



SCI

Society of Composers, Inc.

... dedicated to the
promotion, composition,
performance, understanding
and dissemination of
new and contemporary
music ...

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SCI is an organization for composers. Our membership categories include full member, student member, retired member or life member.

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FEATURE: 2010 SCI REGION VIII CONFERENCE

SCI Region VIII Conference: March 5–6, 2010

The two reviews of concerts from the 2010 SCI Region VIII Conference at the University of Puget Sound in this issue of the *SCI Newsletter* are the first of six that will appear as a three-part series to be concluded in the July–August issue of the *Newsletter*.

Review of Concert 1: Chamber Music Concert 1

Friday, March 5, 2010, 10:00 a.m.

By Art Gottschalk

The first concert began quietly and sweetly, with a piece for trumpet and string quartet by Greg Bartholomew titled *Summer Suite* (Movements II and III). A modal work, suggestive of English folk melodies and with pandiatonic contrapuntal textures, it was reminiscent of the music of Frank Bridges, and early Britten. In Movement II ("Still Life with Melon and Sand") the solo part was played very mellow, with an almost cornet-like tone, by trumpeter Matt Swihart. The allegro section was pentatonic and featured a striking use of repeated notes, before returning to the flowing lines of the opening. Movement III ("Red Cherry Lark") used "pop" type harmonies to accompany a very idiomatic trumpet line, with excellent ensemble in the quartet.

Touches of bravura splashed into the return of the principal trumpet line, with outstanding playing marred slightly at the end by a spot of ensemble trouble.

Next up was a work for solo piano, performed by Eun-Joo Kwak, *Impromptu III*, by James Crowley. An abrupt attention-getting opening was followed by multiple presentations of conjunct right-hand lines, freely atonal but with occasional tonal harmonic references and octatonic harmonies. The piece proved to be short, punchy, jagged, and eminently listenable, despite a very abstract character, and was assisted by a careful and thoughtful performance. The piece did seem to bog down a bit in the middle, after presenting a catalog of the harmonies heard in

the first section, but this did, on the other hand, serve quite well to re-energize a build up and return to the opening tempo, for a most satisfying ending.

Joseph Harchanko's aptly titled *Romanze*, for cello and piano, was next on the program. This piece made unabashed use of a four-note cell treated in a neo-Baroque manner for its primary accompaniment, of a seemingly conscious homage to the great cantabile lines employed by Bach in so many of his best instrumental works. This was followed by an action-packed sequence of repeated notes and cross accents, though the singing nature of the solo cello quickly and efficiently reasserted

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About the Newsletter

Editor: Benjamin Williams

Circulation: 1400

Access: available on the SCI website at
<http://www.societyofcomposers.org/data/publications/newsletter/current.pdf>

Frequency of Publication: bimonthly

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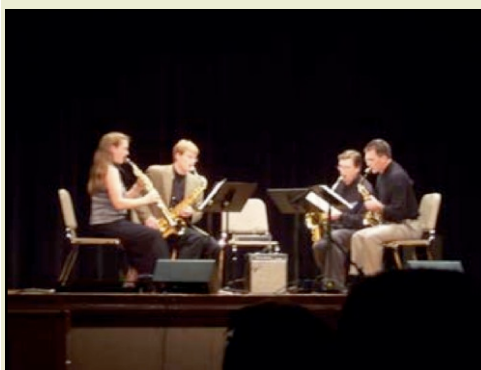
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Articles: The Newsletter welcomes submissions of articles to run in future issues. Articles, if accepted, may be edited for length and content. Please include a photo with all submissions if possible (photo may be of author).

Member News + Photos: Please send all member news and activities with a photo. Submitted items may be edited.

Ideas/Suggestions: The Editors welcome any other ideas or suggestions.

Submit to the newsletter via email at:
newsletter@societyofcomposers.org



Upcoming SCI Events

2010 Region VI Conference March 24–27, 2010

Kansas State University
 Manhattan, KS
 Host: Craig Weston
cweston@ksu.edu

Submission deadline: November 1, 2009

2010 Region V Conference October 1–2, 2010

Augustana College, IL
 Host: David Davies

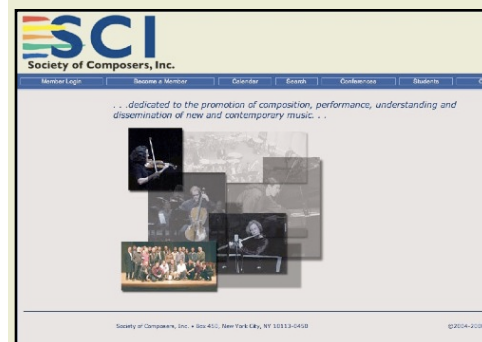
daviddavies@augustana.edu

Submission Deadline: March 1, 2010

2010 National Conference November 11–14, 2010

University of South Carolina
 School of Music
 Host: Tayloe Harding
tharding@sc.edu

