

**Produced, edited and mastered by:** Silas Brown

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**Graphic Design:** Casey Siu

**Executive Producers:** Becky and David Starobin

**Photos credits:**

Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio photos:

Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

Lera Auerbach photo:

F Reinhold

Clancy Newman photo:

J Henry Fair

Chen Yi photo:

Kuandi Photo

Photo of Lera Auerbach's "Insomnia" used by permission of the artist

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**For Bridge Records:** Barbara Bersito, Brian C. Carter, Douglas Holly, Doron Schächter  
Casey Siu, Allegra Starobin and Robert Starobin

Bradley Napoliello, webmaster  
Email: [Bridgegrec@bridgerecords.com](mailto:Bridgegrec@bridgerecords.com)

Bridge Records, Inc.  
200 Clinton Ave. • New Rochelle, NY • 10801  
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# Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio

## AN AMERICAN TOUR



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## Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio • An American Tour

**Paul Schoenfeld** b. 1947 (26:42)

**Four Music Videos** (2000 / Revised 2012)

1. Rock Song (9:50)
2. Bossa Nova (3:17)
3. Film Score (6:58)
4. Samba (6:35)

**Clancy Newman** b. 1977 (12:29)

**5. Juxt-Opposition** (2010) (12:29)

**Chen Yi** b. 1953 (15:58)

**Tunes From My Home** (2007/2008)

6. Introduction (3:33)
7. Nostalgia (7:36)
8. Happiness (4:47)

**Lera Auerbach** b. 1974 (23:13)

**Triptych: The Mirror with Three Faces** (2012)

9. Prelude (Left Exterior Panel) (5:00)
10. First Unfolding (Left Interior Panel) (1:01)
11. Second Unfolding (Right Interior Panel) (3:31)
12. Tell'em What You See (Three Faces - Central Panel) (7:34)
13. Folding - Postlude (Right Exterior Panel) (6:05)

competing against people twice his age. Since then, he has performed as soloist throughout the United States, as well as in Europe, Asia, Canada, and Australia. He has often been heard on NPR's "Performance Today" and has been featured on A&E's "Breakfast With the Arts". A sought after chamber musician, he has been a member of Chamber Music Society Two of Lincoln Center and Musicians from Marlboro, and is a current member of the Chicago Chamber Musicians. Mr. Newman is a graduate of the five-year exchange program between Juilliard and Columbia University, receiving a M.M. from Juilliard and a B.A. in English from Columbia. His teachers have included David Gibson, Joel Krosnick and Harvey Shapiro.



Orchestras. He has collaborated with many of the world's foremost conductors, among them Ormandy, Tennstedt, Maazel, Masur, Dutoit, Ashkenazi, Bychkov, Conlon, Foster, Gatti, Rattle, Robertson, Salonen, Slatkin and Zinman. Recent concerts have included the Elgar concerto with Leonard Slatkin at London's Royal Festival Hall and appearances with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and the Malaysian Philharmonic.

Among Mr. Kaplan's most memorable musical experiences: a series of performances of the Beethoven Violin Concerto, conducted by Klaus Tennstedt, with three major orchestras – the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra and the National Symphony; appearances as soloist with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, and numerous projects involving the solo works of Bach. Mr. Kaplan's extensive discography includes solo and chamber works ranging from Bach, Brahms and Sarasate to Bartok, Berg and Nono. Recent releases feature concertos of Berg and Stravinsky, the *Symphonie Espagnole* of Lalo, and works for violin and orchestra by Joan Manen, Max d'Ollone and Lewis Spratlan. Mr. Kaplan currently serves as Professor of Violin at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music.

Cellist **Clancy Newman** is first prize winner of the prestigious Walter W. Naumburg International Competition and recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant. He received his first significant public recognition at the age of twelve, when he won a Gold Medal at the Dandenong Youth Festival in Australia,

**An American Tour** is a collection of four superlative works representative of the range, diversity and creativity of piano trios written in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century.

In concert, our programs typically offer older masterworks alongside exciting new pieces that are often a first hearing for most of the audience. However, for this recording, we chose to explore new piano trios only, shedding light specifically on American works yet to receive their first appearances on CD. The process of selecting the pieces for this recording from among the great wealth of wonderful works we found was a delightful and challenging task!

