

Composer USA

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What's Life Got to Do with It? —Schönberg's Most Radical Idea

by Edward Green

What would it mean for a theory of music to be radical? To get down to the “roots” of things?—and that, after all, is the etymology of “radical.”

Ever since Rameau, we musicians talk of “roots.” Technically, only endodontists, mathematicians, hair-colorists, and Bugs Bunny scouring a field for the hidden carrot might use the word more often. But does anyone think the traditional way of speaking about harmony—which is still the most common way in our classrooms—penetrates to the bedrock? To the real source of music? To its philosophic roots?

Of course not. In fact there has been a stupefying reluctance on the part of nearly every writer on harmonic theory to relate what goes on in the notes, and among the notes, with *life*—with what goes on in a person, and between persons. And by dodging this question, we have ended up teaching our students very, very badly. They learn about harmony, and about music itself, as if it were an inanimate thing; almost as if it were a problem merely in structural engineering.

Too much, the current teaching of composition still makes this error. But it is a historic error. The “disconnect” between music as ‘abstract,’ and music as ‘expressive’—and warmly full of life—can be seen vividly in (of all people) Tchaikovsky. Whether one loves it, or is annoyed by it, no one doubts the warmth of Tchaikovsky’s music. And in his letters, the Russian composer is constantly relating art and life. But oh! How utterly cool, impersonal, abstract is the text on harmony he wrote for his classes at Moscow Conservatory.

Nor was Tchaikovsky the exception; nearly every late 19th-century harmony text is a perplexing compound of clarity and dullness. The rules, the examples, might indeed be pellucid; but—as one says in another context—the “thrill is gone.” A corpse, after all, does display perfect human proportions, but (alas) no life. These texts, supposedly dedicated to musical harmony, and instilling a love for it in students, again and again, verge on the necrotic.

A radical re-orientation—a literal “resurrection,” a “bringing back to life”—was needed. And Schönberg, was ready to call Lazarus out from his cave.

Radical has come to take on the connotation of “overthrowing the existing order.” Yes. But when the existing order is, itself, perversely distant from truth, then one has the opportunity to be radical in a double sense: revolutionary and reactionary at once. Overthrowing the false gods, and restoring Jehovah to His throne.

That, as I see it, was the ambition of Schönberg as a theorist of harmony: to seize the opportunity. To be, in the well-worn phrase, the “Conservative Revolutionary.”

Different as he was from Heinrich Schenker, another “Conservative Revolutionary,” who was in utter disagreement with him as to the aesthetic potential of atonal harmony, Schönberg nevertheless agreed with his Viennese compatriot and near-contemporary on the imperative of conceiving harmony in organic, living terms. In his 1911 *Harmonielehre*, Schönberg insisted that if a student is to gain a true grasp of the subject, he must understand:

that harmony—balance—does not mean fixity of inactive factors, but equilibrium of the most intense energies. Into life itself, where there are such energies, such struggles—that is the direction instruction should take.

The forceful “hint” to the “instructor” cannot be missed: the technical issues we deal with in musical harmony have “life” implications, and a teacher should be prepared to lead his students there. A vivid instance (there are many in the book) comes as Schönberg writes about the “social life” of the tones in a 6/4 inversion. So lively is this passage, I trust you’d never forgive me were I not to quote it at length:

In the six-four chord two tones struggle for pre-eminence, the bass tone and its fourth (the actual root). The following chord is a concession either to the bass or to the root. If the bass tone is victorious, then I goes to V. Sometimes, however, the concession does not go so far, but chooses rather a middle course. Then it can even happen that the third (*Terz*) becomes the root (*wenn Zwei sich streiten, freut sich der Dritte*—when two parties quarrel, the third rejoices), that one goes to III. And something similar takes place if the fourth (the root) does not give in. Then after I comes IV or VI. In these three cases both of the struggling chord tones in fact succumb. In III *g* is only the third, in IV and VI *c* is the fifth and the third respectively. Each has the satisfaction, however, that the rival did not win; and the chord tones seem to become very nearly as spiteful as people the moment they come into contact with the latter.



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NACUSA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It was founded by Henry Hadley in 1933 as the National Association of Composers and Conductors. It is one of the oldest organizations devoted to the promotion and performance of American music. Many of America's most distinguished composers have been among its members. NACUSA presents several chamber concerts each year that feature music by its members.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMPOSERS, USA

President's Message

Thoughts on the Anniversary Year

by Daniel Kessner

In this, the middle of NACUSA's 75th Anniversary season, I'd like to offer a few thoughts on some of my early heroes in our organization. I've been a member for about 40 of those 75 years, so it has been my pleasure to be associated with some really fine musicians and human beings.

First and foremost was John Vincent. He was my "secondary" composition teacher at UCLA (my true mentor being Henri Lazarof). We developed a deep mutual respect and friendship over his remaining years, which were unfortunately few, as he died in early 1977 at the age of 74. Soon after I joined the (then) National Association of American Composers and Conductors, John came up with the idea of re-forming the group into a truly national one, and under a new name. Up to that time, activities were focused almost entirely in New York and Los Angeles.

John initiated a series of meetings, mostly at the home of Naomi Reynolds, another hero of the organization because of her support, at which a group of about 6-8 composers and conductors brainstormed about all the issues, large and small, involved in the re-creation process: from organizational structure down to the logo that we still use on our stationery. Among others, that group included Abram Chasins, John Barnett, and if memory serves correctly even occasional appearances by Nicolas Slonimsky. I was pretty much the only youngster in the group, and quite a group it was.

I was proud to be John's "right hand man" during the years of transition, and Dolly and I frequently invited him for dinner, always for a combination of some quality time with a dear friend and some organization business. He was the one who really put us on our present track.

Though their contributions were perhaps not as extensive as John's, there were three other now-departed composers who were indispensable during the seventies: Ellis Kohs, Bob Linn, and Leroy Southers. All three were intensely interested in improving the lot of the American composer in general -- more so than in furthering their own careers. They were eloquent speakers on behalf of all of us, both at meetings and at public events. They came up with ideas that became part of NACUSA in some way, as well as contributing their music to our concerts.

Fortunately, such heroes have continued to come forth and carry on the important work of our organization. It is to these generous souls that we owe our success.

All changes to membership status, address changes, or delivery of *ComposerUSA* should be either mailed to the National Office in California or sent via the internet to the NACUSA website.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMPOSERS, USA

FROM THE EDITOR

AL BENNER

What an exciting time for NACUSA as we celebrate our 75th anniversary. There are



some thrilling activities both in our local chapters and on the national level. If you get an opportunity to participate, please do so. After all, that is what being a member of NACUSA is all about.

I am now beginning my 14th year as editor. In some ways it doesn't seem that long—and others—it's kind of long. To start I was 39, just awarded my D.M.A. in composition from L.S.U., about to become a father for the first time, and in the process of moving from Baton Rouge to Green Bay, WI. Now I'm 53, have two great boys (11 & 13), am entrenched in my teaching position at the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, living the small-town life in Natchitoches, and happily married about to celebrate my 18th wedding anniversary. There have been new NACUSA presidents, board of directors, chapter presidents, treasurers, officers, and new positions such as membership coordinator, webmaster, and even a chair of CD projects among many others. Most of my early correspondences went through Marshall Bialosky and Don Thompson—now it is Deon Price, Dan Kessner, and John Winsor. Through it all though, there has been *ComposerUSA*. I thank all the writers who have helped me write this issue and the past 39 issues. And I also thank the board of directors and the membership for their patience in the sometimes not so timely formatting of getting the bulletin out.

