

UI concert to preview tour of East Coast

UI News Services

The University of Iowa Center for New Music will preview an upcoming East Coast tour — including a performance in Merkin Hall at New York's Lincoln Center — with a concert of new American music at 8 tonight in UI Clapp Recital Hall.

The program for the concert and subsequent tour consists entirely of works written by

Music American composers in the past 10 years. It will include two world premieres, and the performances on tour will feature East Coast and New York premieres of several additional works.

The world premieres on tonight's concert will be *Don't Go There* by David Gompper, director of the Center for New Music and composition faculty member in the UI School of Music, and *Agartha* by Noel Zahler, director of the Cummings Electronic and Digital Sound Studio and professor of music at Connecticut College.

Other composers represented on the program will be Cedar Rapids native Michael Daugherty, Mario Davidovsky and William Albright.

A flexible organization



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David Gompper will direct the University of Iowa Center for New Music when they preview the coming week's East Coast tour with a concert of new American music at 8 tonight at Clapp Recital Hall. The program and subsequent tour consists entirely of works written by American composers in the past 10 years.

devoted to the performance of new scores as well as works that are regarded as contemporary masterpieces, the Center for New Music was founded at the UI in 1966, through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

Membership in the center's performing ensemble includes both faculty and students of the School of Music.

The tour schedule will include concerts at Yale University on Monday, at

Merkin Hall on Tuesday, at Harvard University on Wednesday and by invitation at the final performance of the Region I Conference of Society of Composers Inc. at Connecticut College in New

London on Nov. 20.

The program includes works for a wide variety of instrumental combinations, from Gompper's *Finnegan's Wake* for violin and piano to Noel Zahler's *Agartha* for a 17-piece ensemble. Other works call for a variety of traditional and non-traditional instrumental groupings. The complete program for the Nov. 13 concert at the UI comprises six works.

■ *Agartha* (1998) for large instrumental ensemble by Noel Zahler was inspired by Umberto Eco's description of the legend of *Agartha*, the place that cannot be found, in his novel *Foucault's Pendulum*. A mystic center of occult knowledge, *Agartha* consists of underground cities, governed by 5,000 sages who study all holy languages in order to arrive at a universal language.

■ *Finnegan's Wake* (1997) for violin and piano by David Gompper will be performed by the composer with violinist Andrew Carlson. A performer who is equally at home in the concert hall and country fiddle jamborees, Carlson has been concertmaster of the UI Symphony and recorded with REM. Written specifically for

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Carlson's unusual combination of talents, *Finnegan's Wake* presents Irish-Appalachian-Texas fiddle music embedded within the context of art music.

■ *Flashbacks* (1995) for mixed instrumental ensemble by Mario Davidovsky was suggested to the composer by the chaotic way the human memory retrieves tunes, harmonies or rhythmic gestures, with no apparent connection. "In like manner," the composer writes, "*Flashbacks* is a musical fantasy attempting to make an intelligible musical narrative out of an apparently chaotic landscape."

■ *Sinatra Shag* (1995) by Michael Daugherty is scored for flute/piccolo, bass clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion. A composer who is known for writing concert music inspired by contemporary American pop culture, Daugherty got the idea to write *Sinatra Shag* one day during his lunch

break, while looking through postcards in an alternative rock record store. One post card in particular attracted his attention: Nancy Sinatra, circa 1966, wearing a pair of knee-high white boots and sitting on a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

■ Gompper's *Don't Go There* (1998) was written specifically for the tour to provide music for instruments — and players on the tour — that are used less frequently than others. Three percussion instruments — harp, piano and percussion — are contrasted against two sets of pairs — horn/bassoon and viola/double bass. Gompper commented on his score, "Of course, the music does 'go there,' with all the consequences implied by the title."

■ *Abiding Passions* (1988) for woodwind quintet by William Albright, who died unexpectedly last month, consists of four movements, referred to by the composer as "stages," that relate to different aspects of life. Titled *Awakening, Ardor, Play by Play* and *Loss*, the four stages can be associated with stages of human relationships or imagined as metaphors for the four seasons. A rig-

orously organized musical structure parallels the dramatic structure of the piece.

One additional work will be played on tour: the *Concertino* for oboe and ensemble (1998) by Bernard Rands. The *Concertino* will receive its world premiere by the Network for New Music Ensemble in Philadelphia on Sunday. The CNM performances on tour will feature oboist Mark Weiger from the UI School of Music faculty.

All works on the program except Davidovsky's *Flashbacks* will receive their New York premieres in Merkin Hall on Tuesday.

Performers on the CNM tour from the UI School of Music faculty will be Gompper, Weiger, flutist Tadeu Coelho, violist Christine Rutledge, double bassist Diana Gannett, bassoonist Benjamin Coelho, horn player Kristin Thelander, pianist Ksenia Nosikova, and percussionist Dan Moore.

Student members of the ensemble are violinist Miki Yuasa, cellist Cora Kuyvenhoven, clarinetists Christine Bellomy and Annette Machetta, bassoonist David Bryant, horn player

Catharine Jackson and percussionist Jon Donald. Guest artists with the CNM will be Carlson, who currently teaches at Morehead State University in Kentucky; violinist Takuya Horiuchi, concertmaster of the Cedar Rapids Symphony; and harpist Pam Weest-Carrasco of Iowa City.

The Center for New Music promotes the performance of new music by providing a core group of specialists in contemporary performance techniques. In 1986, the center received the Commendation of Excellence from Broadcast Music Inc., the world's largest performing rights organization, and it recently received grants from the Aaron Copland Fund and the National Endowment for the Arts. The CNM is supported by a generous gift from the Glenn and Emily Millice Fund, through the University of Iowa Foundation.

David Gompper joined the music theory and composition faculty of the UI School of Music in 1991. He has received numerous awards for his academic and musical achievements.