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Mark Abel: 4.4.2
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Label: Delos
Artists:
Simone McIntosh, mezzo-soprano
Michael McMahon, piano
Alice K. Dade, flute and piccolo
Ieva Jokubaviciute, piano
Jennifer Choi, violin
Jonah Kim, cello
Keisuke Nakagoshi, piano

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On 13 February 2026, "deeply engaging and unfailingly fresh" (*The Journal of Singing*) composer Mark Abel releases his seventh album on the Delos label. Titled *4.4.2*, the album features four works, each for two musicians, and showcases one of America's most original compositional voices alongside an impressive roster of internationally accomplished artists.

Through its wide variety of duos, *4.4.2* is sure to continue to solidify Mark Abel as "a compositional master of intriguing contemporary music." (*The Whole Note*) Known for his vocal music, "rooted in emotional intensity and extremes of expression," (*Fanfare*) and chamber works which bring "the listener along a whirlwind adventure", the album combines both genres to present a deep look into the range of Abel's works.

About the Music

Praised for his "oft-lyrical, melody-rich" (*Textura*) vocal compositions, *4.4.2* features the premiere recording of Abel's song cycle *As The World Turns*, written with a nod to the long-running American TV soap opera. Each song is modeled as an episode in one person's continuous story, alternatively "a gallery of views into the living rooms and psyches of different people at various stages of their relationships."

As The World Turns is performed by rising Swiss-Canadian mezzo-soprano Simone McIntosh, a 2023 Cardiff Singer of the World finalist, who makes her recording debut on the album. She is accompanied by five-time Juno Award nominee pianist Michael McMahon, hailed by *La Scena Musicale* as "the singer's pianist".

Samantha Sketches, for flute/piccolo and piano, displays Abel's "melodically mesmerizing" (*Classical-Modern Music*) work in the instrumental chamber music medium. Abel wrote the work after hearing award-winning American flutist Alice K. Dade perform Erwin Schulhoff's bracing 1925 trio *Concertino*, and it is Dade who performs the premiere on the recording alongside the acclaimed Lithuanian pianist Ieva Jokubaviciute. *Samantha* is an episodic journey in the interior life – taking dreamy and dark side trips.

The album also features the premiere of one of Mark Abel's most unique compositions — *Symbiotica*, written for solo violin and organ. Inspired by Frank Martin's *Sonata da Chiesa* for organ and viola d'amore, the work combines multiple stylistic planes and pushes the boundaries of the violin. The player up to the challenge is Jennifer Choi, the "soulful, compelling" (*New York Times*) founding member of the Miró Quartet. The organ part of this coupling is performed by the composer himself.

The final work on the album features one of America's leading cellists, Jonah Kim, in his third collaboration with Mark Abel. Praised by *Gramophone* in his 2021 recording of Abel's *Approaching Autumn* for his ability to "capture the elusiveness that gives the music its substance" and his "incisive and dramatic" playing, Kim similarly locks in to bring forth this premiere of *A Door Opens*.

An extroverted voyage of discovery, *A Door Opens* swings between poles of sweet lyricism and fervid passion. Alongside cellist Kim is one of the San Francisco Bay Area's most distinguished pianists, Keisuke Nakagoshi. A longtime pianist-in-residence at San Francisco Conservatory of Music and one half of the GRAMMY® nominated piano duet, ZOFO, Nakagoshi anchors Kim in *A Door Opens* from start to finish. The pair will give the world premiere performance at the San Francisco Music Festival on November 22, 2025.

Available for radio broadcast beginning 2 January, 2026.

Headshots, photos, audio, and recording assets available: https://rbcm.me/de3626/

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About the Composer

American composer **Mark Abel**'s style is a sturdily constructed hybrid of classical, rock and jazz. Known initially for his vocal works, he has recently moved into chamber music. Mark's projects have garnered critical acclaim and attracted esteemed musicians including sopranos Hila Plitmann and Isabel Bayrakdarian, clarinetist David Shifrin, cellists Fred Sherry and Jonah Kim, and pianists Carol Rosenberger, Robert Koenig and Dominic Cheli. A powerful lyricist himself, Mark has also set poetry by Rainer Maria Rilke, Marina Tsvetaeva, and California poets Kate Gale and Joanne Regenhardt. "4.4.2" is his seventh album for Delos.

