



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

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## SCI Region III Conference Report

By Mark Zanter



On February 25-27, 2016 Marshall University, Huntington, WV hosted the SCI Region III Conference featuring concerts, paper sessions, and installations by composer members from regions: I, II, III, IV, V, VI, and VIII. Performances took place on campus in the School of Music and Theatre, the School of Art and Design, and at the First Presbyterian Church, the venue for our MUsic Alive Concert Series.

Highlights from the conference include full concerts featuring the MU Wind Symphony, conducted by Brian O. Walden and Adam Dalton, and the MU Percussion Ensemble, conducted by J. Steven Hall. Featured

performers on the conference include Trifecta! who performed several works with School of Music and Theatre Director, Dr. Richard Kravchak, Dr. Julio Alves who performed works for guitar solo, guitar ensemble, and Paul Richards' *Concerto for Violin, Guitar and Bear Mountain*; and Dr. Michael Stroehrer who performed Dr. Steven L. Rosenhaus' *Nine Feet of Brass* with the



## About the Newsletter

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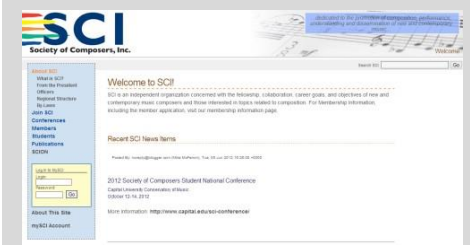


## Upcoming SCI Events

**2016 SCI Student National Conference**  
**November 17-19, 2016**  
 Ball State University  
 Muncie, Indiana  
 Carter Rice, Co-host  
 Chad Powers, Co-host

**2017 SCI Region VIII Conference**  
**March 1-14, 2017**  
 Washington State University  
 Pullman, Washington  
 Ryan M. Hare, Host

**2017 SCI National Conference**  
**March 30-April 1, 2017**  
 Western Michigan University  
 Kalamazoo, Michigan  
 Christopher Biggs, Co-host  
 Lisa Coons, Co-host  
 Richard Johnson, Co-host



## Internet & Email

[www.societyofcomposers.org](http://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, 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](mailto: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/publications/listserv.html>

## National Council

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University of Puget Sound

Patrick Williams  
University of Montana

### President Emeritus

Greg Steinke

## Membership Information

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

**Full Membership** (\$75/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** (\$100/year): Same benefits as full members

**Senior Membership** (\$35/year): Open to those 65 years of age or older, or retired. Same benefits as full members.

**Associate Membership** (\$40/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** (\$35/year): Eligible to submit to national and regional conferences and to vote in society matters. Access to all SCI publications.

**Student Chapter Membership** (\$25/year): Same benefits as student members, but only available on campuses having Student Chapters.

**Institutional Membership** (\$40/year): Organizations receive hard copy of the SCI Newsletter and other mailings.

**Lifetime Membership** (\$1400 or \$150/year for 10 years): Benefits the same as full members, for life.

## Executive Committee

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Gerald Warfield

MU Wind Symphony.

We also offer many thanks to Marshall University faculty, students, and ensembles who performed during the conference, and extend our gratitude to composers who brought their own performers. The combined efforts of all involved made the conference a success!

I urge you to view archived livestream concerts (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) at this link:

<http://livestream.com/marshallu/events/4866838>

**Concert One:**

Frank Nawrot  
Timothy Gibbons  
Scott Brickman  
Ken Davies  
Matthew Harder  
Anthony Almendarez

**Concert Two:**

Mark Phillips  
Joseph Bohigian  
Daniel Adams  
Chris Arrell  
Jeffrey Hoover  
Nolan Stolz

**Concert Three:**

Jeremy Beck  
Sean Price  
Malcolm Solomon  
David Heinick  
Mark Zanter  
Ian Guthrie

**Concert Four:**

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Becky Brown  
Stephen Hennessey  
Trent Hanna  
Andy Walters  
Evan White

**Concert Five:**

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Beth Wiemann  
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Don Bowyer  
Salvatore A. LoCascio

