

**<amberwood > live at Klavierhaus
211 West 58th Street, New York City**

Thursday, February 18, 2010 at 8:00 pm

**Ivan Sokolov: Piano
Karen Bentley Pollick: Violin, Viola & Piano**

Solnechnaya (Sunlight) Sonata for Violin and Piano in E minor (2005) **Ivan Sokolov**
(b. 1960)
I Moderato con moto
II Andantino
III Scherzo
IV Allegro

Uspávanky (Lullabies) (2006) **Jan Vičar** (b. 1949)

Solo Blues for Violin and Piano (2007) **Dan Tepfer** (b. 1982)

Intermission

Visions fugitives, Op. 22 **Sergei Prokofiev**
(1891 – 1953)

1. Lentamente	2. Andante	3. Allegretto
4. Animato	5. Molto giocoso	6. Con eleganza
7. Pittoresco (Arpa)	8. Commodo	9. Allegro tranquillo
10. Ridicolosamente	11. Con vivacità	12. Assai moderato
13. Allegretto	14. Feroce	15. Inquieto
16. Dolente	17. Poetico	18. Con una dolce lentezza
19. Presto agitatissimo e molto accentuato		20. Lento irrealmente

In the Heaven (1992) **Ivan Sokolov**

Elegie for Solo Viola (2001) **Ivan Sokolov**

Sonata for Viola and Piano (2006) **Ivan Sokolov**
Allegro moderato – Andante – Allegro - Tempo Primo

Tango Orientale for Viola and Piano (2001) **Ole Saxe** (b. 1952)

Ivan Sokolov graduated from the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory as pianist and composer and worked as assistant professor of composition there in 1984-94. Mr. Sokolov has appeared in recitals and as a soloist with different orchestras in many European countries and in the USA. Being an extraordinary and inspired performer of baroque, classical and romantic music, Mr. Sokolov is one of the major Russian artists committed to the contemporary music world. His extensive contemporary music repertoire includes music by Prokofiev, Schönberg, Shostakovich, Hindemith, Bartók, Stravinsky, Stockhausen, Kagel, Crumb, Feldman, Cage, Boulez and other composers.

Mr. Sokolov is one of the most prominent and recognized performer of piano and chamber music by the Soviet and contemporary Russian composers. He premiered many works by S. Gubaidulina, V. Silvestrov, E. Denisov, N. Korndorf, A. Raskatov, V. Tarnopolski, F. Karayev, V. Ekimovsky, D. Smirnov, E. Firsova, A. Rabinovitch, and other composers. In 1995 he made a CD-recording of all Galina Ustvolskaya's piano works. His other projects include the recordings of compositions by the Russian-Canadian composer Nikolai Korndorf, a recording of the Russian-German Composers' Quartet, of which he is a member, and many other recordings. He collaborated with such excellent musicians as the cellists Alexander Ivashkin and Natalia Gutman, pianists Marta Argerich and Alexei Lubimov, violinists Tatiana Grindenko and Kolya Blacher, conductors Gennady Rozhdestvensky and Andrey Boreiko as well as with many distinguished Russian and German orchestras.

Since 1979 Mr. Sokolov has performed as a soloist in all major cities of the former Soviet Union and Europe. Since 1986 he has regularly appeared in concerts and festivals for contemporary music, including the *Alternativa Festival* in Moscow (of which he is one of the founders), the *Schleswig-Holstein festival*, *Almeida Festival London*, the *Luzerner Festwochen*, the *Copenhagen Culture festival*, and others. Sokolov made his debut in Seattle with the Seattle Chamber Players at the *Icebreaker: Contemporary Russian Music Festival* in February 2002, performing ten compositions in three days, and was re-engaged by the ensemble for another appearance in Seattle at the *Shostakovich Uncovered* festival with chamber music of Shostakovich and his followers, to many of whom Sokolov is a close friend and first and frequent performer of their compositions.

Mr. Sokolov's own works include pieces for piano, violin, piano trio, orchestra, as well as a miniopera. They have been performed in Moscow and in many other Russian and European cities. In his music, Sokolov experiments with different types of musical expression, including cryptophonic encodings, graphic notational experiments, happenings as well as truly romantic stylistics. Since 1995 Sokolov has divided his time between Cologne (Germany) and Moscow and has toured all over the world.

