

Department of Music, UofA
presents

NEW MUSIC

concert

compositions by
Jeffrey McCune,
Piotr A. Grella

coordinator:
Alfred Joel Fisher

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 1992, 8:00 p.m.

Convocation Hall

free admission

Programme

Melodrama II (The T.Brandenburg Concerto)(1981)....Piotr Grella

Trevor Brandenburg, Vibraphone
Charles Stolte, Alto Saxophone

Two Etudes (1992).....Jeffrey McCune

Corey Hamm, Organ

Orion (music for Franz K.) (1991).....Piotr Grella

Charles Stolte, Soprano & Alto Saxophones
Scott Godin & Piotr A. Grella, Signal Processing

Intermission

Horngardens (music for Norval Morrissette)(1992)....Piotr Grella

University of Alberta Saxophone Quartet:

Charles Stolte, Soprano Saxophone
Ken Myers, Alto Saxophone
Daniel Baker, Tenor Saxophone
Jennifer Jewell, Baritone Saxophone

String Quartet (1991 - 1992).....Jeffrey McCune

Strathcona String Quartet:

Jennifer Bustin, 1st Violin
Melinda Cooke, 2nd Violin
Michael Moser, Viola
Paul Radosh, Violoncello

Jeffrey McCune received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Alberta in 1987. In 1988, he was one of three young Canadians chosen for the Special Program in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Toronto with Michael Tabachnik, an associate of Pierre Boulez and late Herbert von Karajan. His music has been performed by the University of Toronto Women's Chorus, the Claude Watson School of the Arts Orchestra, the North York Wind Ensemble, and at the Festival de la musique sacrée in Fribourg, Switzerland. In 1988, his chamber orchestra piece **Endymion** won first prize in the Canadian Contemporary Music Workshop's Summer Festival, and in 1990, Toronto's new music ensemble Arraymusic awarded him first place in their Young Composers' Competition and performed **Chichen Itza**, a work composed especially for them.

Two Etudes for Organ, written in 1992, represent two explorations of the organ: one, its loud, aggressive nature, and two, its soft expressive qualities and sustaining capabilities. Etude One is an aggressive declamation of force, requiring a lot of sound from the instrument. Etude Two is soft and supple; elastic - different colours and rhythms are stretched out over time, until near the end, they are re-fashioned into a calm and peaceful meditation.

The first movement of my **String Quartet** (1991 - 1992) is designed as a group of contrasting images based upon an initial impression centered around note D. In each of these images I manipulate the dynamics by contrasting unison and non-unison lines, layering textures, and varying the momentum to produce an energy which is constantly re-worked until the final measures of the piece, where it is condensed and focused in powerful unison. The second movement begins slowly and lyrically, its structure consisting of smooth, flowing lines. It is quickly interrupted with the same slow four-note figure now becoming the theme for a wild and energetic dance. The four note theme is manipulated, changed and intensified until it ultimately transforms into a boisterous coda.

Jeffrey McCune

Piotr A. Grelła holds MA degree from the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. His former composition teachers include Dr Edward Bogusławski and Dr Bogusław Schaeffer. In 1991, he entered MMus program at the UofA to study with Dr Alfred Fisher. His works were awarded at major composers' competitions in Łódź, Poland (**ænnea** for guitar, 1985), Kraków, Poland (**Motet** for Six Vocal Soloists, 1988) and Halifax, Nova Scotia (at which Pierre Boulez named his **Horror Vacui** for Strings in the third place, 1991). Grelła is also a recipient of the Beryl Barns Award in Composition (1991). Recently, two works of his, **Palestriniana** for Organ and **aa69** for German Bassoon were performed in Slovenia and California, respectively. The former work was given its European premiere by the UofA graduate Glen Segger.

In February 1992, Piotr has been chosen by the Edmonton Composers' Concert Society to produce the **First Edmonton New Music Festival** which is scheduled to take place between the 14th and the 17th of May, 1992.

