

the first action taken by the Quartet in 1987 was to write to every composer in Austria asking for a new piece. This undertaking for all practical purposes established the Austrian repertoire for saxophone quartet. Since then, the Quartet has endeavored to work with composers of the highest artistic accomplishment, and to expand its efforts to work with composers from other countries. For example, in 1995, the group was fortunate to receive a piece written by legendary Austrian composer Friedrich Cerha, and further collaborated with American composer Steve Reich on an arrangement for saxophones of his work *New York Counterpoint*.

VSQ has performed frequently in Vienna's famous Musikverein and Konzerthaus and has recorded works by Steve Reich, Gavin Bryars, Robert Carl, and Lukas Ligeti for the Lotus Records - Salzburg label. They have released debut recordings of works by John Cage, Iannis Xenakis, and Mark Engebretson. The Vienna Saxophone Quartet appears with the support of the Austrian Ministry of Culture and the Austrian Cultural Institute in New York.

Maurita Murphy Mead joined the UI faculty as artist performer/teacher at the University of Iowa in 1984. Her many solo invitations include the International Clarinet Association conferences, the Oklahoma Clarinet Symposiums, the Southeastern Clarinet Workshop and the College Band Directors National Association conference. In addition, she is in demand both as a soloist and clinician throughout the United States.

She has been principal clarinet of several Midwestern orchestras, the more regional being the Cedar Rapids Symphony. As a chamber musician, she has appeared as a guest artist with the Cleveland Quartet, among others. Hailed as a "master teacher," she has been the recipient of the Collegiate Teaching Award at the University of Iowa with a subsequent speaking invitation for the College of Liberal Arts commencement exercises. In turn, her students have won first prizes in performance competitions sponsored by the International Clarinet Society and ClarFest, Inc.

Maurita Murphy Mead is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music with the performer's certificate in clarinet and Michigan State University. A diverse performer, she is pursuing both classical and jazz repertoire with pianist Arlene Schrut. Most recently, they appeared as featured recitalists at the Oklahoma Clarinet Symposium.

School of Music

Center for New Music

David Gompper, director

Thirty-fourth season, Concert IX

Minnesota

Contemporary

Ensemble



Thursday, April 27, 2000

8:00 p.m.



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
CLAPP RECITAL HALL

MINNESOTA CONTEMPORARY ENSEMBLE

Duane Schulthess, *artistic director*

with the

VIENNA SAX QUARTET

and

**STUDENTS AND FACULTY OF THE
UI SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

Thursday, April 27, 2000

8:00 p.m.

Clapp Recital Hall

New York Counterpoint - Steve REICH

Every Night the Same Dream - Erik GRISWOLD

Bass ist in 1 - Wollie KAISER

intermission

Two Trumpets - Allen GLECK

Energy Drink - Mark ENGBRETSON

Prelude Fugue and Riffs - Leonard BERNSTEIN

with Clarinet soloist Maurita Murphy Mead

MCE

Duane Schulthess - *Artistic Director*

Ray Vasquez, Dr. David Baldwin - *Trumpets*

Tony Baker - *Trombone*

Doug Little - *Saxophone*

David Schmalenberger, Vanessa Tomlinson - *Percussion*

Erik Griswold - *Piano*

VSQ

Sue Fancher, Matthew Sintchak,

Richard Dirlam, Mark Engebretson, *Saxophones*

UI

Maurita Murphy Mead - *Clarinet*

Brian Umlah, Jed Cord, Adam Robertson - *Trumpets*

Matt Baucum, Christopher Nicholas, D. Paul Pollard - *Trombones*

Anton Hatwich - *Double Bass*

Program Notes

***New York Counterpoint* (1985) - Steve Reich**

Steve Reich is one of America's best-known composers, and an acknowledged leader among composers of so-called "minimal" music. I had the pleasure of meeting both Steve Reich and video artist Beryl Korot after their stunning video opera *The Cave* was premiered in Vienna's 1994 *Festwochen*. I wrote to Steve asking if he thought any piece of his might work in a transcription for saxophone quartet. He replied that *New York Counterpoint*, originally for clarinet solo with tape or clarinet ensemble, could work well on saxophones and encouraged me to make an arrangement for saxophone quartet and tape. My arrangement of the work is published by Boosey & Hawkes. (Susan Fancher)

New York Counterpoint is a continuation of the ideas found in *Vermont Counterpoint* (1982), where a soloist plays against a pre-recorded tape. The soloist pre-records ten clarinet and bass clarinet parts and then plays a final 11th part live against the tape. The compositional procedures include several that occur in my earlier music. *New York Counterpoint* is in three movements: fast, slow, fast, played one after the other without pause. The change of tempo is abrupt and in the simple relation of 1:2. The piece is in the meter $3/2 = 6/4 (=12/8)$. As is often the case when I write in this meter, there is an ambiguity between whether one hears measures of three groups of four eighth notes, or four groups of three eighth notes. In the last movement, the bass clarinets function to accent first one and then the other of these possibilities, while the upper clarinets essentially do not change. The effect, by change of accent, is to vary the perception of that which in fact is not changing. (Steve Reich)