All four composers on this CD, although American, have roots in other continents and draw their musical inspirations from sounds both near and far. In Paul Schoenfeld's "Four Music Videos" we can hear Afro-Brazilian influences, Hollywoodian film music, American pop and even a hidden Korean song, all transformed into an extraordinarily rich and complex classical score. Chen Yi is magically able to make her Cantonese tunes blend perfectly with traditional Western forms such as the fugue in the second movement of her trio. Newman's work juxtaposes and contrasts an idyllic vision of the Australian bush with the hustle and bustle of daily life in New York City. And Russian-American Lera Auerbach's depiction of the unfolding of a Triptych combines that favored medieval painting format with the sounds of today.

The Piano Trios on this CD are bursting with creative energy, going beyond time and space to create new meaning through the language of music. And the composers themselves have personalities just as lively and individual as their compositions. The experience of working directly with them has been one of the most rewarding parts of bringing this new music to life.

Thank you for joining us on this tour – we hope you will enjoy the ride!

– *Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio*



New York's WQXR and WNYC, and has appeared numerous times on Israeli television as well as in a recital filmed live for NHK television in Japan. She participates at international music festivals including the Marlboro, Ravinia, Banff, Caramoor, Seattle Chamber Music and the City of London festivals. Ms. Weiss's special projects include performances of the complete cycle of Beethoven's 32 Piano Sonatas. She is also devoted to new works, and has given world premieres of several solo works and concertos written for her.

Ms. Weiss has won numerous honors, including the Naumburg, Kousciuszko Foundation, Harrison Winter, and Presser prizes. She has presented masterclasses at top institutions worldwide and served on the faculties of Indiana University and UCSB. Her own teachers included Richard Goode and Leon Fleisher.

Away from the keyboard, Yael Weiss is an avid runner, taking part in marathons and other long-distance races. For ongoing updates, please visit [www.yaelweiss.com](http://www.yaelweiss.com)

**Mark Kaplan** has established himself as one of the leading violinists of his generation. His consummate artistry has resulted in engagements with nearly every major orchestra in America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, including the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestras, the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras, the Chicago and National Symphony Orchestras, the Berlin Philharmonic and London's LSO, RPO and Philharmonia

2006 at the Kennedy Center.

The **W-K-N Trio** is well known to American radio audiences through nationwide broadcasts as well as syndicated shows such as WNYC's SoundCheck. An appearance on St. Paul Sunday has been broadcast nationally several times, and was selected for St. Paul Sunday's "Best of the Year" CD.

The most current information on the **W-K-N Trio** can be found at [www.weiss-kaplan-newman-trio.com](http://www.weiss-kaplan-newman-trio.com).

### Members of the Trio

A captivating presence on the concert scene is pianist **Yael Weiss**, hailed by many of today's greatest musicians and critics for visionary interpretations of surpassing depth, immediacy and communicative power. Ms. Weiss is in demand as soloist with orchestras and recitalist, and has performed in major venues across the United States, Europe, Canada, Japan, Israel and South America. Following a recent recital, the *Washington Post* portrayed her as "a pianist who delves deeply and tellingly into that cloudy area where fantasy morphs into improvisation, inventiveness being common to both."

Ms. Weiss's discography encompasses piano works by over a dozen composers, with CDs including "Robert Schumann: Piano Works" and "88 Keys to Joy". She has been a frequent guest on National Public Radio, the BBC in London and

### Lera Auerbach – Triptych: The Mirror with Three Faces

Upon entering Lera's apartment, we were all struck by different things. Mark noticed a twisted pile of brass lying on the floor that might have been an instrument of some sort. Yael noticed that under the piano was a mangled, rusted metal frame – some sort of old farm machinery perhaps – in an embrace



"Insomnia", mixed media by Lera Auerbach, based on Triptych

with a human skeleton. Clancy's eyes went to a wooden sculpture from Africa – an elephant playing its trunk like a clarinet, using its tusks as arms.

Then we saw the paintings on the wall. One was of a violin, rather abstract, that had a very real-looking human heart, and blood streaked down from it to the bottom of the canvas. Another was of a genie, whose gray beard came right out of the painting – it might have been real human hair – and then terminated in a bottle, half painted and half real glass. But the one we all remember best included what appeared to be a real cat in some sort of mummified state...

