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Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble - An Evening of Contemporary Classics

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble
Rodney Winther

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Ithaca College founder W. Grant Egbert on the steps of the Ithaca Conservatory of Music with student Helen Doyle Durrett '13
ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Rodney Winther, conductor

"An Evening of Contemporary Classics"

Fire Works (1988)  

Andante and Variations on a Theme for MacBeth (1983)*

I. Andante expressivo
II. Variations on a Theme for MacBeth
   Theme
   Variation 1 - Pastorale
   Variation 2 - March
   Variation 3 - Alla Vienese
   Variation 4 - Alla Spagnuola
   Variation 5 - Alla Down Home
   Variation 6 - Maestoso

INTERMISSION

Metamorphoses (1979)

Brendon Le Page, graduate conductor

Piece of Mind (1988)*

I. Thinking
II. Remembering
III. Feeling
IV. Being

* Denotes works commissioned and premiered by the Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Walter B. Ford Hall Auditorium
Tuesday, February 18, 1992
8:15 p.m.
**PROGRAM NOTES**

*Fire Works* was written in 1987-88 on commission from the Wisconsin College Band Directors Association, which included at that time our own Mark Fonder at the University of Wisconsin, Green Bay. The piece subsequently went on to win the 1990 American Bandmasters Association's prestigious Ostwald Award for wind band composition. The composer writes the following about the work:

"I have always been fascinated with the wild flamboyance of a jazz or rock drum solo and in this piece I treat the entire wind ensemble as a giant drum set. The driving force is rhythm, passed back and forth in imitation between the winds and percussion. Moments of quiet melody and color interject but are always overwhelmed by the recurrence of the rhythmic motive. The main musical device is the triad, bounced around in parallel motion creating an unpredictable yet bright and familiar harmonic palate."

**Gregory Youtz** did his undergraduate composition work at the University of Washington, and received his doctor of musical arts degree in composition from the University of Michigan in 1987. His principal teachers have included Leslie Bassett, William Bergsma, William Bolcom and William Albright. He was awarded a Charles Ives Award in 1984 from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters and his band work, *Scherzo for a Bitter Moon*, won the 1984 National Bandmasters Association composition contest and was runner-up for the 1984 American Bandmasters Association's Ostwald Award. A choral work, *If We Sell You Our Land*, based on a speech by Chief Seattle, was the subject of a story on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* in 1987. His other compositions include a symphony and other works for orchestra, a bassoon concerto, several large choral pieces, songs and chamber music, and a one-act opera, and a full-length opera based on the history of legends of Indian and White cultural interaction in the Pacific Northwest. A native Northwesterner, he is presently on the faculty at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington where he teaches composition, theory and history and directs a multi-media performance art ensemble.

*Andante and Variations on a Theme for MacBeth* for symphonic band fulfills a desire to orchestrate part of a composition for piano written in 1960. The Andante movement uses materials from my earlier experiences playing jazz with other masters of this music who shared a deep appreciation of the European tradition as well as our own indigenous musics that we labeled jazz. In reminiscence of a lullaby, the theme is developed almost in a style of improvisation using the idiom of the blues as well as traditional European techniques.

The second movement utilizes a melody I composed in the summer of 1957 for a production of MacBeth for Joseph Papp's Three Productions of Shakespeare in the Park, where I was the composer for 12 years. In the setting for symphonic
band, each variation features different sounds and colors from this wonderful medium.

Having been honored as the first artist in residence for the Ithaca College School of Music for the 1982-83 school year, I was thrilled to be able to write this for the brilliant young musicians and their conductor Rodney Winther, who has encouraged me to continue to try to create music for lasting value. I hope this composition will be a way of saying thank you to the outstanding contribution the Ithaca College School of Music is making to our future of music in America.

