



Cadenza

The Newsletter of Composer Lawrence Dillon

"There are no two points so distant from one another that they cannot be connected by a single straight line -- and an infinite number of curves."

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Jeffrey James Arts Consulting

EMERSON STRING QUARTET COMMISSIONS *THROUGH THE NIGHT*

The Emerson String Quartet has commissioned **Lawrence Dillon's** [*String Quartet No. 5: Through the Night*](#), to be premiered in early 2010. The commission is in honor of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.



Combining elements of chaconne, passacaglia and theme-and-variations, the piece will take the Welsh tune "All Through the Night" through a dizzying and dazzling journey from twilight to twilight. The form is as follows:

Twilight
Variations
Dream Interlude
Passacaglia
Dream Interlude
Chaconne
Dream Interlude
Variations
Twilight

Performances will take place in Cologne, Germany, Stony Brook, the Smithsonian in Washington, DC and at UNCSCA, where Dillon is Composer in Residence.

The [Emerson String Quartet](#) stands alone in the history of string quartets with an unparalleled list of achievements over three decades: thirty acclaimed recordings produced with Deutsche Grammophon since 1987, eight Grammy Awards (including two for Best Classical Album, an unprecedented honor for a chamber music group), three Gramophone Awards, the coveted Avery Fisher Prize and cycles of the complete Beethoven, Bartók, and Shostakovich string quartets in the world's musical capitals, from New York to London to Vienna.

Much more about *Through the Night* [here](#).

RAVINIA'S FIRST COMPOSER COMPETITION

At a national press conference, [The Ravinia Festival](#) announced the winners of its first composer competition. **Lawrence Dillon's** *The Better Angels of Our Nature* was one of three works featured in the Festival's year-long celebration of Abraham Lincoln's bicentennial this year.

The piece is based on two letters and two speeches by Lincoln. The three movements focus on three aspects of Lincoln's character: his integrity, his sense of humor, and his poetic vision.



The Better Angels of Our Nature was premiered at the Music Institute of Chicago on November 23rd, with Ravinia CEO Welz Kaufman (pictured) as the narrator. In Kaufman's words, "The piece is WONDERFUL. Powerful, simple, very much to the point, and an ideal selection of texts."

COMPETITION JUDGE FOR LONDON SYMPHONY

In July 2008, **Lawrence Dillon** served as a judge for the Realize Music Challenge, sponsored by Notion Music and the London Symphony Orchestra.

Along with Oscar winners John Corigliano and Carter Burwell, Dillon judged ten orchestral compositions, awarding the top prize – a recording session with the London

Symphony Orchestra -- to Mark Edwards Wilson of Maryland for his *Phoenix*.

DILLON ON NAXOS

[Danielle Belen Nesmith](#), Grand Prize Winner of the 2008 [Sphinx Competition](#), will release a CD of **Lawrence Dillon's** violin works on the Naxos label.



Ms. Nesmith will perform Dillon's *Façade* on her Carnegie Hall recital on January 10th, then perform a recital of Dillon's *Façade*, *Bacchus Chaconne*, *Sonata: Motion*, *The Voice* and *Mister Blister* at the Colburn School of Music in Los Angeles later in the month.

In February, she will spend four days recording Dillon's works in Toronto. The disk will be available later in 2009.

DAEDALUS COMMISSIONS THE INFINITE SPHERE

The [Daedalus String Quartet](#) has commissioned **Lawrence Dillon's** [String Quartet No. 4: The Infinite Sphere](#), to be premiered in early 2010.

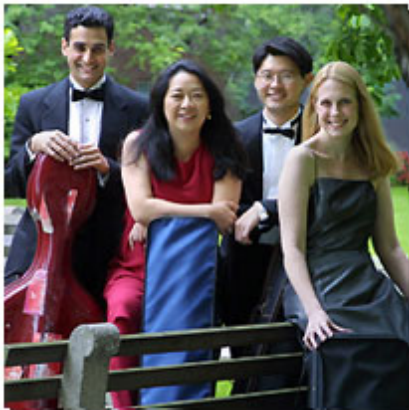
The latest installment in Dillon's [Invisible Cities String Quartet Cycle](#), the fourth quartet takes 17th-century philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal's reference to an "infinite sphere, whose center is

everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere” as a starting point. *The Infinite Sphere* will feature the untapped potentials of Classical circular forms and techniques – in particular the rondo form and canonical rounds. The result will be a six-movement rondo structure (ABACBA) in which all of the surface details reflect the wheels-within-wheels form:

Round: Ascent
Rondo: Vivace
Round: Descent
Rondo: Presto
Rondo: Vivace
Round: The Infinite Sphere

Each round will feature an accelerating circle of fifths, gradually spinning out of control. The rondos will combine contemporary and traditional dance rhythms. In keeping with the spirit of the Classical rondo, *The Infinite Sphere* will be exuberant, joyous, life-affirming.

