



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

XLVII: 3, July - September 2017

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ANNOUNCEMENTS & MEMBER NEWS

SCI Mourns the Loss of Sam Pellman

Sam was Professor of Music at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, where he taught composition, theory, and ran the electronic music studio. He recently served a term as the Associate Dean of the faculty, where he continued to demonstrate his ever-present compassion and advocacy for students and faculty alike. He has been a teacher and mentor to countless students over his long tenure at Hamilton, as well as a friend and supporter to SCI and SEAMUS colleagues across the country. Please keep his wife Colleen, his children John and Emily, and his colleagues at Hamilton, including our own Ryan Carter, in your thoughts today.



From Jonathan Newmark

SCI Member Jonathan Newmark recently had his 2015 trio for bass clarinet, violin, and piano, titled *Secret Atop the Bluff*, selected as the winner of a competition hosted by the Juventas New Music Ensemble. The trio, originally commissioned for the Charlotte New Music Festival, was performed at the Boston New Music Festival on September 24, 2017.

Congratulations, Jonathan!

From Jerry Casey

SCI Member Jerry Casey, Naples, Florida, has been named a semi-finalist in The American Prize in Composition-Choral (professional division) for her work *What Shall We Bring?* (SSAATTBB a cappella), and for the Composition-Vocal Chamber (professional division) Category for *O, Death, Rock Me Asleep* (Soprano/Solo violin).

Congratulations, Jerry!

From Michael Seltenreich

Congratulations to SCI Member Michael Seltenreich on winning the Prime Minister's Award for Composers in Israel!



Michael Seltenreich

From Gabriel Mălăncioiu

We congratulate SCI Member Gabriel Mălăncioiu on just a few of her may recent performances. Among them were the following highlights:

Camino al Tagliamento (Italy), *Dans ritualic* for saxophone, guitar, accordion and piano, Camino Contro Corrente International Festival, L'Arsenale Ensemble, conductor Fillipo Perocco, October 28, 2017

Cineteca Nacional, Mexico City (Mexico), *The Gift* – music for a silent film by Julio Pot, Sound of Silent Film Festival, Mal'Akh Acústico, Felipe Pérez Santiago - conductor performed, April 29, 2017

Munchen (Germany), *Flauros - in memoriam Constantin Brâncuși* for flute, Flöten Festival München 2017, Vlad Colar, November 3, 2017

From Jennifer M. Barker

The University of Delaware SCI student chapter continues to present two concerts of new pieces by their members each year, in addition to hosting reading-recording sessions with professional new music ensembles, and supporting residencies and concerts of music by guest composers from around the globe. Three recent events included a June 2017 string quartet reading-recording session of student works with the Serafin String Quartet; the New Music Delaware Fall 2017 concert with guest composer and hornist Robert G. Patterson (see photo); and the UD SCI Fall 2017 Recital which presented seven works by student members. The latter event included a work for cello octet composed by sophomore composer, Brandon Ye (see photo; Brandon is the closest cellist in the photo).



In addition, the chapter is currently in the midst of collaboratively composing a new opera for 10 female singers and chamber ensemble. The concept for the work was created by UD professor of composition, Dr. Jennifer M. Barker. The premiere of the work, directed by UD professor of voice Dr. Isai Jess Munoz, will be publicly presented, fully-staged, by UDOT's Opera Workshop on April 15th 2018.



From Rain Worthington

Rain Worthington's orchestral tone poem, *In Passages* – for violin soloist and string orchestra was recorded October 14, 2017 by PARMA Recordings with the Croatian Chamber Orchestra, (Hrvatski komorni orkestar), Miran Vaupotić, Conductor, Mojca Ramušćak, violin soloist. Korean violinist, Moonkyung Lee recorded *Jilted Tango* – for violin and piano November 18, 2017 for an upcoming PARMA Recordings release. *Configurations* – for two celli was selected from a call for scores to be premiered by cellists, Guillaume Lagravière & Bruno Ispiola at the Osmose Intermezzo, November 25, 2017 in Brussels, Belgium.



The Croatian Chamber Orchestra

From Oliver Caplan

On December 12, Juventas New Music Ensemble released a new album of Composer Oliver Caplan's music, titled "You Are Not Alone". Mr. Caplan is the ensemble's new Artistic Director.