Submission Deadline: March 15, 2010



Internet & Email

www.societyofcomposers.org

- Conference dates and submission guidelines
- Contact information and links to member web-pages
- Student chapters and opportunities
- CDs and journals produced by SCI
- Details on SCI such as membership options, listings and contacts for officers, regional structure, by-laws, newsletter archives and more...

SCION

SCION is a listing of opportunities on our website exclusively for members. It is updated on a continual basis so that it may be checked at any time for the most current notices. In addition, members are emailed on the first Monday of each month to remind them to visit the site for new or recent postings. The large number of listings is easily managed by a table of contents with links to the individual notices. In-depth coverage; contest listings in full; all items listed until expiration; this is a valuable resource that you may print in its entirety or in part at any time.

John Bilotta, SCION Editor
scion@societyofcomposers.org

[scimembers]

scimembers is a member-driven e-mail mailing list that is intended to facilitate communication between members of the Society on topics of concern to composers of contemporary concert music. It conveys whatever notices or messages are sent by its members, including announcements of performances and professional opportunities, as well as discussions on a wide variety of topics. For more information, including how to join and participate in the listserv:

<http://www.societyofcomposers.org/data/publications/listserv/listserv.html>

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Message from the Editor



Benjamin Williams

It is with great pleasure that I am able to share several reviews of the 2010 SCI Region VIII Conference over the course of the next few issues of the *Newsletter* (see page 1 and 4–5). A special note of appreciation is due to Rob Hutchinson from the University of Puget Sound who not only organized this event, but also coordinated the authors who contributed the reviews that will appear in these pages. The incredible collaboration that allowed for this to come together will make this event one that will not easily be forgotten. Be sure to look for the rest of the reviews in the upcoming issues.

Reviews or notes on events that feature new music by SCI composers are always welcome for publication in the *Newsletter*. Full-length reviews will be considered for publication as regular articles, while a short blurb can be remembered in the SCItings of each issue (page 6, this issue). If you are attending an upcoming SCI conference or event and would like to contribute an article of review, please contact me or the event host to coordinate publication. Also, as always, please send pictures!

Benjamin Williams
Editor, SCI Newsletter

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Review of Concert 1: Chamber Music Concert 1

(Continued from Page 1)

itself, in order to restore its opening material, this time over a *lachrimosa* bass in the piano along with the accompanying pitch cell, all leading to a poignant conclusion of a lovely and considered performance.

Batting clean-up, just before the intermission, was John Bilotta, who brang us his five *Yeats Songs*, for baritone and piano, with Tristan Robben singing and the composer at the piano. The first song, "The Lover Pleads With His Friends For Old Friends," placed the voice as the primary conveyor of the poem's meaning, emotional and literal (as it no doubt should be), with the piano providing appropriate support. The second song was the aphoristic, yet effective, "The Moods." The third song, "A Drinking Song," featured a less convincing declamatory and syllabic vocal part, but given the text this was likely intentional. "The Old Men Admiring Themselves In The Water," on the other hand, caused harmony and melody to converge to powerfully portray the poet's intent, and the last song, "Maid Quiet," made splendid use of the seasoned and practiced performers, who demonstrably understood and conveyed the drama of the poem.

After a brief intermission, a pleasant surprise awaited those of us less acquainted with the performing faculty of the host institution, in the person of mezzo-soprano Dawn Padula, who was featured throughout the conference and brought her trademark competence and beautiful musicality to everything she sang. This first glimpse was provided to us courtesy of Mike McFerron's *Two Songs on E.E. Cummings*, which also featured Keith Ward on piano. "the moon looked into my window" yielded a gorgeous vocalize layered over evocative piano textures in the upper octaves of the instrument, which descended as the voice ascended. A very colorful though delicate voice then battled powerful bass rumblings from the piano, suddenly reverting to the opening textures for the second half of the song. Its conclusion reconciled the extreme registers of the piano, and established a beautiful cadence. The second song, "NIGHT," began with frantic piano activity which set up an angular declamation, which rather oddly revisited the first song's primary material, although an examination of the text seems to indicate that a musical correlation was being made to tie similar textual threads together. This interruption was

followed by a continuation of the song's opening precepts, leading to a steady rhythmic pulse over a succession of pedals, before another interruption by the first song. After a return to the *marcato* material, and an extended piano solo, the re-entrance of the mezzo-soprano is softer, and in augmentation, with a tonic pedal floating her gently to the end.

