

The Lowcountry's Premier Chamber Music Concert presents Charles Wadsworth (host and artistic director), Edward Arron (associate director), Kenji Bunch, Erika Nickrenz (piano) and Jesse Mills (violin) Sunday, March 2 at 5 p.m. at the University of South Carolina Beaufort Performing Arts Center.



Heralded as “A Composer to Watch” by the New York Times, Kenji Bunch has quickly emerged as one of the most prominent American composers of his generation, appealing to audiences and performers alike with a distinctive, vibrant voice in contemporary American music.

As one of only three composers selected nationwide to inaugurate the Meet the Composer “Magnum Opus” Project, Mr. Bunch wrote his “Symphony no. 1: Lichtenstein Triptych”, which was premiered to critical acclaim by the Bay area symphonies of Santa Rosa, Marin, and Oakland.

Recent commissions have come from the English Chamber Orchestra, the Phoenix Symphony, the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, Wolftrap, the Naumburg Foundation, the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, Fear No Music, the New Juilliard Ensemble, the Zoom! Festival of New Music, the Lucy Moses School, and Young Concert Artists, Inc., where he served from 1998-2000 as composer-in-residence. Bunch's music has been performed in premiere venues from New York to Ho Chi Minh City, and is regularly broadcast on nationwide radio including NPR, BBC, and NHK in Japan.

Bunch still maintains an active career as a performer. Now as a solo and collaborative musician, and as a member of the performing composer group Ne(x)tworks, Bunch continues a presence as one of New York's premiere interpreters of new and experimental music. Comfortable in many musical genres and a noted improvising musician, he also plays fiddle and sings in the bluegrass band Citigrass, and has been a featured guest performer with many noted rock and jam bands.

A dedicated teacher, Bunch has developed and conducted residencies, workshops, and master classes across the country in composition, performance, and music appreciation to students ranging in age from kindergarten to colleges including Rice University, SUNY Fredonia, and The University of Hawai'i. In 2002 he was a visiting professor in composition at Bennington College in Vermont. He has served as a teaching artist for the Lincoln Center Institute and the Westchester Philharmonic, and in public school residencies in Vermont, Maine, and Kentucky. Currently he teaches viola and composition at the Juilliard School Pre-College and at the Mark O'Connor Strings Conference in San Diego.

Erika Nickrenz, pianist, is a native of New York, where she made her concerto debut in Town Hall at age eleven. Nickrenz began her studies with German Diez and received her B.M. and M.M. degrees from the Juilliard School as a pupil of Abbey Simon, and is an active solo and chamber musician with more than eighty concerts this season. She has toured with Music from Marlboro, and as a member of Chamber Soloists USA in Australia, resulting in performances at the Sydney Opera House. Nickrenz has appeared in many festivals, including Marlboro, the Spoleto Festival of Two Worlds, Ravinia, Aspen, Interlochen, Mostly Mozart, the Hollywood Bowl, and Tanglewood, where she received the prestigious Rockefeller Award. Nickrenz performed solo excerpts from Moussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition in the “Backstage at Lincoln Center” television series, narrated by Hugh Downs; the program was aired on PBS'

opening night of “Live from Lincoln Center”. In May 2003 she participated in the opening of the New York Stock Exchange after performing there as part of the Steinway 150th anniversary celebration. She has collaborated with many renowned artists including Joshua Bell, Gil Shaham, Carter Brey, Stanley Drucker, Paula Robison, Jean-Yves Thibaudet and was the founding member of the Walden Horn Trio. As a member of the Eroica Trio, Naumburg Award Winner and chosen as Carnegie Hall’s “America’s Rising Star”, Nickrenz has performed the Beethoven Triple Concerto with many ensembles worldwide, including the Chicago, Atlanta, Seattle, Pittsburgh, Saint Louis, Houston and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras, as well as tours with the Budapest Symphony and Prague Chamber Orchestra. The Eroica Trio’s first CD for Angel/EMI won NPR’s 1998 Performance Today Award for “Debut Recording of the Year” and their third CD garnered two Grammy nominations in 1999.

As pianist of the Eroica Trio she has appeared on numerous television programs, including ABC’s The View, CNN’s Showbiz Today, CBS and ABC News, the CBS Morning Show and Saturday Morning, A&E’s Breakfast with the Arts, The Isaac Mizrahi Show, Pure Oxygen, Bloomberg TV and Fox’s The Crier Report. In addition, she was featured in “Eroica!”, a special documentary about the trio and their commissioning of a new triple concerto by Kevin Kaska, premiered nationwide on the PBS series Independent Lens.

Grammy-nominated violinist Jesse Mills enjoys performing music of many genres, from classical to contemporary, as well as composed and improvised music of his own invention. In 2004, Mills made his professional concerto debut with the Ravinia Festival Orchestra conducted by Nicholas McGegan in a unique partnership with Salsa trombonist, Jimmy Bosch. This project combined a classical performance of Vivaldi’s Four Seasons, with Mills as violin soloist, and a Salsa band arrangement of the same piece, fronted by Bosch and Mills as improvising soloists. A successful performance at Ravinia led to bookings with the Phoenix, Colorado and Green Bay Symphonies for the 2005-2006 season. In past years Mills has performed as soloist with the Juilliard Pre-College Chamber Orchestra, the Teatro Argentino Orchestra in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the New Jersey Symphony, the Sarah Lawrence College Symphony, the Plainfield Symphony, the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, the Aspen Music Festival’s Sinfonia Orchestra as winner of the Festival’s E. Nakamichi Violin Concerto Competition.

As a chamber musician Mills has performed at Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall, New York City’s Merkin Concert Hall and Bargemusic, Carnegie’s Weill Hall, Columbia University’s Miller Theater, Boston’s Gardener Museum, the Cooper Arts Series at Cooper Union, the Rising Stars series at Caramoor, the Ravinia Festival’s Bennett-Gordon Hall, and at the Marlboro Music Festival. He performed on the opening night of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s “A Great Day in New York” series with pianist/composer Peter Schickele, and this concert was broadcast live on WNYC 93.9 FM in New York.

Mills is an avid performer of contemporary works. As a member of the FLUX Quartet from 2001-2003, he played in many concert halls around the world, performing music composed during the last 50 years. Among these concerts were 3 performances of Morton Feldman’s String Quartet No. 3, a six-hour-long work of immense beauty. Mills has played extensively with renowned cellist, Fred Sherry, in works by Reich, Wuorinen, Schoenberg, and avant-garde composer and saxophonist, John Zorn. In 2004-2005, they recorded Schoenberg’s String Quartet Concerto and various chamber works of Anton Webern for NAXOS, as well as Zorn’s String Quartet, Necronomicon, on Tzadik.

Mills is co-founder of Duo Prism, a violin-piano duo with Rieko Aizawa. He is also a member of Nurse Kaya, an ensemble comprised of string quartet plus bass and drums which exclusively

plays compositions written by its members; much of this music involves improvisation. The group plays in traditional venues such as concert halls and clubs, as well as in schools, hospitals, and jails. In 2005, Nurse Kaya was awarded a Residency Partnership Grant from Chamber Music America, which resulted in a successful week-long residency in the public schools as well as at the Rialto Theater of Loveland, Colorado.

Individual ticket prices are as follows: B&C \$50, A&D \$45, and E & F \$40. For more information on seating and reservations, please contact the Beaufort Visitor Center, 1-800-638-3525 or 1-843-986-5400, ext. 34.