
Sunday Night Multimedia Series
"Into the Fire"

Montana State University Department of Music
Reynolds Recital Hall, Howard Hall
March 2, 2008 - 7:30 PM

PROGRAM

The Earthphoenix Project, Part 1

music: Kristi McGarity
video: Brian Christensen

Conceived and performed by Rebecca Hartka, cello

Dodge at Mann Gulch

Beth Wiemann

Greg Young, clarinet

Feu de Joie

Mary Jane Leach

Alan Leech, bassoon

Like Butterflies in October

Larisa Montanaro

November Sycamore Leaf

Paul Rudy

Grab It!

music: Jacob Ter Veldhuis
video: Michiel Zegers

Matt LaRocca, guitar

White Flag

music: Jacob Ter Veldhuis
video: Kevin Gallagher

Matt LaRocca, guitar
Scott Stebbins, bass
Stephen Versaevel, drums

The Earthphoenix Project, Part 1 is the first of several planned multimedia pieces on environmental themes by composer Kristi McGarity and cellist Rebecca Hartka. Photos courtesy of the Canary Project.

Kristi McGarity directs the new Music Technology program and teaches music technology, composition, and oboe at Montana State University. She earned a degree in oboe performance from the University of Michigan and a Master of Music degree in composition from the University of Texas, where she is currently completing her doctoral dissertation. She has studied composition at UT with Russell Pinkston, Donald Grantham, Dan Welcher, and Kevin Puts, and she served as oboist with the New Music Ensemble directed by Dan Welcher. In addition to her work at UT, she has taught electronic music at Austin Community College and oboe at Austin Lyric Opera's Armstrong Community Music School. Her background in acoustic and electronic media includes theatrical composition and sound design, songwriting and production, and collaborative works for film/video and dance.

Rebecca Hartka has performed with various ensembles large and small including Serenata Chamber Players, Boston College Contemporary Music Ensemble, Hyperprism, the Fringe Festival, Cape Ann Symphony and in the SAPAS Performing Arts series and in such prestigious venues as the Boston Athenaeum and the Boston Center for the Arts. She is one of the founding members of the Phoenix Trio, which gives regular concert tours throughout the East Coast. The Trio was also a recipient of a 2005 Brookline Tercentennial Fund Grant and participated as a full fellow in the Brevard Advanced Chamber Music Festival in 2004. Most recently, Hartka has been featured as a guest artists in a concert tour with the Meritage Quartet, and currently serves as the assistant principal for the Bozeman Symphony Orchestra. Hartka completed a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Cello performance at Boston University College of Fine Arts in May 2007, where she was the string department teaching assistant and acted on numerous occasions as principal cellist of the Chamber, Opera and Symphony Orchestras. Hartka completed a Masters in Music at BU CFA, and a Bachelor of Arts in Cello Performance at the Oberlin Conservatory and College.

Dodge at Mann Gulch - The text seen in the video accompanying the performer and electronic sound in this piece includes a few sentences from chapters 3 and 5 of Norman MacLean's book ***Young Men and Fire***. That work describes the happenings on August 5, 1949 in Montana during the Mann Gulch fire that killed 12 firefighters who had parachuted into the wilderness. On that day, crew chief Wagner Dodge was able to set an escape fire so that the main forest fire could wash over him while he lay in the ashes. Dodge was not able to convince any others in the crew to go into the area of the escape fire.

Beth Wiemann was raised in Burlington, VT, studied composition and clarinet at Oberlin College and received her PhD in theory and composition from Princeton University. Her works have been performed in New York, Boston, Houston, San Francisco, Washington DC, the Dartington Festival (UK), the "Spring in Havana 2000 Festival (Cuba), and elsewhere by the ensembles Continuum, Parnassus, Earplay, ALEA III, singers Paul Hillier, Susan Narucki, D'Anna Fortunato and others. Her compositions have won awards from the Opera Vista Chamber Opera Competition, the Orvis Foundation, Copland House, the Colorado New Music Festival, American Women Composers, and Marimolin as well as various arts councils. A founding member of Griffin Music Ensemble, a contemporary music group in Boston, she premiered many clarinet works and conducted composer-in-the-schools workshops in the Boston and Worcester public schools. After teaching at the College of the Holy Cross and Salisbury State University, she now teaches at the University of Maine. A CD of Wiemann's music, *Why Performers Wear Black*, was released on Albany Records in 2004. Songs of hers appear currently on the Capstone, innova and Americus record labels.

Feu de Joie was written for bassoonist Shannon Peet and is an homage to the bassoon and its wonderful sound. I had always wanted to write for bassoon, but since my primary interest in writing is to hear what happens when notes are combined, I didn't want to write a solo piece for just one line of music, so I wrote *Feu de Joie* for six taped bassoons and one live bassoon (the concert format). The six taped parts are equal and dependent, while the solo part is meant to be a solo with the tape as accompaniment. This is the first piece that I wrote for multiples in which I couldn't play the instrument; it is also the first piece I wrote using my computer. This is no coincidence; I was able to write very specifically for the bassoon's sound after I did a series of studies using a programmed bassoon sound that matched the real sound very closely, so I was able to hear what was going to happen without having a performer's specific knowledge. The taped bassoons combine to create a sound that exploits the unique qualities of the bassoon, creating combination and interference tones. I started with unison pitches that created the richest sound and built the piece from there. Most of the subsequent pitches and phrases that I wrote occurred naturally before I notated them later on in the piece, and these in turn created others. So, in effect, the nature of the bassoon and its natural sound determined the direction of the piece. The solo part starts off by playing dissonant tones and then picks out notes that are being heard on the tape, continuing on to play a melody that "floats" above the taped bassoons.