***Every Night the Same Dream* (2000) - Erik Griswold**

Every Night the Same Dream was written this winter for MCE's Spring tour featuring the performing duo of Erik Griswold and Vanessa Tomlinson. Erik Griswold is a composer, improvising pianist, and installation artist from San Diego who has studied composition and improvisation with Roger Reynolds and George Lewis, respectively.

Since the late 80s, he has written over fifty pieces for various chamber ensembles, orchestra, and jazz combos, including several works for solo percussion and percussion ensemble. His more recent works often incorporate dramatic visual elements and/or improvisation.

As a pianist and percussionist, Erik has performed frequently in California and Baja California, Minneapolis, and Australia, with performers such as George Lewis, Steven Schick, the group "red fish blue fish," (San Diego) ACME New Music (Australia) and with his own ensembles Mungus, Urban Glass, and the GRW Trio. His solo piano work, recently recorded for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, ranges from "inside-out" interpretations of jazz standards, originals, and pop songs to free improvisations.

Griswold's sound installations combine music, sculpture, dance, and interactive electronics to create three-dimensional sound spaces that are discovered and explored by audience-participants. Currently completing a commission for the "red fish blue fish" percussion ensemble and rehearsing a newly formed big band, the "Clocked-Out Orchestra," he holds a Ph.D. in Music from the University of California, San Diego, and a Bachelor's in Music from the University of Southern California.

Australian percussionist **Vanessa Tomlinson** is a frequent collaborator with composer/pianist Erik Griswold. She completed her Master in Music degree at the University of California San Diego with Professor Steven Schick and has performed and lectured throughout Australia, North America, Asia, and Europe.

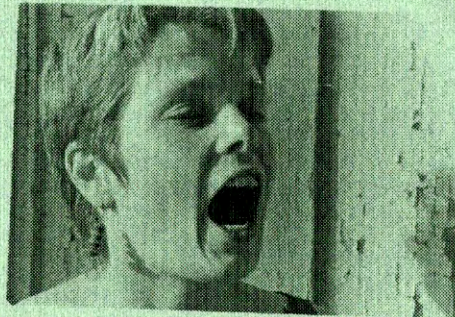
Vanessa has performed as a soloist in many festivals including the Darmstadt Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, Sydney Spring New Music Festival, Bang on a Can Festival - New York, Curtis Institute New Music Series, and WOMAD. She is renowned for her interpretation of new music and since 1989 has commissioned and performed over thirty pieces for solo percussion. In addition to new notated music, Vanessa performs regularly as an improviser with players such as George Lewis, Ewart Shaw, Vinko Globokar, and many others.

In Australia, Vanessa is an active participant with ACME New Music Co and the Adelaide Chamber and Symphony Orchestras. Recordings include a recent Compact Disc under the Dutch label Etcetera, with premiere recordings of works by John Cage, and an ELISION soloists CD with a solo work by Brian Ferneyhough.

***Bass ist in 1* (1988) - Wollie Kaiser**

Wollie Kaiser is a founding member of the *Köln Saxophone Mafia*, one of Germany's leading experimental ensemble's for nearly two decades. Consisting of five reed players who double on an extremely wide array of instruments, the *Köln Saxophone Mafia* uses a unique blend of virtuosic compositions by its own members with an emphasis on improvisation. They have been pioneers in an area of performance that consistently warps the distinctions between avant guard jazz and contemporary "classical" music. Founded in 1982, the *Köln Saxophone Mafia* has 11 CDs to their credit including their most recent, *Licensed to Thrill*.

Bass ist in 1 was composed for the Mafia's CD *Baboma* which featured a collaboration with the African Congolese percussion group "Elma", this is the only CD by the Mafia that uses drums. *Bass ist in 1* has a unique, almost manic makeup of instruments including sopranino sax, soprano sax, 2 baritone saxes, bass sax, percussion, and keyboard. The composition is built around a "be-bop" theme that is mutated and twisted through several multi-rhythmic developments which feature lengthy improvisations by all the performers.