For more information: www.mosconsrv.ru/english/teachers/about.phtml?436

Karen Bentley Pollick has performed as violinist with Paul Drescher's Electro-Acoustic Ensemble since 1999. She performs a wide range of solo repertoire and styles on violin, viola, piano and Norwegian hardangerfele. "Pollick pretty much lit the house on fire with her movements as well as her playing. But after having played the piano and violin simultaneously, she deserved to go wild." (*Birmingham News* re Dan Tepfer's *Solo Blues for Violin and Piano*)□

A native of Palo Alto, California, she was concertmaster and conductor of the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra and studied with Camilla Wicks in San Francisco. While attending Indiana University she studied violin with Josef Gingold, chamber music with Rostislav Dubinsky and received both Bachelors and Masters of Music Degrees in Violin Performance. □ She has several recordings of original music, including *Electric Diamond*, *Angel*, *Konzerto and Succubus* and *Ariel View*, for which she has received three music awards from Just Plain Folks, including Best Instrumental Album and Best Song. On her own record label Ariel Ventures she has produced *Dancing Suite to Suite*, *<amberwood >* and *Homage to Fiddlers*. Pollick has also recorded for Bridge Records, Albany Records, Mode Records, Numinous Records, CRI, Sony, RCA and Camel Productions.

Pollick was concertmaster of the New York String Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in 1984 and has participated in the June in Buffalo and Wellesley Composers Conferences. She has performed in recital with Russian pianist/composer Ivan Sokolov at the American Academy of Rome, throughout the Czech Republic with cellist Dennis Parker in the 2007 and 2008 American Spring Festivals, and in England at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. She has appeared as soloist with Redwood Symphony in the world premiere of Swedish composer Ole Saxe's *Dance Suite for Violin and Orchestra*, the Alabama Symphony and orchestras in Panama, Russia, Alaska, New York and California. Recent collaborations include the Seattle Chamber Players, the Ensemble for the Romantic Century and appearances at the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival, and the Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival.

Along with choreographer Teri Weksler and percussionist John Scalici, Pollick is a recipient of a Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham 2008 Interdisciplinary Grant to Individual Artists. Their original music and choreography premiered at Birmingham-Southern College in May 2009. Pollick received a grant from the Alabama State Council for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts for her March 2010 Solo Violin and Alternating Current concerts in Birmingham and Seattle. With Australian pianist Lisa Moore, Pollick formed the duo Prophet Birds in spring 2009. "The stylistic cohesiveness in the "Prophet Birds" program Monday at Hill Recital Hall was made all the more convincing by Karen Bentley Pollick's and Lisa Moore's determination to make it lucid and palatable." (*Birmingham News*)

Pollick performs on a violin made by Jean Baptiste Vuillaume in 1860 and a 1987 viola by William Whedbee of Chicago. For more information: www.kbentley.com

Solnechnaya Sonata for Violin and Piano was written in August 2005. The first movement, a sonata form, *Allegro moderato* in E minor, is filled with a lyric-epic atmosphere and impressions from the beauty of Russian nature. Working on it, I was listening to Russian music and especially Alexander Glazunov's *Karelian Legend* (op. 99, 1916). The second movement *Andante* is in a pastoral, contemplative mood -- with a kinship to the symphonic music by Vassily Kalinnikov, suggestive of memories of respite in the open air. In the middle section there appears an image of a wide river, smoothly bearing its waters. In the recapitulation, you can hear bird singing. This bird's singing comes closer to us in the third movement, *Scherzo*, and we look at it as if through an "ear microscope." The finale, *Allegro vivace*, and the dramaturgical center of the Sonata, is in rondo form. It has only one theme, but some images from the previous movements are reflected and reach their conclusions in this finale. After a lyrical development, the music gradually becomes brighter and ends with a coda in E major, which is reminiscent of a burst of sunlight. The entire piece is named for this coda -- the *Solnechnaya (Sunlight) Sonata*.