About the Artists

Mezzo-soprano **Simone McIntosh** is regarded as one of the most promising singers to emerge from Canada in recent years. The Vancouver native has won acclaim for her performances in European and North American venues, appearing at San Francisco Opera, Opernhaus Zürich, Canadian Opera, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Staatsoper Hamburg, Bayerische Staatsoper and with the Cleveland Orchestra. Simone was the First Prize Laureate for the Concours Musical International de Montréal - Aria Division and a finalist (Song Prize) at the 2023 Cardiff Singer of the World Competition.

Michael McMahon is one of Canada's premier collaborative pianists. The five-time Juno Award nominee has performed with prominent singers in Canada, Europe and the U.S., and recorded for labels including Marquis Classics, CBC Records and Analekta. He has made broadcast recordings for the English and French networks of the CBC, as well as for the BBC,

RBTF, Radio Suisse Romande and Radio France. An Associate Professor at McGill University, Michael has had a long association with Atelier lyrique de L'Opéra de Montréal and the Banff Centre for the Arts. In 2012, he received the Ruby Award from Opera Canada and in 2025 was made a Member of the Order of Canada.

Alice K. Dade is one of the most respected American flutists, both as an award-winning player and inspiring pedagogue. She has performed with many orchestras, including the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Detroit Symphony and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Alice, an Associate Professor at the University of Missouri's School of Music, has presented masterclasses at numerous universities in the United States, Latin America and Asia. A frequent guest star on the PBS series *Now Hear This*, she recorded a solo album for Naxos, *Living Music*, in 2018.

Lithuanian pianist **Ieva Jokubaviciute** made her orchestral debut with the Chicago Symphony. A much sought-after chamber musician and collaborator, she regularly appears at international festivals, including Marlboro, Ravinia, Chamber Music Northwest and Festival Mozaic. She was a founding member of Trio Cavatina, winner of the Naumburg International Chamber Music Competition. A graduate of the Curtis Institute and Mannes School of Music, Ms. Jokubaviciute is Professor of Piano at Duke University. She has made three acclaimed albums, mostly recently *Northscapes* on the Sono Luminus label.

Hailed by *The New York Time*s as a "soulful, compelling ... excellent violinist," **Jennifer Choi** is known for her broad stylistic taste. A founding member of the Miró Quartet, she has performed for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Guggenheim Museums, MOMA, Ravinia, Caramoor and other series and festivals across North America, Europe and Asia. As a soloist, Jennifer has appeared with the Oregon Symphony, Vancouver Symphony and String Orchestra of New York City. She has championed contemporary composers including John Zorn, Susie Ibarra, Annie Gosfield, Ches Smith, Yuka Honda and Wadada Leo Smith.

Jonah Kim is one of America's leading cellists, celebrated for his dynamism in concert settings and deeply felt interpretations. Making his solo debut with Wolfgang Sawallisch and the Philadelphia Orchestra at age 12, Jonah has moved forward to excellence as an in-demand chamber performer and recording artist. He has made two albums for the Delos label: *Approaching Autumn* and a disc of the Rachmaninoff and Barber sonatas with pianist Sean Kennard. Jonah's Trio Barclay, which includes Kennard and violinist Dennis Kim, is a potent and popular feature of musical life in Southern California.

Keisuke Nakagoshi is a member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and a pianist in the creative teams of Opera Parallèle and West Edge Opera. He has performed at the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Hollywood Bowl and Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco. Receiving training from such eminences as Emanuel Ax, Gilbert Kalish, Menahem Pressler and Paul Hersh, Keisuke has collaborated with conductors including Michael Tilson Thomas, Herbert Blomstedt and Nicole Paiement. He is also celebrated for his work with ZOFO, the Grammy-nominated piano-four-hands duo he founded with Eva-Maria Zimmermann in 2009.

About Delos

Founded in 1973, Delos has released nearly 700 albums featuring top artists from America and around the world. A pioneer in digital recording, Delos is known as a label with a strong personality that attracts a host of major performers and has also garnered acclaim for the technical excellence of its recordings. Its diverse catalogue has won significant new audiences through the most popular streaming platforms and the label is continually expanding its appeal as new technologies reach the marketplace. A half-century after its founding, Delos remains the only American West Coast-based classical label to achieve true international recognition.