Bennington College presents

COMPOSITIONS BY SIMA WOLF
Featuring THE FONTENAY CHAMBER PLAYERS

MONDAY, MAY 9, 2011 8 p.m.
DEANE CARRIAGE BARN

PROGRAM

AWAKENING (2010)
   Duet for Solo Flute and Dance
   Maryly Culpepper, Flute
   Katy Schonbeck, Dance

BIRDS OF A FEATHER (2008)
   String quartet
   Maria Conti and Una Tone, Violins
   Liuh-Wen Ting, Viola and Bruce Wang, Cello

ISLAND (1986, revised 2011)
   String quartet
   Maria Conti and Una Tone, Violins
   Liuh-Wen Ting, Viola and Bruce Wang, Cello

NOCTURNAL LANDSCAPES (2009)
   Piano Solo
   Christopher Lewis, Piano

   I NIGHTWATCH
   II RADIANT SKY

(SHORT PAUSE)

EN PRÉVISION (2010)
   Harp, Flute, Clarinet, String Quartet
   Wendy Kerner Lucas, Harp, Maryly Culpepper, Flute
   Kathryn Taylor, Clarinet
   Maria Conti and Una Tone, Violins
   Liuh-Wen Ting, Viola and Bruce Wang, Cello

BRAZILIAN SUITE (2009)
   Harp, Flute, Percussion
   Wendy Kerner Lucas, Harp, Maryly Culpepper, Flute
   Bruce Williamson, Percussion

   I DANÇA VOADOR
   II REMINISCÊNCIA
   III ESPÍRITO AFRICANO

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PROGRAM NOTES

Awakening is a duet between Musician and Dancer that begins with the simplicity of the breath. The melody develops gradually, as the energy aspires upward and outward, finding definition and clarity. The music is through-composed and the dance is improvised.

Birds Of A Feather uses abstracted variations from Paul McCartney’s “Blackbird” in setting the structure of this short piece for String Quartet. It is based almost entirely on phrases derived from its lyrics and motivic ideas.

Island: Originally written for the Turtle Island String Quartet, Island explores various string sonorities and melodic motifs. I was especially interested in overlapping inter-related phrases and open 5ths. Its 5/4 meter suggests the motion of waves (water and wind), asymmetrical with regular repetition.

Nocturnal Landscapes: A pair of piano pieces depicting the night sky. Nightwatch suggests the contour of a mountain range at twilight. Radiant Sky is an expression of stellar brilliance and scintillation.

En Prévision was written for the Fontenay Chamber Players. The phrase “En Prévision” translates as “in anticipation, in readiness”, as in looking forward to an upcoming event. The piece is episodic in its structure and moves through various events and environments.

Brazilian Suite is a set of three movements, each of which reflects a particular musical form indigenous to Brazil. Dança Voador is based on the Choro. The word “voador” implies the meaning of both “swift” and “flight”. The piece breaks somewhat from a traditional Choro with the improvisational percussion section. Reminiscência is essentially a Bossa Nova. The mood is “sad but sweet”. Typically, lyrics from this type of song recall a long lost love affair, a favorite town or place, or remembrance of an idyllic time in one’s life. Espírito Afro is a fiery dance in 12/8 meter. This movement reflects influences from African music and Jazz, both of which thrive in the music of Brazil.

THE FONTENAY CHAMBER PLAYERS

MARYLY CULPEPPER, flutist KATHRYN TAYLOR, clarinetist
WENDY KERNER LUCAS, harpist with
MARIA CONTI and UNA TONE, violinists,
LIUH-WEN TING, violist and BRUCE WANG, Cellist

The Fontenay Chamber Players was formed in 2003 to bring together some of the New York area’s top chamber players in an exceptional combination of instruments. The group has already garnered critical acclaim and raves from audiences and presenters. The Fontenay Chamber Players has appeared in diverse settings including Caramoor in New York, Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, and The Hat City Opera Company, Greenwich Academy, Long Ridge School and the Pequot Library in Connecticut. A recent review called the groups’ performance "beautiful", "haunting" and cited their "brilliant tour de force", "radiant meshing of color", "visceral excitement", "warmth", "crispness" and "special tension". The Fontenay Chamber Players was chosen for the artist roster of the CT Commission on Arts and Tourism. The group is named for a French town with a connection to the composer Ravel, whose luminous Introduction and Allegro is written for harp, flute, clarinet and strings.
MORE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ABOUT
THE FONTE NAY CHAMBER PLAYERS

MARYLY CULPEPPER, flutist is currently principal flute of the Connecticut River Valley Orchestra. She received her Doctoral Degree from USC School of Music, a Masters of Music from Yale and a Bachelor of Arts from Dartmouth College. Her teachers have included Julius Baker, Jim Walker and Tom Nyfenger. She is a former principal flute with the Portugal Philharmonic, and has played with the New World Symphony. Accepted to the Spoleto Festival, she won a scholarship to the Chigiana Music Academy in Italy. Ms. Culpepper was a finalist in the National General Motors Seventeen Magazine Concerto Competition and semi-finalist in the Pepsi Cola Competition. She is the principal flute of the Hat City Opera and an active freelancer. She maintains an extensive teaching schedule and performs with the Bridgeport Symphony and New Rochelle Opera.

