



SCI

Society of Composers, Inc.

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

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

XL: 5, September–October 2010

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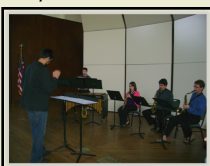


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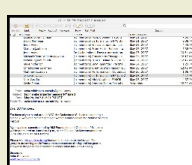
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Join SCI



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

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FEATURE: STUDENT CHAPTER CONNECTIONS

Chapter Connections I

A Space for Creative Collaboration

By Jorge Variego

The “Chapter Connections” are spaces for the members of the SCI Student Chapters to cooperate creatively. In this first edition, the premise was to compose a piece of music in collaboration between nine composers from three different Chapters. Students from Ball State University, University of Miami and University of Florida embarked in a journey towards the realm of the unknown. As a composer, you can be definite about the choices you make on a new piece, you decide what note on what instrument is next, you decide dynamics, instrumentation, form and articulation; literally everything within that work is under your control, even if you decide to incorporate indeterminacy to the piece, the

percentage of option given to the performer is also of your choice.

Composing in collaboration with other artists is quite far from that. The amount of control you have over the



Dress rehearsal at UF. From left to right: Adam Ambrose, Laura Kerslake, Mauricio Agüero and Jack Kinsey.

piece is inversely proportional to the number of composers involved in the process such that each composer has only a very small influence on the final work. Nine composers = nine short pieces. Is this equation inevitable?

In this collaboration, the “patchwork” piece would have been the shortcut. Everyone could contribute an equal amount of music and we would get—fairly easily—a new piece. But the desire was deeper: to collaborate and actually “work together” in a new composition. This initial goal placed us in the realm of the unknown. Yes, as composers we know little about sharing a creative process, or having a limited

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About the Newsletter

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How to Submit Items to the Newsletter

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

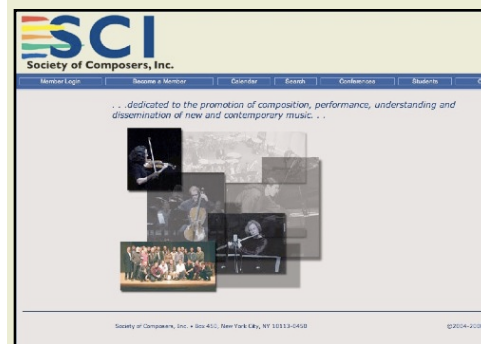
2010 National Conference November 11–14, 2010

University of South Carolina
 School of Music
 Host: Tayloe Harding
[\[tharding@sc.edu\]](mailto:tharding@sc.edu)

Submission Deadline: March 15, 2010

2011 Region VI Conference April 8–10, 2011

University of Central Missouri
 Host: Eric Honour
[\[honour@ucmo.edu\]](mailto:honour@ucmo.edu)
 Submission Deadline: November 29, 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

I am pleased to be able to share with our readership the story of SCI's first Student Chapter Connections project as designed and managed by Jorge Variego (*page 1*). I had heard about some of the details about how the project would work before any of it took place, but I was excited to see how well it turned out for all involved.

I know Variego intends to manage more of these projects in the future, and so I hope you will join me in providing him and the Student Chapters support and encouragement for another exciting collaboration!

On a related note, some of our esteemed colleagues have offered some advice and stories of personal experience regarding commissions for ballet music (*page 4*). Collaborations at every level seem to always be a daunting undertaking at first. I hope some of you will find encouragement in these articles and at some point in the future take the opportunity for a collaborative project.

Benjamin Williams
Editor, SCI Newsletter

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Student Chapter Connections I

(Continued from Page 1)

control over our piece of music. Do we know anything about tolerance in a shared production? That sounded intimidating...

Despite that, we took the risk, decided on a collaboration system, and made it work.

The instrumentation (saxophone trio with vibraphone) was collectively agreed on in advance based on the available performing forces in each Chapter.

The compositional method was simple: each composer contributed with one single sheet of original music; that "page of work" was the composer's reaction to someone else's input in the collaborative process. The participants worked in succession with a predetermined time frame; they all had a week to complete their individual sections, which stretched the total duration of the process to three months. The particularity of the process was that the composers had to react in some way to the previously completed "pages" by other participants. They all received one or two finished pages of work to develop, contrast or simply ignore.

Those responses helped maintain the work's identity with the group, not with the individual participants. Composers had to think constantly about where the piece came from and where it could go, contributing with its forward motion. Once the process got started it took its own path; the eventual direction of the work remained unrevealed for everyone until the piece was completed. And yes, that was also in the unknown.

When experimenting, you establish a method, a goal and take the risk of being uncertain about the outcome. "Bridges" for saxophone trio with vibraphone was a gladly surprising result. I was personally stunned by the quality and diversity of thought offered by the participating composers.



The performance

The main aspiration of this first Chapters Connection was to remotely stimulate the compositional collaborations, to encourage the collective development of ideas between SCI student members and—in the end—to simply learn from each other. I certainly know we succeeded and we will go for more in the Connections II!

Thank you Brent A. Allred, Liz Cravens, Collin Marone (Ball State University); Dan Dickinson, David Sargent, Alyssa Kassler (University of Miami); and Sarah Hersh, Travis Garrierson, Sean Peuquet (University of Florida) for making this possible.

Jorge Variego

SCI Student Representative

SCIMEMBERS: BALLET COMMISSIONS

Ballet Commissions

Edited by **Benjamin Williams**

This discussion took place on the scimembers electronic mailing list July 18–19, 2010.

The Question

Malcolm Rector

Does anyone have a going rate for composing a ballet for a local dance company?

mrector347@aol.com

Answers

John White

20 years ago, I wrote a ballet for a local company in Gainesville, FL,

'Dance Alive!'. I got a grant from the University of Florida Research Office (around \$4,000–5,000). I then used the University Orchestra for the performances.

