


Yael Manor / ELIXIR
Music for Solo Piano





“A special thank you to the composers and listeners of this work of art. I truly feel this compilation encompasses a powerhouse of talent and inspiration. Each piece was selected meticulously, each note played with love and recorded with great care. I am honored to present to you - Elixir.”

Yael Manor

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1	Lawrence Dillon	Honey	7:48
2	Frederick Tillis	Spiritual Fantasy No. 4 for Piano	11:31
3	Karl Kroeger	Toccata for Piano	5:54
4	Richard Cameron-Wolfe	Code of Un-Silence: A Prayer	8:59
5	JunYi Chow	It Rained! The Ants Ran...	1:30
6-10	Reinaldo Moya	Rayuela Preludes	14:50
11	Robert Parris	Variations for Piano	4:48

Total Time 55:20

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PO Box 1108, New York, NY 10040

Yael Manor

Avant-garde performer and champion of new music, Yael Manor regularly collaborates with composers both as a soloist and a chamber musician. A frequent performer of national and world premieres, she has been praised for her artistic sensitivity and breathtaking, powerful performances. As the Artistic Director of 20>>21 Music, Yael collaborates with today's emerging composers to curate programs ensuring new music becomes accessible to all audiences. Repertoire for each concert is carefully selected and presents the composers' music alongside related works. Each piece reflects the composer's influences and draws connections between music of the 20th and 21st centuries. Yael embraces a relaxed concert atmosphere, inviting audience members to learn and interact.

Yael has performed on some of the most prestigious stages in the United States including: the Kimmel Center, the Miller Theatre, the Dekelboun Concert Hall, Symphony Space, Merkin Concert Hall, and Carnegie Hall, and has also been featured in a WQXR broadcast of the McGraw Hill Young Artists Showcase. She holds a Master's degree from the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel-Aviv University and a Doctor of Musical Arts from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University. She currently lives and teaches in New York City.

Yael's debut release, *Elixir*, is the first album to be produced by the American Composers Alliance (ACA) – USA, presenting seven premiere recordings. Collaborating with ACA, She meticulously selected pieces that would represent a wide variety of styles and composers from different generations. *Elixir* is a true collaboration between, a performer, composers, recording studio and a supporting organization. The album brings a myriad of colors and emotions to a collection of solo works from the 20th and 21st centuries.

Lawrence Dillon (b.1959)

Composer Lawrence Dillon creates works that connect past and present in attractive and unexpected ways, provoking Gramophone to exclaim, "Each score is an arresting and appealing creation, full of fanciful and lyrical flourishes within traditional forms that are brightly tweaked." His music is characterized by a keen sensitivity to color, a mastery of form, and what the Louisville Courier-Journal has called a "compelling, innate soulfulness." Despite losing 50% of his hearing from a childhood illness, Dillon began composing as soon as he started piano lessons at the age of seven. In 1985, he became the youngest composer to earn a doctorate at The Juilliard School, and was immediately appointed to the Juilliard faculty. He is now Composer in Residence at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Dillon's music, in the words of American Record Guide, is "lovely...austere...vivid and impressive." Three recordings of his music were released in 2010-2011 on the Bridge, Albany and Naxos labels, featuring (respectively) string quartets, vocal works, and music for violin. His works have been commissioned and premiered since 2010 by the Emerson String Quartet, Le Train Bleu, the Ravinia Festival, the Daedalus String Quartet, the Lincoln Trio, the Seattle Chamber Music Society, the Cassatt String Quartet, the Mansfield Symphony, the Boise Philharmonic, Wintergreen Summer Arts Festival, the Salt Lake City Symphony, the Winston-Salem Symphony, Low and Lower, the Carpe Diem String Quartet, the Quartetto di Sassofoni d'Accademia, the University of Utah and the Idyllwild Symphony Orchestra. Lawrence Dillon is represented by Jeffrey James Arts Consulting.

Honey

Dillon's first composition for solo piano in ten years, *Honey* (2012) is a meditation on the texture, longevity and adaptability of an 8000-year-old source of sweetness. Its four sections flow over and through one another, blending the glittering fluidity of the opening, a stately, reverberant chorus, and a brief aria into a final, exuberant dance. The title page comes with the following lines:

*Open the tomb and you will find a jar. Break the seal, and taste. See?
Thousands of years have not dented its flavor, armies and thieves have not quickened its flow.
Watch it spread in a puddle on your plate,
it slows down the tongue,
brings sovereignty to plain surroundings.
Use it as a name for the one to whom you adhere,
though everything else dissolves. Use it as a prayer that binds you to your moment,
that binds you to moments long before you were born,
and long after your moment
has faded and dispersed.*

Frederick Tillis (b.1930)

Composer in the European and American classical traditions, Frederick Tillis was born in Galveston, Texas on January 5, 1930. He is a graduate of Wiley College and received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Music Composition from the University of Iowa. His catalog includes more than 125 compositions and commissions, spanning both jazz and classical European traditions in various media: orchestral, jazz, instrumental, choral, chamber music, and art song. Melodic and harmonic textures reflect elements of various music from around the world, including Asian and Western cultures, as well as natural outgrowths of his ethnic and cultural background. Tillis' music is performed nationally and abroad. Among his commissioned compositions are: *A Symphony of Songs* (1999), a choral/orchestral work based on poems by Wallace Stevens and commissioned by The Hartford Chorale, Inc.; *A Festival Journey* (1992) and *Ring Shout Concerto* (1974), for percussion, written for Max Roach and premiered by Max Roach and the Atlanta Symphony; and *Concerto for Piano* (Jazz Trio) and *Symphony Orchestra* (1983) written for Billy Taylor and performed with the Springfield Symphony Orchestra. His 2001 *For the Victims and Survivors of September 11* for jazz group and narrator features the composer's own poetry with a wind and percussion ensemble. Tillis has composed more than thirty Spiritual Fantasies for various combinations of chamber instruments and voices – all designed from the basis of a tune or motive from a traditional African-American spiritual song. In many cases the original song is used in an abstract way, while others are more literal and evident. As he first began to compose widely in the early 1960s, his output underwent a significant change in 1968 after the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., at which point the composer more consciously began to incorporate more personal or spiritual elements into the learned chamber music style - a method he has continued to embrace through the years.

Dr. Tillis has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including a Rockefeller Foundation grant, a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts in composition, the 1997 Commonwealth Award from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and an award for outstanding service from the International Association of Jazz Educators. As Professor of Music at the University of Massachusetts, he taught music composition and a survey course in the history of Afro-American Music & Musicians. Active as a jazz saxophonist, he has traveled with the Tillis-Holmes Jazz Duo and the Tradewinds Jazz Ensemble to Australia, China, England, Fiji, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, the former Soviet Union, and others. His recordings include: *Music for Peace and Goodwill*, including *Four Corners of the World* (2005); *Festival Journey Concerto*, including the title track, as well as *Spiritual Fantasy No. 9* (1987), a setting for soprano soloist, choir, and brass ensemble, utilizing the poem *Sympathy* by Paul Laurence Dunbar; and *Jazz-American Classical Music*, historical recordings by Frederick Tillis and Friends – including *Images of the Blue Earth* (1990) for string quartet and soprano saxophone. In a 2012 video interview, Dr. Tillis spoke about traditions in music, saying “I hear young musicians today playing, improvising, and bringing a latitude toward the European classical tradition – a style that is also a part of the American jazz tradition. Young players today have the freedom of traditions...” Dr. Tillis's fascinating history

and experiences have been profiled by writers including William C. Banfield, in *Musical Landscapes in Color* (Scarecrow Press, 2003), and by Howard Klein for New World Records.

Frederick Tillis is currently Professor Emeritus in the Department of Music and Dance, and Director Emeritus of the University Fine Arts Center and Jazz in July Workshops in Improvisation at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Spiritual Fantasy No. 4

Tillis expresses himself in the forms of the European classical music tradition, infusing them with the spirit of black vernacular music. A great interest in spiritual songs as a source of musical material was used as apparent in *Spiritual Fantasy No. 4*. As he reflected on his Spiritual Fantasies, “this piece pays tribute to the essence of the musical expressions of pathos and triumph over worldly obstacles encountered by a people who found hope and strength through faith in God.”

Spiritual Fantasy No. 4 for Piano displays diverse compositional and pianistic techniques, continuously moving between a wide-range of emotions, colors, and expressions. The impetuous opening leads quickly to the first mentioning of the main spiritual, *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*. An air of mystery follows, presenting more musical material, including a reference to *Jacob's Ladder*, using string plucking and muting, as well as a combination with traditional playing. As the piece progresses, it alternates between energetic, tempestuous movements, and a delicate, jazzy atmosphere, leading to a spirited improvisation. The chaotic and passionate music builds up to a powerful scream – “*Lord! Jesus! Christ!*” The cry immediately diminishes with a church-bell reference to the tune of *Glory Hallelujah*, denoting a solemn prayer that slowly fades away.

