

The Dreams of Birds
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Jenni Olson
flute, piccolo, alto flute, bass flute



The Dreams of Birds

Chamber music for flute by Los Angeles Composers

Jenni Olson – Flute, Piccolo, Alto Flute and Bass Flute

1. Jenni Brandon: The Dreams of Birds
Jenni Olson, alto flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

2. Alex Shapiro: Intermezzo
Jenni Olson, bass flute; Marcia Dickstein, harp

3. Dave Volpe: Riverbed
*Jenni Olson, alto flute; Christin Webb, bassoon;
Marcia Dickstein, harp*

4. Dave Volpe: Gwinna
*Jenni Olson, flute/piccolo; Andrew Duckles, viola;
Marcia Dickstein, harp; Sherri Chung, voice;
Lynda Sue Marks, percussion*

5. Damian Montano: Dragonfly
Jenni Olson, solo piccolo

6. Bear McCreary: Incantation
*Jenni Olson, piccolo/bass flute; Christin Webb,
bassoon/contrabassoon; Marcia Dickstein, harp*

7. Joachim Horsley: Moonrise
Jenni Olson, bass flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

8. Peter Jaffe: Un petite cliché
Jenni Olson, flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

Daniel Kelley: A Tripartite Sonata

9. Movement I

10. Movement II

11. Movement III

Jenni Olson, flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

Jenni Olson – flute/piccolo/alto flute/bass flute

Bryan Pezzone – piano

Marcia Dickstein – harp

Christin Webb – bassoon/contrabassoon

Andrew Duckles – viola

Sherri Chung – voice

Lynda Sue Marks – percussion



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The Dreams of Birds

Chamber music for flute by Los Angeles composers

Jenni Olson, Flute, Piccolo, Alto Flute and Bass Flute

1. Jenni Brandon: The Dreams of Birds (7:49)

Jenni Olson, alto flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

2. Alex Shapiro: Intermezzo (3:40)

Jenni Olson, bass flute; Marcia Dickstein, harp

3. Dave Volpe: Riverbed (6:34)

Jenni Olson, alto flute; Christin Webb, bassoon ; Marcia Dickstein, harp

4. Dave Volpe: Gwinna (7:23)

Jenni Olson, flute/piccolo; Andrew Duckles, viola; Marcia Dickstein, harp; Sherri Chung, voice; Lynda Sue Marks, percussion

5. Damian Montano: Dragonfly (3:02)

Jenni Olson, solo piccolo

6. Bear McCreary: Incantation (6:33)

Jenni Olson, piccolo/bass flute; Christin Webb, bassoon/contrabassoon; Marcia Dickstein, harp

7. Joachim Horsley: Moonrise (5:13)

Jenni Olson, bass flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

8. Peter Jaffe: Un petite cliché (3:37)

Jenni Olson, flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

Daniel Kelley: A Tripartite Sonata

9. Movement I (4:44) 10. Movement II (6:56) 11. Movement III (3:54)

Jenni Olson, flute; Bryan Pezzone, piano

Total Playing Time: 59:55

Jenni Olson – flute/piccolo/alto flute/bass flute

Bryan Pezzone – piano

Marcia Dickstein – harp

Christin Webb – bassoon/contrabassoon

Andrew Duckles – viola

Sherri Chung – voice

Lynda Sue Marks – percussion



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Produced by: *Jenni Olson and Matthew Snyder*
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Artist Photo: *Juan Karlos*
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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Talented composers at the University of Southern California inspired this project years ago when I was a student. I came to love collaborating with gifted composers after performing frequently in their composition recitals and student films. The catalyst came when I recorded my first album in 2006: a collection of some of my favorite pieces that I had performed during my years in school. That album included a new piece by gifted film composer Bear McCreary. He composed Three Pieces for flute, accordion and double bass specifically for me. I realized that my talented friends were excited to have the opportunity to create and collaborate on new projects. The composers for *The Dreams of Birds* are all dear friends and colleagues of mine. It was my vision to utilize the auxiliary instruments like the piccolo, alto flute and bass flute – thus creating a flute CD with the full array of tone colors that these different instruments can provide. It has been an incredibly rewarding experience to work with some of Los Angeles' most talented composers and musicians on this project. Their musicianship, spirit and love of music shine through in each of the works. These are all world premiere recordings with the composers taking part in the recording and/or editing process. The following program notes contain a brief biography of each composer followed by their own description of the work(s). I hope you enjoy listening to these as much as I have enjoyed playing them.