I am grateful to the wonderful violinist Karen Bentley Pollick for her request to write this music and for agreeing to perform it.

-Ivan Sokolov

From the Czech Republic, **Jan Vičar** (born on 5 May 1949 in Olomouc) is a prolific composer whose compositions have been performed and recorded by leading Czech soloists, orchestras and choirs in the Czech Republic, United States, Canada and Japan. He has served as Editor-in-chief of the leading Czech music journal *Hudební rozhledy*. As a Fulbright/CIES Scholar-in-residence, he lectured at eight United States universities in 1998 and 1999. He has published five books including *Imprints: Essays on Czech Music and Aesthetics* (2005, in English). He is a professor of music at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, and head of the Musicology Department of Palacky University in Olomouc. As a visiting professor, he taught composition and music theory at Birmingham-Southern College, Alabama, in the fall of 2005. He has been a member of Birmingham Art Music Alliance since 2006.

www.musicology.upol.cz/profiles/vicarzivot.html

Uspávanky/Lullabies for Violin and Piano (2006) was written for violinist Karen Bentley Pollick and pianist Ivan Sokolov to supplement the program of their March recital at Birmingham-Southern College where I spent fall semester 2005. It is a lyrical parallel to *Homage to Fiddlers*, which was premiered at BSC. It is similarly based on the folk music of my native country. The composition is generated from Moravian lullabies, which I have chosen from the repertory of folk singer, Zdena Hovorková. I have expanded the augmented fourth, the governing feature of the Lydian mode, and constructed a bi-tonal work: a mother sings and rocks her baby (simple tune in piano in Ab major), but the child's dreaming comes from somewhere else (violin in D major).

-Jan Vicar

Described as a “remarkable musician” by the *Washington Post* and praised for his “brilliant career” by the *New York Times*, **Dan Tepfer** is a New York-based jazz pianist and composer. Born in 1982 in Paris, France, in an American family, he earned a bachelor’s degree in astrophysics from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, before settling down in the United States. Today he divides his time between sideman work with some of the great jazz musicians of our time (Lee Konitz, Joe Lovano, Paul Motian, Ralph Towner to name a few), and a busy touring schedule with his own solo, duo and trio projects. One of his compositions was recently premiered at Carnegie Hall. He is the winner of both the first prize and audience prize of the 2006 Montreux Jazz Festival Solo Piano Competition and is the current Cole Porter Fellow of the American Pianists Association. For more information: www.dantepfer.com

Solo Blues for Violin and Piano was commissioned by Liz Bacher and premiered at the Weill Recital Hall of Carnegie Hall in January 2007. It is a solo piece, as the title indicates, for violin and piano, meaning that both instruments are played by a single performer. My idea in writing the piece was to imagine an inquisitive soul, equally adept at the piano and violin, sitting down to explore the possibilities offered by the combination of both instruments. As I child, after I had been playing the piano and improvising for a number of years, I was given a clarinet by my father and I have a clear memory of going through this exploration myself. I loved how two separate problems, one geometric, the other musical, came together and grew off of each other. Hence, there is a sense of narrative to the piece, as the musician, a little tentative at first, gradually gains confidence and sees her enthusiasm grow as she discovers more and more ways to combine the two instruments. While the music is meant to stand on its own, a live performance of the piece is ultimately as much choreography as it is music. The Blues of the title refers to the harmonic framework used in the composition, which is articulated around the first, fourth and fifth degrees of the key of D, in the order of the traditional blues form: I - IV - I - V - IV - I. This makes two things possible: on the one hand, using the backdrop of the blues connects this classical composition with my background in jazz and gives a cultural and historic framework to the plaintive quality of the initial melody; on the other, it allows me to use the violin's open strings (G, D, A and E) to play the fundamental and fifth of each of the three harmonic centers of the piece. Seen this way, it's as if the violin had been made to play the blues.

