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**NATIONAL CONTEMPORARY/IMPROVISED MUSIC INNOVATORS CELLIST  
MICHELLE KINNEY AND SAXOPHONIST GEORGE CARTWRIGHT PRESENT  
NEW MUSIC/NEW VOICES AT THE WALKER ART CENTER**

Two national innovators in contemporary and improvised music (and recent Twin Cities transplants)—cellist-composer **Michelle Kinney** (Henry Threadgill, Butch Morris) and saxophonist-composer **George Cartwright** (Curlew)—assemble remarkable groups of instrumentalists from New York and Minneapolis to present their new compositions at 8 pm Friday, November 7, in the Walker Art Center Auditorium. Kinney's set will include **Brandon Ross** (guitar), **Anthony Cox** (bass), **Myra Melford** (piano), **Timothy Hill** (voice), and **Kevin Washington** (percussion); Cartwright invites **Adam Linz** (bass), **Alden Ikeda** (drums), **Chris Parker** (piano/keyboard), **Dean Granros** (guitar), **JT Bates** (drums), and **Anne Elias** (projections).

Kinney's portion of the evening, titled *Broken Word*, intersects poetry, extended vocal technique, and musical improvisation. The work of W.S. Merwin, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Twin Cities author Wang Ping (*The Majic Whip*, Coffee House Press), and Kinney's own writings are featured. In contrast, Cartwright's part of the night, titled *A Tenacious Slew*, is a free-form concoction of his internal deliberations fleshed out by sound and motion, stops and starts, melody and not, ancient and new.

**George Cartwright**

In his own words: "Music has always been a part of my life. Singing in church and learning songs at my grandfather's knee are some of my earliest memories. As a child, I took piano lessons,

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and later learned to play the guitar by ear. I started composing on the guitar, writing songs with words and creating instrumental pieces a la Mississippi John Hurt and John Fahey. In high school, I was a big fan of the British bands that played blues and was thrilled to discover that they had found the blues literally in my own hometown on the Mississippi Delta. I bought my first sax on my 21st birthday for \$65, a present from my grandmother. I studied jazz saxophone, being irreversibly drawn to its beauty and passion. In college, after hearing Ornette Coleman's *Dancing in Your Head* I started finding melodies and ideas for songs and began seriously composing pieces. After a year and a half at the Creative Music studio in Woodstock, New York, I moved to New York City where I made a conscious decision to eschew journeyman positions in music, learning a trade to pay the bills, passionate that I wanted to compose and perform my music free of traditional restraints. Clarity had always been important to me. I love counterpoint, things pulling in different directions while respecting the others, right and need to exist—or, as Coleman describes his harmolodic philosophy, 'communicating the equal access of information for multiple expression.' My intent when I compose music is that it be clear, non-redundant (in both a global and personal sense), unique, and a vehicle for passionate expression. I see it as a mechanism to cultivate individuality, and towards that end, I wish to express my own, standing in places where no one else does. The composition is nothing without the musicians, and those I assemble are distinctive, individual, cultivated practitioners of their art. The result is a combination of musicians and composition that stresses the primacy of the individual and power of the group. I believe it detracts from the experience to have a preordained message for the listener. Instead, my hope is that each listener will come away from my music transformed on an emotional level."

Cartwright has been a vital figure in new jazz frontiers for over twenty years, and is founder of the seminal free jazz band Curlew, "the best and most obstinately committed band to emerge from New York's Knitting Factory-based alternative music scene." (*Option*). Curlew's most recent and 10th release is titled *Mercury* (Cuneiform). Cartwright's latest ensemble is the Minneapolis-based GloryLand PonyCat (with Alden Ikeda and Adam Linz). Their most recent is *Black Ants Crawling* (Innova).

## **Michelle Kinney**

As a composer, Michelle Kinney has received awards or grants from The Bush Foundation, The Jerome Foundation, Harvestworks/Studio Pass Artists in Residence, McKnight Foundation, NEA/Rockefeller, and the American Composers Forum. Her compositions have been featured on CD compilations *Jewel Box*, *Building Higher Nests*, *Live at the Walker*, and two productions of Elliot Sharp's, *State of the Union* and *String Theory*. Her work has been performed throughout the Twin Cities and New York City venues, the U.S., Europe, and South America.

Kinney's theater and dance composition credits include composing for the Wooster Group founder/director Richard Schechner's *Faust*, which was performed in New York City as well as in various European festivals. In collaboration with Fast Forward and Ikue Mori she composed and performed the music for French choreographer Mark Tompkins' work *Channels*, which toured Europe in 1994-1996. She has worked extensively with American choreographer Cyrus Khambatta, and since 1991 his PHFFT! Dance Theater Company has presented her work at various European, South American, and U.S. venues, including the Spoleto Festival and the University of Caracas, Venezuela. She continues a long-term collaboration with Minneapolis-based choreographer Laurie Van Wieren.

As a film composer, Kinney recently scored the film *Ruthie and Connie*, in collaboration with her husband Chris Cunningham and directed by Deborah Dickson, which was featured in the Berlin Film Festival 2002. Kinney scored director Jim Cozza's award-winning documentary *River Rat*, about a Vietnam vet living in the Louisiana swamps, which aired on the National Geographic channel and on Canal-Plus, Spain. She also co-composed with Cunningham the score to the documentary *The Art of Influence*, also by Dickson, which features interviews with 20 artists talking about their mentors, shown in Europe, Japan, and on the Bravo network domestically. She also scored several films and performance art pieces that toured the U.S. by Chicago-based animator/performance artist Chris Sullivan.

Michelle Kinney's performance is underwritten by the American Composer's Forum with funds provided by the Jerome Foundation.

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Tickets for Michelle Kinney/George Cartwright *New Music/New Voices* are \$16 (\$13 Walker members) and are available at the Walker box office or by calling 612.375.7622; or visit [www.walkerart.org/tickets/](http://www.walkerart.org/tickets/). Patrons with special needs are asked to call two weeks in advance.

The Walker Art Center's Performing Arts Program is generously supported by funds from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation through the Doris Duke Fund for Jazz and Dance and the Doris Duke Performing Arts Endowment Fund.

**The Walker Art Center is located at 725 Vineland Place,  
at Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis, one block off Highway I-94.  
For public information, call 612.375.7622.  
Gallery hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 10 am–5 pm;  
Thursday, 10 am–9 pm; Sunday, 11 am–5 pm; closed Monday.  
<http://www.walkerart.org>**

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