— Jenni Olson

Jenni Brandon (b. 1977) is an award-winning composer with music commissioned, performed, and recorded by many ensembles around the world. Her publishers are Boosey & Hawkes, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Graphite Publishing, and Jenni Brandon Music. She produces concerts of new music in Los Angeles and is the music director of the choral group The Concert Singers. Her first self-produced CD, *Songs of California: Music for Winds and Piano*, released in 2010, was nominated for an Independent Music Award. Please visit www.jennibrandon.com.

"In *The Dreams of Birds*, I explore the idea of what birds might dream. Would they dream of running, of flying to the sun? Would they dream of being human? I wanted to explore these possibilities while evoking the creatures' sonic images with birdsong imitations from the alto flute. The bird's voice is heard in little turns and grace notes from the instrument, as well as by use of the flutter-tongue technique. The piano – both supportive and, at times, grand – helps give flight to these dreams of birds. It was an honor to write this piece for Jenni Olson to premiere and record."

Alex Shapiro (b. 1962) composes acoustic and electroacoustic pieces known for their lyricism and drama. Published by Activist Music, her music is heard daily in concerts and broadcasts across the U.S. and internationally, and can be found on over twenty commercially released CDs from record labels around the world. Alex lives on Wash-

ington State's remote San Juan Island, and when she's not composing, she can be found communing with the sea life, as seen on her music- and photo-filled blog, www.notesfromthekelp.com and her website, www.alexshapiro.org.

"I composed *Intermezzo* as a response to the waves of the ocean, and as a reflection on the flow of a more introspective, emotional sea. A long and lyrical theme floats above a steadily rolling line, perhaps as a lengthy branch of kelp might dance from the force of each coming tide. It was a pleasure to adapt this piece for Jenni's gorgeous bass flute tones, so soothing against the lilt of Marcia's harp."

Dave Volpe (b. 1983) is a composer based in Los Angeles who loves film, collaboration, and making music. He is a graduate of the Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television Program at USC, where his mentor was Thomas Newman. There he scored numerous student films, and learned from some of the industry's leading professionals. Dave holds a Master's Degree in Music Composition from Queens College in New York City and has participated in the film-scoring program at the Aspen Music Festival and the ASCAP/NYU Buddy Baker Film Scoring Workshop. In addition to composing, Dave is a classically trained pianist, a lifelong choir nerd and an avid cook/baker. He is thrilled to be contributing to Jenni's album and couldn't be happier with the quality and musicianship she has brought to this project. For more information, visit Dave's website, www.dave-volpe.com — or soundcloud.com/dave-volpe.

"The inspiration for *Riverbed* came from the desire to write a piece that would showcase the subtle and almost haunting qualities of this unique ensemble. Once I got into the slow and luscious opening, I could not help but think of the serene calm of a moonlit trip down a river, perhaps in a time before motorboats or even electricity. This eventually gives way to a playful waltz: fireflies dancing, water rippling over rocks, even a dance between lovers. Water brings us to a place of both peace and of romance, and I believe this beautiful trio of instruments embodies that same place.

"*Gwinna* is a children's story written and illustrated by Barbara Helen Berger. The main character, Gwinna, is a girl born with owl wings who, when she hears music on the wind, is inspired to embark on a quest to discover her origins and purpose. She follows the melodious tones to their source and ultimately acquires a harp on which she learns to play the very songs that drew her there. Gwinna returns home with her harp and discovers the healing powers of the music she creates.

"The idea of a flute/piccolo, viola, and harp trio (plus voice and percussion) came from three core elements of the story. The harp, of course, is Gwinna; the flute/piccolo represent the hooting of the owls, and the viola depicts the tree from which Gwinna's harp

is made. The ethereal and almost mystical atmosphere that Berger establishes is the perfect backdrop for what can be produced with such a combination of instruments.”

Damian Montano (b. 1976) enjoys a dual career as composer and bassoonist. His works have been performed by ensembles across the country – including the National Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the Houston Symphony. He is a member of the LA Chamber Orchestra – and has performed with the LA Philharmonic, LA Opera, Pacific Symphony, and in film soundtracks from composers including Danny Elfman, Hans Zimmer, Marco Beltrami and John Powell.

“*Dragonfly* is for solo piccolo: the insect’s perfect instrumental equivalent. Both are small and light. The Dragonfly is one of the world’s fastest insects while the piccolo is one of the orchestra’s most agile instruments. They both have elegance along with great power. The opening section of *Dragonfly* highlights the beauty of the seldom-heard lower register of the piccolo. There are coy and hesitant moments, but they are handled gracefully. The second section showcases the piccolo’s agility. It is dainty yet persistent until the powerful finish.”

