



# Duo XXI

## Unique Perspectives of the String Duo

featuring  
**Anna Cromwell, violin and Mira Frisch, cello**

**Sunday, October 18, 2009 / 3:00 pm**  
**McColl Center for Visual Art / 721 North Tryon St. (at 10th St.) / Charlotte, NC**

On October 18th at the McColl Center for Visual Art, **Duo XXI** (Anna Cromwell, violin and Mira Frisch, cello) will complete their tour of six recently commissioned works. In the spirit of the residencies at the Center, four of the five composers commissioned for this project will be present at the performance for audience members to engage in conversation about their works. This project is designed to promote music as a living art influenced by the ever-changing world. Each of the six compositions captures the violin and cello from a different perspective and represents each composer's interpretation of this unique ensemble. Through collaboration, the composers and performers have combined virtuosity and expression to create an exceptional concert experience. This program, comprised of a wide range of musical trends, displays Duo XXI's musicality through an impressive display of depth and precision.

### PROGRAM

<b>Rocket</b>	John Allemeier
<b>A Matter of Perspective</b>	Ronald Keith Parks
<b>Blue Refracted</b>	David Maki

*interval*

<b>Folklore</b>	John Allemeier
<b><i>Nomina sunt Omina</i></b>	Joseph Dangerfield
<b>Quest</b>	Stephen Anderson

Duo XXI, founded in the spring of 2007, is committed to developing the musical culture of the 21st century through commissioning, performing, and recording new music. Both members are passionate string professors who reach a diverse audience through concerts, conference presentations, and outreach workshops at universities and public schools. The duo's mission is to unite today's students, performers, and composers to enliven music and to cultivate the intimate and expressive string duo as a genre for our time.

## Performers

Dr. Anna Cromwell is an Assistant Professor of Violin and Viola at Eastern Illinois University. Most recently she was a Professional-in-Residence at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky where she also served as concertmaster and soloist of the Bowling Green Western Symphony Orchestra. Dr. Cromwell performs regularly in Duo XXI and has presented at MTNA National and CMS Super-Regional Conferences. She earned both her M.M. and D.M.A. under Sally O'Reilly at the University of Minnesota where she was a Dahl Fellowship recipient. She taught two summers at Meadowmount School of Music. In high school the Oklahoma native soloed with the Tulsa Philharmonic and graduated from the North Carolina School of the Arts. She continued her studies at Rice University under Kathleen Winkler, and graduated summa cum laude from the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University where she won the Concerto Competition and received the Jean Keller Heard Prize. She has studied string pedagogy with Sally O'Reilly and completed Suzuki pedagogy training with Mark Bjork.

Dr. Mira Frisch, Assistant Professor of Cello at UNC Charlotte, received the Bachelor of Arts degree in Music and Mathematics from Saint Olaf College, the Master of Music degree in Cello Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Cello Performance from the University of Minnesota. Her primary teachers include Tanya Remenikova, Richard Aaron, Irene Sharp, and Colin Hampton. She previously taught chamber music and cello at Truman State University in Missouri and at the summer Festival Musicale della Toscana in Italy. Dr. Frisch has performed as a recitalist and chamber musician throughout the United States and in Bermuda, Italy, and France. In Duo XXI, with violinist Anna Cromwell, she recently performed at the National Gallery of Bermuda and at the University of Minnesota's Bravo! Festival. She can be heard as a guest artist on the Compact Disc *There Lies the Home*, produced by CANTUS (a professional vocal ensemble based in Minneapolis, Minnesota).

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## Program Notes

**Rocket** was composed for Anna Cromwell and Mira Frisch. When writing this piece, my primary concern was the textural limitations of a piece for violin and cello. In order to create a thicker texture, each section was constructed around open strings to give the piece a more resonant quality. The title refers to the tendency for each section to escalate in intensity. The first section begins with a double-stop melody in the violin over pizzicato double-stops in the cello. As the section progresses, the double-stops evolve into quadruple-stops to create a thicker more resonant texture. Each section ends abruptly, which creates a sense of weightlessness before the next section begins. Despite the constant rhythmic activity, the piece projects the loneliness I often feel when I think about planets and satellites in their orbits.

**A Matter of Perspective** was written in the spring of 2009 for violinist Anna Cromwell and cellist Mira Frisch of Duo XXI. Like many of my compositions, *A Matter of Perspective* is based on principles of visual art, in this case five varieties of visual perspective. Each of the five movements is an exploration, in sound, of the possibilities inherent in realizing models of visual perspective through music. This type of mapping from one art form to another is inherently inexact and subjective. However, it is my hope that the different perspectives, and intrinsic re-contextualization of the materials to reflect each type of perspective, will be audible and facilitate a musically meaningful experience for the listener. The five type of perspective explored are multiple-shifting vanishing points, one point perspective, aerial perspective, two point perspective, and forced perspective. Special thanks to Anna Cromwell and Mira Frisch for their dedication to new music, their patience, and their invaluable input regarding technical aspects of their instruments.

