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Matt Dane and Christina Jennings Perform Two Premieres For ROCO's Unchambered Series

April 12, 2015 at 5 p.m. at Studio 101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 25, 2015



Violist Matt Dane

HOUSTON — Continuing its 10th Anniversary Season programming theme of works based on classic literary sources, ROCO (River Oaks Chamber Orchestra) performs a program entitled "*The Little Prince*," featuring the Texas Premiere of "*To Love A Flower*." Based upon the beloved Antoine de Saint-Exupéry allegorical nouvelle "*The Little Prince*," "*To Love A Flower*" was composed by Dan Kellogg for violist Matt Dane and flutist Christina Jennings, who perform it for ROCO Sunday, April 12, 2015 at 5 p.m. at Studio 101 in the Spring Street Studios. On the same program, Matt Dane performs the Southwest Premiere of "*Nashani*," a work for solo viola d'amore that Reena Esmail composed expressly for him.

"Dan Kellogg wrote '*To Love a Flower*' for us earlier this year," said violist Matt Dane. "It is a virtuosic piece based on images and concepts from Saint-Exupery's magical children's novel '*Le Petit Prince*' that features both open, spacious harmonies and soaring, dramatic lines between flute and viola."

"I fell in love with [the viola d'amore] a couple of years ago," continued Dane, "and commissioned my own instrument from Chicago luthier Martin Biller this past year. When I first played the new instrument I realized what an expressive range it had. That previous Fall we had just premiered a string piece ('*Teen Murti*') by Reena Esmail at ROCO- and I thought that perhaps she'd be interested in writing a solo piece. She was, and through a very engaging, collaborative process she wrote '*Nishani*' for me this summer."

The April 12th program also includes Maurice Duruflé's Prelude, Recitative and Variations, Opus 5 for flute, viola and piano; and variations for flute and piano from Schubert's "*Trockne Blumen*" ("Dry Flowers," one of the last songs in the song cycle "*Die Schöne Müllerin*" . . . "The Lovely Maid of the Mill"). Matt Dane and Christina Jennings are joined by accompanist David Korevaar for this concert.

ROCO's principal violist Matt Dane is also on the faculty of The University of Colorado. As a member of The Boulder Piano Quartet, Dane has recorded quintets by Lowell Liebermann with Jon Manasse for the Koch label. His chamber music festival appearances include OK Mozart (Portland, Maine), Chamber Music Quad Cities (Iowa), Ruby Mountains (Nevada), and Tanglewood, and in the Summer, Dane performs in the Colorado Music Festival and teaches at the Texas Music Festival.

Christina Jennings is ROCO's principal flutist, and has appeared as a concerto soloist with over fifty orchestras including the Utah and Houston Symphonies, including concertos written for her by Carter Pann and Laura Elise Schwendinger. She also performs as principal flute with the Arizona MusicFest! Orchestra, and has performed frequently with Orchestra 2001, including recent performances at the

Library of Congress and in Havana, Cuba. She has worked with such diverse artists as Jethro Tull, David Parsons Dance Company, and members of Pilobolus Dance, as well as with her husband Matt Dane.



Flutist Christina Jennings

Christina Jennings and Matt Dane performed the world premiere of “*To Love A Flower*” February 4, 2014 at The University of Colorado.

One of the nation’s most prominent young composers, Dan Kellogg was described by The Washington Post as “...technically assured, fascinated by unusual sonic textures, unfailingly easy to listen to, yet far from simplistic.” An assistant professor of composition at The University of Colorado, Kellogg’s works have recently premiered with The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Aspen Chamber Orchestra, The National Symphony Orchestra, The Takács Quartet, The San Diego Symphony, The Colorado Symphony Orchestra, and the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris.

Indian-American composer Reena Esmail enjoys working in both the Western and Hindustani (Northern Indian) classical music idioms. Her recent commissions include “Teen Murti” for ROCO, as well as works for the Padadena Master Chorale and a collaborative work for The Albany Symphony and classical Indian dancer Sisira Gorthala.

Tickets for “The Little Prince” are \$25 general admission, \$15 for students, and are available at www.rocohouston.org.

About ROCO

ROCO is a professional chamber orchestra of 40 all-star musicians, distinguished guest conductors and dynamic composers who come together from all over the world to present engaging performances of classical and original compositions. Founded in 2005 by oboist Alecia Lawyer, ROCO is *the most fun you can have with serious music*.

ROCO performances to come include:

- “The Little Prince” April 12th at Studio 101.
- “Notes To Be Written” April 23rd at The Church of St. John the Divine
- “Mahler’s Fourth” May 21st at Rothko Chapel

More at
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