Melodrama II for Vibraphone and Flute or Alto Saxophone or Trumpet was written in 1981 as the second piece in the larger cycle of works for solo instruments or small ensembles under the same title. The score was slightly revised in 1992 and given its present subtitle 'The T. Brandenburg Concerto' as a tribute to this talented young Edmonton musician. To me, **Melodrama II** has always been a very special piece: premiered in 1982 at the Silesian Tribune of Composers it was my professional debut as a composer. The work consists of three movements based on the idea of gradual structural transition from one movement to another: the first movement is fairly precisely notated and although it gives the performers an opportunity to improvise, the overall formal and textural design cannot change; the second movement is a mobile (a set of segments to be played in any order) in which elements of the indeterminate graphic notation are introduced; and the third movement makes use of the approximate notation only - both performers (playing from the same score!) must follow a suggested shape of the "melodic" curve and the suggested changes of density. In the third movement a kind of specific timbral modulation was employed for the first time in the vibraphone literature.

Orion (music for Franz K.) (1991) was written for and dedicated to Charles Stolte. The piece is for any Saxophone(s) or 1 to 5 optional woodwinds and consists of two extremely contrasted parts entitled 'Sparse' and 'Dense', respectively. The name of a mythological hunter (and a famous constellation) serves as a metaphor of a creative process as such. The work was composed through statistical and chance operations and a technique of rhythmical permutations (used in the second movement only). A special scale was so constructed that the performers can read the music (notated in a traditional manner on the staff) in any of the following clefs: treble, tenor and bass. It is a "hunt" for dialectical opposition of rational and irrational - performer's personality and capability influence a highly formalized, "objective" universe of numerical proportions. It turns out that technology should (and may) be subservient, that it 'recalls' mental archetypes, frees instincts and emotions, when used as part of a process (not for its own sake).

Horngardens (music for Norval Morrissette) were written in 1992. This single-movement work was inspired by paintings by a great native Canadian artist and is dedicated to Dr William Street from the UofA Department of Music. As a matter of fact, I have never had 'mercy' on performers. In my opinion, it is important to write music which poses fundamental questions regarding the place of a work of art (a musical composition) within the context of what we call 'a modern culture'. And such music should (or, at least, might) reflect the complexity of our socio-cultural environment. Therefore, the performers have to face this complexity, this multidimensional, multilevel sonic construct as if they were facing their own 'fate' in the stream of time passing. Both music and the performers interact with one another, influence one another and learn from one another. The profit is mutual. Firstly, music itself has been brought into being and given the opportunity to manifest its uniqueness. Secondly, the performers have broadened their musicianship, both intellectually and technically. And thirdly, the composer is, of course, the one who gathers a lot of new information necessary for his or her artistic development.

Here, I would like to thank Dr William Street for letting me get acquainted with the newest publications dealing with the saxophone techniques, Jennifer Jewell, Daniel Baker and Charles Stolte for their creative approach, and also Ken Myers for invaluable advice regarding certain practical solutions.

Piotr A. Grelis

Trevor Brandenburg was born and currently lives in Edmonton. He is a BMus student at the UofA Department of Music. Trevor has performed with the Santa Barbara Festival Orchestra, The Edmonton Symphony, and will be performing with the National Youth Orchestra this summer. He is also a member of a new music group The Hammerhead Consort (the other members include pianists Roger Admiral and Corey Hamm and Raj Nigam, percussionist). Recently, the Hammerhead Consort won the prestigious Sir Ernest MacMillan Chamber Music Prize which will allow them to release a CD and commission new works from Dr Alfred Fisher and Garth Hobden.

Charles Stolte is a BMus student at the UofA Department of Music where he is planning to remain to do his MMus degree. Charles is well-known for his excellent interpretations of the most demanding contemporary works for saxophone.

Corey Hamm is a MMus student at the UofA Department of Music. He is a member of the Hammerhead Consort. With this ensemble, Corey has been awarded at the National Music Competition in Brandon, Manitoba (1991) and received the Sir Ernest MacMillan Chamber Music Prize (1992).

Members of the **University of Alberta Saxophone Quartet** have been together for one year, studying with Dr William Street. Recently, they performed at the Region 9 Conference of the North American Saxophone Alliance in Regina, Saskatchewan. Their repertoire includes several works by contemporary composers such as Lukas Foss, Alfred Desenclos and others.

The **Strathcona String Quartet** has been performing in Edmonton for five years. Its members love playing together and were fortunate enough to tour the West Coast in the summer of 1991. They look forward to continued activity in the coming years.

House manager: **Scott Godin**
Stage Manager: **Sharle Rathwell**