That said, I am grateful to the members who send me materials that I can just cut and paste into the bulletin. They have seen my formatting over the past 14 years and submit their materials in that format. The older I get, I am not as patient with info that comes all jumbled in a big paragraph, with capital letters and all other sorts of extraneous information that I have to spend an enormous amount of time trying not only to decipher properly, but also format properly. And since I am venting, please don't send me emails that direct me to go to a website and cut and paste relevant information about you or a local chapter as I see fit. Providing me with information about your activities is your responsibility. If it is that easy to cut and paste, then please do so on a blank page and email me that page. And one last thing, as sending photographs or pictures becomes easier and I find ways to use them, please see if you can send them in as little KBs as possible. I have gotten some huge picture files that are over 6000 KBs. Not a problem to put into the bulletin, but a huge problem when I backup these files and also the newsletter on only a 1.44 MB floppy disc.

Wishing you the best this Spring. My plans now are to be at the National Convention in Dallas this May. I hope to see some of you there. V



Children participating in "Song of the Warrior" concert.

World *Continued from page 12*

composer's vision to life with vitality and impressive technical proficiency. By far the most engaging solo performance that I witnessed was Anna Klett's stunning performance of "Drrrunnn" – an electroacoustic work by Faroese composer Kristian Blak. The Hong Kong Pure Strings ensemble also provided an impressive performance of Anthony Ritchie's "Oppositions for Piano Quartet".

Throughout the conference I found myself constantly fascinated by the difference between the current trends in composition in the U.S. and those that I encountered at "World Music Days." I was intrigued by the prevalence of pieces that were process oriented and/or concept driven. Since my own perceptual orientation tends to be focused on emotional rather than intellectual content, many of the pieces provided me with fascinating challenges – algorithmic organizational structures, complex pitch and rhythm manipulation, advanced extended techniques, etc. By sharp contrast, only a few pieces were deliberately expressive in any clear way.

I was also surprised by how few of the works (excepting the Asian pieces) bore any evidence of the national and cultural origins of the composer. This may be an outgrowth of the continuing influence of the Darmstadt school on composition worldwide, or it may reflect the artistic sensibilities of the selection panel. In any case, I came away from Hong Kong with a new appreciation for the divergent approaches that exist in the international composing community.

Not everything was inspiring, and I confess that there were some pieces that I did not enjoy at all. I made a note to myself that one piece might have been subtitled "How to make a world-class cellist with an expensive instrument sound terrible in five short movements." I also commented that one piece was "all concept, but no music" – revealing once again my bias toward more expressive and communicative pieces. But mingled with these, I found many works that I genuinely admired. A few of these included:

- *Hagion Pneuma* by Gondai Atsuhiko (currently based in Tokyo and Paris)
- *Tromma* by Askell Masson (Iceland)
- *Ling Long* by Xie Peng (China)
- *Magnificat* by David McMullin (USA)
- *Out With No Fear* by Lorenzo Alvaro (Australia)
- *Coreopsis in June* by Guo Long (China)

One of the performances that I will remember for many years was the "Song of the Warrior" mass participation

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Schönberg *Continued from page 1*

Cool Positivists, and even cooler Post-Modernists, might easily have a field-day sniping at such writing. Yet Schönberg was arguably the most effective teacher of harmony in the 20th century. He's still a candidate for the most successful teacher of musical composition ever—were we to judge by the quality, and diversity, of his students. His only rival in this regard, in my opinion, would be Anton Reicha, whose students included Berlioz, Liszt, Gounod, and Caesar Franck.

My point is: we should go slow—very slow—before we reject what clearly was a crucial factor in Schönberg's pedagogical success: the “life” factor.

Let us take a swift look at a major text which he sketched in the mid-1930s, *Der Musikalische Gedanke und die Logik, Technik, und Kunst seiner Darstellung*. As you know, it was translated and published with commentary by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff in 1995; and in it one encounters a kaleidoscope of “extra-musical” references—all for the purpose of clarifying what happens “technically” in the relation of sound to sound, chord to chord.

Analogies are made to cats, emperors, soldiers, the activities of revolutionary parties as they attempt to overthrow established governments, the journeys of Columbus, the work of a postman, the military expeditions of Hannibal, and people crowding themselves by a theater coatroom. Schönberg contrasts bold swimmers and those so timid that they hug the shore. (This, interestingly, *not*—as one might expect—in terms of harmonic adventurousness, but in terms of metric accentuation.) And, oh yes, there are references to the darker side of life: to cannibals, butchers, and the stupidity of the Nazi laws of “racism purity.” Meanwhile, supervising the entire panorama is God, who, in Schönberg's charming lingo, gets in as the “higher commissioner.”

The warmth of feeling we see in Schönberg, and for that matter, in early Schenker and also, though somewhat later, in Ernst Toch—(was there something in the Viennese coffee?)—challenges the dryness of nearly all current harmony texts: a dryness too often reflected in our classroom teaching. Nor are musical theorists who have endorsed the “life” implications of harmony alone in that belief. Literary figures have agreed: among them Balzac, Browning, Dryden and Wordsworth.

Washington Irving, for example, said in the first volume of his *Sketchbook* (1820): “The very difference in their characters produced an harmonious combination.” And Shakespeare, two centuries earlier, wrote in *The Merchant of Venice*:

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils

.....

Let no such man be trusted.

Nor, unfortunately, is music alone here. Any art can be used in a schismatic way—separate from life. As Eli Siegel noted in a humorous, and pointed way in a maxim included in his book *Damned Welcome*:

He who likes art and doesn't like life, doesn't know what he's aesthetic about; he who likes life and doesn't like art, doesn't know what he's living for.

The belief shared by these (and other) important literary and musical thinkers is that the technical procedures which make for musical success are intimately related to what makes for success in life—for social harmony and for harmony within oneself. Returning to the work of Eli Siegel, who is not only one of America's great poets, but also the philosopher who founded Aesthetic Realism, consider this paragraph from his essay, “Art as Life.” A “radical” paragraph, I submit; for it cuts to the chase. Art

and life explain each other, he says, because each depends on the concept of *relation*, a concept implicitly “harmonious.” Relation means finding unity amid diversity—exactly what all musical theory aims at.

Here is the paragraph, and I'll take the risk of saying I can imagine Schönberg applauding, so close is the conception to his own:

What does an artist do as he looks at objects? He finds a relation among them. This relation brings them to life. The changing of a number of objects into a composition, is the making of them one thing. And the changing of the many or general into one vivid thing, is like birth....The fact that the word *creation* is so much used in art, points to the fact that art is seen as life itself. Creation is in life, but it is the *life* part of life. Every living thing in a way is as alive as any other living thing, but it is clear that there is, also, more life in some living things than in others; indeed, that there is more life in a living thing at one time than at another. It is this kind of life that art goes after: that which is the affirmation, increase of life.

Schönberg, as teacher, distinguished himself through his passionate belief that the creativity of art should be reflected in the creativity of a classroom. There were for him, no “dry” examples, no “correct” answers that didn't spring first from a burning, intense, lively engagement with the musical problem.

