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Recital: The Music of George Tsontakis, Karel Husa Visiting Professor of Composition Spring 2008

Susan Waterbury

Alexander Shuhan

Charis Dimaras

Richard Faria

Jennifer Hayghe

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The Music of George Tsontakis

**Karel Husa Visiting Professor of Composition
Spring, 2008**

**Hockett Family Recital Hall
Monday, March 3, 2008
8:15 p.m.**

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Dust

I. *Softly Expansive; Dynamic*

Sacred Duo

IV. *Scherzo; Soliloquy; Slower*

Susan Waterbury, violin, Alex Shuhan, horn
Charis Dimaras, piano

PAUSE

Eclipse

Richard Faria, clarinet, Susan Waterbury, violin
Jennifer Hayghe, piano

Photographic, video, and sound recording and/or transmitting devices are not permitted in the Whalen Center concert halls. Please turn off all cell phone ringtones.

George Tsontakis was recently awarded the Charles Ives Living Award by the American Academy of Arts, a three year grant which allows the composer to concentrate on composition. His Violin Concerto No. 2 won the 2005 University of Louisville Grawemeyer Award. Other awards include the American Academy's award for lifetime achievement in 1995; and in 2002, Tsontakis spent several months at the American Academy in Berlin as a result of the 2002 Berlin Prize (Alberto Vilar Fellowship). He also served as the first Composer-in-Residence with the Oxford Philomusica (England) from 1998-2002.

Mr. Tsontakis' catalogue continues to grow dramatically as prominent orchestras and musicians commission and record new works. In recent seasons, his works have been heard with great frequency in concerts throughout the world (including dozens in Europe), with over 100 performances of his major works in the 2006-2007 season alone. Spring 2007 saw the premieres of his Naumburg-commissioned Midnight Rain song cycle for Sari Gruber and Clair de Lune by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Performances in recent years have included the premieres of his Third Piano Quartet (Opus One Quartet), his Fifth String Quartet (Cypress Quartet), and a Piano Concerto, Man of Sorrows (Stephen Hough and the Dallas Symphony), as well as performances by the Chicago, American, Albany, Jerusalem and Oregon Symphonies, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Athens State Orchestra. Pianist Stephen Hough performed Mr. Tsontakis' epic Ghost Variations (nominated for a Grammy for Best Composition) at the 2006 Salzburg Festival and on the Paris-Louvre Series.

Mr. Tsontakis' music consistently enjoys performances by the world's most prestigious orchestras, and in some of the world's most vaunted concert halls. The Millennium season alone brought performances to a dozen European countries in such venues as Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Berlin's Philharmonic Hall, London's Queen Elizabeth and Wigmore Halls, Oxford's Sheldonian, Radio France, Auditorium Bank de Luxembourg, Athen's Megaron and Oslo's Gamle Logen. In the late 1990s, six CDs representing his works were released, including his acclaimed Four Symphonic Quartets with James DePreist and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo on the KOCH label, and Stephen Hough's monumental Hyperion recording of the Ghost Variations, nominated for a Grammy for Best Contemporary Classical Composition, and the only classical recording cited in TIME magazine's 1998 Top Ten Recordings. Two recordings of Mr. Tsontakis's piano chamber music were released on KOCH International Classics in November 2004, featuring the Broyhill Chamber Ensemble and Da Camera of Houston. Three all-Tsontakis orchestral CDs have been or will soon be released, including a Hyperion disc of his Man of Sorrows piano concerto and KOCH CDs featuring the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Albany Symphony.

Recent premieres have included a percussion concerto, *Mirologhia* (2001), for Evelyn Glennie, with the National Symphony at Carnegie Hall, and a horn concerto, *Shiver* (2002), for soloist David Jolley in Santa Fe; as well as *October*, a work for the Baltimore Symphony; he wrote *Cathedral* on a commission from the Aspen Music Festival to inaugurate the festival's acclaimed Benedict Music Tent in 2000, as well as a violin concerto for Cho-Liang Lin (*Violin Concerto No. 1*), premiered with the Oregon and Albany Symphonies. The piano concerto *Man of Sorrows*, for Stephen Hough with the Dallas Symphony, was premiered under the direction of Andrew Litton in September 2005. Mr. Tsontakis has composed works for the American, Blair, Colorado and Emerson string quartets, *Da Camera* of Houston, the American Brass Quintet, *Orpheus*, flutist Ransom Wilson, violinist Glenn Dicterow, violist Lawrence Dutton with pianist Misha Dichter, the New York Virtuoso Singers, the Broyhill Chamber ensemble, the Aspen Wind Quintet, *Aureole* and numerous American orchestras and ensembles.

Mr. Tsontakis has twice been a winner of Kennedy Center Awards — in 1989 for *String Quartet No. 4* and in 1992 for the orchestral work *Perpetual Angelus*. He studied composition with Roger Sessions at Juilliard and conducting with Jorge Mester, and has directed the Riverside Orchestra and the Metropolitan Greek Chorale. A faculty member of the Aspen Music School since 1976, he was the founding director of the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble from 1991 until 1998 and is Composer-in-Residence at the Aspen Music Festival. Mr. Tsontakis will be the featured composer-in-residence for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in 2008-09, where he will write a work to commemorate the reopening of Alice Tully Hall. He served as Composer-in-Residence with the Music from Angel Fire Festival in summer 2005, and in September of that year, he began a 3-year Meet the Composer residency with the Albany Symphony. He is Distinguished Composer-in-Residence at Bard College.