, and ensembles have been given by artists from Mexico, Europe, and across the US at festivals and concert series like the John Donald Robb Composer Symposium (Albuquerque, NM), Wolf Tones Electronic Music Festival (Abq, NM), Sounding Off: an Audio Art Performance Series (ABQ, NM), Titwrench Stockholm (Stockholm, Sweden), Klavierfestival Lindlar (Köln, Germany), Sommerkonzerte, St. Marien Kürten (Kürten, Germany), and UNM Faculty Spotlight Series (Abq, NM).

Since 2011, Newman has taught courses, seminars, and workshops in music theory, music history, music for dancers, composition, and piano performance from elementary to the college level at institutions like the Albuquerque Institute of Music's Trinity College Theory Program, The University of New Mexico, and Klavierfestival Lindlar, Germany. He has been a lecturer with UNM Music since 2017 where he is currently publishing a first major textbook on music history.



Associate professor of flute at UNM since 1998, Valerie Potter has performed as principal flutist of the NM Philharmonic and has held the piccolo position with the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra. She received her Bachelor of Music from Indiana University with a performer's certificate. Ms. Potter also received a Master of Music from Yale University.

She has performed with many orchestras across the country including the Cincinnati Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, the San Antonio Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony and the Houston Symphony. She has been featured as a soloist with the New Mexico Symphony and Philharmonic, performing music by CPE Bach, Mozart and Lowell Liebermann.. She has been a member of the faculty of the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.



Christoph Wagner is a prize-winning cellist and sought-after pedagogue and lecturer who enjoys a diverse international career. He received first prizes at the German Youth Competition Jugend Musiziert, Ribalta Mozart Italia in Italy, and the Peter Pirazzi Competition in Germany. Prize-winner of the National Society of Arts and Letters competition in Bloomington, Indiana in both 2016 and 2017, he holds scholarships from the Richard Wagner Verband in Frankfurt, the Lions Club in Karlsruhe, and the Theodor Rogler Foundation for Young Musicians.

In 2018, he received the Sviatoslav Richter Grant from Rice University, followed by the Amici di Via Gabina Fellowship in 2019 for research and performances in Italy. Wagner has performed in major concert halls in Europe such as the Berlin Philharmonie and the Concertgebouw Amsterdam under

renowned conductors including Jonathan Nott, Lothar Zagrosek and Stefan Asbury, and appeared at festivals throughout Europe and the US. His international career has spanned four continents, including appearances in Switzerland, Croatia, France, Italy, South Africa, South America, China, South Korea and the US.

Wagner received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Music in Frankfurt, a Master of Music at Indiana University, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. He taught at Lone Star College in Houston from 2018 – 2023 and joined the University of New Mexico Department of Music as Assistant Professor of Cello in August 2023.

2024-2025 Faculty Spotlight Series

September 8, 3:00pm

October 27, 3:00pm

February 9, 3:00pm

April 13, 3:00pm

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