And the same creativity was present as Schönberg made relations between music and life: the creativity of a good simile, a true metaphor, a startling but illuminating analogy. If some poetry is stronger than other poetry on these grounds, so, too, some music educators will bring a deeper poetic sensibility to their teaching of harmony than others. Few, if any, will be as good as Schönberg was, but if we don't try, we guarantee our failure. I have a notion Schönberg would want us to make the attempt.

And why? Because he knew the secret—the radical secret—of all successful music education. Like all the finest secrets, it is hidden in plain sight. The secret is simply this: the key to musical education is the strengthening of that faculty of mind from which music springs: the imagination. As an educator makes relations between life and art, that faculty is being employed, and is being evoked in the students.

Nor is the true pedagogic imagination a hallucinatory flight of fancy; it is grounded in hard fact, and is used with precision, freedom, and humanity. For example, consider this extended Schönbergian metaphor, taken from a notebook entry of June 12, 1934. The subject is “Musical Articulation:”

...clarity as it pertains to articulation calls for something further: a difference in the delineation. Indeed, all our members are covered with skin, which conceals the mechanism of their connections. But the manner in which the nose protrudes from the face clearly differs from the manner in which the arms protrude. And just as characteristic are relationships of size. Our arms are large than our mouth because we have to do more walking than eating.

Ah, that Schönbergian imagination! And that “Arnold-specific” humor! For some, this humor is an acquired taste. Speaking just for myself, I must say, I'm glad to have acquired it.

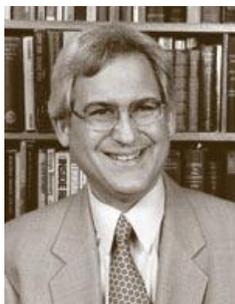
Nor, by the way, does the passage I just quoted hang in mid-air as a kind of charming “general” analogy. No; Schönberg immediately relates it to the physiognomy of a specific work—in fact, to a very specific two-bar passage: measures 25 and 26 of the opening movement of Beethoven's Op. 18, #4.

So let me close with another brilliant, funny, insightful, imaginative, and all-together-pedagogically-vivid example. It

Continued on page 8

Edward Green

Edward Green is a prizewinning composer whose music has been performed by orchestras across the United States as well as in several countries overseas, including Russia, the Czech Republic, Argentina, and England. He received first place in the International Kodály Composers Competition for his *Brass Quintet* and a Delius award for his *Genesis Variations*. In 2004, he was awarded a Music Alive! grant jointly sponsored by the American Symphony Orchestra League and Meet the Composer. Through that grant, he was composer in residence for the InterSchool



Orchestras of New York for the 2004-5 season.

Prof. Green is a graduate of Oberlin College, and is currently writing his doctoral thesis (on the late choral music of Haydn and Mozart) for New York University. Since 1984, he has been a professor at Manhattan School of

Music, teaching courses in ethnomusicology, jazz history, composition, and the humanities. He is included in *Who's Who* among America's teachers and in the international *Who's Who in Music* in both their classical and popular volumes. Prior to Manhattan School of Music, he taught at St. John's University, Pace University, Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, and the School of Visual Arts. Since 1980, he has also been on the faculty of the Aesthetic Realism Foundation, where he teaches an ongoing course in musical aesthetics.

Green has been a guest composer and lecturer at Tanglewood, the University of Southern California (Los Angeles), the University of Montreal, Baltimore's Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute, Ithaca College, Dartmouth University, and other important educational institutions. In 2003, he gave a convocation address at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music, and in 2004 he participated in the first International Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology, held at the University of Graz, Austria. His presentation, coauthored with anthropologist Arnold Perey, was entitled "Aesthetic Realism: A New Foundation for Interdisciplinary Musicology." The conference was sponsored by the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music.

His compositions include works for various chamber ensembles, chorus, and symphony orchestra, as well as much solo music for piano, guitar, and other instruments. He is also an active composer for theater and film and is staff composer for Imagery Films, whose director is the Emmy award-winning filmmaker Ken Kimmelman. Among their recent films is *What Does a Person Deserve?* It received a Silver CINDY award and was sponsored by the National Coalition for the Homeless. In 2005 Imagery Films released *Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana*, which is based on Eli Siegel's *Nation* prize-winning poem and has a score by Prof. Green. It has garnered several prestigious awards, including the "Grand Festival Award in the Arts" from the Berkeley Film and Video Festival.

MEET THE COMPOSER



LETTERS

Dear NACUSA:

"Remembering Andrew Imbrie"

At the national conference of the SCI when it took place at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa quite some years ago Andrew Imbrie was the guest composer who delivered an eloquent address at the banquet. What impressed me far more, however, was the piece that was performed at one of the concerts (I think it may have been a piano trio). What I vividly recall was that, while the music by my SCI colleagues on that program was decent enough, my attentiveness suddenly came alive as I listened to Imbrie's work. Once again I had to concede that I was in the presence of a master whose work was clearly superior to our own--or at least to *my* own. On yet another occasion at Queens College, where I taught at the time, Imbrie responded to our advertisement for a position as distinguished composer and arrived for an interview. It was to my great regret that he did not wish to move to the east coast, but my personal impression of him was as an eminently civilized gentleman, lacking the arrogance which too often characterizes composers of note. Considering the quality of his work, it is sad that his music has not received the notice that the music of so many inferior composers has received. Is it perhaps because it not only takes effort to perform it well but also to listen to it well?

--Allen Brings

Dear NACUSA:

My name is Josh Jones, and I am a music student in Kansas. I just recently learned about the [Organization], and I wanted to contact you (the administrative board) with a proposition.

I am currently working to establish a John Philip Sousa Center for the Arts. I have learned of a person who has inherited warehouses full of his (JPS's) possessions, and I feel that they should be properly curated. I'm currently working with a member of the board of the west-coast division of Kappa Kappa Psi, and have confirmed contact with Colonel John R. Bourgeois, retired director of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band. He is currently president of the John Philip Sousa Foundation.

There are many other people helping to make this happen, and I would like to invite the [Organization] to discuss with us becoming active members in this exciting process. Our vision is to go beyond recognizing John Philip Sousa; we want to create a musical crossroads right here in Kansas City where people can come to actively interact with music, hear live bands & orchestras perform, and more.

You can also contact me [at the information below]. I look forward to hearing from you.

--Josh Jones

P.O. Box 361; Lindsborg, KS 67456; 785.342.0167



PERFORMANCES

Daniel Adams: Nov. 28--*Two Antiphonal Portraits* by Hamiruge, the Louisiana State University Percussion Ensemble, conducted by Emory Blake, Baton Rouge, LA. Also on Nov. 19 by the University of South Florida Percussion Ensemble, conducted by Robert McCormick, Tampa, FL. Nov. 16--*Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble* by the Aaron Copland School of Music Percussion Ensemble, conducted by Michael Lipsey, New Music Festival, SCI and the Long Island Composers Alliance, Flushing, NY.

Adrienne Albert: Dec. 12--*Lullaby* for string orchestra and piano, by the Los Cerritos Middle School orchestra, Liz Blake, dir., Thousand Oaks, CA. Dec. 2--*Doppler Effect* for flute, cello and harp by Carisma for the Queensland Harp Society, Brisbane, Australia. Nov.—*Bassoonet Boogie* by Helen Goode-Castro, clarinet and Damian Montano, bassoon, for Chamber Music Palisades Outreach Program, Palms and Pacific Palisades, CA. Again on Nov. 11 by The Ceora Winds, Christin Webb, bassoon and Heather Millette, clarinet, Altadena, CA. Oct. 26—*Three Chinese Folk Songs*, The Newstead Trio, Tibet House in New York, NY.