Along with the *Köln Saxophone Mafia*, Wollie Kaiser has worked with many of Europe's leading experimental jazz ensembles/artists and is a lecturer at the Academy of Music in Essen, Germany. He has toured extensively internationally and his compositions have been featured on over forty recordings. (*Duane Schulthess*)

***Two Trumpets* (1992) - Allen Gleck**

Movement 1 - Slow

Movement 2 - Fast

In 1992, I began graduate work at the University of Minnesota with composition instructor Alex Lubet. My first assignment was to write a work for limited forces that would develop in depth one musical idea, not dissimilar to a compositional study or etude. I was spending considerable time thinking about what makes a piece of music work as I was fascinated by the music of George Ligeti and Steve Reich equally, although they are both very different composers. I theorized they both produce a strong feeling of musical direction by creating and releasing tensions: Ligeti through tone clusters, Reich through rhythms. I set out to put this theory to a test and wrote a two-movement ditty for two trumpets.

Contrary to popular belief, brass instruments with valves (trumpets, tubas, French horns) are awfully out of tune in their natural state. Trumpet players (good ones at least) spend most of their adult life adding slides, changing mouthpieces, custom building lead-pipes, and working with tuners to try to overcome the built in "out of tune-ness" of their instrument. What I attempt to do in the "slow" movement is harness this inherent "out of tune-ness" to create and release tension by using shades and degrees of, frankly, discomfort. The movement owes heavily to George Ligeti and I quote three measures from his piano solo piece "Musica Ricerata" near its end.

The "fast" movement of *Two Trumpets* is structured around one long, unbroken line of 16th notes divided between the performers. The *fast* movement is quite difficult, as the players have to "pass the musical baton" to each other every two or three bars or so, plus, the end is very high and loud (thus fulfilling a normal trumpet player's basic carnal instincts). The "fast" movement was recorded and released by MCE on their CD *180° from Ordinary*. *Two Trumpets* is dedicated to David Baldwin who has been an avid supporter of my music. (Allen Gleck)

***Energy Drink I* (2000) - Mark Engebretson**

Energy Drink I was written for Matt Sintchak, who gave the premiere performances at an Amamus Saxophone Salon April 22, 2000. The piece is the first in a series of planned solo works for various instruments, which will demand high-speed (and energetic) virtuosity from the performers. *Energy Drink II* will be written for the Austrian flutist Alexander Wagendristel.

Not only intended to be exciting and exhilarating, *Energy Drink I* is also a highly structured work that uses an array of processes affecting parameters such as pitch, timbre and duration at different rates throughout the piece. (Mark Engebretson)

As a member of the Vienna Saxophone Quartet for the past 6 years, **Mark Engebretson** has performed throughout the world. He has appeared as a solo recitalist throughout Europe and the United States and is a founding member of the new music ensemble *MeloMania!*, which is based in Chicago.

Mark has taught saxophone at Benedictine University and North Park University, both in the Chicago area. He holds a Masters degree in saxophone and music composition from Northwestern University, and is currently writing his dissertation, which will complete his Doctor of Music degree in composition, also at Northwestern. He also studied at the Conservatoire National de Région de Bordeaux in France and at the University

of Minnesota. He has received numerous commissions from the Austrian Cultural Ministry and he has received commissions from the Swedish Society for Composers (STIM).

A native of New York, **Matthew Sintchak** recently joined the music faculty at the University of Iowa in 1997. He is an avid supporter of contemporary music through numerous commissions and premieres of such composers as Pulitzer-prize winner John Harbison and Gunther Schuller. Matthew has given solo saxophone recitals throughout the U.S. and has performed with the Hartford Symphony, the Rochester Philharmonic, and the Eastman Wind Ensemble on two tours of Japan sponsored by Sony and Kodak. He also has a deep interest in jazz and performs with groups including the University of Iowa's faculty combo, the *Iowa Jazztet*.

Matthew Sintchak has founded alternative performing groups including the Jupiter Saxophone Quartet, and *Duo Nouveau*, a saxophone and guitar duo with Matthew Ardizzone. He is also the newest member of the *Ancia Saxophone Quartet* based in Minneapolis (www.anciaquartet.com). Matthew has studied at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, the Paris Conservatory on a grant from the Beebe Foundation, and the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York where he has recently completed his Doctorate.

Prelude, Fugue and Riffs (1949) - Leonard Bernstein

Although a prominent composer until his death in 1990, Bernstein's most well known compositions, *West Side Story* & *On the Town*, are jazz as seen through the eyes of a post-Gershwin songster and fall very early in the composer's career. Ironically, *Prelude, Fugue and Riffs* was composed nearly ten years before *West Side Story* and is virtually unknown to the general public, even though it is arguably one of Bernstein's greatest compositions.

