There are less than 100 Heckelphones extant in the world, hence there is no "school" of Heckelphone playing, and each player is self-taught.

[Notes by Arthur Grossman]

WILLIAM O. SMITH's SUDANA was written in January of 1985. The single movement work is for solo oboe, with an accompanying pair of pedal tones, D and E, to be hummed by the audience members! (A similar indication is made in Berio's Sequenza for Oboe in which a B is to be sounded throughout by a source of the performers choosing—a tuner is often used). By designating the audience members as the source of the pedal tones, Smith invites them to be involved in the music on a much more intimate level, while also setting up a degree of tension between the hummers singing a whole step apart. Smith also indicates that the D and E may be played by other instruments to augment the audiences humming, which allows for a great deal of creative license on the part of the performer(s). The solo oboe line begins by expressively reiterating the tones D and E, and goes on to explore the various colors and registers of the instrument with large leaps between registers, and quick shifts from harsh to dolce tones, before returning quietly to the D and finally the E to finish.

[Notes by Rebecca Henderson]

ERIC EWAZEN, born in 1954 in Cleveland, Ohio, studied under Samuel Adler, Milton Babbitt, Warren Benson, Gunther Schuller and Joseph Schwantner at The Eastman School of Music (BM 1976), Tanglewood and The Juilliard School (MM 1978, DMA 1980), where he has been a member of the faculty since 1980. In May 1997, he was Composer in Residence at the International Trombone Association Convention held at the University of Illinois. A former vice president of the League ISCM, he is currently the Composer in Residence with the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, and lecturer for the New York Philharmonic's, Musical Encounters Series.

[Notes by Don Immel]

The music of GÜNTER RAPHAEL is generally divided into three periods: A late Romantic style, a second, transitional time when his compositions explored modality and diatonicism and reached back to the music of Bach and Schutz for inspiration, and a third period in which he expanded his style to include some 12-tone techniques. The SONATA FOR OBOE AND PIANO, Op. 32, written in 1933, was one of the last compositions from the first period. Just one year later his music was banned by the Nazi regime, he resigned his teaching position in Leipzig, and his second compositional period began. His works from the early period (pre-1934) have been compared to those of Brahms and Reger, for their large scale structure, dramatic impact, and extensive use of chromaticism. Yet while most Romantic composers turned their attention toward string and piano instruments, with respect to chamber music, Raphael wrote for a wider variety of ensembles. Thus, this work is one of the few completely Romantic chamber works written for the oboe.

[Notes by Rebecca Henderson]
SONATA FOR OBOE AND PIANO, OP. 32 (2 3'0 2....) GÜNTER RAPHAEL
Moderato
Allegro molto
Andante con moto
Grazioso e comodo

Rebecca Henderson, oboe + Craig Sheppard, piano

RODOLPHE KREUTZER, born November 16, 1766 at Versailles, was greatly respected in France both as a performer and teacher on the violin, and as a composer. In addition to his still renowned "Kreutzer Studies" and numerous chamber works, he wrote some 39 operas and ballets. As in all of his chamber works, the TRIO IN F MAJOR FOR OBOE, VIOLA, AND BASSOON was written in the concerto style—all instruments taking a turn at playing the melodic lead while the others accompany. Written for Francois Joseph Garnier, first oboist of the Paris opera house, this sparkling and energetic work is highly unusual for its combination of instruments.

[Notes by Rebecca Henderson]

RAY LUKE has earned an international reputation with more than 70 works including symphonies, operas and a ballet. His "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra" won the first prize in the Queen Elizabeth of Belgium International Composition Competition in 1969 and his opera "Medea" won first prize in the Rockefeller Foundation/New England Conservatory Competition in 1979. He conducted the Oklahoma Symphony Orchestra for twelve years, during which he conducted some 400 concerts. He was also conductor of the Oklahoma City University Concert Band and Orchestra for twenty-five years. He has also been professor of composition and composer in residence at Oklahoma City University. CONTRASTS was written for Elizabeth Johnson, who was Arthur Grossman's first bassoon teacher and was premiered by her in Seattle in 1994.

[Notes by Arthur Grossman]

HINDEMITH set out to write a solo work for each instrument of the orchestra. Among the more unusual of these pieces which resulted from this plan is the TRIO FOR VIOLA, HECKELPHONE AND PIANO OP. 47. The Heckelphone itself is an oddity. Wagner went to the famous Heckel bassoon factory and asked if they could make an instrument in the range of the bass oboe, but which could be heard in the orchestra (the bass oboe is notably weak) and which would have some of the characteristics of the Alphorn. By the time that Wilhelm Heckel had made the first instrument, in 1904, Wagner was long dead. However, Richard Strauss heard the instrument in the factory and wrote extensively for it in his operas and symphonic scores. The TRIO is one of the most virtuosic of all of Hindemith's solo and chamber music works, being equally difficult for all three players.