The piece, running close to twenty minutes, will be premiered by the Daedalus String Quartet at Columbia University in 2010. The commission was funded by the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts.



Winner of the 2001 Grand Prize in the Banff International String Quartet Competition, the Daedalus String Quartet is the resident quartet for the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University.

APPENDAGE RECORDING

Conductor Ransom Wilson has assembled an ensemble to record **Lawrence Dillon's** thirty-three-minute song cycle [Appendage](#) at the American Academy of Arts and Letters in June. The group, which will include members of Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, will spend three days working on the piece. The recording will be engineered by Grammy-winner Judith Sherman.

“*Appendage* was written in 1993, a pivotal year in my artistic development,” says the composer. “It’s when I really began to understand who I was musically, and what I needed to do as a composer. It’s gratifying to have such an outstanding group working on this piece, all these years later.”

Look for *Appendage* to become available in early 2010.

BRIO AND BLOSSOM

On January 29th, **Lawrence Dillon** will head to Odessa, Texas for a three-day residency.

The occasion will be the premieres of two new triple quartets Dillon composed on commission from the [Cassatt String Quartet](#). The pieces will be performed by Cassatt in conjunction with two high school string quartets.

“The commission was actually for just one piece, but I loved the idea so much I wrote two,” says Dillon. “It’s great to see young musicians have this opportunity to perform side by side with seasoned professionals.”

Brio is an energetic, rhythmic dynamo. *Blossom* begins with a single note that gradually evolves into an ornate melody.



Acclaimed as one of America's outstanding ensembles, the Manhattan-based Cassatt String Quartet has performed at New York's Alice Tully Hall and Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Tanglewood Music Theater, the Kennedy Center and Library of Congress in Washington, DC, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and Maeda Hall in Tokyo.

The commission and residency were funded by the *Cassatt in the Basin Project*, with support from the Education Foundation of Odessa, Texas.

WHAT HAPPENED WITH HOCHMAN

[Benjamin Hochman](#), one of the world's most sought-after young pianists, will be recording **Lawrence Dillon's** piano quartet [What Happened](#) with the [Daedalus String Quartet](#) in June.



Hochman has appeared as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestras, and the Seattle, New Jersey and Portland Symphonies.

Dillon's *What Happened* was premiered by the Atlantic Ensemble in Paris in May 2005.

ARTS COUNCIL HONOR

In September 2008, **Lawrence Dillon** was honored by the Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County with the largest individual grant of 2008.

“Supported by a grant from The Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County with funding from the State of North Carolina, an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that great nation deserves great art,” the grant will be used to assist with the costs of Dillon's many recording projects in 2009.

STILL POINT IN NEW YORK

Dillon's *Still Point*, commissioned by author Shona Simpson as a birthday present for her husband, will receive its New York premiere on February 10th. The piece, for mezzo-soprano, viola and piano, sets a tender sonnet by Ms. Simpson. The performers will be the Metropolitan Opera's [Theodora Hanslowe](#) (pictured), violist [Hsin-Yun Huang](#) of The Juilliard School, and pianist [Thomas Sauer](#), founding director of the Mannes Beethoven Institute.



Classical Voice North Carolina raved about *Still Point*: “Simpson's sonnet about the fleet passing of life and time served as the text ... The prominent viola part was gorgeous. This was a very successful song.”

The New York premiere will take place at Mannes Concert Hall.