After completing degrees in composition and recording arts at USC’s Thornton School of Music, **Bear McCreary** (b. 1979) became one of legendary film composer Elmer Bernstein’s select protégés, and learned the tools of the trade working with the Maestro and orchestrating for him. At the age of 24, he was launched into pop culture with his groundbreaking score to SyFy’s hit series *Battlestar Galactica*, described as “the most innovative music on TV today” (Variety). Io9.com dubbed him “one of the ten best science fiction composers of all time,” alongside legends like John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith and Bernard Herrmann. McCreary’s many other credits include *The Walking Dead* and *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*. His score for *Human Target* earned him his first Emmy nomination. His feature film work includes Disney’s worldwide hit *Step Up 3D*, and his videogame credits include *SOCOM 4: US Navy Seals*.

“I wrote *Incantation* for Jenni because I’ve always adored the exotic sound she can coax out of her instruments. This piece is all about extreme registers. The flute part ranges from the lowest notes of the bass flute to the highest notes of the piccolo. The bassoonist growls the deepest pitches of the contrabassoon, and dances perilously on the upper range of the bassoon – and the harpist detunes the strings and strikes the body of the instrument to produce very unusual sounds. The piece’s title reflects its evocation of a séance. Flourishing phrases in the piccolo are echoed by low chanting drones from the contrabassoon and low harp strings, emulating a spiritual leader preaching and being echoed by his flock. Exoticism and mysticism were foremost in my mind as I composed. As the ritual evolves, first the harp, then the bassoon takes over the ceremony. At last, the main theme returns. We return to darkness with the same ominous harp tones and piccolo solo that began our ritual.”

Joachim Horsley (b. 1977) is a composer and orchestrator for award-winning films and television programs, including the Lionsgate films *The Possession* and *Rabbit Hole*, as well as the recent international martial arts drama *My Kingdom*. You have heard Horsley’s work in TV shows, commercials, and promos airing on NBC, ABC, HBO,

TruTV, and A&E, among other channels. You may recognize his music from the Peabody Award-Winning Onion News Network (TheOnion.com). He is often called upon as an arranger and orchestral conductor for major label recording artists, most recently The Pet Shop Boys. He lives in Studio City, CA with his wife Lisa and sons Desmond and Bode. For more information, see www.LittleHorseMusic.com.

“Every night, before bedtime, my 2-year old son Desmond would insist that we find the moon through a window on one side of the house or the other. Sometimes there would be no moon in the sky, and he would ask, “Is the moon sleeping?” I would answer no, that the moon was busy all night. I could tell from the look on his face that this was not a satisfactory answer. Thus inspired, *Moonrise* is meant to depict the story of the moon’s journey during the night. The bass flute, one of my favorite instruments, carries so much richness and mystery; I thought it would be a perfect match for the imagery I was hoping to create. Moreover, I wanted to show some of the bass flute’s ability and range, in a way that may not typically be exploited by composers.”

Peter Jaffe (b. 1956) is in his seventeenth season as music director of the Stockton Symphony, and has been credited with fostering sustained artistic growth throughout his tenure. His background as an instrumentalist includes extensive performing on the violin, viola, and keyboard. As acting concertmaster of the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra, he spent a season in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and served for several years as staff pianist and vocal accompanist at the Aspen Music Festival.

“My wife’s sister Connie plays the flute, and I wanted to surprise her with a little flute and piano piece in December 1980. *Un petit cliché* was the result, so named to acknowledge its unmistakable indebtedness to French composers such as Fauré – and its loving, nostalgic glimpse back to an earlier time ... the piece could have been written almost a century earlier.”

Daniel Kelley (b. 1968) is a Los Angeles-based composer and arranger. Over 500,000 books of his compositions and arrangements have been sold. As a French horn player, he is a member of the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra and the Pasadena Symphony, and has performed on numerous motion pictures. He and his wife, Cynthia, have three children and too many fish. Adair, Darcy and Adele are the names of the children. Sheet music is available through www.lastresortmusic.com

Our flutist, Jenni Olson, writes: “If you ever meet Daniel Kelley, you will know exactly where this piece comes from. He has been surrounded by music and musicians his entire life, and the music he writes is reflective of his positive encounters. When I asked him about the title for the piece, he mentioned he was making a “Tripartite dessert” during its composition, and thought it would suit the piece. (If you ever get a chance to try his desserts, you won’t be sorry.) For me, *A Tripartite Sonata* is a virtuosic three-movement work for flute and piano. The first movement is playful and soaring, standing in contrast to the expressive second movement. The final movement is a whirlwind and a lot of fun to play. It is characterized by its flourishes and driving energy to the end.”

