

2-10-2005

Concert: Ithaca College Percussion Ensembles

Ithaca College Percussion Ensembles

Conrad Alexander

Gordon Stout

Leigh Howard Stevens

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA COLLEGE
PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES

Conrad Alexander, Gordon Stout, directors
Leigh Howard Stevens, marimba soloist

Ford Hall
Thursday, February 10, 2005
8:15 p.m.

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Sacrificial Rite

David Gillingham

Side by Side

Rolando Morales-Matos

INTERMISSION

The Invisible Proverb (2001/02)

Russell Hartenberger
(b.1944)

1. *Okarche*
2. *Drumtalker*

Shadow Chasers (1994)

Michael Burritt

Leigh Howard Stevens, marimba

Leigh Howard Stevens

Hailed by Time magazine as “the world's greatest classical marimbist”, Leigh Howard Stevens' repertoire ranges from Renaissance music and the Preludes and Fugues of J. S. Bach, to original marimba works written by contemporary composers expressly for him. Much of this unaccompanied literature was considered technically and musically impossible by one player until the development of Mr. Stevens' new system of four-mallet technique. Percussionists and marimbists worldwide have adopted his revolutionary approach and his book on the subject of four-mallet marimba technique, Method of Movement, has been translated into six languages.

It is difficult to find a single aspect of marimba technique, repertoire or design that has not been profoundly changed by the work of Leigh Howard Stevens. From “Stevens Grip” to the types of motions used to play the instrument; from the length and material of the mallet handles to the wrapping and stitching of the heads; from the first height-adjustable all wooden marimba frame in the 1980's to the first fully-tunable resonators in the 1990's; from one-handed rolls and baroque ornaments to the use of contrasting roll types; from the early polyphonic Helble Preludes to the works of John Serry, David Maslanka and Joseph Schwanter to his own original compositions and transcriptions.

Considered “revolutionary” at the time, many of these concepts and developments are now used routinely by players and teachers around the world, and in fact, have become synonymous with contemporary marimba playing. It is no exaggeration to say that Leigh Howard Stevens has not just been at the cutting edge of the development of the marimba in the last 30 years – he has been the cutting edge.

This fresh approach to music making on the marimba has greatly expanded the instrument's compositional possibilities, stimulated composer enthusiasm for the marimba's use in solo and chamber music and ultimately led to a series of more than thirty world premiere performances by Mr. Stevens. The first performance of Raymond Helble's Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra by Leigh Howard Stevens and the Denver Symphony in 1980 was a milestone in the development of marimba literature. His digitally recorded all-Bach album has been greeted with rave reviews for its artistry by magazines as diverse as *Stereophile* and *Billboard*.

Devoted marimba lovers have sprung up all over the world—both players and general public—converted by Leigh Howard Stevens' solo recitals, hundreds of college campus appearances, concertos with symphony orchestra, European concert tours, masterclasses and radio and television appearances both here and abroad. He has been featured in *Time Magazine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and appeared on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, and Voice of America's internationally broadcast, *New York, New York*. His celebrated musicianship, imaginative programming and exciting performances have inspired critical acclaim and standing ovations in forty-eight of the United States and 18 other countries. Mr. Stevens introduced the marimba to The People's Republic of China in a televised performance that reportedly reached an audience of 800 million viewers.

In addition to performing exclusively on an extended-range Malletech Marimba of his own design, he serves as a consultant and conducts educational masterclasses for Malletech. Mr. Stevens served as Professor of Marimba at the Royal Academy of Music, London from 1997-2004. He has been awarded four U. S. Patents for marimba design.

Mr. Stevens can be heard on past releases of the Delos, Musical Heritage Society, Musicmasters and CRI record labels, as well as current releases on Resonator Records.

**ITHACA COLLEGE
PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES
Conrad Alexander, Gordon Stout, directors**

PERSONNEL

Ernest Backus
Elliot Beck
Alyssa Cadwalader
Billy Chou
Matt Donello
Alan Dust
Brian Ente
Alison Hannah
Yu-Tzu Hunag
Taryn Lott
Vinnie Malafronte

Laurette Noller
Jeff Otto
Joshua Oxford
Evan Peltier
Edith Resnik
Andrew Sickmeier
Laurie Sklar
Ryan Socrates
Jason Taylor
Lee Treat
Valerie Vassar