Karl Kroeger (b.1932)

Karl Kroeger is an American composer, musicologist, and music editor, and has been a professor of music at several universities. Kroeger was born in Louisville, Kentucky. He studied at the University of Louisville under Claude Almand and George Perle. After receiving a Master of Music at Louisville, Kroeger went to study at the University of Illinois where his main teacher was Gordon Binkerd. Kroeger was head of the American Music Collection at the New York Public Library from 1962-1964. Between 1964-1967 he was Ford Foundation composer in residence to the public schools of Eugene, OR. In 1967 Kroeger joined the faculty of Ohio University. He then began doctoral studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, after which he transferred to Brown University where he completed his Ph.D. Since then, Kroeger has directed the Moravian Music Foundation in Winston-Salem, North Carolina (1972-82) as well as been a professor at the University of Colorado (1982-98). He is currently retired and living in the greater Chicago, IL, area.

Toccata for Piano

“My *Toccata for Piano* was composed in 2003, but its origins go back to the piano accompaniment for a song I wrote in about 1980. The piano part to the song contained musical ideas and gestures that I thought could be expanded and developed. The toccata contrasts two musical ideas – one rhythmically nervous and impulsive, the other more sustained and lyrical. The main movement is preceded and followed by a quasi-improvisatory introduction and coda. Unlike most of my compositions, which were written for specific performers or occasions, this one was written for the sheer joy of composing it.”

Richard Cameron-Wolfe (b.1943)

Composer-pianist Richard Cameron-Wolfe was born in Cleveland, OH, and received his music training at Oberlin College and Indiana University. His principal piano teachers were Joseph Battista and Menahem Pressler; his composition mentors included Bernard Heiden, Iannis Xenakis, and John Eaton. After brief teaching appointments at Indiana University, Radford College (Virginia), and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Cameron-Wolfe moved to New York City, where he performed and composed for several major ballet and modern dance companies. In 1978 he began a 24-year professorship at Purchase College, State University of New York, resigning in 2002 in order to devote himself primarily to the piano and composing. He now resides in the mountains of northern New Mexico.

Cameron-Wolfe, a long-time member of the American Composers Alliance, is devoted to the promotion of modern classical music (which he prefers to call “sound art”) and he has served as an administrator for several musical organizations: Friends of American Music (1974 to the present), the New Mexico Music Festival (1978-82), Music from Angel Fire (1984), The Charles Ives Center (1990-91), and as Executive Director of the American branch of CESAME: the Center for Soviet/American Musical Exchange (1989-93). In early 2015, he participated in two “Brothers” concerts in Russia, in St. Petersburg and Moscow with his long-time friends, the composers Grigory Korchmar and Sergei Zhukov. Then, in Kharkov, Ukraine, he coached and attended the February 28th world premiere of his cantata, *Breathless*, scored for mezzo-soprano, cello, and guitar quartet. Returning to the USA, four of his works were performed in a “New Mexico Composers” concert at the DiMenna Center’s Cary Hall, presented under the auspices of the American Composers Alliance.

His current projects include the recording and editing of two CDs of his music, the first of which – titled “An Inventory of Damaged Goods” – is projected for release in late 2016, on the Furious Artisans label. On March 11, 2016, he will share a concert in New York City with Ukrainian composer Volodymyr Runchak.

Code of Un-Silence: A Prayer

Code of Un-Silence is a prayer, a meditation on the composer's cantata *A Measure of Love and Silence* (which embraced the poetry of Tatyana Apraksina). Partly an epilogue, or an afterthought, it contemplates "the presence of an absence", experienced as a resonant silence. The cantata is dedicated to the memory of Cameron-Wolfe's mentor, the visual artist Robert Kostka, and to the memory of Russian composer Andrei Petrov. The spirit of these dedications permeates *Code of Un-Silence* as well. Cameron-Wolfe himself gave the premiere performance of this work on October 12, 2006, at the Astrakhan Festival in southern Russia. He dedicated that performance to the memory of Astrakhan composer Alexander Blinov.