If you are not on a college faculty, then you could ask the dance company for a commission fee, but don't ask for too much as they might have to turn you down because small local dance companies don't have the resources usually.

jwhite48@earthlink.net

David Ward-Steinman

My friend Barney Childs used to tell would-be commissioners "Your maximum is my minimum."

In 1967 I was paid \$3000 plus performance royalties by the Joffrey Ballet in NY to compose music to a scenario by Eugene Loring (*These Three*). Joffrey paid for the copying and printing of score and parts. In addition I was paid travel and living expenses at the Chelsea Hotel to come to NYC for the

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SCItings

Member News and Activities

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

Lorne Dechtenberg

The Bluegrass Opera gave the premiere of Dechtenberg's comic opera, *Sutures and Love*, August 13 and 15, 2010 at the Singletary Center for the Arts in Lexington, KY.

Sutures and Love features music and libretto by Lorne Dechtenberg. Loosely based on Richard Sheridan's classic play *School for Scandal*, the opera was previously titled *Sex, Drugs, and Aliens*. The work tells the story of a cosmetic surgery clinic and the events that take place there one fateful day.

<http://www.bluegrassopera.org/dddip@yahoo.com>

Daniel Adams

Daniel Adams appeared as a guest lecturer for the Directors Forum of the Nord-Amerikanischer Sängerbund held at the Germania Singing & Sport Society in Columbus, Ohio on July 16 and 17. Adams discussed the process of converting computer-assisted music notation files to sound files for individual practice and led a discussion on commissioning composers to provide new choral works. He also presented scores and a recording of his recent composition *Of a Just Content*.

dcadams@airmail.net

Christopher Gable

The world premieres of *The Ladysmith Story*—a chamber opera based on the renaming of Ladysmith, Wisconsin—took place July 16–25, 2010 as part of the 125th anniversary celebration of the founding of Ladysmith.

www.ladysmithstory.org
cgable68@comcast.net

Adrienne Albert

The premiere of *Menage a Trio* for flute, clarinet and bassoon was given in the Annenberg Beach House in Santa Monica July 13, 2010 by the Sea Winds Trio: Susan Greenberg, flute; Helen Goode-Castro, clarinet; Carolyn Beck, bassoon.

adrienne@adriennealbert.com

Robert J. Bradshaw

Bradshaw's hour-long chamber opera titled *Gabriel* ("Dot Gabriel") was commissioned by the Australian Trumpet Guild for the 2010 International Trumpet Guild Conference and premiered on July 8, 2010 in Sydney by members of Opera Australia and the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, directed by Tony Legge (Opera Australia Assistant Music Director).

mail@robertjbradshaw.com

Paul A. Epstein

Paul A. Epstein's *Changes 3: Palindromes* for violin and viola was performed in New York on June 27, 2010 by counterinduction. The ensemble first performed the work at their inaugural concert in Philadelphia in 1999. The performers were Miranda Cuckson, violin, and Jessica Meyer, viola.

A recording of Epstein's *Three Sonnets* for mezzo-soprano, cello and piano with poems by Harvey Gilman was released in May, 2010 by Navona Records as part of the compact disk *RAP-PORT: Vocal Chamber Works*. Krista River is the mezzo-soprano, along with cellist Michal Shein and pianist Hannah Shields. The CD is available for purchase or download.

www.naxosdirect.com/title/NV5827/pepstein@comcast.net

Jeff Jacob

Jacob's most recent CD, *Contemporary Eclectic Music for the Piano Vol. X* was released on the New Ariel Recordings label. All of the composers represented on the CD are members of the Society of Composers, Inc..

The CD consists of *Impromptu* by Roger Briggs (Western Washington University), *Sonata no. 6—The Wasteland* by Paul Reale (Emeritus Professor at UCLA), *Astoria* by Amy Williams (University of Pittsburgh), *Spiral* by Jonathan Pieslak (The City College of New York), *Metamorphosis no. 1* by Jonathan Russell (Princeton University), *Point to Line and Plane* by Clifton Callender (Florida State University), *Song of the Himalayas* by He Jian-Jun (Jacksonville University), and *Piano Sonata* by Jorge Muniz (Indiana University South Bend).

The CD is available at the New Ariel website at NewArielRecordings.org.
jjacob@saintmarys.edu



Paul A. Epstein

Opera Commissions

(Continued from Page 4)

summer to write the music, collaborate with Loring, and attend rehearsals. I had six weeks to compose and orchestrate a 30-minute ballet, which was done in repertory during the 1967 fall season at City Center, NY. Great experience!

dwardste@indiana.edu

Mark Phillips

There is no such thing as a "going rate" for this sort of thing. A lot depends on two variables:

- 1) The size of the dance company's budget and/or their ability to raise money for this project;
- 2) How badly you want to compose this ballet (and its corollary, how much it may enhance your career).

Unless you need money *upfront* for food and rent, you might consider a deal to compose the ballet on your own and license their performances for a mutually agreed upon fee.

phillipm@ohio.edu

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

For complete details, please visit <http://www.societyofcomposers.org/data/organization/membership.html>.

FULL MEMBERSHIP (\$55/year): Eligible to submit scores to the National Conferences, regional conferences, SCI Recording Series, SCI Journal of Music Scores. Access to the SCI Newsletter in electronic form. Optional subscription to [scimembers], the SCI listserv and all other SCI publications. Eligible to vote on Society Matters and in elections for the National Council.

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 of composers featured in recent issues of the Newsletter with activities described in the SCItings section (page 5, this issue).



David Vayo

Daniel Adams



Brandon Hendrix