David Amram

David Amram, the 1982-83 Visiting Artist of the Ithaca College School of Music, has received numerous honors and accolades from governments, universities, colleges, and arts organizations throughout this country and the world. Among them is an honorary Doctor of Laws from Moravian College in 1979. The citation read at the presentation provides an insight to Amram's life: "For his distinguished achievements as composer and performer it is my honor to present David Amram, a true American original who has hopscotched his way from jazz to serious folk music, from New York's Lower East Side and Greenwich Village to the mountains of Tibet in pursuit of what he dearly loves best, music. He became the first Composer-in-Residence with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, wrote a much talked about autobiography, Vibrations, has conducted symphony orchestras from Chicago to Cairo, loves to jam with bluegrass bands on his penny whistle, has served as cultural ambassador in ten countries for the State Department, and ranks as one of the twenty most performed composers of classical music Broadcast Music, Inc."

Born in 1930, his formal study of music began with lessons on the trumpet and piano at the Music School Settlement School in Philadelphia. He became particularly fascinated with the style of the great jazz trumpeter, Bix Beiderbecke. At 13 he was playing trumpet professionally earning a dollar a night with Louis Brown's jazz band. The need for braces forced Amram to switch to French Horn, whereupon he adapted this instrument to the jazz styles.

Amram entered the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 1948 where his horn teacher was Martin Morris, a horn player of the Cleveland Orchestra. He went on to earn his bachelor of arts degree at George Washington University where he combined academics with playing the French Horn in local amateur orchestras, as well as pioneering the French Horn in modern jazz when he met and "jammed" with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie.

Amram has summarized his musical philosophy as follows:

"Music is my language, whether it be classical, jazz or folk . . . the one thing people around the world have in common is the beauty that music can bring into our lives . . . it is meant to be shared."
Metamorphoses was commissioned in 1979 by the Goldsmith's College of the University of London, where Mr. Gregson teaches. The original intent of the commission was to create a work for the College symphony orchestra. The composer however simply expanded the orchestra's wind and percussion sections, added double basses, piano and simple electronics and deleted the upper strings. Composed in three primary sections, the work is built around a four note set involving the intervals of a tritone, a perfect fourth and a semitone. It is this process of continual change in the set that brings about the "metamorphoses" of the music. The first section "explores the relationship between pulsed and non-pulsed music," creating a certain tension. The second section features solo flute and clarinet, whose sounds are fed through a digital delay system, which results in a unique "dream-like" quality. The third section is a pulsating, rhythmic dance somewhat reminiscent of early Stravinsky. The work is dedicated to the composer's father, who died in the year before it was written.

Edward Gregson is principal lecturer in music at Goldsmith's College and teaches composition at the Royal Academy of Music. His compositional range is wide and includes oboe and piano sonatas, works for chamber and large orchestras, song cycles, a cantata, music for the York Cycle of Mystery Plays and several important works for brass band. His works for wind band include Festivo, commissioned by the Bolton Youth Concert Band for its tenth anniversary in 1985 and used as the test piece in the National Concert Band Festival in 1988.

Piece of Mind was commissioned and premiered by the Ithaca College Wind Ensemble and received its premiere performance in New York City's Symphony Space in 1987. It has achieved remarkable success since then, having won the Sousa Foundation's 1988 Sudler International Wind Band Composition Competition as well as the 1988 ABA/Ostwald Prize. It has been performed virtually around the world and most recently received its third commercial recording, which will be released by the Toyko Kosei Wind Orchestra under the direction of Frederick Fennell. The composer writes the following:

Piece of Mind is a musical pun on an old expression. It is composer Dana Wilson's representation of the workings of the human mind. The first movement, Thinking, begins with a very simple four-note idea which grows seemingly of its own inertia—as thinking about something often does—while sometimes being joined or overwhelmed by other, related ideas.