ABOUT SCI

About the Newsletter

Editor: Carter John Rice
Assistant Editor: Brad Decker

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

The SCI Newsletter is a quarterly publication which serves the SCI membership by publishing materials pertaining to the field of composition and contemporary music culture including: history, pedagogy, philosophy, opinion, current events, interdisciplinary connections, etc. Specifically, the types of articles published are blog or academic style articles, interviews, album reviews, concert/conference reviews, etc. The views and opinions expressed in articles published by the SCI Newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Society of Composers, Inc.

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- 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

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>



"Ascend" SCI Vol. 31**Released: July 24th, 2017****Reviewed by David M. DeVasto**

"Snoqualmie Passages," a piece for saxophone and piano by Patrick Houlihan, is drenched in a neo-Romantic language, and it's hauntingly effective. The sweeping gestures of the piano are coupled with dynamic and serene passages in the saxophone, although the piece saves it's aggressive and most biting moments for the close. The most impressive part of the piece, other than the use of color, is the composer's use of form. It's a fantasia of sorts, narratively driven by reflections of the traversal of a mountain pass. There is no true recap of the opening material - yet it satisfies the listeners expectations.

Joungmin Lee's "Vexations" is a string quartet with the expressive ambition of an orchestra. Extended string techniques provide a wide range of tone color, reminiscent of Ligeti or perhaps Zorn. But that doesn't overshadow the originality of this piece, replete with microtonal passages. Who says there's nothing left to say with a string quartet? The language is texturally focused, driven by the sound quality over pitch content - although it is distinctly "atonal" albeit in a post-Darmstadt sense. The form is akin to a set of variations, with very pleasant tranquil moments serving as interludes dispersed throughout. That said, the piece never lets you rest for long - you are grabbed by the throat and in order to survive you must listen without apology or regret and you will come away rewarded.

Paul SanGregory's "Shining Through Cracks" is a well-crafted piece from start to finish. Strings echo shades of Bartok, but the piano enhances the color palette with foreboding effectiveness, All the while the oboe stretches it's lamenting cries above the shifting textures. The piece is a tale of two halves. The first, shorter, is an introduction that slowly creeps and crescendos, setting the stage for the arrival of section two. The second section is jaunting as the tempo increases and the oboe becomes more active, even so the piece is driven by the strings. Microtones are used as the oboe bends its piercing melody. SanGregory's use of aleatoric elements in the strings adds to the unsettled and "cloudy" atmosphere while the oboe seeks out the proverbial "light." The end of the piece is surprising and effective - driven by narrative, with the promise that there is hope at the end of this tunnel. The pitch content is

derived from the piano chords, which flesh out the missing pieces as they scatter and re-scatter. Beautiful. This critic's favorite entry on an album filled with excellent pieces.

Mike McFerron delights again with "If You Walked A Mile," for marimba and computer. A recorded narrator recites George Miller's poem of the same title, one decrying the ails of poverty and the schism between a society of haves and have-nots. The computer synthesis of marimba-like sounds fuses the piece's non-acoustic and digital elements seamlessly. McFerron does an excellent job of getting a lot of material out of relatively few pitches - like drawing blood from a stone. The poem is separated into two halves, each capping the ends of the piece while the middle section serves primarily as a marimba feature. It's a thought-provoking piece and pleasant to the ear.