Oct. 11—*Reflections* for alto saxophone and piano, by Doug Masek, soprano saxophone and Elna van der Merwe, piano, Capetown, Port Elizabeth, Worcester, and Grahamstown, South Africa. Also on October 8, and 4 as part of Doug's month long tour of the country. Aug.—*Reflections* for alto saxophone and piano, the Beverly Hills Music Festival, Jeff Kodell, alto saxophone. Back in China, Doug Masek performed *Reflections* for soprano saxophone and piano in Beijing, and Alan Durst and Corey Whitehead performed her *L.A. Tango Nuevo* for soprano saxophone and guitar in Beijing. July—*Three Chinese Folk Songs* by members of the Pennsylvania Academy of Music, Dunhuang, Qinghailu, Lanzhou and Xining, China; *Lullaby* by the Newstead Trio in several concerts, also in China; *Doppler Effect* for flute, cello and harp by Trio Callisto of Minneapolis, MN. Jul. 1—*Courage* for orchestra by the Oahu Civic Orchestra, Ron Hirai, conductor, Honolulu, HI.

Joe L. Alexander: Aug Oct. 31-Nov. 3; Nov. 7-Nov. 10--*Sigh No More* for alto, viola and piano, (text by William Shakespeare) by Toni Brown, alto; Madelyn Hollifield, viola; and Madelyne Godley, piano, for Louisiana Tech University's theatrical production of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Ruston, LA. Oct. 29--*Five Movements for Tuba (Or Something Like That); Pop Music; and Infamy...* by the composer, tuba, on Campbell University's *Contemporary Music Concert*, Buies Creek, NC. Oct. 21--*Two Duets for Tubas* by Leroy Hawthorne III and the composer; *Playtime* for tuba/euphonium ensemble by the



The following reflects performances that took place through December 2007.

Also, to avoid mistakes by the editor in processing performance information, please try to submit in the format presented here.

If you insist on not following the format here, then please DO NOT capitalize the title of your pieces, performers, or any other words that aren't supposed to be capitalized. Also, DO NOT lump everything into one long paragraph that gives numerous performances that take place over several months along with other information on commissions, awards, etc. It is very time consuming trying to rewrite this lump sum information and still convey your meaning.

Thank you.

Louisiana Tech Low Brass Ensemble; and *Partita #2* for bass trombone by Nick Wood on Louisiana Tech University's *Octubafest*, Ruston, LA.

Oct. 10--*When a Man Hath no Freedom* and *Stanzas for Music* for mezzo-soprano, oboe, and 2 bass clarinets (text by Lord Byron) by Laura Ulrich, Kristin Polk, Nathan Mumphrey and Richard Thomson; *Sammy's Suite* for 2 flutes by Doug Donley and Kristin Polk; and *Partita #1* for clarinet by Richard Thomson at the Louisiana Composers' Consortium Concert #27, Natchitoches.

Oct. 10--*When a Man Hath no Freedom* and *Stanzas for Music* for mezzo-soprano, oboe, and 2 bass clarinets by Laura Ulrich, Kristin Polk, Nathan Mumphrey and Richard Thomson; *Sammy's Suite* for flute and oboe by Doug Donley and Kristin Polk; and *Partita #1* for clarinet by Richard Thomson on the student recital hour, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA.

Oct. 3--*Two Duets for Tubas* by Leroy Hawthorne III and the composer on student recital hour, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA.

Sept. 30--*When a Man Hath no Freedom* and *Stanzas for Music* for mezzo-soprano, oboe, and 2 bass clarinets (text by Lord Byron) by Laura Ulrich, Kristin Polk, Nathan Mumphrey and Richard Thomson; *Sammy's Suite* for flute and oboe by Doug Donley and Kristin Polk; *Playtime* for tuba/euphonium ensemble by the Louisiana Tech Low Brass Ensemble; and *Two Duets for Tubas* by Leroy Hawthorne III and the composer at the Louisiana Composers' Consortium Concert #26, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA.

Al Benner: Dec. 9—Premiere of *Changes* for woodwind septet, A Concert of Classical and Modern Masterworks for Wind Instruments, Louisiana Sinfonietta, Dinos Constantinides, conducting, LSU School of Music Recital Hall, Baton Rouge, LA. Oct. 18—Premiere of *Psalms 117* (SATB/piano), Red River Chorale, Burt Allen, artistic director, Psalms concert, Congregation Gemiluth Chassodim, Alexandria, LA. Oct. 11—*From the Past* by Anthony Sawyer, clarinet, and Alyssa Labat, bassoon, LSMSA College Fair, Boardroom, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA. Premiere took place by the same performers on Oct. 10 on the Louisiana Composers Consortium Concert #27, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches. Oct. 10—Premiere of *"Grace" Variations* by Daniel Jang and Louisiana Composers Consortium Concert #27, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches. Oct. 10—*Reoccurrence* by Paul Christopher, cello, Louisiana Composers Consortium Concert #27, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA.

John G. Bilotta: Nov. 15—*I Fiori di Seta* for flute, alto flute, and string quartet by students of the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College, NY, on the SCI/LIAC Festival and Conference of New Music. Sept. 29—*Petroushka Dreams* for clarinet, cello, and piano by the Chamber Mix ensemble on the Irregular Resolutions Fall Concert, San Francisco.

Aug. 18—*Fire in Spring* for flute and oboe by Melanie S. Keller, flute, and Sarah Rathke, oboe, on the 5th Annual Festival of Contemporary Music.

Aug. 16—*Quantum Mechanic*, a short comic opera, by VocalWorks at the Opera-in-a-Month Challenge Festival, American Fork, Utah.

Aug. 4—*Shadow Tree* for alto flute and guitar by Carla Rees, flute, and David Black, guitar on the San Francisco Chamber Wind Festival 2007.

Dinos Constantinides: Dec. 16—*Four Interludes for Solo Guitar* by Ronaldo Cadeu, Baton Rouge Art Gallery, Baton Rouge, LA. Also on Dec. 12, 13, and 14 in Baton Rouge.

Sept. 23—*Cello Concerto* by the Louisiana Sinfonietta and Dennis Parker, cello, Baton Rouge, LA.

Sept. 10—*Lazy Jack and His Fiddle* by Michael Buckles (solo fiddle), McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA.

Aug. 14—*Recollections* by Theofilos Sotiriades (sax), Bräche, Germany.

Aug. 4—*Dialogues for Oboe and Double Bass* by the Vecchione-Ehdahl Duo, North Lake Arts Association, MN.

July 16—*Music for Cypress* by the Trio Olympics, Athens, Greece.

June 16—*Reverie II* by the Basso Moderno Duo.

Joel Feigin: June 7—*Lament* by Helen Callus, viola, Ensemble for Contemporary Music UCSB, Santa Barbara, CA.

Mar. 25—Premiere of Santa Barbara Youth Symphony, conductor Andrew Radford, Santa Barbara, CA.

Mar. 23—*Elegy in Memoriam Otto Luening*, Beach Cities Symphony, Barry Brisk, conductor, Torrance, CA.

Feb. 18—*Veranderungen* for violin and piano, Mark Kaplan and Yael Weiss, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

Aaron Johnson: Sept. 22—*Prelude and Dance* for guitar by Mathew Daniels at St. Louis University.

Daniel Kessner: Dec. 2—*Les Nymphéas*, for string orchestra, performed by the Holy Names University Orchestra in Oakland, Steven Hofer, conductor.

Dec. 2—excerpts from *Array*, for 4 guitars, performed by the Chapman University Guitar Ensemble, Jeff Cogan, director.

Dec. 1—*Interconcerto*, for oboe, clarinet & wind ensemble performed by Richard Kravchak, Julia Heinen, and the CSUN Wind Ensemble, Lawrence Stoffel, conductor.

Nov. 27—*Rhapsody*, for oboe/english horn, clarinet & piano, performed at Northern Illinois University by Richard Kravchak, Julia Heinen, and Shari Raynor.

Nov. 9—*Two Visions, Harmonic Space, and Chamber Concerto No. 5* performed by the Trondheim Sinfonietta, Norway, conducted by the composer.

Oct. 31—*Simple Motion, Natural Cycles, and Prière et scherzo* performed at the Music Institute of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology by Daniel and Dolly Kessner, along with music of Max Lifchitz, James Chaudoir, German Cáceres, and Liviu Marinescu.

Oct. 14 & 18—Premiere performances of *Rhapsody*, for oboe/english horn, clarinet, & piano at CSUN and the University of New Mexico by Richard Kravchak, Julia Heinen, and Shari Raynor.

Oct. 9—Double Premiere of *Les Nymphéas*, version for string orchestra and version for wind ensemble presented at the Irvine Barclay Theater, Irvine Valley College Orchestra and Wind Ensemble, Stephen Rochford, conductor.

Godwin Sadoh: Dec. 28—Premiere of *Five African Dances* by organist Mark Taylor, Dale Church, Norway.

Nov. 4, 2007—*Ijo Oba* [from *Nigerian Suite No. 2* for solo organ], by the composer, DeForrest Chapel, Talladega College, AL.

Oct. 11—*Tun Mi Gbe* [from *Five African Marches* for solo organ], by the composer, DeForest Chapel, Talladega College, AL.

Oct. 9—*Yungbayungba* for piano solo by organist Mark Taylor, Guddal Church, Norway.

Oct. 7—*Ijo Oba* [from *Nigerian Suite No. 2* for solo organ], by Carol Craig, St. John's United Methodist Church, Memphis, TN.

Sept. 30—*Yin Olodumare* [from *25 Preludes on Yoruba Church Hymns* for solo organ], by Ronda Hilton, The Catholic Church of St.

Mary the Virgin, Arlington, TX.

AWARDS

Daniel Adams received an Award from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers for his music composition activities in 2006-07.

Adrienne Albert was awarded an Artist-in-Residency Fellowship to the *Ucross Foundation* in the fall of 2007. She also received the *ACME Award*, the organization of Artists, Composers, Musicians and Educators under the umbrella of Mu Phi Epsilon Music Fraternity. Her work, *Animality* for woodwind quintet is a winner of the 2007 Aeros Quintet Competition

William P. Alexander received an ASCAP Plus Award for the 22nd consecutive year in 2007. Also, the new music building on the campus of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania is now complete and is being used by the Music Department. The building is known as the Dr. William P. Alexander Music Center, in honor of the composer's 46 years of association with the university, where he is now emeritus professor of music history and composition.

Joel Feigin: Fromm Music Foundation Commission for a concerto for piano and chamber orchestra, Yael Weiss, piano.

Aaron Johnson received his 9th consecutive ASCAP Plus Award.

Daniel and Dolly Kessner both received Fulbright Senior Specialist Grants for a two-week residency involving concerts, workshops, lectures, and master classes at the Music Institute of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway, October-November, 2007.

Dancing on the Brink of the World for orchestra by **Deon Nielsen Price** was winner in the large works category of the 2007 Mu Phi Epsilon International Composition Competition

MEMBER NEWS

Several orchestral works of **William P. Alexander** were played or will be played by The Erie Philharmonic as part of the retrospective leading up to and beyond his 80th birthday. This includes *Three Visions* after poetry by Brett Rutherford, April 7, 2005, Hugh Keelan, conductor; *From the Sacred Harp*, November 16, 2005, Hugh Keelan, conductor; *Suite No. 1 for Orchestra*, April 26, 2005, Hugh Keelan, conductor; *Todesblumen*, November 15, 2006, Peter Stafford Wilson, conductor; *Ashes and Equinox*, February 7, 2007, Peter Stafford Wilson, conductor; *Two Portraits*, April 25, 2007, Bruce Morton Wright, conductor; *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra*, Patrick Jones, saxophone, Victor Yampolsky, conductor; *quietude and repartee*, April 23, 2008, Daniel Meyer, conductor; and *Concerto for Flute and Saxophone*, November 12, 2008, Daniel Meyer, conductor.

Joel Feigin gave a lecture entitled "Variations on a Theme of Arnold Schoenberg for Piano: A contemporary American Composer's View of Schoenberg," on May 30 at the Beijing Modern Music Festival, Beijing, China.

Godwin Sadoh has been included in the following: [Who's Who in America, 2008](#); [Who's Who in the World, 2008](#); and [Who's Who in American Education, 2008](#).

PUBLICATIONS

Daniel Adams is the author of an article entitled "2007 PAS Composition Winners" published in the October 2007 issue of *Percussive Notes*, the journal of the Percussive Arts Society.

Al Benner: *Past and Future Visions* for violin and piano [CP#347], and a brass quartet arrangement of G.F. Handel's *Marche* [CP#349 by Connors Publications.

Godwin Sadoh had his book published—*The Organ Works of Fela Sowande: Cultural Perspectives* [N.E.: iUniverse Publishing, 2007]; and music published—*Five African Dances* for solo organ and *Nigerian Organ Symphony* (organ solo) by Evensong Music Publications; and *Badagry* (woodwind Quartet) and *Summer Evening at Ile-Ife* (woodwind quintet) published by Wehr's Music House, FL.

BROADCAST NEWS

Aaron Johnson: **Vexation** for cello and saxophone was broadcast on Oct. 14 and **Prelude and Dance** for guitar was broadcast on Nov. 7 on the radio show *Fresh Ink*, which airs in the New York cities of New York, Syracuse, Utica, and Watertown. Both recordings were from the New Tertian Recordings CD titled *Resonance: Chamber Works Volume I*.

COMMISSIONS

Adrienne Albert was commissioned by the Award-Winning Pacific Serenades to compose *Between the dark and daylight* for flute, violin, viola, cello and harp; The Newstead Trio commissioned her to adapt several Chinese Folk Songs for their tours of China and for performances in the United States; Chamber Music Palisades has commissioned her to compose a Quartet for flute, violin, viola, and cello which will be premiered on May 6th, 2008 at St. Matthews Parish in the Pacific Palisades, CA; and Peter Sheridan, contrabass flutist, has commissioned Albert to compose a new work for flute duo which he will perform internationally and record on a new CD of music for contrabass flute.

