

UCSB DEPARTMENT *of*  
**MUSIC**

University of California, Santa Barbara  
Department of Music  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106-6070

CONTACT:

Adriane Hill  
Marketing and Communications Manager  
UC Santa Barbara Department of Music  
Information: (805) 893-3230  
Tickets: (805) 893-2064  
[adrianehill@ucsb.edu](mailto:adrianehill@ucsb.edu)  
[www.music.ucsb.edu](http://www.music.ucsb.edu)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 17, 2017

**UCSB ENSEMBLE FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PRESENTS “THE CONCERT THAT WENT SOUTH”**

*Works by Tristan Murail, Sofia Gubaidulina, Donald Erb, Mikolaj Gorecki, György Kurtag, and more*

SANTA BARBARA, CA (May 17, 2017)—UCSB’s Ensemble for Contemporary Music presents an unusual season finale on Wednesday, May 31, 2017, with the whimsical title: “The Concert that Went South.” Again destined to unfold at a friendly late-matinee hour (4 p.m.), the concert in UCSB’s Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall is free to university students with an I.D., and at only nominal cost to others.

Starting with an elegant modernist bent and music by Tristan Murail, the concert will see a drastic turnabout in tone and direction, even vis-à-vis the compass needle. Murail’s *Feuilles à travers des cloches* is a glowingly beautiful example of late modernist thinking; only the title illogically inverts Debussy’s own. “Leaves are now seen through bells,” rather than the other way ‘round, as D. intended.

The first good inkling that we are “going south” comes before intermission with Sofia Gubaidulina’s *In Croce*, offered in the version for cello and pipe organ by Kathryn Carlson and director Haladyna. Postmodernist Gubaidulina is known for her deconstruction of the modernist *ethos*, and here that is notable in a lengthy section where both cello and organ play a passage that sinks down, down, down...heading “south” for what seems an eternity.

“After intermission, when the group blusters into Donald Erb’s *The Rainbow Snake*, the audience will ABSOLUTELY know we have turned a corner and that it’s impossible to backtrack,” says ECM Director Jeremy Haladyna. “Taking a concert 180 degrees in midstream like that is something I’ve always had a hankering to do...just as an experiment. But it requires some special planning.”

Erb’s no-holds-barred tribute to Australian aboriginal legend features solo trombone, plus a large array of percussion and tweaked keyboards. The trombonist “is” the rainbow snake, so pivotal to aborigines as the center figure in their creation story. Trombonist Nick Mazuk interprets a part that pushes out a new envelope for a surprisingly versatile instrument. Subtlety? That’s entirely absent from the work, which is brash, loud and vivid in its tone painting.

With the Erb from “down under,” we have committed to going South, and the concert becomes one of irony and fun. From here, notable jollity will be had with Mikolaj Gorecki’s *Overture* for string quartet, which clowns with the verve of a manic mechanical engine. There’s also the *Six Pieces for Trombone and Piano* by György Kurtag of Hungary, with odd “going-nowhere” fanfares, a quasi-masochistic “Beating” movement and a strange parody of Liszt’s famous *La Campanella*. Nick Mazuk and Jarod Fedele interpret.

*A Different World* by Scotsman James MacMillan draws inspiration from an opera and has a violin soloist soaring above a Bach chorale one minute, only to see everything fallen and dashed on low, crashing piano chords the next. Zach Olea and Jarod Fedele are featured.

Clarinetist Hiroko Sugawara is the soloist in the gentle humor of Jean Francaix’s *Quintette* for her instrument and strings, which simply wants to have darting fun and never troubles about “being modern,” even while its harmonies speak with the sophistication of the worldly-wise. The concluding *Grave* and *Rondo* movements are paired together and excerpted here, fully representative of a craftsman born well “south” of Paris.

Other treats: there’s a choice nugget for trumpet and organ by the blind French organist Jean Langlais (an ECM first), and even a brand-new premiere of music for saxophones (soprano and alto) plus harpsichord, spotlighting Brian Leal on sax and director Haladyna on the 2-manual Herz. This item is by doctoral composer Scott Perry and recalls minimalist textures over here, but a special brand of lyricism over...there.

*Four Funny Songs* by a young German composer of Würzburg, and sung by baritone Tyler Reece, might seem out-of-place in a more sedate setting, but seem right at home in “The Concert That Went South.” (And note how Würzburg, home to composer Yannik Helm, is well south of Germany’s beltline!)

Surprise is the watchword and all are invited to partake in the fun at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, May 31, 2017 in the Music Department’s 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 [music.ucsb.edu/news/purchase-tickets](http://music.ucsb.edu/news/purchase-tickets), or by calling the AS Ticket Office at **(805) 893-2064**.

Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall is located in the Music Building on the UCSB campus. For directions and parking information, please visit [music.ucsb.edu/about/maps](http://music.ucsb.edu/about/maps).

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](#).

### **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 graduates of the voice program 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).

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