**Blue Refracted** opens with solo cello that is joined by the violin in a quickly building texture, eventually taken over by solo violin. The active middle section features a trading of melodic ideas between the two instruments, gradually rising in register until the two fall back down to a lush, low resting point. The last section begins with a somewhat diatonic and imitative texture that soon changes to a more chromatic area, recalling the first section. A final, dramatic statement of the cello melody first heard at the beginning of the piece is followed by a brief, somber coda. The title of the piece refers, most immediately, to the way in which melodic ideas are "refracted" as they pass from one instrument to another, or from one register or texture to another, or even through time. "Blue" refers to the general pensive, even melancholy, nature of the melodic materials featured in the outer sections. Thanks to Anna and Mira for their enthusiastic commitment to new music and to this project.

**Folklore** emulates a piece for fiddle and guitar more than a concert piece for violin and cello. The piece begins with a pizzicato cello introduction that becomes the accompaniment to a modal violin melody. The cello's pizzicato line is almost exclusively double-stops, which is more typical of guitar writing than cello music. The middle section consists of a series of strict canons. As the section progresses, the time interval between the voice's imitation becomes smaller and smaller. In the final canon, the violin imitates the cello in inversion after only a single pulse. After a brief transition, the opening material returns to conclude the piece.

**Nomina sunt Omina (Names are Omens)** is the title of the Catholic naming ceremony. The piece uses the seven-part observance as a formal outline. The work is harmonically and melodically comprised of a series of fourths bisected by seconds. *Nomina sunt Omina* is dedicated to Mira Frisch and Anna Cromwell.

### Quest

With each new commission, I like to research scores and recordings, as well as texts that discuss the technical capabilities of each instrument in order to immerse myself in the sound world of the ensemble and compose more idiomatically for the instruments. I also like to consult the performers concerning the repertoire they love to play, as I find that their interests can sometimes spark new compositional ideas that can help me to avoid falling into stylistic ruts from piece to piece. When Dr. Mira Frisch invited me to compose a piece for Duo XXI, I subsequently asked her concerning her musical interests. She said that she thought it would be nice if the piece could sound "full," as if it were being performed by a string quartet. With this in mind, after researching some materials, and as a non-string player, I borrowed a cello from my colleague to experiment on the instrument. To my horror, "A" string broke the first time I barely touched the tuning peg, so I spent the next few months sawing away on the lower three strings of the cello. Through the process, I became fond of the raw sound of the open strings and the double and triple stops that were possible when combined with one stopped note. I came to the realization that I could construct a piece for the duo that incorporated a great deal of four-part harmony that would sound "full," while the consistent use of the open string would make the piece very idiomatic for the players. Thus, the building blocks for *Quest* simple—considerable use of four-part harmony by combining the open strings with various chromatic intervals found in the stopped notes. The chromatic lines are created through an intervallic expansion and compression technique that can render tonal combinations, or more dissonant sounding atonal groupings. My studies

of the Paganini Caprices (especially No. 6) provided further methods to make a single instrument sound full through the use of rolling chords and other techniques. The form is relatively traditional—an opening theme, developmental material, a recapitulation, and a coda. Given the general sonic character of *Quest* and due to some of its influences, I call this my “Neo-Romantic” piece.

Program notes provided by the composers.

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## Composers

**John Allemeier** received his Ph.D. in Composition from the University of Iowa, his Master of Music in Composition from Northwestern University and his Bachelor of Music in Performance from Augustana College. He has studied in Europe at the 41st and 42nd Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt, Germany and the 6th International Composition Course in Cesky Krumlov, Czech Republic. His music has been programmed on new music festivals such as 5th Annual Festival of New Music – San Francisco, 3er Festival Internacional de Percusiones – Monterrey, Mexico, Russia-America: Music of the XXI Century – Moscow Conservatory, the Seoul International Computer Music Festival and the 7th Brazilian Symposium on Computer Music, on national conferences of the Society of Composers and the Society for Electro Acoustic Music in the United States, and at regional conferences of the College Music Society and the Society of Composers. John Allemeier's music is published by Carl Fischer Music Publishers, C. Alan Publications, M. Baker Publications and European American Music. Recordings of his music are available on the Albany (Troy 1069 and Troy 937), Capstone (CPS 8812, CPS 8744, and CPS 8701) and Vox Novus (VN 001 and VN 002) labels. He currently teaches composition and music theory at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. ([www.johnallemeier.com](http://www.johnallemeier.com))

**Ronald Keith Parks** diverse output includes orchestral, chamber, choral, electroacoustic, and interactive computer music. His compositions and papers have been featured at national and international venues including the Malgrat de Mar International Music Festival, International Computer Music Conference, Society of Composers, Inc., the Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival, Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States, National Flute Association, North American Saxophone Alliance, North Carolina School of the Arts International Music Program, and numerous others. Recent commissions include the Out of Bounds Ensemble, Red Clay Saxophone Quartet, NeXT Ens, Force of Nature, Charlotte Civic Orchestra, South Carolina Music Teacher's Association, et al. His honors and awards include the Aaron Copland Award, two Giannini Scholarships, the NCSA Chancellor's Award, three Graeffe Scholarships and the Presidential Recognition Award at the University of Florida. His music is available on the EMF and ERM labels and is published by American Composers Edition. He received a BM from the North Carolina School of the Arts, MM from the University of Florida, and a Ph.D. from the University at Buffalo. He is currently an associate professor of composition and Director of the Winthrop Computer Music Labs at Winthrop University. More info is available at <http://faculty.winthrop.edu/parksr>.