Continued on page 9

Schönberg *Continued from page 4*

seems an appropriate example with which to close, since this is Schönberg speaking about the concept of "Cadencing." He wrote this in his Notebook a day earlier than the passage just quoted. It is June 11, 1934:

Whenever an important event occurs (an accident, a miracle, etc.) people come running from all directions, perhaps merely to see it, but mostly to participate, to help. A similar rushing forth of participating energies (perhaps the "final chorus," which is based on an intense emotion shared by all, is symbolic of a similar feeling) also takes place at the cadence and here too, in the jostling, space gets tight, so that the individual, regardless of how important he may be, has to be satisfied with a fraction of the space usually available (like people at the end [of a performance] crowding one another at the coatroom or—it is already late—to catch the last train.) This is surely the psychology of the close.

Edward Green is a professor of composition and music history at Manhattan School of Music.

World *Continued from page 3*

concert held at Olympic Square in Hong Kong Park. This elaborate undertaking included over 800 performers, combining school children with multiple ensembles of drummers, brass players, and various Chinese plucked instruments. The performers outnumbered the audience by so many that the audience was seated on the middle of a coliseum-style arena, surrounded by tier after tier of performers on all sides. The diverse and highly sectional music for "Song of the Warrior" was composed collaboratively by Law Wing-fai, Lo Hau-man, and Li Kar-ye; and coordinated (from a huge drum) by Ronald Chin Kowk-wai. Each of the thirteen movements featured a different ensemble. Although sitting on the ground was uncomfortable, the sheer size and scope of the event was overwhelming and intensely



Nan Lian Garden

memorable.

I went to "World Music Days" with the hopes of learning more about current compositional trends and forging new relationships with composers from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. I am happy to say that I achieved both of these goals admirably, and also gained some unexpected benefits. I learned a great deal about myself as I struggled to understand and evaluate new and unfamiliar techniques. I acquired a new appreciation for the amazing range of indigenous Chinese instruments and the formidable technical requirements they place on performers. Lastly, I developed a genuine affection for Hong Kong itself – with its diversity of influences and surprising contrasts. I commend the International Society of Contemporary Music for organizing the event, and I look forward to attending future "World Music Days" festivals.

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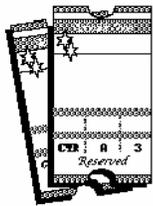
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Concert Review



by
Giselle Eastman

The Louisiana Sinfonietta presented a number of modern works for Wind Instruments, including two by guest composers Stephen Lias (b. 1966) and Al Benner (b. 1955). The concert took place at the LSU Recital Hall in Baton Rouge, LA, on December 9, 2007.

The first work was *Symphony No. 5 for Wind Instruments* by Darius Milhaud. The first movement, *Rude*, begins very abruptly and continues at a very rapid pace with harsh, accented notes. *Lent* opens with tension-building trills that lead to eerie dissonances. An intriguing part of the movement features unison sounds that morph into dark cluster chords in the upper woodwinds. The bass clarinet's color gave the movement a full, round sound. The last movement, *Violent*, didn't necessarily live up to its name – but it was very aggressive. It opens with solo clarinet and builds to a climax of long woodwind lines over marked ostinato patterns in the lower winds.

The second piece on the program was *Divertimento No. 13, K. 253* by W. A. Mozart. Mozart's piece provided a stark contrast to the more modern first piece. The *Theme and Variations* has a defined melodic theme which is playfully manipulated by the composer to create accessible and distinguishable sections that are all interrelated. The *Minuetto*, in triple meter, is a contrasting movement but still has ties to the initial theme presented in the first movement. The *Allegro Assai* was full of speed, arpeggios, melodic phrases and clear, well written counterpoint.

Before the intermission was the premiere of Stephen Lias's Sinfonietta commission, *Glide for Nine Instruments*. *Glide* was a massively entertaining and syncopated piece that went so far as to draw comparisons to 70s television music! The piece opens with a playful clarinet solo which is then taken over by the bassoon section. A main theme is passed around the various woodwind instruments while others keep a steady syncopated rhythm going on underneath the main action. One of the most interesting parts of Lias's piece was his use of very independent lines that fit together quite well – it made for some interesting contrapuntal moments!

After the intermission was Al Benner's *Changes for Wind Septet*. This piece included the woodwinds (including contrabassoon) but no horn unlike the other pieces. It begins with big, dissonant chords and then begins morphing itself into a variety of motives. The piece uses a lot of techniques of atonal music (dissonant intervals) but also has more easily noticeable melodic theme development. The piece reflects its title very well; each time the listener becomes accustomed to a motive or a section, the piece moves away from it and onto something else. The motives are not abandoned, however; they are recognizable in later parts of the piece, tying it all together.

The final piece on the program was *Petit Symphonie for Wind Ensemble* by Charles Gounod. The first movement was playful and reminiscent of Tchaikovsky and even Grainger! It

was very upbeat and charming and combined short staccato lines and long, legato lines which made for a lot of character. The *Andante Cantabile* was very waltz-like and featured the flute with flowing lines over the top of accompaniment by the rest of the instruments. Third was the *Scherzo* – a very dance-like and upbeat movement that was in duple meter. It modulated between major and minor keys which kept the movement interesting. Last was the *Finale*. This final movement opened with a broad theme played in unison by the performers. The theme was developed neatly throughout the movement and overall it was agreeable and upbeat.

The concert overall was entertaining, thought-provoking and had great combination of instrumentations and styles of composition -- from Mozart to modern!

Ms. Eastman is sophomore studying music composition under Dinos Constantinides at Louisiana State University.

Commissions *Continued from page 7*

William P. Alexander: *Symphony No. 2* by the York Symphony, York, PA on the occasion of its 75th anniversary; to be performed April 26; **Claremont** and **Episodes** by the Concert Band of Northwest Pennsylvania, John Fleming, conductor, to be performed in April (*Claremont*) and June (*Episodes*); and **A Neobaroque Suite** for alto saxophone and piano, by saxophonist Patrick Jones, to be performed by Dr. Jones at the International Saxophone Congress, June.

Dinos Constantinides is the 2008 LMTA Commissioned Composer. He is writing an opera for the LMTA conference that will take place in Shreveport, LA in October. He also received a commission by the Vecchione-Ehdahl Duo for **Dialogue for Oboe and Double Bass**. They have given 4 performances of this work last Fall. Another commission was from the Hellenic Trio (Greece) for **Hellenic Dance** for flute, viola, and guitar. They premiered the work on Feb. 13, 2008. Also from Athens, Greece, was a commission from Filodos (vocal quartet) for a work from Sophocles, from the chorus of Constantinides' opera **Antigone**. That work was premiered last April.

Aaron Johnson was commissioned by St. Xavier High School (Cincinnati, OH) to write a work for male choir with soprano solo to be premiered in Atlanta, GA in March 2008.

Godwin Sadoh was commissioned by Jonathan Orwig [proprietor, Evensong Music Inc.] to write a **Nigerian Organ Symphony** for publication by Evensong Music Inc., WI.

RECORDINGS

Adrienne Albert has works on several CDs that have been recently released. These CDs include: *Saxophone Alternative*: Doug Masek performs **Winter Solace** on his Centaur CD; *Lily's Eyes*: Carisma (Anna Stoddart flute, Janice Preece harp, Louise King cello) perform **Doppler Effect** on ABC Classics; and *Tangos y Serenatas*: Alan Durst, saxophone, and Corey Whitehead, guitar perform **L.A. Tango Nuevo** on Centaur (CRC 2901)

John G. Bilotta: **Shadow Tree** for alto flute and guitar, performed by Martha Stoddard, flute, and Patrick Francis, guitar, released in July by Capstone Records CPS-8787.

