

# UCSB DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

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**UCSB Ensemble for Contemporary Music presents “We Miss You Max!”**

*The Department of Music’s ECM honors the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of composer Max Reger’s death*

SANTA BARBARA, April 26, 2016—If you want to be a part of international Reger year 2016, there’s only one place in all of America to do it: at Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall with UCSB’s Ensemble for Contemporary Music (or ECM). There, on May 11<sup>th</sup>, this versatile ensemble offers a program well dosed in the music of Max Reger on the exact calendar day he died 100 years ago. In a special concert, dubbed, “**We Miss You Max!**” the young musicians of ECM get to express their newfound love for a musical renegade, while, on the very same day, Germany is all a-buzz with special concerts in his honor. But here in the U.S., ECM will have a rare “exclusive.”

ECM, the repertory new music ensemble on the campus, occasionally looks back to recent musical history to better understand today’s musical brief. On Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m., Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall will be the locus for a generous sampling of music by this important early modernist, who had brusquely dropped in his lap the difficult job of bridging German music over from Romanticism to Modernism. In 43 short years on the planet, Max Reger fought the good fight for what was “new” in music, pitting his genius against occasionally furious and petty criticism. In spite of that, he had his firm supporters, such as Hindemith, Bartók, and most notably Schoenberg, who said: “I consider him a genius.”

Another supporter is ECM director Jeremy Haladyna, a lifelong Regerite. “We organists all come to know him,” says Haladyna, “but he is a very rich and complex personality. He is, for example, one of music’s finest comedians, as we’ll show the audience when Christina Esser returns to UCSB to sing some of the *Schlichte Weisen* [Simple Tales].” The harmonic adventurism of his later periods is fully on display, too, in both the *Clarinet Sonata, Op. 107*, and his last published work, the *Clarinet Quintet, Op. 146*. Both will feature ECM’s gifted and painstaking clarinetist, Hiroko Sugawara, who is faculty in East Asian Languages at UCSB. “The quintet, an acknowledged masterwork, is like a many-sided crystal,” says Haladyna, “which at one moment has us on the highest spiritual plane and at the next, communing with goblins.” Violist Dana Anex will offer a movement from Reger’s oft-played solo suites, here on viola (*Op. 131d*). These show Reger as an early exponent of neoclassicism, an artistic position for which he receives too little credit. ECM cellist Kathryn Carlson will join Haladyna in a performance from another late work, the *Cello Sonata in A minor, Op. 116*. “There is no other piece of music I know that so resembles relishing a well aged wine or sherry. I love playing it!” says Haladyna.

Reger is not the only focus of this final seasonal effort by ECM. Its talented student performers have been busy for months mastering other repertoire designed to pay honor to two other of music’s “fallen composer heroes”—this time, men all-too-recently departed: the Australian giant Peter Sculthorpe, who passed in August, 2014, and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, the Briton of colossal importance who died only months ago in March, 2016.

Appropriately, cellist Kathryn Carlson offers Sculthorpe’s *Requiem*, for solo cello, a moving and wide-ranging statement on just that instrument’s four strings. Sara Bashore, meanwhile, plays something we think Maxwell Davies (a second “Max” whom we miss!) would approve: *Two Fiddlers*, his personal treatment of dances from his beloved Orkney, the Scottish chain of islands where he died.

Violinists Zach Olea and Danica Neuhaus will play in two works by the Estonian minimalist giant Arvo Pärt, his *Für Alina* and *Fratres*. The gravity and serenity of the latter are striking when one considers the

formidable virtuosity required of the player (Olea), while the first is all simplicity itself. Both will serve to reflect deep emotions stirred by those we will remember on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Doctoral piano student Petra Peršolja is featured in several key accompaniments to Pärt and Maxwell Davies.

There will be extracts from a *Serenade* by Vincent Persichetti, too, admitting ECM's fine young trombonist Nick Mazuk into the concert equation, aided and abetted by violist Anex and cellist Carson.

**Ensemble for Contemporary Music: "We Miss You Max!"** Wednesday, May 11, 2016. 4 p.m. UCSB Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall. Tickets: general (\$10), non-UCSB students with ID (\$5), UCSB students with ID (FREE), children under 12 (FREE). Tickets may be purchased at the door, at the AS Ticket Office window (UCEN Room 1535, across from Corwin Pavilion), online at [www.music.ucsb.edu](http://www.music.ucsb.edu), or by calling the AS Ticket Office at (805) 893-2064.

### **About the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music**

From an institution that began life dedicated to training the next generation of music educators, to what is now a fully established research and professional graduate program, graduates of the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music have distinguished themselves both nationally and internationally. Many have gone on to teaching, either privately or in outstanding secondary school positions, and in more recent years, graduates have joined the faculties of major colleges and universities in the United States and abroad. A number have become widely recognized and published scholars; some are now prize-winning and frequently performed composers, while others are writing for television and film. Alumni are also establishing fine reputations as conductors of orchestras, opera, and choruses. Graduates of the instrumental programs have gone on to solo and orchestral careers with leading orchestras, and our singers can be heard in opera companies around the world.

With over 200 events presented annually, the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music offers something for every music lover. The department boasts 26 unique performing ensembles, each with a quarterly concert calendar. Chamber music, large ensembles, opera, contemporary groups, world music, and jazz ensembles make up the department's rich performance calendar, along with lectures, master classes, and presentations from the ethnomusicology, musicology, theory, and composition programs. For a complete listing of performances and lectures for the quarter, please visit the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music website, at [www.music.ucsb.edu](http://www.music.ucsb.edu).

For additional information, photos, or to request an interview with an artist, please contact Adriane Hill at [ahill@music.ucsb.edu](mailto:ahill@music.ucsb.edu) or (805) 893-3230. To sign up for the Department of Music's newsletter, please [click here](#). Follow the Department of Music on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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