**Concert Seven:**

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Evan J. Williams  
Daniel Sitler  
Stephen F. Lilly  
Amir Zaheri  
Sabrina Clarke

**Concert Nine:**

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Brian Bevelander  
Drew Dolan  
Michael Boyd  
Tim Chatwood  
Ken Metz  
Joo Won Park

**Installations:**

Joel Hunt  
Zack Merritt

**Concert Six:**

David Mettens  
Mark Dal Porto  
Mike D'Ambrosio  
Kyong Mee Choi  
Steven L. Rosenhaus

**Concert Eight:**

Maxwell Tfirm  
John Beall  
Justin Houser  
J. M. Smith  
Ameilia S. Kaplan

**Concert Ten:**

Matthew Weaver  
Paul Richards  
Harvey Stokes  
Tayloe Harding  
Bryce Craig  
James Romig



## New Horizons: SCI Student Members Series

# Interview with Peter Van Zandt Lane

By Cody Brookshire



**Cody Brookshire:** Hello Peter! Thanks for agreeing to do an interview. It seems like you've been quite busy over the last few months. New baby, new job, new pieces... it must all be very exciting!

**Peter Lane:** I'm having a blast! I just had a big new piece, *Chamber Symphony*, premiered by EQ Ensemble up in Boston, as well as a new piece for Transient Canvas (Amy Advocat, clarinet; Matt Sharrock, marimba), *Exergy Bubblebath*. Next up on my desk is a piece for viola and electronics for composer/violist Kurt Rohde, and a trombone concerto for Joe Alessi, commissioned by American Chamber Winds.

It's exciting to be teaching composition at UGA and running the Roger and Phyllis Dancz Center for New Music. It's such an amazing place to be, packed with such creative people. Fatherhood is its own adventure. You hear composers say, "my pieces are like my children"... completely untrue – babies are much noisier! But it's so rewarding to see the little guy learn new things.

**CB:** I can imagine! I'm sure you're overrun with inspiration

for new projects going forwards. Does your recent *Chamber Symphony* premiered by EQ Ensemble draw from this particular and very personal inspiration by any chance? Or did your motivations for this piece come from elsewhere?

**PL:** *Chamber Symphony* was a tricky piece for me, if life events influenced the piece in any way, it's beyond anything I can specify. This is my second Barlow Endowment commission, and I feel like that adds a bit of pressure to do something out of my comfort zone – write something serious. For *Chamber Symphony*, I tried to do something more ambitious with formal structure than I've done before, and spent the better part of 2015 focusing exclusively on this piece. As far as direct inspiration, I studied other chamber symphonies composed by Schoenberg, John Adams, and Thomas Adès, and tried to say something new but also deal with the problem of a condensed traditional symphonic form. The result is a pretty big piece, almost 20 minutes, with a lot of activity, a lot of interconnectivity between movements, and a lot of moving parts.

**CB:** This sounds ambitious, indeed. Can you, in a bit more detail, describe what you did with the formal structure that made it so ambitious for yourself? With any attempt at something both grand and new, sometimes the results can be unpredictable... did the piece end up being what you thought it might at the outset, or did it morph into a different beast? ...and in what ways?

**PL:** I don't tend to commit too strongly to pre-planned maps in my pieces, but this one definitely took some unexpected turns, especially with the finale. I wanted to end big, fast, and loud, but there ended up being a certain amount of unexpected intensity that came out of the middle movements. In the second movement I was playing around with a similar kind of approach to prolation canon I came across in John Corigliano's *String Quartet* (1995). It ended up being a huge focus in the movement, making it longer, more dissonant, and further away from what I had originally imagined (which was something more peaceful and reflective). So, after a more dancelike and energetic third movement, it was best to let the finale – more of an epilogue,

really – gracefully unwind the tension from the previous movements, and letting the process-driven rhythmic schemes fizzle out to something stately and regular.

**CB:** Speaking of fizzling, tell me about *Exergy Bubblebath*, your recent piece for Transient Canvas. I admit, I had to look up the word “exergy,” and now I have the image of a thermodynamics professor winding down at the end of a tough day, complete with candles and a rubber duck. This is exactly what you were thinking too, right?