Carson Cooman: The CD **Sacred Choral Music** includes 15 of his sacred choral works performed by the Choir of Royal Holloway, University of London under the direction of Rupert Gough, Naxos 8.559361. It is available from Amazon.com or any local record dealer, most online retailers, and most digital download sites (such as the iTunes Music Store).

Dinos Constantinides has CDs from North/South Consonance for **China I** and **Rhapsody for Harp and Strings**; from Centaur for **Three Choral Works**, and from ERN Media for **Symphony #4** performed by the Keiv Philharmonic and **Antigone Fantasy** performed by the Czech Philharmonic.

Continued on page 11



As NACUSA Chapter Coordinator, I would like to take this time to officially welcome NACUSA's newest chapter – The Southern Oregon Chapter. My thanks to l'ana Cotton for initiating this chapter. She brings to Oregon a great amount of experience from her active role in the San Francisco Chapter. l'ana, president Ken Deveney, and the other members have invested a tremendous amount of work and dedication in order to realize what is already proving to be a successful and active chapter. I encourage everyone to visit their website (<http://nacusasor.org/>), which is maintained admirably by Barry Ulrich, and attend their concerts if you happen to be in the Southern Oregon area. I look forward to following the progress of the Southern Oregon Chapter as its membership grows and its sphere of influence widens. All the best for great success.

--Aaron Johnson

CHAPTER NEWS

Greetings from **SOUTHERN OREGON**, and Happy 75th Anniversary to NACUSA!

Since August, 2007, our new Southern Oregon chapter has been meeting about once a month for listening sessions and business meetings. There are 9 of us now, including three Southern Oregon University composition students, and we have enjoyed getting to know each other at these informal meetings, where we bring music to share - either our own or other new music that inspires us.

Last fall, we produced a reading/recording session for works in progress, using primarily student musicians from SOU. Our first public concert was on Feb. 23, 2008, and featured 4 of our composers in a program of wind performed by the Rogue Valley Wind Quintet. Next up, on March 15, will be a mixed ensemble performing a variety of songs and instrumental works; our special guest will be Oregon poet laureate, Lawson Inada, whose poetry is featured in two of the works being presented.

We have our own yahoo group now, and use it a lot, especially the files section where we've been posting

publicity materials, donation letters and receipt forms. One of our composers, Barry Ulrich, has started a website which you can check out at: <http://www.nacusasor.org>. We hope to record all concerts and post sound files there.

--l'ana Cotton

Recent news from **VIRGINIA**: NACUSA composers are invited to participate in New Music Day events on the Chowan University campus. New Music Day occurs each semester. Composers are encouraged to supply their own performers or electronic works. The most recent New Music Day occurred on November 14, 2007 and featured works by:

--Lynn Freeman Olson: *Inner View*, Vivian Preston, piano.

--James M. Guthrie: Premiere of *Andante quasi mesto* from *Sonatina for Piano*, Malachi Philip, piano; and the premiere of *ElectroSonata No.3*, (composed with Miller Puckette's Pure Data 0.39-2.).

--Alan Blanks: Premiere of *Pour vous*, Charles Hulin, piano.

--Debra Hinson Bridges: *Two Songs for Voice, Cello, and Piano*, Kate Blackburn, voice, Tom Blackburn, cello and Debra Hinson Bridges, piano. The work consists of two movements: *Memo to the Caretaker*, and *Sphinx*.

Plans for Fall '08 Concert: The Virginia chapter will present a concert in November of 2008 at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts in Suffolk, VA. The concert will feature music by Robert Ian Winstin, John Winsor, Peter Blauvelt, Charles Hulin, Debra Hinson Bridges and James M. Guthrie.

Election results: In a recent election, the Virginia Chapter elected James M. Guthrie as president and Robert Ian Winstin as vice president.

Chapter CD project: We are planning a Chapter CD project that will include works by Virginia members.

--James Guthrie

Report from the **LOS ANGELES** Chapter. Following three highly successful concerts in 2006, chaired by Jenni Brandon, Deon Price, and Carol Worthey, NACUSA-Los Angeles Chapter began planning for the 2008 celebration of NACUSA's 75th Anniversary. From Jeannie Pool's research in the NACUSA History Project we learned that Henry Hadley made frequent visits to Los Angeles as a conductor, composer and collaborator with local composers at the time he was organizing American composers and conductors into a national organization based in New York. Therefore, we decided to call the chapter celebration "NACUSA Celebrates 75 Years in Los Angeles." We also learned that Hadley encouraged all serious composers to work in all genres including music for the concert hall, films, and even radio jingles. For the 2007-08 and

the 2008-09 seasons we are programming works by as many chapter members as possible, both current and historical - in perhaps ten to twelve concerts. Most of the L.A. Chapter members have already submitted lists of their chamber works for consideration. We are scheduling venues throughout Los Angeles area with a variety of programs for which we are actively soliciting funding. Our resources will be chapter dues for both 2007 and 2008; contributions from individual members and corporations; and we had hoped for an Arts Commission grant, not funded for 2008, but we'll try again for 2009.

[What follows] are the concert dates and venues that have been confirmed to date.

Prelude to Series

--November 15. 7:30 pm. Home of Deon Price, Culver City String Quartet reading of NACUSA founder HENRY HADLEY's QUARTET Op. 132; John McLaughlin Williams, Nancy Roth (violins), Alma Fernandez (viola), Ruslan Biryukov (cello).

--March 22. 7:00 pm. Armstrong Theater, Torrance Civic Center, Palos Verdes Regional Orchestra, Dr. Berkeley A, Price, Conductor.

--April 30. 1:30 pm. Culver City Senior Center.

--May 2. 8:00 pm. Cal Poly Pomona.

--May 4. 3:00 pm. UCLA Flute/Guitar Duo: Dan Kessner, Peter Yates.

--July 27. 2:00 pm. Contrapuntal Hall, Brentwood Trios for Clarinet/Violin/Piano; Price Duo, Nancy Roth.

--September 20. 3:00 pm. Villa di Fontani, Lakeview Terrace Saxophone/Guitars/Cello: Doug Masek, Jonathan Marcus, Gregg Nestor, Ruslan Biryukov.

--September 24. 1:30 pm. Culver City Senior Center.

--October 19. 2:00 pm. Contrapuntal Hall, Brentwood Piano Trios & Piano Quartet, Ruslan Biryukov, cello, Mary Au, piano and others.

We began the Los Angeles celebration listening to a reading of the excellent String Quartet by NACUSA founder Henry Hadley. Opening the 2008 Series is an orchestra concert March 22, a rare opportunity to celebrate the annual orchestra concerts of NACUSA's early days.

--Deon Nielsen Price

Godwin Sadoh's book, [Intercultural Dimensions in Ayo Bankole's Music](#) [N.E.: iUniverse Publishing, 2007], is currently on Amazon Bestselling List in Ethnomusicology: www.amazon.com/gp/new-releases/books/1780; and on the Bestseller List at www.buy.com. His other book, [The Organ Works of Fela Sowande: Cultural Perspectives](#) [N.E.: iUniverse Publishing, 2007], is also on the Bestseller List at www.buy.com.