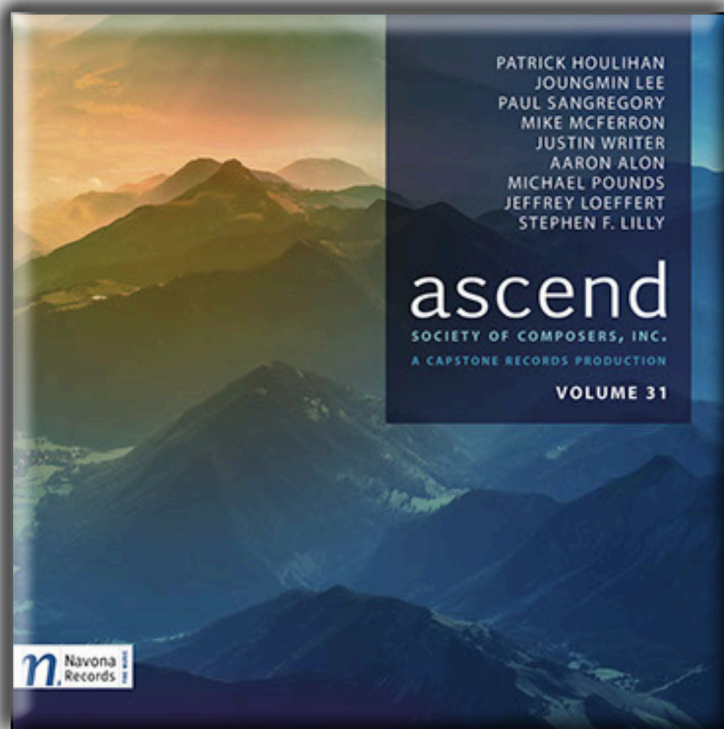
Justin Writer's "Fantasia" for Clarinet solo could be seen as a performance study on utilizing the instrument's wide range. Compositionally, the piece is organized around an E-flat major triad, it's not easily perceived. Some motives repeat themselves in unpredictable ways, and there is a definitive climax to provide formal clarity, but it is a fantasia in the truest sense. This fantasia, as the composer suggests, is meant to give the impression of spontaneity - which it surely accomplishes.

"Dulce Et Decorum Est," by Aron Alon features a string quartet and baritone voice. In the opening minutes, the strings strive forward through dissonant textures in a demarcated progression, reminiscent of Schoenberg's Transfigured Night - or more appropriately his 2nd String Quartet which also featured a vocal solo. The text here, however, is set to Wilfred Owen's anti-war poem to which the composer owes his title. In that sense, John Adams' "The Wound Dresser" also comes to mind. The composition is driven and shaped by the anti-war narrative in dramatic fashion, with Mark Whatley's baritone voice providing a beautifully dark tone befitting of the material. The second stanza picks up the tempo, revealing Whatley's higher tessitura in refreshing ways to depict the flashback of soldiers returning from battle. The strings provide interesting accompaniment textures using extended techniques and a pulse that drives the piece into it's final stanza, and it ends with a lovely resolution of transformed opening material. Alan's use of musical quotation ("Battle Cry of Freedom") also provides a memorable moment of transcendence towards the end of

Michael Pounds' "Breathing 2: RE/INSPIRATION" is a pure acoustic experience formed solely by digital media. Pounds washes the listener with transforming textures and sweeping gestures that are difficult to identify in terms of their source material, whether samples or synthesis, but the result is haunting as it straddles a space between fact and fiction- creating in the listener the suspension of disbelief. Exhaustive breathing, laughter (with no sense of joy), and one-syllable entrances from a female protagonist shape the narrative while other shapes are explored at various depths - all while shifting stereophonic positions. The result is a contrapuntal impression that offers much to the wandering imagination.

"Bombinate," by Jeffrey Loeffert, employs three soprano saxophones and a singing bowl, tuned to D. As the title suggests, the instruments work in tandem to create a variety of buzz-like textures. Again, microtones are central to the aesthetic of this piece. The outer sections serve as formal end caps, each utilizing a more linear approach with grace notes embellishing angular saxophone melodies reminiscent of folk dances. The trance-like middle section offers sharp dynamic contrasts, multi-phonetic outbursts, lip bends, and tongue slaps - all in strict repetition while modifying the tempo.

Stephen Lilly's "Embark" offers a fine farewell as the final track of an excellent record album. In Lilly's percussion trio, a saturating percussion palette enchants the listener with a simple egg shaker and kalimba, although the 5-bell desert chime is the clear focus. The stereo recording quality is resoundingly good, with use of depth perception providing a noticeable impact. One gets the sense this piece may be more effective as a purely acousmatic experience rather than a live performance, but if it is experienced in a live setting, something like a religious ceremony (which was the purpose of its commission) seems apt. The use of time and microtonal intonation adds to the windblown atmosphere of the piece. the trio of instruments compliment one another nicely, with the kalimba providing dry sounds, the chimes wet sounds and the egg shaker somewhere in between. Lilly describes the piece as meditative, and describes the relationship between the instruments as "represent(ing) three simultaneous ways of being present in the world." The sound world Lilly created to represent this metaphorical schism is one I'd like to revisit.



Navona Records
Release Date: July 14, 2017
Catalog #: NV6112

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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

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