Remembering, the second movement, is structured in a manner similar to the way memory serves most of us—not as complete, logical thought, but as abrupt flashes of images or dialogue. In this case, the flashes provide a view of the original four-note ideas through various musical styles vividly entrenched in the composer's own memory and hopefully that of much of the audience.
The third movement, **Feeling**, explores various states throughout the emotional spectrum, and the final movement, **Being**, addresses a mental state that is rarely considered in our culture. Non-Western—particularly East Indian—musical styles are called upon to shape the four-note idea so as to conjure up and celebrate this marvelous attribute (this piece, this peace . . .) of mind.

Currently professor of music composition at Ithaca College, **Dana Wilson** holds a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music. He is active as a composer, jazz pianist, clinician, and conductor, with several commissioned works and grants to his credit. His compositions and arrangements have been performed in the United States, Europe, Australia and the Far East, and have been published by Ludwig Music Publishers, Columbia Pictures Publications, Cherry Lane Music Company, Shall-u-mo Publications, Dorn Publications, and Kendor Music Publications. He was the winner of the 1987 Sudler International Wind Band Composition Competition and the 1988 American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Composition Contest. His music has been recorded on Musical Heritage Society, Mark, and Redwood compact discs. He is currently writing an orchestral work on a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, which will be premiered by the Ithaca College Orchestra at the Alice Tully Hall this April.

**Brendon Le Page** was educated in South Africa where he completed a bachelors degree in mathematics and a post-graduate diploma in education. He has been a life-long enthusiast of wind music, and has played in or conducted bands throughout South Africa. In 1988 and 1989, as chairman of the non-racial South African Association for Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles, he was privileged to be involved in the organization of the first two National Wind Band Festivals held in South Africa. He subsequently wrote an article *Wind Music in South Africa* that has been published in the British magazine *Winds* and reprinted in the American NBA Journal. Two years ago he moved to England to take up a dual post as full-time brass teacher for the Kent Music School and manager of the Kent Youth Wind Orchestra. During this time he was conductor of the Maidstone Youth Wind Orchestra, which won a Silver Award in the finals of the 1991 National Concert Band competition. Since his arrival in January, he has been studying conducting with Rodney Winther and working toward his masters degree in wind conducting.
ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Rodney Winther, conductor

Flute/Piccolo
Ginette Boykin
Mary Camilleri
Jeffrey McCool
Theresa Midgley
Robert Southard*

Oboe
Rebecca Armstrong
Yvonne Opperman
Sandy Stimson*

English Horn
Yvonne Opperman

Eb Clarinet
Lisa Ryan

Clarinet
Diana Cassar
Andrea Cheeseman
Kristen Kelly
Jennifer Seiter
Christin Smallman
Rick Vare*

Eb Alto Clarinet
Rosemary Sears

Bass Clarinet
Deborah Rich

Contra-Bass Clarinet
Kimberly Peterson

Bassoon
Deborah Pincus*
Julie Simon*

Contra Bassoon
Thomas DiPuma

Alto Saxophone
Kent Clelland*
David Yusko

Tenor Saxophone
Connie Frigo

Baritone Saxophone
David Lewis

Horn
David Pepin*
Jill Preston
Ann Stewart
Bradley Strauchen

Trumpet
Erich Ledebuhr*
Aaron Lewis
Jim Malone
Jennifer Mark
Jason Miklowcic
Chris O'Neil

Trombone
Laura Kern
Deborah Kinsey, bass
Michael Kramarsyck, bass
Scott Quinlan*

Euphonium
Jennifer Dayton
Melissa Fulmer*

Tuba
John Fuente
Peter Hommel*

* indicates section leader

Members of the Wind Ensemble have been listed alphabetically to emphasize the rotation of parts within some sections and the importance of each individual.
ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Rodney Winther, conductor

**Double Bass**
Frank Haines
Alan Niezabitowski*

**Piano**
Gwen Nichols

**Celeste**
Sonja Branch

**Timpani**
Gifford Howarth

**Percussion**
Sonja Branch
Tom Burritt
Bryan Clarke
Chris Greenawalt
Vince Pitzulo*
Joy Smith

**Graduate Assistant**
Brendon Le Page