

University of Washington  
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

C67

1994

11-21

*presents*

# CONTEMPORARY GROUP

Stuart Dempster  
*and*  
William O. Smith,  
*Co-directors*

*performing works by*

Ben Johnston

Bob Snyder

Reza Vali

William O. Smith

Diane Thome

8:00 PM  
November 21, 1994  
Meany Theater



School  
of  
Music

University

of

Washington

DATE  
12.468

PROGRAM

CASS #  
12.469

DAF  
ID2 ONE MAN for Trombonist and Percussion... (5 1/2') ..... Ben Johnston  
(1967 & 1972) (b. 1926)

*Cross*  
*Keeping Still*  
*Arousing*

Stuart Dempster

ID3 THE MOTION OF FRAGRANCES (1991)... (45') ..... Bob Snyder  
for computer generated sounds (b. 1946)

ID4 FOLK SONGS (SET NO. 9) for Flute and Violoncello (1991) ..... Reza Vali  
(b. 1952)

*Largo*  
*Molto allegro*  
*Andante*  
*Molto vivace*  
*Adagio*  
*Allegro Scherzando*  
*Lullaby: Adagio*  
*Molto allegro*

(22')

Sabra Weber, flutes; Loren Dempster, 'cello

INTERMISSION

CASS SIDE A  
SIDE B

ID6 INCANTATION for Solo Clarinet (1994)... (8') ..... William O. Smith  
(b. 1926)

William O. Smith

ID7 MASKS OF ETERNITY for Solo Tape (1994)... (45') ..... Diane Thome  
in four movements (b. 1942)

Tape playback by Elizabeth Hoffman  
Technical Assistance by Richard Karpen, Gary Louie,  
and Meany Hall staff

William O. Smith was born in Sacramento, California, in 1926. He studied at The Juilliard School, Mills College, the Paris Conservatory, and the University of California. His principal composition teachers were Darius Milhaud and Roger Sessions. He has received many awards and honors including the Prix de Paris, the Prix de Rome, two Guggenheim fellowships and grants from the National Endowment of the Arts and the American Academy of Art and Letters. His music has been published by Universal, Oxford University Press, Shall-U-Mo, Edi-Pan, MIQ Music and Ravenna Editions. It has been recorded on Columbia, Fantasy, Edi-Pan, New World, Contemporary, CRI and Crystal Records. A pioneer in the development of new clarinet sonorities, he is also a jazz performer frequently appearing with the Dave Brubeck Quartet.

Composer of a wide variety of works which span solo, chamber, choral, orchestral and electronic media, Diane Thome is the first woman to write composer-synthesized music. Her compositions have been presented in Europe, China, Australia, Israel, Canada, and throughout the United States. She has been the guest of the Ecole Nationale Claude Debussy and featured on French Radio, composer-in-residence at the University of Sussex and the Bennington Chamber Music Conference and Composers Forum of the East, and an invited composer at International Computer Music Festivals, and many others. Her collaborative works include *Night Passage*, an environmental theatre piece presented in the pavilion of the Moore College of Arts in Philadelphia and *Angels* for virtual reality artwork shown at the Biennale des Arts Electroniques in Paris. Her music has been recorded on the CRI, Crystal Records, Opus One, Tulstar, Capstone and Centaur labels.

The first woman to receive a Ph.D. in Music from Princeton, she also holds an M.F.A. in composition, an M.A. in Theory and Composition from the University of Pennsylvania, and two undergraduate degrees with distinction in piano and composition from Eastman School of Music. Among her teachers are Dorothy Taubman in piano, Robert Strassburg, Roy Harris, Darius Milhaud, A. U. Boscovich, and Milton Babbitt in composition. In recent years she has served as composer panelist for the Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Illinois State Arts Councils and as co-chair for the NEA Composer Fellowship programs. A member of American Composers Alliance and Broadcast Music, Inc., Thome is Professor and Chair of the Theory and Composition Division at the School of Music of the University of Washington.

Ben Johnston taught composition at the University of Illinois from 1951 to 1983. Among his widely performed works are *Knocking Piece* for piano interior and two percussionists, *String Quartet No. 2*, and *Duo For Flute and Contrabass*.

Commissioned by Stuart Dempster, ONE MAN for Trombonist and Percussion has three movements: *Cross*, *Keeping Still*, and *Arousing*. Almost all the actions of the performer, playing in three different stage locations, are indicated in the score, including not only his manipulation of the trombone and various percussion instruments, but also the manner of preparation before playing and stage movements during and between musical movements.

The pitch structure of this work reflects Johnston's interest in just intonation. The intervallic plan uses extensively and systematically the seventh partial of the overtone series.