JunYi Chow (b.1987)

Born and raised in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, JunYi Chow began studying piano and music theory at the age of 5. He gained admittance into Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 2005 and there studied with WenChen Qin, Gang Chen and JianPing Tang. After graduation in 2011, Chow began a master's degree program in the U.S. at Indiana University, Jacobs School of Music, completing it in May 2013 as a student of P.Q. Phan. Chow's music has been performed in many places including Malaysia, Singapore, China, Taiwan, the United States, and Canada. In July 2010, Chow received sponsorship from the Goethe Institute of Malaysia to attend the 45th Darmstadt International Summer Course for New Music in Darmstadt, Germany. In December 2010, his first symphonic work *Getaran* was commissioned and premiered by the Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, and was performed in "Past & Present" – a concert that toured Kuantan, Penang and Kuala Lumpur. In May 2011, Chow's ensemble piece *A Night Without Voices* was performed in the concert "Malaysian Voices," curated by the Malaysian composer Kee Yong Chong and presented by New Music Concerts in Toronto, Canada. In October 2012, Chow presented his composition recital in fulfillment of his master's degree at the University of Indiana in Bloomington.

It Rained! The Ants Ran...

JunYi reveals his playful side with his the sweet and whimsical *It Rained! The Ants Ran...* (2013). This piece depicts a scene in which a colony of ants scurrying in a nervous yet orderly fashion to find higher ground before the rain. The climax, filled with clusters of music that imitate the sound of thunder, is followed by softness, as the listener imagines the ants moving marching further and further away off into the distance.

Reinaldo Moya (b. 1984)

Reinaldo Moya is a composer of opera and instrumental music. His highly rhythmic and expressive works conjure up imaginary worlds out of sounds that come out of his own ambiguous sense of identity and “home.” A native of Caracas, Venezuela, Mr. Moya grew up playing the violin and was a founding member of the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela, with whom he toured France, Italy, Mexico, Chile, Brazil and the United States. In 1999, he relocated to the United States, where he has lived ever since. He was trained as a composer at The Juilliard School, from which he received both master’s and doctorate degrees, under the tutelage of Samuel Adler and Robert Beaser. Mr. Moya is the recipient of the Van Lier Fellowship from Meet the Composer and the Aaron Copland Award from the Copland House, which led to a residency at Aaron Copland’s historic home in New York State in 2012.

Moya has been commissioned by the Minnesota Opera to write a new opera for their Project Opera. An adaptation of Will Weaver’s book *Memory Boy*, the opera will have a libretto by Pulitzer Prize-winner Mark Campbell and is scheduled to be premiered in the spring of 2016. Excerpts from his opera *Generalissimo* have been performed at Symphony Space, and Weill Recital Hall in Carnegie Hall. His music has been performed in Germany, Colombia, Australia, Argentina, Venezuela and throughout the United States by performers such as the Juilliard Orchestra, the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela, the St. Olaf Orchestra, the Da Capo Chamber Players, the Attacca Quartet and other notable performers, including members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the JACK Quartet, and Alarm Will Sound. Mr. Moya is on the faculty at St. Olaf College in Minnesota and is a member of the Theory and Composition Faculty at the Interlochen Arts Camp.

Rayuela Preludes

Julio Cortázar’s novel *Rayuela* (Hopscotch) from 1963 represents one of the most impressive achievements of Latin American literature. Written in an episodic, snapshot manner, the novel has 155 chapters, the last 99 being designated as “expendable.” These “expendable” chapters fill in some gaps in the main story, while others add information about the characters or record the aesthetic and literary speculations of a writer named Morelli who makes a brief appearance in the narrative. Some of these ‘expendable chapters’ at first glance seem random, but upon closer inspection suggest some underlying order and logic.

At the beginning of the book the author suggests the book can be read in two possible ways. First, the book can be read either in direct sequence from chapter 1 and stop at chapter 56, which, Cortázar writes, the reader can do “with a clean conscience,” or alternatively by hopscotching through the entire set of 155 chapters according to the “Table of Instructions” designated by the author. The author also leaves the option of having the reader choose his/her own path.

“When I first read *Rayuela*, I knew I wanted to translate its sprawling, urban-scape into a set of piano pieces. This first book of *Rayuela Preludes* (2011) represents the beginning of a series that will reinterpret, and comment upon Cortázar’s novel. The preludes are not intended to be program music. The fragments from the novel that are included in the score became the inspiration for that particular prelude. Sometimes that inspiration came by way of a mood, a narrative technique, an image or any of the possible reactions one can have while reading the novel.”

