

IDIOMS, Parts I & II

IDIOMS is a piece of experimental musical theater combining experimental Western music and traditional Vietnamese music, created by composer Richard Karpen in collaboration with musicians of the Six Tones (Vietnamese musicians Nguyen Thanh Thuy and Ho Hoai Anh and Swedish guitarist Stefan Östersjö). The full theatrical version of *IDIOMS* includes actors from Vietnam, Sweden, and the US along with the musicians of the Six Tones in an adaptation of three classic stories of impossible love across cultures and social barriers: Marguerite Duras' *The Lover*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and the Vietnamese tale of My Chau and Trong Thuy.

Part I

Music-only workshop version performed by
musicians of the Six Tones

INTERMISSION

Part II

Garth Knox, Cuong Vu, Richard Karpen and Joshua Parmenter join the musicians of the Six Tones to perform a new collaborative, improvisational work composed for viola d'amore, dan trahn, dan bau, trumpet, guitars and live electronics.

Special thanks to Mike McCrea and his crew of students from DXARTS for providing the sound system and technical coordination for this concert.

Nguyen Thanh Thuy, dan tranh

Nguyen Thanh Thuy studied at the Hanoi National Conservatory of Music where she received her diploma in 1998, followed by a Master of Arts at the Institute of Vietnamese Folklore in 2002. Since 2000 she has held a teaching position at the Hanoi National Conservatory of Music. She has performed at the Roskildefestivalen in Denmark, Guzhang Melody in Indonesia, in Singapore, Ryssland, Kina and at numerous festivals in Vietnam. She has received many distinctions: in 1992 First Prize in the Contest of Traditional Instrument Performance on Television and Radio, Vietnam, and in 1998 First Prize and the Best Traditional Music Performer Prize in the National Competition of Zither Talents, Vietnam. Thuy has recorded several CDs as soloist with orchestra: *Nhung danh cam dan toc tre* (Young musician Talents)–1998, *Giai dieu bon mua* (Four Seasons' Melodies)–1998, *Loi ru que huong* (Lullaby of the Native Land)–2001 and a solo CD: *Doc tau dan tranh Nguyen Thanh Thuy Vol. 1* (Solo dan tranh Nguyen Thanh Thuy Vol. 1)–2005.

Ho Hoai Anh, dan bau

Ho Hoai Anh graduated from the University of Traditional Music at the Vietnam National Academy of Music in 2003. In 2009 he was voted Musician of the Year by the Vietnamese Press community. He has performed in various countries around the world, and with orchestras in Europe, Japan, and America. In 2010, he was voted 'Best Musician' by FM audiences.

Stefan Östersjö: guitars/banjo

Stefan Östersjö is one of the most prominent soloists within new music in Sweden. Since his debut CD (Swedish Grammy in 1997) he has recorded extensively and toured Europe, the US and Asia. He writes articles on contemporary music and is frequently invited to give lectures and master classes at universities, festivals and academic conferences. His special fields of interest are the interaction with electronics, and experimental work with different kinds of stringed instruments other than the classical guitar. His great interest in chamber music has resulted in the founding of flute, viola and guitar-trio HOT 3 and collaboration with most chamber ensembles and important soloists in Scandinavia such as Jonny Axelsson, Geir Draugsvoll, KammarensembleN, Ensemble Gagego and Ensemble Ars Nova. He is continuously working with composers both in Sweden and abroad on the task of extending the repertory of solo works and chamber music with guitar. As a soloist he has cooperated with conductors such as Lothar Zagrosek, Peter Eötvös, Pierre André Valade, Mario Venzago, Franck Ollu and Tuomas Ollila.

He has recorded extensively for the Swedish National Radio and also for Swedish TV as well as in many other countries.

Östersjö studied with Gunnar Spjuth and Professor Per-Olof Johnsson at the Malmö Academy of Music (1987-1992) and also with Peder Riis and Magnus Andersson in Stockholm and Darmstadt. He continued his studies with a PhD project within the field of artistic research, carried out in 2002-2008. His thesis SHUT UP 'N' PLAY! Negotiating the Musical Work is published by Lund University. He is at present engaged in artistic research on improvisation in different cultural contexts at the Malmö Academy of Music.

In 1995 he made his CD debut as soloist on Ensemble Ars Nova's second CD (nominated to a Swedish "Grammy -96" for best classical album). His first solo CD, with works by E. Carter, J. Dillon, F. Donatoni and T. Murail, received a Swedish "Grammy Award" in the category of "Best Classical Album" in 1998.