Join NACUSA

A Difficult Page Turn

by Stephen Lias

Technology pervades our lives. It has revolutionized how we entertain, cook, communicate, research, and navigate. As musicians, I have observed that we tend to be rather polar on how we incorporate technology into our discipline. We have collectively embraced email for professional networking, PDAs for keeping track of gigs, and I-Pods for playback and distribution. On the other hand, our art music is still strongly dominated by instruments and traditions that have remained largely unchanged



for hundreds of years.

I am not at all troubled by this state of affairs – every discipline has these contrasts and I think it is healthy to be connected with both the future and the past. Nor am I interested in advocating a change in any particular direction. Lately, however, I have found myself considering the potential benefits of a particular technological innovation that is, perhaps, long overdue. Let me explain.

Early in 2006, a product was introduced called the Sony Reader. This device is simple enough – a screen on which you can display electronic texts or PDF files – but it employs a fascinating new technology. Rather than a traditional LCD display one might see on a tablet PC or PDA, the Sony Reader utilizes something called E-Ink. This remarkable stuff looks like paper and displays black and white images with a resolution comparable to laser printouts. As an added bonus, it can be read in any normal light and requires no battery power to maintain an image. Since power is only needed to change the content of a page (a virtual page-turn), battery life is exceptionally long.

Always attracted to the “gee-whiz” value of a new gadget, I read up on the details about this product and spent an inappropriate amount of time daydreaming about why I really “needed” one of these things. Somewhere in the middle of the daydreaming, though, it occurred to me that this simple innovation could allow musicians to take a quantum leap forward in a way that would improve our lives without threatening our connection to the past. With a little engineering and product development, we could cheaply and easily replace our conventional printed music with a sleek, simple, and reliable page-sized display device that would do everything the printed page can do, and much more.

The end product might be the approximate size of a legal pad with a small foot pedal (wired or not). The screen would display PDF files of music with page turns triggered by the pedal. Think of the ramifications. A gigging musician could carry hundreds of tunes in it and call them up at a moments notice. A pianist could put all the music for one recital into this “virtual” music book

and dispense with the page turner (and the difficult page turns) altogether. A band director could replace all the printed music with these devices and load each semester’s repertoire into them as needed. Since these devices would work in ambient light and look a lot like paper, there wouldn’t be a problem with glare and existing recital lighting would continue to work fine. There is already a growing market of PDF file music online and it is a simple matter to make PDFs from any notation program.

I have gone so far as to make some phone calls to product development people at some of the companies dealing with this technology. So far, their interest is meager. I’m hopeful, though, that some visionary will eventually realize that ours is the perfect field in which to introduce this new product. Think of all the pianists, bands, orchestras, and recitalists whose lives would be improved by this simple innovation. Even the one intrinsic weakness in the existing technology (the fact that it is black and white) works in our favor since music is always monochromatic.

Obviously, there are already musicians doing this with their tablet computers or even their PDAs. This can work very well if power and security are not issues. The new “virtual music” would be even better, though, since a single battery could last for years, the pedal would handle the page turns (I don’t know anyone who has worked this out with their PDA yet), and the device itself would (hopefully) be a fraction of the cost of a computer or PDA. To see more about the new Sony product and the technology behind it, you can look at www.eink.com. When such a product is developed (and I hope it won’t be too long), I know our school of music would be delighted to be a beta-testing site. In the meantime, call all the entrepreneurs you know and try to drum up some interest.

Addendum

Since I wrote this article, it has come to my attention that almost the very product I was proposing is now available from Freehand Systems, Inc. It is called the Music Pad Pro and, although it doesn’t use the E-Ink display that I discussed, it has most of the other features including the foot-pedal. You can also use a pen to draw in annotations onto your scores. You can see their promotional information and watch a video of it in action at www.freehandsystems.com.

Dr. Stephen Lias is Area Coordinator for Music Theory and Composition at Stephen F. Austin State University.

Recordings *Continued from page 9*

Aaron Johnson: *PR(callmegod)IDE* for electronic medium was released on the CD /Tweak/ by New Tertian Recordings.

October 18-20, the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine recorded six works by **Deon Nielsen Price** for a CD to be released in 2008 by Cambria Master Recordings: **Yellow Jade Banquet** (clarinet and orchestra, Berkeley Price, clarinet), **Epitaphs for Fallen Heroes: Concertpiece** for piano and orchestra (the composer, piano); **America Themes, Dancing on the Brink of the World, Gateways** (for winds and percussion), and **States of Mind** (4 movements for string orchestra), John McLaughlin Williams, conductor, Berkeley Price, guest conductor.

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NACUSA National Concert 2008

by Wieslaw V. Rentowski

The National Association of Composers, USA will present its Annual National Concert on Tuesday, May 20, 2008 at 7:30 PM. The event will be held at Eisemann Center for the Performing Arts in Richardson/Dallas, Texas. The program will feature Texas premiere of the composition that won NACUSA Young Composers Competition in 2006 (*"Mechanical Fanfare"* by Dante De Silva) and several solo/chamber works written by composers from California, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oklahoma and Texas.

Performers will include Christina and Beatrice Long Piano Duo (New Jersey based Piano Duo - *First Prize Winners, 1997 Ellis Duo Piano Competition* sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs), musicians from Texas State University/San Marcos, Southern Methodist University/Dallas, University of Texas at Dallas/ Richardson and other musicians from the Dallas and Fort Worth area.

The concert is sponsored by the *National Association of Composers* with some additional funds for archival recording from the *American Music Center/NY*.

For info about tickets visit: www.eisemanncenter.com.

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World Music Days

by Stephen Lias

This past November, I had the privilege of attending the "World Music Days" festival co-sponsored by the International Society of Contemporary Music and the Asian Composers' League. The ISCM organizes "World Music Days" in a different country each year, and the 2007 event was hosted by Hong Kong as part of the new branding of that city as "Asia's World City."

Hong Kong provided a diverse and engaging forum for this festival, with concert venues located all over the city and surrounding areas. In addition to events at City Hall and the Cultural Center, performances were held at a number of universities, Hong Kong Park, and the Science Museum. The concert in Nan Lian Garden in Northern Kowloon was particularly memorable both for the serene location, and the emphasis on native instruments.

In keeping with the Asian theme, most of the concerts were prefaced by a short demonstration of indigenous folk instruments from the region including the Xiao, Guqin, Yangqin, and others. These presentations (called "Gems of Chinese Traditional Music") were performed expertly by members of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra and became a highlight of each event.

As with any festival of this type, the pieces started to blend together over time and after a few days with multiple concerts per day, it became a bit more difficult to listen to each work with a fresh ear. I say this only as an apology to the many excellent composers whose works I will inevitably fail to mention.

In some cases, single works stood out as the highlight of a concert like Martijn Padding's delightful "Eight Metal Strings" (performed by Ensemble INSOMNIO from The Netherlands) which served up engaging harmonic and rhythmic interplay and particularly interesting use of percussion. Another was "Invisible Dance for Orchestra" by South Korean composer Yi Si-hyun. With a wonderful performance by the Hong Kong Philharmonic, this piece was compelling and reminiscent of the naturalistic music of Hilary Tann. Bold timpani gestures and lush chords combined to create a sense of intensity and earnestness.

In other cases, it was the performers themselves who really captured the imagination of the audience - bringing the

Continued on page 3