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Jenni Olson is an active orchestral and chamber music performer and recording artist in the Los Angeles area. She currently serves as principal flute with the Stockton Symphony and second flute with both the Long Beach Symphony and Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra. As a freelance musician, Jenni performs frequently with prestigious groups such as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera and Pacific Symphony. She co-founded the chamber music group Orion Winds and can be heard throughout Southern California performing with various chamber ensembles. As a recording artist, Jenni can be heard on dozens of soundtracks. Some of her recent credits include *The Lorax*, *Men in Black 3*, *Night at the Museum 2* and *Sex in the City 2*. Living in Los Angeles, she has had the opportunity to work with many distinguished musicians such as John Williams, James Galway, Tony Bennett, Liza Minelli, Stevie Wonder, Jerry Goldsmith, Michael Kamen, John Lithgow, Monica Mancini and Quincy Jones. Jenni has performed in almost every significant classical music venue in Southern California – including Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Royce Hall, Staples Center and the Nokia Center. She also teaches flute at Citrus College and Music Appreciation at Pasadena City College. Jenni received her BA from California State University, Stanislaus, where she studied with Caryl Mae Scott – and received her MM and DMA from University of Southern California, where she studied with Jim Walker. For more information, go to www.jenniferflute.com or visit the Jennifer Olson musician page on Facebook.

Bryan Pezzone is known as *the* consummate crossover pianist of his generation. He excels in classical, contemporary, jazz, and experimental genres – and is well known for his versatility and virtuosity as a recording and performing artist, improviser and composer. He performs with many major symphony orchestra associations, tours widely with the jazz group Free Flight, and is known in the Los Angeles area as a preferred freelance pianist for film and television soundtrack recording, contemporary music premieres, and chamber music. Bryan is the pianist on most all of the cartoons released by Warner Brothers and Disney; he was the principal pianist with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra from its inception in 1991 through 1999, and received a rare on-screen credit for his performance on the soundtrack of *The Game*.

Marcia Dickstein entertains audiences with her performances of chamber, solo and orchestral harp music. She inspires composers to write new works in classical and jazz harp, and has commissioned and premiered over 130 composi-

tions. As founder and artistic director of the Debussy Trio music ensemble, Ms. Dickstein has produced numerous chamber music records, along with her own solo projects. Many of her recordings are available at www.fatrockink.com. She has also played on more than 350 film scores and toured extensively, including the United States, Canada, Europe, Scandinavia and Japan. Her latest projects include improvisational harp music, and a book of poems for children, *Tall and Small Poestries* with drawings by Dave Riddles. Ms. Dickstein teaches at Westmont College.

Bassoonist and contrabassoonist **Christin Phelps Webb** is a sought-after freelance musician in the Los Angeles area. Since moving to Los Angeles in 1995, she has performed with many of Southern California's finest orchestras. She also maintains a career as a chamber musician, performing with Ceora Winds as well as the Orion Winds Quintet. In addition to her performance schedule, Christin teaches bassoon at Citrus College, conducts master classes and maintains a private teaching studio.

Violist **Andrew Duckles** enjoys a diverse musical life as a recording artist, chamber musician, soloist, and teacher. Mr. Duckles has made guest appearances as principal viola of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, the Long Beach Symphony, and the New West Symphony. As a recording artist, he is featured on a multitude of studio albums, television, and motion picture soundtracks. Andrew also teaches viola and chamber music at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach.

Sherri Chung is a classically trained pianist, composer and singer based in Los Angeles and a graduate of USC's Scoring for Motion Picture and Television department. She has worked with such successes as Walter Murphy (Family Guy) and Randy Newman – and her work has appeared in both film and television on CBS, Discovery, ION, and VH1.

Lynda Sue Marks is both a percussionist and a classical soprano. She is Principal Percussion for the Long Beach Symphony and has performed both soprano solos and xylophone solos with the symphony. For many years, she was the mallet and soprano soloist for the Long Beach Municipal Band as well as the mallet player for the Ice Capades and Ice Follies in Long Beach, Los Angeles and New York City.