Though Elaine Ross' *Shapeshifter*, for flute and piano, is also based upon poetry, it could not have been a greater contrast from the piece preceding it. Beginning with a dark soliloquy in the piano, played by the composer, it gradually settled into a quasi-Impressionistic accompanimental figure, introducing the flute in its extreme low range. Rhapsodic in the truest sense of the word, one may wish that the piano was more of an equal in this piece, in the sense that its frequent solos might be less derived from the accompaniment and more along the lines of the compelling solo flute part, such that it would create a real dialogue with the flute rather than provide "breathers". Nonetheless, this was a skillfully written and magnificently performed work, and deserving of many future performances.

Although autodidact composer Lothar Kreck could not be in attendance, he was ably represented by his

piece for cello and piano, *Sonata Concertante*, although only Parts II and III were performed at this time. In the first part, we heard a solo piano, followed by a solo cello, and then a rather grave melody and accompaniment in the low registers of the two instruments. This was repeated, but the duet became rather more elaborate and, surprisingly, slightly swung, ending with a solo statement by the cello. The next part was a dark romp, with the cello often overwhelmed by an intentionally boisterous piano. While the piano remained predominantly low, the cello went for an extended spin on the A string. A sense of introspection returned all too soon, although a veritable catalog of virtuosic cello techniques combined with rhythmic drive, in a cadenza-like section, to put the swing back into things.

All good things must, and should, come to an end, and Douglas Rice's *Not Quite Spanish Sextet* provided a rollicking ending. The composer was there to conduct a mixed consort of able student musicians from the host institution, and they gave us their all in the performance of this admittedly quirky little work. The piece advertises itself as willfully derivative, which gives the composer license to make a lot of sound and have a lot of fun. Unfortunately, the instrumentation masked all but the



SCI Composers Andrew Walters, Mike McFerron, Michael Pounds and Matthew Shildt

least covered of the guitar passages. Balance among the various wind instruments was difficult, although the students worked valiantly and at a consistently high level. The composer

might wish to reconsider the almost constant employ of *tutti* throughout the work, as his ideas are quite engaging and might be better served (and heard) through more subtle colors from

smaller and more varied instrumental combinations. The piece was, nonetheless, enjoyable and a great showcase for the excellent student musicians.

Art Gottschalk

Review of Concert 2: Percussion Ensemble and Electro-acoustic Music

Friday, March 5, 2010, 1:30 p.m.

By Joseph Harchanko

The second concert of the conference melded two of my great loves: electro-acoustics and percussion. Both these mediums must deal with the question of how one is to blend pitched and non-pitched, harmonic and inharmonic sounds. Every composer approaches this question in his or her own way and this concert presented an engaging multiplicity of ideas.

Andrew Walters' *Moth to Flame* put the issue front and center by presenting a work for flute and percussion. While the pitch content of the flute was carefully thought-out and masterfully performed by Matt Zavortink, the instrument itself often crossed into the realm of the inharmonic. Various techniques matched the intensity of sound of the electronics and foreshadowed the percussive nature of the upcoming works. It was an energetic performance of an exciting work.

The next three works were for playback media alone. The soundscapes of Adam Hill's *ORD* should be familiar to anyone who has flown through O'Hare or any other major airport. Hill is clearly well versed in the classics of *musique concrète* and his work projects itself around you as a virtual environment. Likewise, Emily Kimball's *The Bone and the Flower* is at times reminiscent of Berio's *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)*, if only Berio had had access to today's modern digital studios. Its interplay of piano sounds and creative arrangements of Gwen Binda's feminist

poetry created a tapestry of emotional content that pleads to be heard.

The third work for digital playback was Michael Pounds' *Recollection*. I had the pleasure of hearing his *Collection* earlier this year and was pleased to be able to complete the set. Both works were based on sounds collected during his recent trips to Japan. The sounds of *Collections* have been warped and distorted in *Recollections* as if through the filter of memory and the contextualization of personal experience. What is most remarkable about both pieces is Pounds' attention to spectral density—how each sound occupies a certain space without competing with other sounds. Whether working with concrete sounds or abstracted sounds, the careful interplay of the sources leads the listener in an intuitively satisfying emotional journey.

