Paul Lansky coaching *Four's Company* for four guitars, at the Curtis Institute, Philadelphia. (Left to right: Hao Yang, Kaiieng Chan, Paul Lansky, Alan Liu, David Starobin, John Marcel Williams).
PAUL LANSKY
(b. 1944)
ANGLES

Four’s Company (2018)  (18:53)
   1) A Slow Train  (4:50)
   2) Pseudo Pavanne  (4:03)
   3) Harmonicity  (4:14)
   4) Vivaldiana  (5:45)

Curtis Institute Guitar Quartet
Hao Yang, guitar 1 • Kaiieng Chan, guitar 2
Alan Liu, guitar 3 • John Marcel Williams, guitar 4

Angles (2017)  (18:47)
   5) With Pluck  (4:29)
   6) Take a Bow  (6:03)
   7) About a Minute Waltz  (1:16)
   8) A Sad Song  (6:57)

Weiss Kaplan Stumpf Trio
Yael Weiss, piano • Mark Kaplan, violin • Peter Stumpf, cello

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9) Springs (2016) (11:52)
Sō Percussion
Eric Cha-Beach · Josh Quillen · Adam Sliwinski · Jason Treuting

Color Codas (2017) (11:20)

10) In the Red (4:09)
11) Purple Passion (4:25)
12) Out of the Blue (2:46)

Quattro Mani
Steven Beck and Susan Grace, pianos

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NOTES BY PAUL LANsky

FOUR’S COMPANY

Four’s Company was written in 2018 for David Starobin’s guitar class at the Curtis Institute of Music. Solo guitar writing is often characterized by the way that the instrument embeds its own accompaniment. The movements of Four’s Company present four different approaches to writing for this ensemble. “A Slow Train” contrasts sustained chords with linear and staccato passages. The music reminds me of a cartoon train chugging along slowly and steadily. “Pseudo Pavane” is an arrangement of “Partly Pavane” from my Semi-Suite (1998) for solo guitar. Harmonicity uses only harmonics and open strings and the fourth movement, Vivaldiana, is characterized by repetitive sequences in the spirit of the Italian master.

ANGLES

Angles was written for the wonderful Weiss, Kaplan, Stumpf Trio. Each of its four movements takes a different textural or procedural “angle”. The first movement “With Pluck” uses a lot of pizzicato and piano with virtually no use of the pedal. The second movement “Take a Bow” uses extensive double stops in the violin and cello parts. The third movement, “About a Minute Waltz” is percussive and rhythmic, and the last movement, “A Sad Song” contrasts repetitions of a straightforward lyrical stanza with rhapsodic interludes.
**SPRINGS**

*Springs*, for percussion quartet, exercises the ability of percussion to work up kinetic energy through pattern repetition and to ‘spring’ into action. *Springs* was commissioned by Chamber Music America for So Percussion and is dedicated to So Percussion Writing for this extraordinary group has changed my compositional life.

**COLOR CODAS**

The three movements of *Color Codas* can be played individually or, preferably, as a set. “In the Red” flirts with extremes in dynamics and register; “Purple Passion” wears its heart on its sleeve. “Out of the Blue” is an arrangement of the fourth movement of my trio for horn, violin and piano, *Etudes and Parodies*. *Color Codas* was written for the superb piano duo, Quattro Mani.
The four members of the Curtis Institute Guitar Quartet are prize-winners of international competitions in the USA, Europe and Asia. After giving the premiere of Paul Lansky’s Four’s Company earlier this year, the group recorded the piece for an upcoming Paul Lansky disc on Bridge Records. All four guitarists study with David Starobin and Jason Vieaux at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

The Weiss-Kaplan-Stumpf Trio melds three leading soloists, called by the New York Times “three strong voices, locked in sequence”. The Trio tours regularly in the US, Europe, Asia and the Middle East, including recent appearances at The Kennedy Center, Wigmore Hall, Shriver Hall, Princeton, UCLA and Oxford Universities. This season’s concerts include two complete Beethoven trio cycles in Israel. The trio records for Bridge Records and is currently working on a set of the complete Beethoven Trios.

The duo piano team Quattro Mani has had a distinguished history, consistently generating high praise from critics and audiences for their concerts and recordings. Formed in 1989, the duo quickly gained prominence, with pianists Susan Grace and Alice Rybak performing throughout the USA and Europe and issuing award-winning recordings for Bridge Records. In 2013, following Ms. Rybak’s retirement from the concert stage, the young virtuoso Steven Beck joined forces with Susan Grace for concerto performances of one of Quattro Mani’s signature pieces, Paul Lansky’s Shapeshifters, for two pianos and orchestra. Such was the chemistry of that occasion, Quattro Mani was immediately formed again. Quattro Mani’s intense involvement with modern repertoire has led to dedications and collaborations with leading composers, including George Crumb, Joan Tower, Paul Lansky, Poul Ruders, and Frederic Rzewski. Both Susan Grace and Steven Beck have earned recognition as soloists and chamber musicians and now come together to form one of the most dynamic piano duos before the concert-going public.

Through its sensational interpretations of modern classics, innovative multi-genre original productions, and “exhilarating blend of precision and anarchy, rigor and bedlam,” (The New Yorker), Sō Percussion has redefined the scope and role of the modern percussion ensemble, placing it at the leading edge of 21st-century music. Sō’s repertoire ranges from 20th century works by John Cage, Steve Reich, and Iannis Xenakis, et al, to commissioning and advocating works by contemporary composers such as David Lang, Julia Wolfe, Steven Mackey, and Caroline Shaw, to distinctively modern collaborations with artists who work outside the classical concert hall, including Shara Nova, choreographer Susan Marshall, The National, Bryce Dessner, and many others.