

PROGRAM NOTES

***Toy With Me* (2009)**

Toy with Me was composed at the request of Phyllis Chen. The first movement is derived from a series of improvisations I created in order to perform with the interdisciplinary artist Mayumi Ishino. The two pianos are placed antiphonally in order to create spatial effects unavailable on one instrument. While the core material comes directly from the improvisations, this piece led in surprising new directions that built to a brand new melody. The second movement is a mensuration canon in four parts where the initial idea keeps recurring exactly, but at faster and faster speeds. When the first two voices meet, I cut off the development of the canon and lead to a strong conclusion. The last movement forces the two players into extremely close quarters. Fitting four hands onto an instrument that is less than three octaves provided an intriguing challenge indeed.

- David Smooke

***Studies In Narrative* (2011)**

Studies In Narrative began as an interest in composing a work that explored a new performance model between the performer and the score.

I was interested in giving the performer the opportunity to influence the composition beyond mere interpretation of notated music. The performer is given a set number of pages of music each with their own performance instructions regarding decisions to be made during live performance. These decisions include the order of movements, order of phrases, choices of pitch and register.

I would like to give special thanks to Michelle Duskey and Natsu Onoda Power for collaborating with me for this performance!

- Evan Rogers

***Broadcast Recovered from the Room Marked "1930s"* (2007)**

A certain thread of nostalgic science fiction appears from time to time in the poetry of Gregory Brooker, so when I set out to write my first piece for theremin, I asked him if he'd written any short poems on a supernatural theme. He sent several, and BROADCAST RECOVERED FROM THE ROOM MARKED "1930s" leaped out as a perfect fit, with its references to the heyday of radio (when the theremin was introduced to the world), "the blazing static ghosts make," and music, including jazz (metaphorically) and Franz Schubert's *Ave Maria* (literally).

The title is an invented "label one would find on lost files in imaginary boxes," and a subtitle reveals Greg's inspiration for the poem, "*—after finding in Hart Crane's letters / the silver thread connecting his ear / to my grandmother's voice.*"

The latter was Mildred Cook, a classically trained soprano who performed regularly on broadcasts by Cleveland-based WGAR. The station's signal reached as far as New York, where Crane listened to it, and so very likely heard Cook sing. Crane committed suicide in 1932 by jumping overboard from the steamship taking him from Mexico back to New York; this poem (and now, this music) tune in to hear the otherworldly connection between the drowned poet and the distant singer.

- Brian Robison

***Sequenza VIIIb* (1969/1993)**

Sequenza VIIIb is Berio's reworking of the oboe *Sequenza VII*. Berio composed a series of solo works for 16 different solo orchestral instruments (including voice). Originally, *Sequenza VII* was composed for oboist Heinz Hollinger.

The piece begins on a concert B in the saxophone. In addition, the performer is instructed to have a drone of the same pitch (played by another instrument or electronic device) present in the background throughout the piece. This corresponds to the function the oboe has in the orchestra; an instrument that provides a base for tuning. Also, the note is speculated to be homage to Heinz Hollinger ("b" in German nomenclature corresponds to "h").

This particular *Sequenza* can be viewed as an etude in color changes and articulation. Out of 13 lines Berio devotes one entirely to the note "B", and spends about half a minute exploring the colors of that note through enharmonic fingerings and varies articulation/dynamics. Berio gradually adds notes to the concert B and by the end of the piece, all twelve notes of the chromatic scale have been sounded.

- Jeremiah Baker

***Sketches In Realization* (2005)**

Sketches in Realization was written for Berginald Rash in 2005, as part of Bergie's push for an increased E♭ clarinet repertoire. The piece is largely aprogrammatic, with no fixed plotline or recurring theme. Each sketch, from First to Fifth, was independently conceived and constructed.

First and Fifth incorporate one melody each from my 2005–2006 piece *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, setting for narrator and orchestra texts from Harriet Jacobs' narrative of the same name. Second incorporates birdsong from the campus of North Carolina State University, in Raleigh. Third and Fourth are played *attacca*, and Third ends with a section of music improvised by the clarinetist. Fourth, which opens with a brief allusion to The Crystal Method's "Keep Hope Alive," incorporates a Lebanese folk tune and a traditional tune of the Jewish prayer *Sh'ma Yisrael*. This tune was the basis for the twelve-tone men's chorus at the end of Arnold Schönberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*, and my own twelve-tone version of the tune concludes Fourth.

- Ted Gellar-Goad

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PROGRAM

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Toy With Me (2009)

- I. "Hatching"
- II. "Rule Book"
- III. "Snug as bugs in a rug"

David Smooke

Justin Sergi, toy piano | Mika Emily Sasaki, toy piano

Studies In Narrative (2011) *

Evan Rogers

Michelle Duskey, oboe | Natsu Onoda Power, video

Broadcast Recovered from the Room Marked "1930s"

(2007) * Brian Robison

Jessica Abel, soprano | Georgi Videnov, vibraphone | Brian Robison, theremin

Sequenza VIIb (1969/1993)

Luciano Berio

Jeremiah Baker, soprano saxophone

Sketches In Realization (2005) *

Ted Gellar-Goad

- First
- Second
- Third-Fourth
- Fifth

Berginald Rash, clarinet | Martiros Shakhzadyan, violin | Joe Canner, violin
Sarah Lowenstein, viola | Dorotea Racz, violoncello

*World premiere

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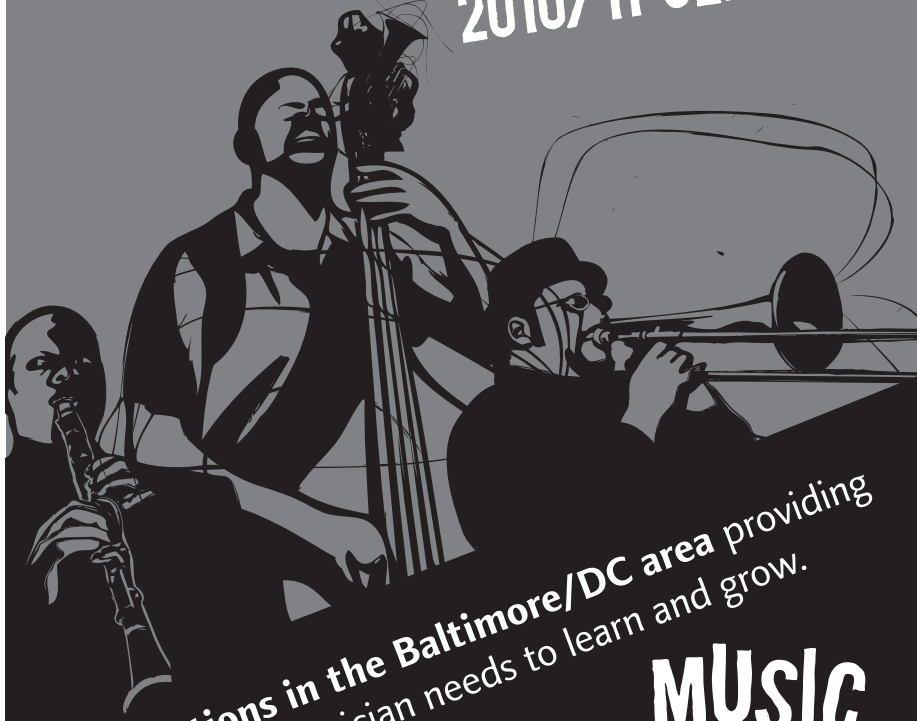
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