We returned to the genre of instrument and electronics in the final work of the first half with Brent Weaver's *Legends*. Maria Choban seized the stage with a powerful performance of three of the work's five movements which are all based on women in ancient mythology. With the ferocity of Atalanta and the pathos of Pandora and Echo, Choban pounded the piano mercilessly while remaining perfectly meshed with the electronic sounds, making them seem a part of the live performance.

As if to summarize my own thoughts on the creative intersection of percussion and electronics, the second half featured three works performed by

the Puget Sound Percussion Ensemble under the direction of Amy Putnam. Matthew Schildt's *Continuance* focused largely on instruments of definite pitch with creative evolutions of color. Its primary melodic material morphed through an otherworldly transformation with the opening material at times being sung and at other times performed as if from a distant music box. The unifying rhythmic construction of the pieces created the convincing drama of a machine willfully coming to life.

With Daniel Adams' *Camaraderie* we move back towards the inharmonic with a bombastic performance. *Camaraderie* is at times reminiscent of Varese's *Ionization* but with a decidedly aggressive momentum performed with grace and power.

The concert closed with the delightful (and delightfully titled) *Whack!* by Art Gottschalk which pulled together the pitched and unpitched resources of the large percussion ensemble with a recorded electro-acoustic medium. The work itself acknowledges the debt all composers of on this concert owe to the work of Carl Stalling who, in his Warner Brothers cartoon soundtracks, blurred the line between music and sound effect. *Whack!* manages to pull-off the difficult trick of putting humor in a concert work without sacrificing compositional integrity in a very enjoyable way.

Joseph Harchanko

RESOURCES ON THE WEB

Lawrence Fritts and Chris Shortway

Three plug-ins for Sibelius that are free and can be downloaded from the Sibelius site:

1. Pitch Multiplication

Performs the multiplicative, or M5, operation. User can choose central pitch for the transformation and level of multiplication.

sibelius.com/download/plugins/index.html?plugin=278

2. Fritts Transformation

Uses the Fritts transformation to change interval quality (i.e. M3 to m3, and m7 to M7. P4 and P5 are inverted and the tritone remains the same). User can choose a central pitch for the transformation.

sibelius.com/download/plugins/index.html?plugin=277

3. Pitch Counting

Counts the number of individual pitches in a selection. First displayed with octave numbers and then by pitch class. (In order for a tied pitch to be counted, it must be selected through the end of the tie.)

sibelius.com/download/plugins/index.html?plugin=279
lawrence-fritts@uiowa.edu

David Fuentes

A treatise on melodic figuration and counterpoint that might be of use to you or your students. Download a copy to your own computer (rather than opening it in a browser), which will make it easier to play the musical examples.

calvin.edu/academic/music/faculty/dfuentes.stm
dfuentes@calvin.edu

SCItings

Member News and Activities

Performances, Awards, Commissions, Honors, Publications and other Member Activities.



Daniel Adams

Daniel Adams

From a Visible Darkness for contrabass solo received its world premiere on February 26 at the NACUSA Texas Chapter Conference held at Texas State University, San Marcos. Frank Murry was the bass soloist.

Brett Dietz performed *Five Marimba Miniatures* on February 6 at the Southern Regional Conference of the College Music Society held at Loyola University in New Orleans. This performance included the premiere of three miniatures composed especially for Dr. Dietz.

Intrusions, for oboe, bassoon, and piano was premiered by Trio 488, at Texas State University, San Marcos, February 2. Trio 488 subsequently performed *Intrusions*, again at Texas State University for the NACUSA Texas Chapter Conference on February 26.

dcadams@airmail.net

Mark Winges

Luna, Nova Luna was premiered by the Piedmont Children's Choir and Volti, conducted by Bob Geary February 26, 2010 at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Berkeley.

WingNotes@earthlink.net

Brian Fennelly

The world premiere of *The Other Side of Time for Winds, Brass and Percussion*, commissioned by Charles Peltz and the NEC Wind Ensemble took

place February 25, 2010, at Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston.

FennellyBL@aol.com

Jim Scully

The world premier of Scully's *Sonata for Guitar* was performed by Dr. Keith Calmes, a friend and colleague, February 21, 2010 at California State University, Bakersfield.

jscully@csub.edu

Lynn Gumert

The premiere of Gumert's *Quemar las naves*, scored for voices, recorders, strings, and percussion, took place February 5-7, 2010.

"Migrations: Resistance and Endurance," a musical and choreographic exploration of cultural migration, featured music and dance from the Golden Age of Spain, from indigenous people of the New World, from the Sephardic diaspora, and contemporary compositions by Lynn Gumert. The music was performed by Zorzal Music Ensemble, of which Gumert is the Artistic Director, and guest artists.