THE SCHUMANN TRILOGY

To commemorate Robert Schumann's (1810-1856) bicentennial, a consortium of orchestras has commissioned **Lawrence Dillon** to compose a trilogy of celebratory pieces. [*Fantasiestück*](#), [*The Marriage Diary*](#) and [*Florestan and Eusebius*](#) will be premiered in May 2010 by the Idyllwild Symphony Orchestra, the consortium leader, under the baton of Music Director Peter Askim. Other orchestras involved in the commission are the Boise Philharmonic, the Salt Lake Symphony, the Mansfield Symphony and the University of Utah Symphony Orchestra.

[*Fantasiestück*](#) is an orchestral fantasy on the enigmatic figure of Robert Schumann, a brilliantly gifted composer and writer who ascended to the pinnacle of the music world only to end his days in an insane asylum.



[*The Marriage Diary*](#)

For the first four years of their married life, Robert and Clara Schumann kept an intimate marriage diary. They wrote notes to one another, commented on visitors and concerts, and kept a running dialogue on the delights and challenges of married life. The Schumanns' marriage holds particular interest for couples in the twenty-first century, as Robert and Clara coped with many of the same issues familiar to two-income families today. Dillon's [*The Marriage Diary*](#) takes its cue from this infamous book: a dialogue for mezzo, tenor and orchestra, it is an amusing dramatization of the complications, misunderstandings, and hard-won tenderness of 19th-century newlyweds.



[*Florestan and Eusebius*](#)

While still in his twenties, Robert Schumann became a very influential music critic. In his writings, he invented several characters, through whom he expressed contrary perspectives on artistic issues of the day. Chief among these fictional figures were Florestan and Eusebius. Florestan was impetuous, passionate, and forward-looking; Eusebius was a quiet, introspective dreamer.

Dillon's [*Florestan and Eusebius*](#) imagines these two characters beside Schumann's deathbed, trying to make sense of their creator's madness and decline. It concludes with a setting of a haunting elegy by Heinrich Heine, one of Schumann's favorite poets.

To read more about this trilogy, visit [here](#). For information on joining in the commissioning consortium, contact [Jeffrey James Arts Consulting](#).

WRIGHT FLIGHT LANDS IN COLORADO

Dillon's [*Wright Flight*](#), which has been performed in North Carolina and Ohio over a dozen times, will have its Colorado and Wyoming debuts in April, when the Youth Orchestra of the Rockies performs it under the direction of Cynthia Katsarelis. Last year, the Mansfield Post Journal called *Wright Flight*: "a most unusual composition. Commissioned in honor of the centennial of the first flight on Dec. 17, 1903, the composition is a multi-media work, featuring the orchestra, three actors and projected slides of the actual first flight of

the Wright brothers in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. [the piece is a] musical journey, with narration excerpted largely from the letters and journals of the two brothers.

Especially memorable moments included a rhythmic dialogue between the two brothers describing technical construction measurements and assembly details ... a vivid verbal and musical depiction of the challenges of battling the hoards of mosquitoes (MISERY!), and Mr. Daniels' keen local observations on the character and tenacity of these two gentlemen from Ohio as they strove to achieve the goal of human flight.

The musical score ebbs and flows along with the tale ... graphically depicting winds and gales, storms and seas, and even the sputtering of the crude engine that powered the first aircraft on its maiden flight. The symphony and actors gave an engaging performance of this unusual theater piece, which was warmly received by the audience."

For more information about [Wright Flight](#), including photos and a film excerpt, visit [here](#).



NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM AMERICAN COMPOSERS EDITIONS

American Composers Editions published six new works by **Lawrence Dillon** in 2008:



The Better Angels of Our Nature (14:00) – narrator, violin, cello, piano.

Blossom (6:00) – triple string quartet.

Brio (6:00) – triple string quartet.

The Best Season (5:00) – tenor, mezzo and piano

The Voice (4:00) – violin, piano

Sonata: Motion (18:00) – violin, piano

To obtain copies of these works, visit Dillon's page on the [American Composers Alliance website](#), phone (212) 362-8900, email info@composer.com, or write to:

American Composers Editions
648 Broadway, Room 803
New York, NY 10012

DILLON ON THE WEB

For more about **Lawrence Dillon**, including a biography, list of works, news, discography, etc. visit his website at <http://www.lawrencedillon.com/>.

Read Dillon's Sequenza21 blog at <http://www.sequenza21.com/dillon.html>

You can also contact Jeffrey James Arts Consulting for more information at 516-586-3433 or jamesarts@worldnet.att.net.

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