As we played her Triptych, Lera sat perched on a chair, a cup of coffee in front

of her. She would close her eyes and furrow her brow, seeming to evaluate each moment from outside herself, in a distant concert hall perhaps. And then her eyes would open, and she'd speak to us in her Russian accent: *Don't be confined by what is on the page, she said, feel free to express yourselves, to make the piece your own. Nothing should be conventional or normal... even the beautiful moments should have something "off" about them – something that seems not quite right.* And as we played her music in that place, those words rang true.

– Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio



**L**era Auerbach is one of today's most sought after and exciting creative voices. A composer, pianist, poet and visual artist she has published more than 100 works for orchestra, opera, ballet, theater and chamber music, and performs at festivals and concert halls throughout the world.

Her works have been produced by Vienna's Theater an der Wien, the Lincoln Center Festival, Staatstheater Nürnberg, San Francisco Performances, the San Francisco Ballet, Hamburg Ballet, Bayerisches Staatsballett, Netherlands Dance

throughout the US, Europe and the Middle East, with multiple appearances at The Kennedy Center, Wigmore Hall, Baltimore's Shriver Hall, Princeton, UCLA, Indiana and Oxford Universities, Tel-Aviv Museum, and for the Chamber Music Societies of Edinburgh, Santander, Pasadena, Phoenix, Cincinnati, Salt Lake City and Tucson, among others. A performance of Beethoven's Triple Concerto at the Prague Festival was praised for its "rare timbral refinement, nobility and virtuosic brilliance...among the brightest moments of this year's Festival" (*Lidove noviny*, Prague). Other international festival performances have included appearances at the Jeju Island Music Festival in Korea and the Festival of the Sound in Canada.

The Trio is known for its performances of Beethoven's complete cycle of works for Piano Trio, which are an ongoing part of its programming. New music is another feature of **Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio** programs. The group's commitment to new works has resulted in many commissions, including Lera Auerbach's "Triptych: The Mirror With Three Faces" and Clancy Newman's "Juxt-Opposition", as well as "Variations on a Poem" by Michael Hersch.

The **Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio's** 2011 CD of Brahms and Smetana Trios was released by Bridge Records to great critical acclaim – Fanfare Magazine hailed it as "absolutely one fabulous chamber music recording you cannot afford to be without... This may just be the best of the best Brahms B Major Trio recordings." Previously Bridge presented the Trio's recording of Paul Chihara's trio, "*Ain't No Sunshine*", a work the group commissioned and premiered in





Combining the talents of three award-winning soloists, the **Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio** brings to each performance its distinctive fusion of authority and experience, energy, and passion. These three musicians comprise an ensemble that embraces the music of the future while offering fresh insights into three centuries of masterworks. Hailed by The New York Times as “Three strong voices, locked in sequence,” the **Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio** was founded in 2001 (originally as Sequenza Trio), and has presented concerts

Theatre, National Ballet of Canada, the NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover, Staatskapelle Dresden, New York Philharmonic, National Symphony, Tokyo Philharmonic, and the Verbier, Pacific, Trondheim, Lucerne, Marlboro and Caramoor Music Festivals, among many others.

She has collaborated with Tokyo, Borromeo, Petersen, Kuss, Parker, and Ying Strings Quartets, with Gidon Kremer, Charles Dutoit, Leonidas Kavakos, Hilary Hahn, Vadim Gluzman, Julian Rachlin, Alisa Weilerstein, David Finckel and WuHan, Gautier Capuçon, Ani Aznavoorian, Kim Kashkashian, Philippe Quint, and the Rasher Saxophone Quartet, among other distinguished artists.

Auerbach is a regular contributor to the Best American Poetry blog, has published five books of poetry in the Russian language, and is the author of her own opera librettos. She was selected as a Cultural Leader by the World Economic Forum and is a Paul and Daisy Soros fellow. Awards include two Golden Masks, an Echo Klassik, and the Hindemith Prize.

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### **Chen Yi – Tunes From My Home**

**M**y trio "Tunes From My Home" (2008) was commissioned by the Pennsylvania Academy of Music, for the Newstead Trio (violinist Michael Jamanis, cellist Sara Male, and pianist Xun Pan), to celebrate the grand

opening of the Pennsylvania Academy of Music's new facility in Lancaster, Pennsylvania on 6/11/08. Since I am a Cantonese from Southern China, it's natural for me to get the inspiration from the folk Cantonese Music when I composed this work. The pitch materials of my motives are drawn from the folk tunes *Summer Thunder*, *Prancing Horses*, and *Racing the Dragon Boat*. The first movement serves as the introduction with all pitch materials. The music is happy, energetic and celebrating, with a quiet middle section featuring harmonics and lyrical counterpoint in the strings as a contrast. The second movement, *Nostalgia*, is a fugue in delicate and sensitive expression. The final movement, *Happiness*, in the textures of dialogues and smooth moving passages, is a celebration to happy occasions. It's my privilege to know the Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio who has performed the work excellently in the past couple of years and recorded it on Bridge. I have enjoyed their delicate and powerful performance tremendously, and think that it really speaks to our audience in my native language through the music.

–Chen Yi



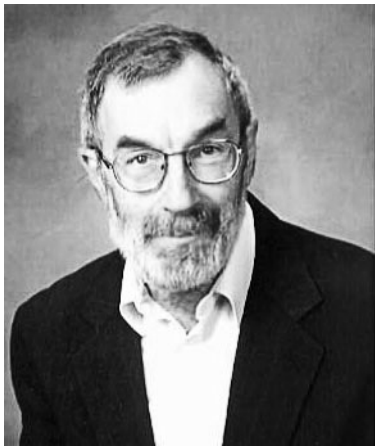
Although he now rarely performs publicly, he was formerly an active pianist, touring the United States, Europe, and South America as a soloist and with groups including “Music from Marlboro” Among his recordings as a pianist are the complete violin and piano works of Bartók with Sergio Luca. His compositions can be heard on the Angel, Decca, Innova, Vanguard, EMI, Koch, BMG, and the New World labels.

Reclusive and a wanderer by nature (having rarely lived in any one place for more than five years) he is presently on the composition faculty at the University of Michigan. Additionally, Mr. Schoenfield is an avid student of mathematics and the Talmud.

– Zello Ahni







Even if his works have rarely been popular with the press (“Bad Culture” – *The Hague*, “Really Annoying Music” – *Danceview Times*, “An Undeserved Standing Ovation” – *New York Times*, “One is not sure whether to laugh or gape in awe at a mind so warped” – *San Francisco Examiner*), **Paul Schoenfield’s** music is widely performed and continues to draw an ever-expanding group of fans. According to Juilliard’s Joel Sachs, “He is among those all-too-rare composers whose work combines exuberance and

seriousness, familiarity and originality, lightness and depth. His work is inspired by the whole range of musical experience, popular styles both American and foreign, vernacular and folk traditions, and the ‘normal’ historical traditions of cultivated music making, often treated with sly twists. Above all, he has achieved the rare fusion of an extremely complex and rigorous compositional mind with an instinct for accessibility and a reveling in sound that sometimes borders on the manic.”



A prolific composer who blends Chinese and Western traditions, transcending cultural and musical boundaries, **Dr. Chen Yi** was born in 1953 in China. She is the Distinguished Professor at the Conservatory of Music and Dance in the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and the recipient of the prestigious Charles Ives Living Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Her music is published by Theodore Presser Company, commissioned and performed world wide by such ensembles as the Cleveland Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra,

the BBC Symphony and the Royal Philharmonic, the Seattle, Pacific, Singapore symphonies, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra and Sachsische Staatskapelle Dresden, recorded on Bis, Bridge, New Albion, New World, Teldec, Albany, Naxos, and many labels. She has received bachelor and master degrees in composition (1983 and 1986) from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, and Doctor of Musical Arts degree (1993) from Columbia University in New York. Major composition teachers are Profs. Wu Zu-qiang, Chou Wen-chung and Mario Davidovsky. She has been inducted into the American Academy of

Arts and Sciences in 2005, and appointed to the Cheungkong Scholar Visiting Professor at the CCoM in 2006, and Distinguished Visiting Professor of Tianjin Conservatory in 2012.

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### **Clancy Newman – Juxt-Opposition**

In 2007, I read about a fascinating natural phenomenon: certain trees sprout each new branch a golden angle away from the previous branch (the golden angle is roughly 222.49, the golden ratio of 360 degrees). As I considered why they had evolved this way, which must have something to do with achieving optimal light exposure, it occurred to me, *what if I devise a method of composition based on this pattern?*

In the years that followed, I worked obsessively at this method, dividing theoretical tree trunks (circles, or "pies") into slices, and labeling each slice a pitch, then charting the list of pitches each consecutive "branch" sprouted in. I would take this list, often put it in canon, and then plot it horizontally beneath the staves, and it would serve as the music's skeleton, sometimes heard and sometimes submerged beneath the surface. What this all amounts to is something I never could have imagined when I had the initial idea: a sort of complex minimalism, in which events repeat over and over again, but do it aperiodically according to Fibonacci numbers; this means that, between any

The work consists of four movements:

I. (Rock Song) A Sonata-form movement – the Exposition consisting of music which might appear on 1950's "Top Forty" charts (e.g. Little Richard), and in deference to the Ahns, a contrasting pentatonic tune, and an almost imperceptible quote from the famous Korean song *Arirang*.