-Dan Tepfer

Visions fugitives are a series of short piano pieces written by Russian composer **Sergei Prokofiev** (1891-1953) between 1915 and 1917. They are based on a poem written by Russian poet Konstantin Balmont and were premiered by Prokofiev on April 15, 1918 in Petrograd, Soviet Union. The title is French for "*Fleeting/Fugitive Visions*" which is taken from the following line of poetry by Balmont:

"In every fugitive vision I see worlds, full of the changing play of rainbow hues..."

The pieces, though far from atonal, contain dissonant harmonies similar in nature of music composed by Prokofiev's contemporaries (Schoenberg and Scriabin), although still retaining highly original concepts in both tonality and rhythm.

1. *Lentamente*
2. *Andante*
3. *Allegretto*
4. *Animato*
5. *Molto giocoso*
6. *Con eleganza*
7. *Pittoresco (Arpa)*
8. *Commodo*
9. *Allegro tranquillo*
10. *Ridicolosamente*
11. *Con vivacità*
12. *Assai moderato*
13. *Allegretto*
14. *Feroce*
15. *Inquieto*
16. *Dolente*
17. *Poetico*
18. *Con una dolce lentezza*
19. *Presto agitatissimo e molto accentuato*
20. *Lento irrealmente*

In The Heaven (1992) is a children's piece about one little cloud. At the beginning, the cloud is light and white, then turns grey with the wind, rain, thunder and lightning. A rainbow appears and the clouds become fainter until they disappear. This composition is an allegory of our lives from good to bad, and ultimately returning to good at the end.

Elegie for Solo Viola (2001) is a lyrical piece composed for English violist Carol Allen. The violist must play and interpret from deep within their soul. At the end the spirit comes from above and the material world lies underneath. I don't know if this represents death or not.

Sonata for Viola and Piano (2006), along with the 2002 Cello and 2005 Violin sonatas, form a triad of works, united by a similar opening motive. The *Viola Sonata* can be seen as an interlude between the Violin and Cello Sonatas - the midway point between the two other members of a string trio. This one-movement sonata is comprised of four sections resembling the construction of a sonata or symphony cycle. The agitated opening *Allegro* is followed by a nocturne; the impetuous finale is preceded by a short scherzo-like link. Each section concludes with a funereal-like iteration of the beginning theme before its transcendental transformation. Perhaps it is possible to find some light irony or melancholic smile in the concept. Or perhaps it's absolutely serious music. I don't know...

The Sonata is dedicated to the violist Carol Allen -- a friend of many years.

-Ivan Sokolov

Ole Saxe was born in April 1952 in Copenhagen, and has lived in Sweden since 1973, now at Lake Siljan. As a naturopath and psychodramatist he is head of the School of Holistic Therapy, giving classes in alternative medicine, relaxation therapy and drama. Apart from piano, he plays drums and guitar and loves to sing and play in a world music band for which he writes songs in various styles. As a composer he has recorded 3 albums of relaxation music inspired by the seven seas and Scandinavian nature, as written four musicals, among others the fairytale *Travel Companion* by Danish author Hans Christian Andersen. Other compositions include settings of Swedish poems by Gustav Fröding and Per Lagerkvist , a string quartet inspired by Cuban salsa rhythms, and in 2000 a Dance Suite of contemporary dances for solo violin written for Karen Bentley, then arranged for symphony orchestra and premiered in 2002 with Karen and Redwood Symphony Orchestra. Recently, his *Summers Suite* setting of 6 poems by Nobel Prize winner Harry Martinsson was performed in New York and Sweden by soprano Ulla Westlund and the chamber music trio Musical Seasons ([youtube.com/misetersaxe](https://www.youtube.com/misetersaxe)). Ole Saxe is a great lover of all waters. Whenever he gets a chance he is either swimming, paddling his kayak or sailing. www.helhetsterapi.org/olesaxe/

Tango Orientale was originally written for clarinet and piano. Here it is scored for viola and piano. In this work the multicultural influences of the tango tradition seek out its roots from the Orient. The Andalusian scale reminds us of the Moorish occupation of Spain that left Andalusia with a rich inheritance of music and art. Ages later, this musical influence would inspire Latin American music. When the clarinet version of *Tango Orientale* toured South America with Kjell Fagés and his sextet, it found its way to Argentina, the homeland of tango.

-Ole Saxe