KATHRYN TAYLOR, clarinetist, is a member of the Connecticut Grand Opera, Stamford Chamber Orchestra, and Bridgeport Symphony. Ms. Taylor performs regularly with the New Haven, Hartford and Stamford Symphonies and is a founding member of the nationally acclaimed, Grammy nominated Borealis Wind Quintet, with whom she tours and records. Ms. Taylor has been a featured artist at chamber music festivals including the Newport Music Festival and the Windham, NY Festival and the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado. She is an active teacher and clinician and gives master classes throughout the country at high schools, colleges and universities. An alumna of the Juilliard School, Ms. Taylor toured Europe in 2001 with the American Sinfonietta as principal clarinet and subs in the orchestra of Beauty and the Beast on Broadway.

WENDY KERNER LUCAS, harpist, has appeared in concert throughout America, performed at the World Harp Congress in Seattle, and Paris, France, played for Queen Sirikit of Thailand, and for former First Lady Hillary Clinton. Ms Lucas was presented in her New York Debut in Carnegie Recital Hall as a winner of the Arts International Chamber Music Competition. She also won the American Harp Society's Concert Artist Auditions and Silver Prize in the National Flute Assoc. Chamber Music Competition. Ms. Lucas is the principal harpist in The Bridgeport, Norwalk and Ridgefield Symphonies. She began the harp at seven and received her Bachelor and Master of Music Degrees at The Juilliard School. Her CD Sounds of the Seine with The Glorian Duo is on Delos, and has met with critical acclaim. She maintains an active teaching studio in New Canaan, CT.

MARIA CONTI, violinist, has performed in all the major concert halls New York City, as well as abroad in Venezuela. A graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, Maria is currently the Assistant Concertmaster of the Norwalk Symphony. She has served as acting Concertmaster in numerous orchestras and subs regularly on Broadway in Lion King. Maria was recently asked to perform the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with the National Symphony of Peru. In addition to solo and orchestral engagements, Maria is a member of the Axis Quintet, exploring the possibilities of string quartet and guitar, receiving rave reviews. Maria is co-president of the Westchester Musicians Guild and has a private violin studio in New Rochelle. She performs at the Windham Chamber Music Festival, and has been a soloist in the Hudson Valley Bach Fest. Maria also enjoys playing non-classical music and has recorded for numerous artists as well as releasing a CD of original songs with her folk rock band “Fearless Juan”.

UNA TONE, violinist enjoys a career as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player internationally. Born in Riga (Latvia) in the family of a pianist and a ballet dancer, Una began playing the violin at the age of four. Her first solo appearance with a symphony orchestra performing Beethoven's Violin concerto, took place while still at school. In NYC Una performs with Opera Orchestra of NY, NY Pops, Princeton Symphony Orchestra, NY Chamber Orchestra and many others. She is the concertmaster of Metro Chamber Orchestra and she regularly collaborates with the leading musicians in a variety of genres and styles: she has toured with U2, Andrea Boccelli, Jose Carreras and Savion Glover, played in many shows on Broadway including Ragtime, Lion King, Wicked, The Producers, Young Frankenstein. Una records with many artists such as Carly Simon, Diana Krall, Tony Bennett and has appeared on radio and TV: David Letterman, Good Morning America, Conan O'Brien etc.
A Juilliard graduate with a Masters Degree on the viola, LIUH-WEN TING played with the Meridian Quartet and has collaborated most recently with the Manhattan String Quartet, Ensemble l'art pour l'art, and the Cassatt String Quartet. Her past collaborations include musicians Kenneth Cooper, Bernard Greenhouse, Paula Robison, soprano Kathleen Battle, and the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society. Ms. Ting is on the staff of the Composers Conference at Wellesley College. She has performed at international festivals such as The Prague Spring Music Festival, Ostrava New Music Days, The Warsaw Autumn Music Festival. Her solo performance of Morton Feldman's Viola in My Life with the Janacek Symphony Orchestra was praised by The Czech Music 2001 as "an extraordinary experience". Ms Ting has recorded chamber music for Deutsche Grammophon, Mode, and Capstone Records.

BRUCE WANG, cellist, has performed across the United States, Asia, Europe, and Australia, both as soloist and chamber musician. He has recorded on hundreds of recordings, including solo, chamber music, television, radio, as well as numerous studio recordings for feature films, theater, and media projects. A founding member of the Dakota Piano Trio, Bruce Wang has concertized internationally under New York management, performed in residency at Queens College, and at Indiana University, Chicago Chamber Music Society, Weill Hall, Atlanta Chamber Music Society, and in televised interview and performances across Australia. Mr. Wang performs with the critically acclaimed new music ensemble North/South Consonance, and can be heard on their recordings. He also performs and records as a member of the Bronx Arts Ensemble. He has taught at Juilliard School Pre-college, Nyack College, the Lincoln Center Institute, and has coached chamber music at Yale University. Mr. Wang is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and has two degrees from The Juilliard School.