**David Maki** is Assistant Professor of music theory and composition at Northern Illinois University. His music has been performed widely throughout the U.S. at national and regional venues by ensembles such as Due East, Duo XXI, the University of Iowa Center For New Music, saxophonist Steve Duke, soprano Diane Ragains, Mosaic, Prime Directive, Kantorei, Contemporary Directions, and the Indiana University Contemporary Vocal Ensemble. His composition, *Lake Sonata*, was recorded by pianist Stacey Barelos and released on Albany Records in 2009. Current projects will result in commercial releases performed by flute and percussion duo Due East, and violin and cello duo, Duo XXI. Maki holds degrees in composition from Northern Illinois University (B.M.), the University of Iowa (M.A.) and the University of Michigan (D.M.A.).

**Joseph Dangerfield's** creative voice has been garnering much attention over the past several years, with performances of his works throughout the United States and abroad. American presenters include the Society of Composers Inc., the MusicX Festival at

the Cincinnati Conservatory, the San Francisco New Music Festival, and the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music. His instrumental and chamber compositions have also been performed at such international venues as the Moscow Conservatory, the Frankfurter KuenstlerKlub, the Conservatorio di Giuseppe Tartini (Trieste, Italy) and in Cairo, Egypt. Born in 1977, he began his composition studies at Marshall University (BFA 1999) with Michael Golden. He completed his master's degree at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, working with Marilyn Shrude and Mikel Kuehn, and received a doctorate in 2005 from the University of Iowa, following studies under David Gompper. Dangerfield is the recipient of many awards and recognitions, including The Young and Emerging Composers Award (2002), ASCAP Standard Awards, and the Henry and Parker Pelzer Prize for Excellence in Composition (2005). Most recently, he was awarded a Fulbright Grant to the Russian Federation for the 2009-10 academic year. He will lecture, compose, and conduct at the famed Moscow Conservatory. He was selected for a three-week independent senior residency in the Leighton Studios of the prestigious Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada, which he completed in January 2008. Recordings of his works are available on the Albany Records label, and many are published by European American Music and PIP Press Music Publications. Originally trained as a pianist, Dangerfield is active as a performer and conductor throughout the United States. He has conducted various concerts (chamber and orchestral) of music, both new and from the canon in New York City, Vienna, Prague, and other venues.

**Stephen Anderson**, composer and pianist, has been performed by the West Point Military Academy Band, the North Carolina Jazz Repertory Orchestra, the Dallas Chamber Orchestra, the Crested Butte Chamber Orchestra, the One O'Clock Lab Band, Two O'Clock Lab band, North Carolina Central University Percussion Ensemble, UNC-Charlotte Percussion Ensemble, UNC Wind Ensemble, and had a film score broadcast nationally on PBS. Anderson has received two awards from the Barlow Endowment—most recently, a commission to compose a piano concerto for Steven Harlos (pianist, Dallas Symphony) and the UNC Symphony Orchestra (2009), and previously, a commission for the West Point Military Band (2003). Other awards or recognitions include: Honorable Mention from the International Society of Basses composition contest (2002), UNC Junior Faculty Development Award (2008), the United Arts Council of Greater Greensboro (2007), the UNC Research Council (2007), the “Hometown Hero Award” WCHL Chapel Hill radio (2008), *Endeavors* magazine feature (2008), and reviews in *All about Jazz*, *Jazz Times*, and the *All Music Guide* (2008), and the PAS Percussive Notes (February 2009). Anderson is a recording artist for Summit Records. His *Forget Not* (2008) trio CD received 4½ stars (of 5) from the *All Music Guide*, was nominated best jazz “Debut CD” (3rd Annual Village Voice Jazz Critics Poll 2008), and has been widely performed on radio internationally. He was pianist with the Lynn Seaton Trio, appearing on two recordings for Nagel Heyer Records, *Puttin' On the Ritz* (2005) and *Ballads* 2006, the North Texas One O'clock Lab Band (Lab 2001), was winner of the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival piano competition (1997), and keyboardist for gold-recording (country) artist, Kevin Sharp (1996-1997). He holds a D.M.A. from the University of North Texas (2005) and is currently Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina in Jazz Studies and Composition.