*Ben Johnston*

[Translated by John E. Woods from Patrick Suskind's 'Das Parfum,' 1985.]

"He would often just stand there leaning against a wall, or crouching in a dark corner, his eyes closed, his mouth half open and nostrils flaring wide, quiet as a feeding pike in a great, dark, slowly moving current...

"When he had smelled his fill of the thick gruel of the streets, he would go to airier terrain, where the odors were thinner, mixing with the wind as they unfurled, much as perfume does, to the market of Les Halles, where the odors of the day lived on into the evening, invisibly but ever so distinctly, as if the vendors still swarmed among the crowd, as if the baskets still stood there, stuffed full of vegetables and eggs, or the casks full of wine and vinegar, the sacks with their spices and potatoes and flour, the crates of nails and screws, the meat tables, the tables full of cloth and dishes and shoe soles...and all the hundreds of other things sold there during the day...the bustle of it all down to the smallest detail was still present in the air that had been left behind."

*Bob Snyder*

Bob Snyder teaches electronic 'music' and composition at the Chicago Art Institute.

FOLK SONGS (Set No. 9) is the ninth set of an ongoing cycle of Persian folk songs which I have been writing since 1978. The piece consists of eight songs, some of which are based on authentic Persian folk melodies, and some composed in the style of a folk song (imaginary folk songs.) The piece was written for and dedicated to my friends Marielena Arizpe and Alvaro Bitran in celebration of the birth of their son, Daniel Bitran.

*Reza Vali*

Reza Vali was born in Ghazvin, Iran. He began his music studies at the Conservatory of Music in Tehran. In 1972, he went to Austria and studied music education and composition at the Academy of Music in Vienna. After graduating from the Academy of Music, he moved to the United States and continued his studies at the University of Pittsburgh, receiving his Ph.D. in music theory and composition in 1985. Mr. Vali is currently director of the Computer-Electronic Music Studio at Carnegie Mellon University. He has received numerous honors and commissions, including the honor prize of the Austrian Ministry of Arts and Sciences, two Andrew W. Mellon Fellowships, commissions from the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Kronos Quartet, and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, as well as grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education. In December 1991, he was selected by the

Pittsburgh Cultural Trust as the Outstanding Emerging Artist for which he received the Creative Achievement Award. Vali's compositions, which have been performed in the United States, Europe, South America and Australia, have received critical acclaim. His first string quartet, *Persian Folklore*, commissioned by the Kronos Quartet, was hailed by the Los Angeles Times as "urgent, cogent and tautly dramatic."

For INCANTATION, I wanted to write a piece that would very slowly unfold a musical line. The line itself emphasizes non-traditional clarinet sonorities. I also wanted to incorporate physical gestures and words into the performance. The pitches to be played, the fingerings to be used, and the poses to be achieved, are projected on a screen, allowing the performer freedom of movement in and out of the projected images.

The work was written in celebration of the Centennial of the American Academy in Rome. It was premiered at the American University in Rome in June of 1994 and this evening receives its American premiere.

*William O. Smith*

While my music is often inspired by poetry or poetic images, the initial impetus for this work was visual. The striking and powerful masks displayed in the Museum of Northwest Indian Art in Juneau, Alaska, made an unforgettable impression on me when I saw them in late summer, 1993. It seemed that behind the forms and frozen expressions of these remarkable artifacts lay worlds of human experience, association and meaning that could still resonate in the imagination of the viewer. The second impetus arose as a result of my collaborative discussions with choreographer and chair of the University of Washington Dance Department, Hannah Wiley, to compose a work which could be projected kinetically and choreographically as a set of mythic images which are progressively unveiled and dynamically articulated. The final influence on the piece was Sri Aurobindo's elucidation of the four aspects or personalities of the Divine Mother known as Mahasaraswati, Maheshwari, Mahakali, and Mahalakshmi. It is said that the archetypal presences which these goddesses symbolize within all human beings, although disguised, can be evoked and experienced as living and transformative energies.

MASKS OF ETERNITY was conceived as a concert work in four sections or a dance work in a series of four tableaux. Equipment used in the creation of the tape included a Kurzweil 2000 digital synthesizer and Cakewalk for Windows sequencing software. The sections were digitally mixed using the MTU Microsound Digital/Audio System. I wish to thank Robert Austin who was my collaborator in the production of the tape.

MASKS OF ETERNITY was commissioned by the Washington State Chapter of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) as part of its 1994 Composer of the Year Award. It is scheduled to be released on a Centaur label CD in early 1995.

*Diane Thome*