Chapter 1 “¿Encontraría a la Maga?” (“Would I find La Maga?”): The opening musical gesture seems to ask a question akin to that which opens the novel. The constant motion perhaps is reminiscent of the narrator’s constant search for his lover in Paris. The rolled chords over the undulating accompaniment suggest the first glimpses of La Maga from across the bridge. These chords build up to a suspended resolution. Ultimately, this relationship is unattainable and La Maga remains elusive and mysterious.

Chapter 34: Cortázar plays an intricate game in this chapter. He has transcribed the opening chapter of *Lo Prohibido* (The Forbidden) by the Spanish novelist Benito Pérez Galdós. The narrative alternates between a direct transcript of the novel by Pérez Galdós and Horacio Oliveira’s thoughts as he reads it. In his thoughts, Horacio is dismissive, distracted and generally unimpressed by the book, which he ends up tossing away.

It is impossible to read both lines of text at the same time, and the challenge of this prelude consists of presenting two musical strains in a truly simultaneous way. The opening of Erik Satie’s first Sarabande is presented in the middle two staves in the score, significantly slowed down. The outer staves reflect the thoughts that one might have as one listens to the Satie. There is a sense of impatience. New melodies and motives emerge from the texture, the music gathers momentum, and all the while the Satie continues undisturbed, sometimes in the foreground, sometimes as a mere shadow.

Chapter 109 Interludios: Interludio a - This interlude consists of a mosaic of musical “snapshots”, different in mood, nature and tempi. These fragments are connected by short and deliberately inconclusive transitions, as if they were coming into being on the spot like the bridges of Morelli’s imaginary cities. **Interludio b** - This interlude consists of a complete reshuffling of Interludio a. There is not a single note added or taken away, but passages have been moved up or down the octave, and some dynamics and articulations have been changed. Some of the snapshots have remained unaltered, but the bridges connecting them to the city, and indeed the new city itself, feels and sounds completely different from the one conjured up in the first interlude.

Chapter 7 “Toco tu boca” (“I touch your mouth”): This prelude was inspired by Cortázar’s beautiful depiction of a kiss in this chapter.

Robert Parris (1924-1999)

An American composer who worked primarily in the Washington, D.C. area, Robert Parris (1924 - 1999) was a Julliard student who later studied with Luening and Copland, though he counted their influence on his music as “minimal.” Known as a musical colorist, Parris specializes in small ensembles and has been known to push instruments to the limits of virtuoso playing. His solo violin sonata is considered quite difficult, and the composer-directors of CRI believed his trombone concerto to be unplayable until they heard a recording of it. A longtime professor at George Washington University, Parris has had his works performed by Mstislav Rostropovich and the NSO. In the early seventies, he turned to Borges for inspiration and produced the marvelous *Book of Imaginary Beings*. Part I (1972) is a work for flute (piccolo), violin, cello, piano, celeste, and percussion. Part II was published in 1983. Parris got his first international recognition in 1958 with his *Concerto for Five Kettledrums and Orchestra*, premiered by Fred Begun, and the National Symphony in Washington, under Howard Mitchell. CRI recorded a number of his works, and ACA is the largest distributor of his music, with more than 65 works available for sale and rental.

Variations for Piano

Variations for Piano (1953) is one of Parris' earlier works, presenting a delicate and expressive treatment of melody and harmony. The theme is first presented in unison in the lower register of the piano. The starkness of the opening is tempered by an ever-increasing intensity. The variations flow seamlessly into one another, with each one gathering more momentum and activity. The original theme undergoes several transformations and eventually becomes the subject a slithery fugato. As the music progresses, the tempo and dynamic undergo extreme changes leading to a passionate and climactic ending.

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a piano keyboard. The focus is on the white keys in the foreground, with the black keys and the hammer mechanism visible in the background. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the keys and the wood of the piano frame.

American Composers Alliance (ACA)

The original and continuing mission of American Composers Alliance (ACA) is to promote and disseminate music by its composer members of the past and present, and to encourage performances and recordings of their ACA works. After 80 years in service, the ACA catalog includes more than 12,000 works by more than 250 composers, including works from every year since 1905. Read more about the music in this recording at www.composers.com.

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PO Box 1108, New York, NY 10040