

# RISING



PERFORMANCES BY  
NEAVE TRIO  
PIGEONWING DANCE

MUSIC BY  
ROBERT SIROTA

CHOREOGRAPHY BY  
GABRIELLE LAMB





## Neave Trio

Since forming in 2010, Neave Trio—violinist Anna Williams, cellist Mikhail Veselov, and pianist Eri Nakamura—has earned enormous praise for its engaging, cutting-edge performances. *WQXR* explains, “‘Neave’ is actually a Gaelic name meaning ‘bright’ and ‘radiant’, both of which certainly apply to this trio’s music making.” *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* included Neave in its “Best of 2014” and “Best of 2016” roundups, claiming, “their unanimity, communication, variety of touch, and expressive sensibility rate first tier.”

Neave has performed and held residencies at many esteemed concert series and at festivals worldwide. In the fall of 2017, the Trio joined the faculty of the Longy School of Music of Bard College as Alumni Artists, Faculty Ensemble-in-Residence.

Neave Trio strives to champion new works by living composers and reach wider audiences through innovative concert presentations, regularly collaborating with artists of all mediums. These collaborations include *D-Cell: an Exhibition & Durational Performance*, conceived and directed by multi-disciplinary visual artist David Michalek; as well as performances with the Blythe Barton Dance Company; with dance collective BodySonnet; with projection designer Ryan Brady; in *Klee Musings* by acclaimed American composer Augusta Read Thomas, which was premiered by Neave; in the premiere of Eric Nathan’s *Missing Words V*, sponsored by Coretet; and in a music video by filmmaker Amanda Alvarez Díaz of Astor Piazzolla’s “Otoño Porteño,” among many others.

*Gramophone* described Neave Trio’s latest album *Her Voice* as, “a splendid introduction to these three pioneering female composers,” and as, “sumptuously recorded ... a taut and vivid interpretation.” Neave Trio’s other critically acclaimed recordings include *Celebrating Piazzolla* (Azica Records, 2018), which features mezzo-soprano Carla Jablonski; *French Moments* (Chandos Records, 2018); and its debut album, *American Moments* (Chandos Records, 2016).

[neavetrio.com](http://neavetrio.com)



## Pigeonwing Dance

“to cut a pigeon wing”: *Dictionary of American Regional English*. To execute intricate dance steps gracefully...to dance in a fancy way

Described by *The New Yorker* as “eccentric...playful...curious,” Pigeonwing Dance seeks the coordinates where beauty turns to awkwardness and tension dissolves into ease. Whirlwinds, accidents, and chance encounters are caught, preserved, and folded into dance. This improvisatory abandon is counterbalanced by meticulous calculation, revealing intricate architectures where fleeting moments of resolution open into new wonderings.

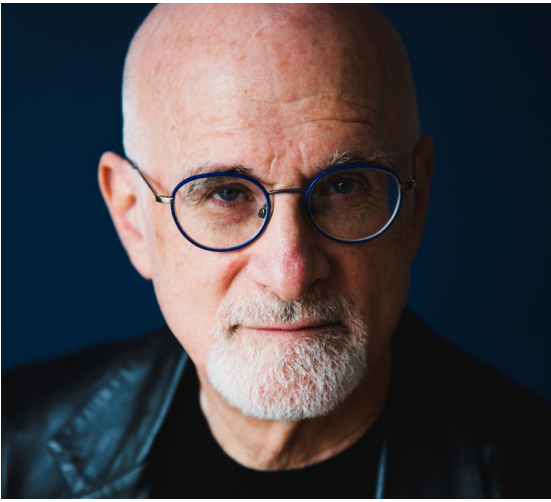
Pigeonwing, named for its blend of airiness and NYC grit, was founded in 2016 by Guggenheim Fellow Gabrielle Lamb. PWD has been presented by New York City Center, the CUNY Dance Initiative, 92Y’s Harkness Dance Festival, Bryant Park, and Jacob’s Pillow. In 2018 they were the first dance company commissioned by Symphony Space’s beloved *Selected Shorts*, where they premiered an adaptation of Ben Loory’s short story, *The Cape*.

During the pandemic, their artistic model was transformed by the 2020 premiere of *The Carpet Series*, a compact outdoor performance taking place on a 5x8 Persian carpet in public spaces throughout NYC. Showcasing the talents of five contemporary ballet dancers and an array of solo musicians, it is a choreography rich in detail, complexity and virtuosity. It has been performed 100+ times in 4 boroughs, including a month-long residency at the NY Botanical Garden.

*The Carpet Series* has been featured in the *New York Daily News* and *DANCE Magazine*, where critic Nancy Wozny observed, “the geometric patterns of the Persian rug echo and amplify Lamb’s idiosyncratic movement vocabulary, which is both intensely intricate and unusually syncopated.”

Pigeonwing’s upcoming projects include a new work based on CRISPR gene-editing technology, commissioned by the MIT Museum.

[pigeonwingdance.com](http://pigeonwingdance.com)



## Robert Sirota

Over five decades, composer Robert Sirota has developed a distinctive voice, clearly discernible in all of his work – whether symphonic, choral, stage, or chamber music. Writing in the *Portland Press Herald*, Allan Kozinn asserts: “Sirota’s musical language is personal and undogmatic, in the sense that instead of aligning himself with any of the competing contemporary styles, he follows his own internal musical compass.”