**PL:** Ha! No, but now I will! It is one of my odder titles, but at least it's more interesting than "Chamber Symphony!" The piece steals some Stravinsky-style pitch-rotating ideas, and I found myself going to some old Aphex Twin albums (namely, the Analogue Bubblebath compilations) for inspiration about shape, rhythm, and the electronic sounds I was working into the piece. The "exergy" bit has to do with the electronics primarily expanding the marimba sound, while also introducing acid-house tropes. Thus, *Exergy Bubblebath* was born, a new quasi-serial pseudo-techno theme song for elderly physics professors in floral-scented garden tubs.

**CB:** I imagine that you'll have that niche market cornered. That is a cool combination of influences... do you find yourself doing combinations like this often? Does it come natural to you to fuse elements from these disparate styles, or is it a challenge you gravitate towards? And how do the electronic sounds interact with the live instruments in this piece?

**PL:** I think it's pretty clear that the influence of vernacular styles is one of the big defining traits of music by a lot of 21st century composers. For me, it's not about polemics of low-art/high-art, it's just about writing honest music that doesn't shut out prominent musical influences of the music I love. I'm not wholly absorbed in one genre as a listener (and I don't know many who are)... right now my recently played list has a nice mélange of Punch Brothers, Venetian Snares, Beat Furrer, Deftones, and Rolf Lislevand. If I blocked all those experiences and influences out, I wouldn't be able to write. I figured out pretty early on that the constant fear of something 'lowbrow' sneaking into my piece is simply paralyzing. At the same time I'm aware that pieces that sound like they're 'about' mixing genres can get kitschy. So, I do gravitate towards making compositional challenges for myself, but they're typically all about form and musical

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narrative. The polystylism thing is just the result of keeping all the doors open.

The electronic sounds in *Exergy Bubblebath* are part Davidovsky and part techno, they're also triggered by little transducers built into the marimba mallets. So, the electronic sounds get very disparate from the live instruments, but they're always in direct reaction to the percussionist.

**CB:** Thanks for the insight into some of your recent music and your compositional approach. It seems that you've been quite successful thus far with your music, projects, and career trajectory: you've got pieces being performed by large ensembles left and right, commissions, residencies, and you've landed a pretty nice job, all by age 30. Of course your current state is the result of a chain of many decisions you've made in your life, but can you pinpoint a pivotal decision in your time as a student that has helped you immensely? And what advice can you offer to undergraduate music composition students to lay a solid foundation, and to graduate music composition students that are breaking into their professional careers?

**PL:** The best advice I think I can give to younger composers is to at once have confidence in the music you write, while also practicing a high level of self-criticism. Most of us are better at one than the other: we're either too self-conscious and don't have enough pride in our music to push it out there, or we're too narcissistic to make use of genuine criticism and improve our craft! Other than that, I would say it's extremely helpful to be regimented about how much time you spend composing, and prioritize this time. And figure out how to talk about your creative work with non-musicians! I can't emphasize how useful it is to be able to energize a roomful of arts patrons.

*“...figure out how to talk about your creative work with non-musicians! I can’t emphasize how useful it is to be able to energize a roomful of arts patrons.” - Peter Lane*

I’ve been fortunate to have some great teachers, performers, and conductors that have been advocates for my music. What has helped me more than anything else, is finding these other musicians that I connect with on a stylistic level, who understand what I’m trying to do. These people – “your” people – will give you the most useful critical feedback, and are the most likely ones to help generate opportunities and champion your music.

I suspect a lot of big opportunities I had when I was a student came from being involved in a lot of musical organizations – both inside and outside academia – not just as a composer, but as a performer, arts administrator, recording guru, equipment grunt, whatever was needed to make good music happen. As composers we spend a lot of time working in solitude. But being a genuinely engaged, active member of a thriving arts community makes the difficult and unpredictable life of being a professional composer far more rewarding.

**CB:** That is good advice for composers of any level, and I hope this will reach the eyes of many eager and excited musicians. Thank you for your responses, and taking the time to interview. Best of luck to you.