In 1999 he recorded Kent Olofsson's "Il Liuto d'Orfeo," a recording released by GMEB in Bourges and by dB Productions (Sweden). His second solo CD, *Impossible Guitar Parts*, with works by Swedish composers, was released in spring 2001 on dB Productions, Sweden - Portrait CD with the music of "Fredrik Ed", soloist in 'Leash', dB Productions, Malmö. He recorded the lute works of J. S. Bach on the 11-stringed alto guitar, released on dB Productions (Sweden) in 2003.

In 2003 *Trio con Forza*, a constellation of Swedish works for flute, viola and guitar, with HOT 3 was released on Phono Suecia. His fourth solo CD on dB Productions, *Play Time* with works for guitar and electronics, was released in 2004. In 2005 *Rhizome*, a portrait CD with works for guitar and chamber ensemble by Swedish composer Christer Lindwall was released on Phono Suecia (Sweden). Portrait CD with the music of Johannes Johansson, recordings with HOT 3 and Ensemble Ars Nova), dB Productions, Malmö. His recording of Kent Olofsson's Guitar Concerto "Corde" with the Gothenburg Symphony and Mario Venzago was released on Phono Suecia in 2008. He has also recorded the complete guitar works by Danish composer Per Nørgård, released on Caprice records in autumn 2008.

Garth Knox, viola d'amore

Garth Knox was born in Ireland and grew up in Scotland. Being the youngest of four children who all played string instruments, he was encouraged to take up the viola, and he quickly decided to make this his career. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London with Fredrick Riddle, where he won several prizes for viola and for chamber

music. Thereafter he played with most of the leading groups in London in a mixture of all repertoires, from baroque to contemporary music.

In 1983 he was invited by Pierre Boulez to become a member of the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris, where he had the chance to do much solo playing (including concertos directed by Pierre Boulez) and chamber music, touring widely and playing in international festivals.

In 1990 Garth Knox joined the Arditti String Quartet, playing in all the major concert halls of the world, working closely with and giving first performances of pieces by most of today's leading composers including Ligeti, Kurtag, Berio, Xenakis, Lachenmann, Cage, Feldman and Stockhausen (the famous «Helicopter Quartet»). Since leaving the quartet in 1998, Garth Knox has given premieres by Henze (the Viola Sonata is dedicated to him), Ligeti, Schnittke, Ferneyhough, James Dillon, George Benjamin and many others. He also collaborates regularly in theatre and dance projects and has written and performed shows for children and young audiences.

Improvisation is also an important part of his musical activity, and he has performed with George Lewis, Steve Lacy, Joel Léandre, Dominique Pifarély, Bruno Chevillon, Benat Achiary, Scanner and many others. He appears on the Frode Haltli CD *Passing Images*. In the past decade he has begun to write his own music, and is much in demand for theatre, dance and film scores as well as concert pieces and instrumental works.

Garth Knox has recently begun to explore the possibilities of the viola d'amore in new music, with and without electronics, and is in the process of creating a new repertoire for this instrument. His CD *D'Amore* (EMI New Series 1925) features old and new music for the viola d'amore.

Garth Knox now lives in Paris playing recitals, concertos and chamber music concerts all over Europe, the USA and Japan. His solo CD with works from Ligeti, Dusapin, Berio, Kurtág and others (MO 782082) won the coveted Deutsche Schallplatten Preis in Germany.

Cuong Vu, trumpet

Cuong Vu is widely recognized by jazz critics as a leader of a generation of innovative musicians. A truly unique musical voice, Cuong has lent his trumpet playing talents to a wide range of artists including Pat Metheny, Laurie Anderson, David Bowie, Dave Douglas, Myra Melford, Cibo Matto, and Mitchell Froom.

As a youngster, Cuong's intense dedication and love for music led him to a full scholarship at the New England Conservatory of Music where he received his Bachelor of Music in Jazz studies with a distinction in performance. Transitioning from his studies in Boston, he moved

to New York in 1994 and began his career actively leading various groups while touring extensively throughout the world. As a leader, Cuong has released five recordings, each making critics' lists of the 10 best recordings of their respective years. Each record displays how he has carved out a distinctive sonic territory on the trumpet, blurring all stylistic borders while developing his own compositional aesthetic.