Mary Jane Leach is a composer/performer whose work reveals a fascination with the physicality of sound, its acoustic properties and how they interact with space. In many of her works Leach creates an other-worldly sound environment using difference, combination, and interference tones; these are tones not actually sounded by the performers, but acoustic phenomena arising from Leach's deft manipulation of intonation and timbral qualities. The result is striking music which has a powerful effect on listeners. Critics have commented on her ability to "offer a spiritual recharge without the banalities of the new mysticism" (Detroit Free Press), evoking "a visionary quest for inner peace" (Vice Versa Magazine), and "an iridescent lingering sense of suspended time." (Musicworks Magazine) Leach's music has been performed throughout the world in a variety of settings, from the concert stage to experimental music forums, and in collaboration with dance and theatre artists. Recordings of her work are on the Lovely Music, New World, XI, Wave/Eva, and Aerial compact disc labels

Like Butterflies in October, written for Sharir+Bustamante Danceworks in Austin, TX, is part of a larger work entitled D-U-O-S.

Larisa Montanaro's compositional style is as modern and daring as her choice of soprano repertoire. She works primarily with electronics and has written for the concert hall, the dance floor, and the video display. She won first prize in the prestigious International Competition of Electroacoustic Music Russolo 2002 for her solo work *INSIDE THE RIDE* and an honorable mention in the 27th International Electroacoustic Music and Sonic Art Competition at Bourges for her work with choreographer Yacov Sharir. She has studied with Russell Pinkston, Paul Steinberg, and Stephen Montague and worked in the studios at the University of Texas at Austin from 1995-2002. She is currently writing music for the Aurora Project, a collaboration of artists, dancers, and technology.

November Sycamore Leaf- In December of 2003, a friend sent me a Christmas Card with a photograph called November Sycamore Leaf by Missouri Photographer John Hess. The moment I slid the card out of the envelope sound literally exploded in my head. The bright orange leaf leapt

off the card and into my sonic imagination, and as my eyes dug into the details of the image, the music made itself heard before my very eyes. Two years later, in a small cabin high in the Rocky Mountains with no running water but a fantastic view and quietness, the concentration of the photograph bore itself out in the composition of the music, and November Sycamore Leaf came to life over a three day period. I composed a video based on the single photograph of Hess in December of 2006. The video, like the music, explores the intricate structure of the leaf, and my perception of the leaf as it unfolded on first seeing. "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately...and to see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived." (Thoreau)

Paul Rudy is a composer, writer, teacher and life-long student and lecturer. His music, performed around the world, encompasses sounds from the cactus of the desert, the kitchen, inside, outback and to the chamber and orchestral stage. A fascination with sound has led from radio programs in London and Aspen Colorado, to orchestral and chamber concert works to interactive, installation, and cinematic works, with, and without visuals. In addition to being recognized by his close friends and family, Rudy has received awards from the Fulbright and Wurlitzer Foundations, Bourges Electroacoustic Music Competition, EMS (Sweden), SEAMUS, Meet the Composer, the American Composer's Forum, SCI, National Music Teacher's Association and the Missouri Music Teacher's Association. He has done a lot of work to promote the music of living composers including curating concerts throughout South American and Europe. He lectures widely on sound in film and timbral practice in music. He teaches at the University of Missouri at Kansas City and has an avid interest in bicycling, hiking, camping, and mountaineering. In 1994 he completed the Colorado Grand Slam after climbing all 54 of Colorado's 14,000 ft peaks and still hopes some day to go above 20,000 ft.

Grab It! was originally composed in 1999 for tenor saxophone and ghetto blaster. *Grab It!* tries to explore the no-man's-land between language and music. The audio is sampled from an American documentary about juvenile delinquency called "Scared Straight," broadcasted uncensored on television in 1978. It was designed to scare cocky juvenile delinquents "straight" by showing them the reality of prison life. The audio used is the verbal assaults of those life-sentenced convicts, which form a duel between their perpetual syllables, words and sentences, and the performer. As the piece progresses, the hopeless situation of the prisoners gradually becomes clear, yet the piece is not just sad. It can be understood as a "memento vivere." Life is worth living: *Grab It!*

White Flag was composed for the rock quartet Electric Kompany during the winter of 2006-07. The work was inspired by the war in Iraq and features George Bush in a Christmas interview with Bill O'Reilly for Fox News and a number of amateur videos by US soldiers posted on YouTube. The war in Iraq is perhaps the first war that is documented so well by soldiers themselves. We can hear and see them on the battlefield. *White Flag* contains hysterical moments of victory, intense despair and fear, as well as cold-blooded killing. The madness of war.

Special thanks to Kevin Gallagher of Electric Kompany (www.electrickompany.com) for the making of the accompanying video.

Dutch avant-pop composer **JacobTV** (aka Jacob Ter Veldhuis) started as a rock musician and studied composition and electronic music at the Groningen Conservatoire. JacobTV is preoccupied with American media and world events and draws raw material from these sources. He incorporates sound bytes from political speeches, commercials, interviews, talk shows, televangelists, and what have you – a colorful mix of high and low culture. He strives to liberate new music from its isolation by employing a direct, and at times provocative, idiom that spurns "the dissonant," which in his opinion reflects a completely devalued method of music expression.