Lynn Matlock Brooks, chair of the Dance Department at Franklin and Marshall College, created the choreography, some of which is based in modern interpretative dance and some of which is reconstructed from historical documents. The dances were performed by Grant Street Dance Company.

lynnmgumert@verizon.net

Guy Vollen and Daniel Racer

Two world premieres were heard at the Wichita Wind Ensembles Professional Band concert February 6, 2010 under the direction of Dr. John Taylor in Sebitts Auditorium in the Riney Fine Arts Center on the campus of Friends University in Wichita.

The Professional Band performed Vollen's *Carnival of Souls*, a symphony for winds and percussion with added low strings, harps and electronics. They also performed *Kartikeya and the Demon*, a newly composed movement from the suite *Wandering Stars* by Daniel Racer.

gvollen1@cox.net

David Smooke

Bassist Jeffrey Weisner of the National Symphony and the Peabody Conservatory faculty gave a recital February 3, 2010 in the Griswold Hall on the Peabody Conservatory campus in Baltimore premiering Smooke's microtonal piece for solo bass *Introspection* #11,072.

dasmooke@gmail.com

Jenni Brandon

Make Music Sweet was premiered by The Singers—Minnesota Choral Artists on February 2, 2010 in Minnesota.

On February 6, 2010 the premiere of Brandon's commissioned work *Spider Suite* took place at the California Association of Professional Music Teachers State Conference.

jenni@jennibrandon.com

Shawn Hundley

Surface Tensions by Shawn Hundley was premiered by the University of Georgia Wind Ensemble January 22, 2010 in the University of Georgia Performing Arts Center. The performance is part of the Janfest 60th Anniversary Celebration. The work is one of two compositions awarded the Arch Composition Prize sponsored by UGA's chapter of Phi Mu Alpha.

fsudoc2b@yahoo.com

William Vollinger

A work of Vollinger's commissioned by the ensemble Musaica was premiered on January 17, 18 and 21, 2010. *Duck Girl* is the story of Ruthie Moulon, a fancily dressed street person locally famous for having ducks follow her on Bourbon Street and environs from the 1950s through 90s. Her role was sung by Liz Argus.

http://williamvollinger.com/Duck_Girl.html

WilliamVollinger@aol.com

Sy Brandon

Brandon has been awarded a commission from the Arizona Commission on the Arts to compose the band composition to celebrate the centennial of Arizona's statehood. The centennial is being celebrated from September 2011 to September 2012. Brandon's piece is called "Arizona Centennial Overture." It celebrates the various cultures that make Arizona a unique blend of old and new. Sections of the overture depict the indigenous cultures, the Mexican heritage, the early pioneers, and finally, the recent diverse population growth.

sybrandon@gmail.com

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JOINT MEMBERSHIP (\$75/year): Same benefits as full members

SENIOR MEMBERSHIP (\$27.50/year): Open to those 65 years of age or older, or retired. Same benefits as full members.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP (\$27.50/year): Open to performers and other interested professionals. Receives the SCI Newsletter in electronic form and can participate in national and regional conferences.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP (\$27.50/year): Eligible to submit to national and regional conferences and to vote in society matters. Access to all SCI publications.

STUDENT CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP (\$17.50/year): Same benefits as student members, but only available on campuses having Student Chapters.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP (\$25/year): Organizations receive hard copy of the SCI Newsletter and other mailings.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP (\$1100 or \$120/year for 10 years): Benefits the same as full members, for life.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications include the *SCI Newsletter*, *SCI Recording Series*, *Performers CD Series*, *SCI Journal of Music Scores* and **SCION** (monthly e-mail listing of announcements and opportunities for composers).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements of contests, calls for scores and other solicitation appear in the *SCI Newsletter* and **SCION** as a service to SCI members. While every effort is made to assure the accuracy of these announcements, SCI cannot accept responsibility for errors, misrepresentations, or misinterpretations.

PIXEL PERFECT: MEMBER PHOTOS

Pixel Perfect

Photos of SCI Members

Photos from the 2010 SCI Region VIII Conference, March 5–6, 2010 at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, hosted by Robert Hutchinson



SCI composer Greg Simon, guest composer Carter Pann, Puget band director Gerard Morris and SCI composer Brendan Faegre

Conference host Rob Hutchinson, guest composer Carter Pann, SCI composers Alejandro Rutty, Greg Simon and Lan-chee Lam



SCI composer Bob Fleisher, cellist Katri Ervamaa and SCI Composer Andrew Walters