Robert Sirota’s works have been performed by orchestras across the US and Europe; ensembles such as Alarm Will Sound, Sequitur, yMusic, Chameleon Arts, and Dinosaur Annex; the Chiara, American, Ethel, Elmyr, Blair and Telegraph String Quartets; the Peabody, Concord, and Webster Trios; and at festivals including Tanglewood, Aspen, Yellow Barn, and Cooperstown; Bowdoin Gamper and Bowdoin International Music Festival; and Mizzou International Composers Festival. Recent commissions include Jeffrey Kahane and the Sarasota Music Festival, Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, Palladium Musicum, American Guild of Organists, the American String Quartet, Alarm Will Sound, the Naumburg Foundation, and yMusic, Thomas Pellaton, Carol Wincenc, Linda Chesis, Trinity Episcopal Church (Indianapolis), and Sierra Chamber Society, as well as arrangements for Paul Simon.

Grants include the Guggenheim and Watson Foundations, NEA, Meet the Composer, and the American Music Center. Sirota’s works are recorded on Legacy Recordings, National Sawdust Tracks, and the Capstone, Albany, New Voice, Gasparo and Crystal labels. His music is published by Muzzy Ridge Music, Schott, Music Associates of New York, MorningStar, Theodore Presser, and To the Fore.

[robertsirota.com](http://robertsirota.com)



## Gabrielle Lamb

Gabrielle Lamb is a Princess Grace Award-winning choreographer based in NYC, where she directs Pigeonwing Dance. Her work also been presented by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, BalletX, Whim W’him (Seattle), Ballet Collective, Ballet Austin, Ballet Memphis, and the Sacramento, Milwaukee, and Kansas City Ballets.

Lamb, a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow, has won choreographic competitions at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and Milwaukee Ballet, as well as the Banff Centre’s Lee Award and a NY City Center Choreography Fellowship. In 2018 she was Grand Prize Winner of the S&R Foundation’s Washington Award. In 2018 and 2019 she was selected to create for the American Ballet Theatre Choreographic Incubator.

A native of Savannah, GA, she trained at the Boston Ballet School and was a longtime soloist at Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. In 2009 she was invited by Christopher Wheeldon to join his company Morphoses in NYC. *DANCE Magazine* called her “a dancer of stunning clarity who illuminates the smallest details—qualities she brings to the dances she makes, too”.

[pigeonwingdance.com/gabrielle](http://pigeonwingdance.com/gabrielle)

## Rising

The Neave Trio and Pigeonwing Dance come together to perform *Rising*, a new evening-length work with a rich score by composer Robert Sirota, and intricately detailed choreography by Gabrielle Lamb. Weaving together music, text, and dance, the work is a meditation on the question of: What does it mean to rise?

The project's impetus came from the Neave Trio (violin, cello, piano) whose mission "to Engage, to Exchange, to Connect" prompted them to respond through music and movement to the tumultuous events of 2020. They chose Robert Sirota for his emotional musical language, complete with dramatic and lush harmonic landscapes, and choreographer Gabrielle Lamb for her understated lyricism, deeply felt sense of motion and her musical instincts. *Rising* draws its energy from the creative polarities that emerged during the dialogue between composer, choreographer, and musicians.

Sirota observed that his music will always tend toward the Romantic, with an emphasis on humanity and emotional intensity. Lamb, however, bends towards a Classicist's restraint. Her intricate gestural language imitates the movement of the natural world: cells dividing, an octopus tentacle unfurling, or a time lapse of blooming flowers. The push and pull of opposites is at the heart of this lively collaboration, resulting in a rich journey through the emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects of what "rising" can mean.

The music is structured in seven movements, four principal movements each expressing a different aspect and energy of rising, separated by three briefer solo instrumental interludes.

- I. Floating  
Interlude
- II. Spiraling  
Interlude
- III. Stepping  
Interlude
- IV. Rising

Sirota details his concept of "rising" as embracing: "the purely physical qualities of reaching upward and ascending; the struggle against oppression and subjugation; the striving and aspiring to a life of dignity and accomplishment; the mystical vision of death and resurrection."

Lamb's choreographic imagination is piqued by the physicality of buoyancy and ascent. For her, "Rising" brings to mind curtains rippling in the breeze; "Spiraling" is the growth patterns of leaves or the helical twists of DNA. Her choreography might easily embody a microscopic world - or perhaps the swirl of galaxies. But the music's emotional currents pull the dancers back towards the world of humanism and aspiration.

The evening opens with "Floating." A single dancer is onstage, moving to spoken text by an oceanographer describing oceanic gyres. Words give way to the piano's rippling arpeggios, and more dancers enter with sinuous oscillations suggestive of sea creatures. Soon their five bodies combine into fluent living sculptures; strange angles emerge, then dissolve quickly back to spirals and undulations. Eye contact connects dancers, transforming abstract movement into human interaction and hinting at multiple interrelated stories.

The Neave Trio is integral to the work, onstage and off. Musicians share the space with the dancers, and as the piece moves from "Spiraling" through "Stepping" the music changes course without losing momentum.

The final movement begins with a slow soliloquy on the cello, which introduces the "Rising" theme, joined by the violin and then the piano. A solo violin cadenza evoking the clarity of folk traditions - Celtic fiddling, American hymnody - ushers in a series of variations of increasing intensity.

Rather than creating conflict, Sirota and Lamb's complementary perspectives yield results greater than the sum of their parts: a profound exploration of how dance and music can intertwine to embody a shared concept of "rising".

***To come into existence; appear.***

***To come into action, as a wind or storm***

***To become active in opposition or resistance; revolt or rebel***

***To get up after falling or being thrown down.***

***To prove oneself equal to a demand.***



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