A recipient of numerous awards and honors, Cuong was awarded the Colbert Award for Excellence: The Downtown Arts Project Emerging Artist Award. As an assistant professor in jazz studies, he was recently awarded the University of Washington's prestigious Distinguished Teacher Award and is a Donald E. Petersen Endowed Fellow. In 2002 and 2006, Cuong was a recipient of the Grammy for Best Contemporary Jazz Album as a member of the Pat Metheny Group. He's been recognized as one of the top 50 young Jazz Artists in an article called "The New Masters" from the British magazine, "Classic CD" and in 2006 was named the Best International Jazz Artist by the Italian Jazz Critics' Society. Amazon listed Vu's "Come Play With Me" on their "The 100 Greatest Jazz Albums of All Time".

Cuong is a "Yamaha Performing Artist", playing the Yamaha Custom YTR8310Z trumpet.

Richard Karpen, *composer*

Richard Karpen (b. 1957) is one of the leading composers and researchers of electroacoustic music internationally. He is known not only for his pioneering compositions for live and electronic media, but also for developing computer applications for composition, live/interactive performance, and sound design.

Karpen is currently Director of the School of Music at the University of Washington after previously serving at the UW as Founding Director of the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS) and Divisional Dean for Research in the College of Arts and Sciences. He is also a Professor of Music Composition. He has been the recipient of many awards, grants and prizes including those from the National Endowment for the Arts, the ASCAP Foundation, the Bourges Contest in France, and the Luigi Russolo Foundation in Italy. Fellowships and grants for work outside of the U.S. include a Fulbright to Italy, a residency at IRCAM in France, and a Leverhulme Visiting Fellowship to the United Kingdom. He received his doctorate in composition from Stanford University, where he also worked at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA). Karpen is a native of New York, where he studied composition with Charles Dodge and Gheorghe Costinescu.

Karpen's works are widely performed in the U.S. and internationally. While he is primarily known for his work in electronic media, Karpen has also composed symphonic and chamber works for a wide variety of ensembles. Furthermore, he has composed works for many leading international soloists such as soprano Judith Bettina, violist Garth Knox, trombonist Stuart Dempster, flutists Laura Chislett and Jos Zwaanenberg, guitarist, Stefan Östersjö, and oboist Alex Klein. Along with numerous concert and radio performances, his works have been set to dance by groups such as the Royal Danish Ballet and the Guandong Dance Company of China. Karpen's compositions have been recorded on a variety of labels including Wergo, Centaur, Neuma, Le Chant du Monde, and DIFFUSION i MeDIA, and Capstone.

Joshua Parmenter, *programmer/technical director*

Joshua Parmenter is currently a research artist in Computer Music and Composition at the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS) at the University of Washington, Seattle. He completed his D.M.A. in Composition at the University of Washington in 2005, where he studied with Professor Richard Karpen. He received his Master of Music in Composition in 2002 from the University of Washington. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied with Edwin Dugger and Jorge Liderman. He is currently a Research Artist at the University of Washington at the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media.

Parmenter's music has been performed throughout the United States and Europe. He specializes in both acoustic and electro-acoustic music, especially music that combines performers with real-time electronics. An important part of his research has been in the development of real-time synthesis software as part of the SuperCollider open source project. He also uses the CSound and Common Music synthesis programs. Currently, his research is focused on extending the real-time analysis and performance tools in the SuperCollider programming language, as well as a suite of Ambisonic Unit Generators for sound spatialization.

Parmenter's piece Organon Sostenuto for flute, bassoon, cello, double bass and live electronics was awarded the prize for outstanding composition from the Americas at ICMC 2007 in Copenhagen, Denmark. In 2008, he completed his "Musical Changes", a set of four pieces that explore crescendo, decrescendo, accelerando and ritardando. The first piece, Cadence (III. Decrescendo), received its premiere in November 2005, and Concerto for Bass and Computer-realized Sound (II. Accelerando) was commissioned and performed in March, 2006 by bassist Kristjan Sigurleifsson.

THE CONTEMPORARY GROUP

presents

IDIOMS - Parts I & II

with

Richard Karpen, *composer/artistic director*

Nguyen Thanh Thuy, *dan tranh*

Ho Hoai Anh, *dan bau*

Stefan Östersjö, *guitars/banjo/ty ba*

Garth Knox, *viola d'amore*

Cuong Vu, *trumpet*

Joshua Parmenter, *technical director*

February 14, 2011

7:30 PM

Meany Theater