II. (Bossa Nova) and IV. (Samba) are both inspired by the Batuque, an Afro-Brazilian folk dance. This highly syncopated group dance (the group frequently being in a circle) is accompanied by percussion, and includes responsive singing between soloist and chorus.

III. (Film Score) has no program, but the textures and harmonic language are appropriate for Hollywood feature films. The movement is formally amorphous, all material being an unfolding of a four-note motive initiated by the cello.

– Paul Schoenfeld

Angela and Maria explained that it was a promotional medium featuring “music videos” (defined to me as a short film integrating, song, dance, and imagery.)

PS: It would be difficult to write such a work without amplification, drums, and a singer.

AHNS: Do what you can.

At first, I thought they were joking but went ahead contriving a piece which would be called, “Music for MTV”. I inquired of my cousin Larry Garvin, a law professor if it would be a copyright issue. He said it would be; and I countered, what if it were called *Musique pour une vie vide* (Music for an Empty Life), and he responded that it would be okay, but incomprehensible to anyone not knowing French.

An email from Angella came later in the year asking if I had seen the film, “The Buena Vista Social Club”, and if I would be willing to include Latin-American music in the new trio. Happily, I agreed, and the result became my fourth piano trio.

two similar events far enough apart, there will be another similar event at the golden ratio between them, on a micro and macro scale.

After reading the above, I know what many of you are thinking: *Oh no, not another compositional method devoid of all humanity!* A valid concern... but what I have ultimately found is that this method allows for great flexibility; I have not had to sacrifice my artistic "voice". In writing *Juxt-Opposition*, I began with a jazzy rock 'n roll riff I'd had in my head for years and I simplified it into eight pitches, which I distributed around the "pie". I then discovered that if I replaced half of them with four slightly different pitches, and then played every three pitches from the resulting chart list, it created a chorale-like melody, which in turn could form the basis for the rustic fiddle tune heard at the beginning of the piece. What struck me as I experimented with this was how completely different the chorale and the riff seemed to be from each other, even though they were linked by this extraordinarily close relationship.

I am indebted to my trio mates for their patience in working with me on this experiment – which has been an adventure for all of us – and particularly to Yael, whose help with the piano part hopefully made the adventure a little less perilous.

– Clancy Newman



The San Francisco Chronicle writes that **Clancy Newman** "makes the case for composition and performance as being activities that are intimately bound up with each other", and indeed his unconventional approach to both activities may be attributed to their mutual influence on each other. He developed an interest in composition at an early age, writing his first work at seven, a piece for solo cello. Since then, he has greatly expanded the cello repertoire: he premiered his *Four Pieces for Solo Cello* at the Violoncello Society in New York, his *Sonata for Cello and Piano* in New York's Weill Hall, and his

*Four Seasons* for cello and string orchestra with Symphony in C in Philadelphia. He has also written numerous chamber music works, including two string quartets, a piano quintet, and several duets and trios. He has been a featured composer on the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's "Double Exposure" series and the Chicago Chamber Musicians' "Freshly Scored" series, and he has received commissions from Astral Artists, the Barnett Foundation, the Carpe Diem String Quartet, and the UBS Chamber Music Festival of Lexing-

ton. His clarinet trio, *Collision Course*, commissioned by the Silo Collective, was premiered in March 2014 in a six concert tour of Australia.

He wrote *Juxt-Opposition* for the Weiss-Kaplan-Newman trio, who presented its premiere performance in 2010 at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.

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### **Paul Schoenfeld – Four Music Videos**

FOUR MUSIC VIDEOS had its inception during a short meeting I had in the spring of 1999 with Angella and Maria Ahn, from the Ahn Trio. The kernel of the session was:

PS: What kind of piece would you like?

AHNS: Possibly a rock piece – (tentatively) we were thinking of something for MTV.

PS (Having no knowledge of pop culture, and not having a television): MTV, what is that?