Originally commissioned in 1949 by Woody Herman for his Band, *Prelude Fugue and Riffs* was to be part of a series of jazz inspired works that already included Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto* commissioned by Mr. Herman. Bernstein completed the composition in November of 1949, but by then Woody Herman's first edition of the Thundering Heard had disbanded and it would be a full fifteen years before they reformed. Woody Herman never performed *Prelude Fugue and Riffs* in his lifetime and never pursued the jazz series project any further. Not willing to let the composition lay fallow, in 1952 Bernstein revised the score from its original instrumentation of traditional big band for a more conventional pit orchestra. Parts of the score were re-written and arranged, and the work was then incorporated into a ballet sequence in the first draft of the musical comedy *Wonderful Town*, the sister piece of *On the Town*. Although *Wonderful Town* was successful, the revised music of *Prelude Fugue and Riffs* did not survive the initial run and the majority of the music was cut from the final version of the *Wonderful Town* score with the exception of a few phrases in the musical's "Conquering the City" and "Conversation Piece".

The original jazz band version of *Prelude Fugue and Riffs* received its premiere as part of Mr. Bernstein's Omnibus telecast, "What is Jazz" on October 16, 1955 with Benny Goodman as the soloist, to whom the work is now dedicated. Although the composition should have, at that time, assumed a prominent position in the repertoire, it would be overlooked for many years due to the composer's completion of *West Side Story* in 1957. Leonard Bernstein would record the work twice, the first with Benny Goodman and the second with the Vienna Philharmonic, but neither recording is particularly brilliant. In 1987, Simon Rattle and the London Sinfonietta released "The Jazz Album" for the EMI label which was a comprehensive recording of the majority of the influential jazz based "classical" works from the 20th century, including *Prelude, Fugue and Riffs*. The recording won numerous international awards and praises, finally giving exposure to this long overlooked masterpiece. (Duane Schulthess)

About the MCE

Founded in 1993, Minnesota Contemporary Ensemble (MCE) is a flexible chamber orchestra dedicated to the performance of quality modern music. MCE has been guest conducted by Pulitzer Prize winning composer

John Harbison and has also collaborated with Libby Larsen, LA guitarist/producer Skip Heller, and the new music quartet Zeitgeist. In its brief six-year history, MCE has covered the far-flung musical realms of classical, tango, exotica, ambient, electronics, and noise to featuring D.J. Bonebrake, legendary drummer of the seminal Los Angeles punk band "X".

Last year, MCE was guest conducted by the former head of music at CBS television, Robert Drasnin, in the first ever live presentation of his 1960 cult-classic lounge LP "Voodoo". In the fall of 1999, MCE embarked on a United States tour with performances at Columbia University, Dallas Museum of Art, San Diego Museum of Fine Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Festival of New American Music. The New York Times called MCE's Manhattan debut, "a thrilling performance both vocally and dramatically."

As an educational resource, MCE engages in outreach concerts within the public schools of the twin cities metro area which feature question and answer sessions with local composers/performers and student volunteers performing for their peers under the guidance of MCE members. MCE has also instituted an innovative program, which distributes free tickets to students for their evening concerts. MCE musicians have a voice in their performance repertoire and musical interpretation, giving our ensemble members an integral part in the artistic process, which is often ignored in today's musical environment.

Duane Schulthess is the Artistic Director and conductor of MCE. He has worked with many leading composers of our time including Libby Larsen, John Harbison, Elliott Carter, and Luciano Berio. He received an Associated Press Award for his radio feature *Moonlight Classic* and was the producer of MCE's critically acclaimed debut release, *180 Degrees from Ordinary*, for Innova Recordings.

Duane was a French horn student at London's Royal Academy of Music in the studio of Michael Thompson and was the winner of the Royal Academy of Music Concerto Competition and the Dennis Brain Prize. He has won the Schubert Club Recital Competition, has performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, and served as Principal Horn of the Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra.

Working at a surf shop and attending numerous punk shows for a year after graduating high school in Southern California, Duane Schulthess went on to receive his Bachelor of Arts from the University of the Pacific where he graduated Magna Cum Laude and was twice nominated to the National Dean's List. He was a fellowship student at the University of Minnesota where he received his Master's Degree and studied horn with A. Kendall Betts. He has served on the staffs of the University of Minnesota in Duluth and Regent's College in London. As a conductor, he has studied with Colin Metters, Robert Halseth, and William Dehning. The New York Times said, "[MCE], conducted by Mr. Schulthess, was energetic and attentive to dramatic detail. . . intense and sometimes strangely humorous."

The **Vienna Saxophone Quartet** (Susan Fancher, soprano saxophone • Matt Sintchak, alto saxophone • Richard Dirlam, tenor saxophone • Mark Engebretson, baritone saxophone) was formed in 1987, and has since established a strong reputation for performing new music in Austria and abroad. To date, over 70 works have been composed for and premiered by the Quartet, primarily by Austrian composers. International tours have brought the ensemble to Europe as well as Africa and North America.

The Vienna Saxophone Quartet has been dedicated to the performance of new works since its inception:

