

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: SELECTED SOLO MUSIC FOR SAXOPHONE
 BY UNITED STATES COMPOSERS: 1975-2005

David B. Stambler, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2006

Dissertation directed by: Professor John Wakefield
 School of Music

This dissertation project identifies important works for solo saxophone by United States composers between 1975 and 2005. The quality, variety, expressiveness, and difficulty of the solo saxophone repertoire during these thirty years is remarkable and remedies, to some extent, the fact that the saxophone had been a largely neglected instrument in the realm of classical music.

In twentieth-century music, including Jazz, the saxophone developed, nevertheless, a unique and significant voice as is evident in the saxophone repertoire that expands immensely in many instrumental settings, including the orchestra, solo works, and a wide variety of chamber ensembles. Historically, the saxophone in the United States first found its niche in Vaudeville, military bands, and jazz ensembles, while in Europe composers such as Debussy, D'Indy, Schmitt, Ibert, Glazounov, Heiden, and Desenclos recognized the potential of the instrument and wrote for it. The saxophone is well suited to the intimacy and unique timbral explorations of the solo literature, but only by the middle twentieth century did the repertoire allow the instrument to flourish into a virtuosic and

expressive voice presented by successive generations of performers -- Marcel Mule, Sigurd Rascher, Cecil Leeson, Jean-Marie Londeix, Fred Hemke, Eugene Rousseau, and Donald Sinta. The very high artistic level of these soloists was inspiring and dozens of new compositions were commissioned. Through the 1960's, American composers such as Paul Creston, Leslie Bassett, Henry Cowell, Alec Wilder, and others produced eminent works for the saxophone, to be followed by an enormous output of quality compositions between 1975 and 2005.

The works chosen for performance were selected from thousands of compositions between 1975 and 2005 researched for this project. The three recital dates were: April 6, 2005, in Gildenhorn Recital Hall, December 4, 2005, in Ulrich Recital Hall, and April 15, 2006, in Gildenhorn Recital Hall. Recordings of these recitals may be obtained in person or online from the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library of the University of Maryland, College Park.

SELECTED SOLO MUSIC FOR SAXOPHONE BY
UNITED STATES COMPOSERS: 1975-2005

by

DAVID B. STAMBLER

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Advisory Committee:

Professor John Wakefield, Chair
Instructor Dale Underwood
Associate Professor Christopher Gekker
Associate Professor Christopher Vadala
Professor Peter Beicken

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April 15, 2006, Gildenhorn Recital Hall

I. Justification

This dissertation project serves to identify the important works for solo saxophone by United States composers since 1975, and present selected works in performance in three recitals. It offers a perspective on the development of the solo saxophone repertoire has come, and illustrates that United States composers (hereafter referred to as American) are making significant contributions to that end. The quality, variety, expressiveness and difficulty of the solo saxophone repertoire by American composers from 1975-2005 is remarkable, and is illustrated in this dissertation project through the representative works chosen.

Beginning with pieces as the *Sonata* (1970) of Russian composer Edison Denisov, the solo saxophone literature began an evolution to a new realm of sophistication, technical difficulty, and expressiveness. However in the United States - after the extraordinary popularity of novelty works by Rudy Weidoeft, and the emergence of saxophone in popular and Jazz idioms - only a few works by American composers received recognition as being outstanding. These works include the *Sonata* (1939) of Paul Creston, the *Air and Scherzo* (1961) by Henry Cowell and the *Music for Saxophone and Piano* (1967) by Leslie Bassett.

Upon examination of dissertations listed at University Microfilms (Ann Arbor, MI), and on the website for the North American Saxophone Alliance (dissertation resource), it is apparent that no dissertation project, performed or

written, directly presents a cumulative sampling of solo saxophone music for saxophone by American composers during the last thirty years.

II . Background

The Saxophone has been, and to some degree remains, a neglected instrument in the realm of classical music. However, especially in twentieth century music including Jazz, the saxophone has developed a unique and significant voice. As an orchestral instrument the saxophone made slow progress in the nineteenth century. A few well-known composers took a liking to the saxophone and included it in their works. Adolphe Sax became quite friendly with Berlioz, and to a lesser degree with Bizet, Donizetti, Rossini, and Massenet, all of whom either praised or made use of Sax's new invention.

In the twentieth century, the saxophone repertoire expanded immensely in many instrumental settings, including the orchestra, solo works, and a wide variety of chamber ensembles. While the saxophone in America first found its niche in Vaudeville, military bands, and jazz ensembles, composers in Europe such as Debussy, D'Indy, Schmitt, Ibert, Glazounov, Heiden, and Desenclos recognized the potential of the instrument and composed for it. The saxophone is well suited to the intimacy and unique timbral explorations of the solo literature, and only by the middle twentieth century did the repertoire allow its virtuosic and expressive voice to flourish.

Composers of the middle 20th century had the benefit of hearing the saxophone blossom into a virtuosic and expressive instrument as played by each successive generation of performers -- Marcel Mule, Sigurd Rascher, Cecil Leeson, Jean-Marie Londeix, Fred Hemke, Eugene Rousseau, and Donald Sinta. These soloists performed at a very high artistic level and inspired and commissioned dozens of new compositions. Through the 1960's quality works for the saxophone had been composed by Americans Paul Creston, Leslie Bassett, Henry Cowell, Alec Wilder, and more.

III. Selection of Repertoire

A. Criteria for Selection

Through this dissertation project, thousands of works written by United States composers have been identified through numerous bibliographies, concert programs, publishing entities, and consultations with colleagues. The field of compositions was then narrowed to those composed between 1975 and 2005. Consideration for inclusion in the recital programs was given to the following works: those appearing frequently on University curricula; those appearing frequently on concert programs or in trade journals; those about which dissertations or scholarly papers have been written; and those familiar to myself, Dale Underwood, or the numerous colleagues consulted. From among these, the pieces chosen were those that best combined high compositional quality and significance within the repertoire, and those which would create a viable recital program. Among the types of works chosen are: those that challenge the technical

limits of the saxophone within a context of musical sophistication; those that are frequently performed in academic environments; those by long-established and respected composers; and those that have favorably withstood analysis.

Frequently, a determination had to be made to select one deserving work over another, as not every quality piece could be included. Characteristics such as length, and variety of tonal and textural styles, were among those considered. For example, on the first recital works by Bassett, Bolcom, Albright and Wuorinen could have comprised the entirety of a recital. These pieces are similar in their non-traditional, significantly dissonant tonality. They are also similar in their aggressive treatment of the solo instrument. From a programming perspective I chose to include two of these works. I selected two others that represented different tonal and textural approaches - the Lennon, which is texturally fluid, and alternates between atonality, major, minor and lydian tonalities, and the Muczynski which is both tonally and texturally conservative.

In other cases works were eliminated because of availability - The *Four Impromptus* by Paul Cooper, a dynamic, interesting, and exciting work, was out of print at the time the works were being assessed for inclusion; neither The *Dream Dancer* by Michael Colgrass nor the Lennon *Symphonic Rhapsody* have convincing or viable piano reductions from the original ensemble versions.

For the third and final recital, there is a speculative element to assessing the quality and longevity of some of the works. While Bolcom, Albright,

Lennon, Muczynski, Larsen, and Tower are significant composers of wind and chamber music of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the works of Leshnoff, Garrop, Chang, John Rogers, have only been played a handful of times. These composers are still quite new and unknown in relative terms, but are apparently composers of great promise. This can be assessed by examining the pieces themselves, as well as by the critical reaction of performers and listeners. It is appropriate to include one such work to represent both the process and the product of the recent evolution of the repertoire. In the case of Leshnoff, Chang, Garrop, and Rogers, the compositions by each from the appropriate decade are all remarkably similar in their tonal and textural approach, as well as their quality. The Leshnoff was chosen because it is a piece that I commissioned and premiered.

Ultimately, even within the parameters of this dissertation recital series, consideration was given to works which function well together within a recital. In each recital, several works stood out as very strong candidates for inclusion, leaving one or two more needed to complete the program. The remaining pieces were chosen from the eligible pool of significant works based on texture, tonal approach, duration, and rehearsal considerations.

It is an inherently subjective process to assess the quality and significance of art, especially recent art. Therefore, discussion with colleagues combined with my own experience as a performer and teacher were a significant part of the selection process.

Criteria:

- Quality of composition
- Relative significance within the repertoire
- Significance of composer as represented by their body of work
- Frequency of performance
- Availability
- Programming viability

B. Examination Process for Selection

Each of the above criteria was assessed with the following processes:

- Personal experience as performer and teacher.
- Discussion with Dale Underwood.
- Discussion and correspondence with colleagues including:

Joseph Lulloff, Professor of Saxophone, Michigan State University;
Clifford Leaman, Professor of Saxophone, University of South Carolina;
Timothy McAllister, Professor of Saxophone, Crane School of Music;
Kenneth Tse, Professor of Saxophone, University of Iowa;
Joseph Murphy, Professor of Saxophone, Bloomsburg University;
Steve Mauk, Professor of Saxophone, Ithaca College;
Russell Peterson, Professor of Saxophone, Concordia College;
Ken Radnofsky, Professor of Saxophone, New England Conservatory.

- Examination of concert programs, including those of conferences by North American Saxophone Alliance and World Saxophone Congress.
- Examination of Bibliographies.
- Examination of trade journals: Saxophone Symposium and Saxophone Journal.

- Examination of online programs, curriculum, and repertoire lists.

C. Clarification of “Solo Music”

For the purpose of this dissertation, “Solo Music ” shall include the following genres of repertoire:

- Unaccompanied saxophone
- Saxophone solo with piano accompaniment
- Concerti (performed on these recitals with piano reduction)
- Saxophone solo with small chamber ensemble accompaniment.
(performed on these recitals with piano reduction)

It shall not include the following:

- Saxophone Ensemble (Duo, Trio, Quartet, larger)
- Saxophone with Electronic Media
- Saxophone as member of a larger ensemble (Orchestra or Band), not in a significant enough solo capacity as to be described as concerto or “solo” work. Example: Ravel, *Bolero*; Mussorgsky/Ravel, *Pictures at an Exhibition*; Milhaud, *La Creation Du Monde*.
- Saxophone as an equal member of a miscellaneous chamber ensemble.
Example: Tomasi, *Printemps*; Webern, *Quartet, Opus 22*.
- Jazz or Commercial genres

IV. Programming

The three recital programs shall be divided into three decades: 1975-1985; 1985-1995; and 1995-2005. This is not intended to indicate any significant trend or characteristic of each decade, but rather to simplify programming while providing a chronological perspective. The overlapping of the dates of the three time periods is intentional, and facilitates the distribution of chosen repertoire over three recitals.

Recital 1: 1975-1985

David Stambler, saxophone; Kim Lewis, piano
April 6, 2005, Gildenhorn Recital Hall

Distances Within Me (1979)

John Anthony Lennon (b. 1950)

Sonata (1984)

William Albright (1944-1998)

- I. Two-part Invention
- II. La Follia Nuova: a lament for G. Cacioppo
- III. Scherzo "Will O' the Wisp"
- IV. Recitative and Dance

Lilith (1984)

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

1. The Female Demon
2. Succuba
3. Will 'O The Wisp
4. Child Stealer
5. The Night Dance

Concerto, Op. 41 (1981)

Robert Muczynski (b.1929)

- I. Allegro Energico

RECITAL 1: Notes for this evening's performance

David Stambler, saxophone
Kim Lewis, piano
Gildenhorn Recital Hall, April 6, 2005

Distances Within Me - John Anthony Lennon

Composed in 1979 for Saxophonist James Forger, this work has become a frequently performed and recorded work in the repertoire. The saxophone part is quite difficult and requires lyrical beauty throughout the horn, including the extended altissimo range. Originally composed without barlines, its current form utilizes constantly changing meters to accommodate the rhythmically complex stream of consciousness melodies. This creates numerous challenges for ensemble performance.

The work is nearly through composed, but contains structural punctuations of recurring material, surrounded by what can be described as episodes. The two haunting "Dance Macabre" sections are followed by a highly charged rhythmic unison. Each time this rhythmic cohesiveness is dissolved by the use of rhythmic "phasing", or slightly offset passage in both voices. The saxophone and piano restate the entirety of the opening melody in exact unison, and the piece closes with a lyrical coda.

This work is one of several that is almost universally praised for its quality, beauty, and technical challenges. Lennon has also composed an even more challenging work for saxophone, the *Symphonic Rhapsody*, which is far less frequently performed.

Sonata for Saxophone and Piano - William Albright

Composed in 1984, this sonata was part of a joint commission by saxophonists Donald Sinta, Laura Hunter, and Joseph Wytko, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, which also yielded two other works - the *Sonata* by David Diamond and *Lilith* by William Bolcom. The four diverse movements total twenty minutes in duration and make use of extremes of tempo, dynamics, technical facility, and range. The *Sonata* is widely considered one of the strongest works in the saxophone repertoire because of its beauty, intensity, and imaginative and cohesive composition.

Movement I is both canonic and chaotic. It features three recurring pairs of counterpoint sections and cadenzas. Dedicated to composer and friend of

Albright's, George Cacioppo, Movement II is a lyrical ballad set in regularly changing meters. It alternates between placid and angstful, closing with poignant and percussive piano chords. The final melody statement in the saxophone is played into the open piano, as a "private performance". Movement III is a brief and wild scherzo performed sotto voce, with occasional bursts of extreme dynamic change. Albright employs both hocket and unison to unify the saxophone and piano voices. The final movement begins with a lyrical cadenza and proceeds into a wild ride of Jazz-like riffs and percussive articulation. The minor-third motive recurs constantly, creating a bluesy tonal center.

Lilith - William Bolcom

One of the three 1984 NEA Commission works mentioned, *Lilith* is programmatic in its depiction of the female demon of the same name. Bolcom writes that Lilith is "a female demon believed to haunt desolate places,...the child-stealing witch of worldwide folklore....In Mesopotamian texts she appears primarily as the Succuba, who tempts men in sexual dreams." The five movements, each programmatic in its reference to the various elements of the Lilith myth, are relatively brief and quite varied in texture and use of tonality. Bolcom explores, to a far greater degree than the other works on this program, extended techniques and sound effects. Growls, flutter tonguing, pop tonguing, multiphonics, key noises, and vocal wails are frequent throughout.

Movement I, the Female Demon, is noted by Bolcom "wild and raunchy, free". It alternates between placid call and response and wild chaotic passages. Movement II, Succuba, is haunting in its simplicity. Ironically marked "Adagio religioso", it is peppered with flutter tonguing and growls in the saxophone. Movement III, Will-o' the Wisp is notated without barlines, and is marked "smooth, no pulse". Similar to the third movement of the Albright Sonata, Bolcom employs hocket, unison and counterpoint to create an almost non-stop linear.

Movement IV, the Child Stealer, opens with a series of haunting wails in the saxophone, which throughout the movement become progressively less urgent. The entire movement, with the exception of the last note, is played by the saxophonist into the open piano. The final movement, Night Dance is the most tonal of the movements, and is driven by a recurring, urgent bass pattern.

Compositionally *Lilith* is quite cohesive and imaginative, and, like the Albright and Lennon, is almost universally lauded as a superlatively dynamic and expressive work in the repertoire. There are numerous compositional similarities between this work and the Albright – including an identically named and similarly textured "Will O the Wisp" movement - perhaps because Bolcom and Albright

were simultaneously on the composition faculty of the University of Michigan during its composition.

Concerto for Saxophone - Robert Muczynski

A far more conservative work than the others on the program, the *Concerto Opus 41*, has become a frequently played staple of the university saxophonist. It was first performed in 1981 and in 1982 was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in Music. It was originally written for Saxophone and Orchestra, and the piano reduction by the composer is quite effective. Trent Kynaston, for whom the *Concerto* was written, arranged the work for wind ensemble.

It consists of three movements each containing elegant and appealing melodic and harmonic material. The first and third movements are also challenging because of the incessant sixteenth note texture and rapid tempi. Muczynski writes “ there is a great deal of interplay between soloist and orchestra in the first movement, contrasted by a central section of brooding lyricism. A return to the bustling first tempo carries the movement to an impetuous close.”

It is outstanding representation of the Concerto genre, a far less common one than sonatas or other works for saxophone with piano. Muczynski also composed a short and simple, yet very appealing, *Sonata for Saxophone* which is even more frequently played.

Recital 2: 1985-1995

David Stambler, saxophone; Erik Apland, piano
December 4, 2006, Ulrich Recital Hall

Lessons of the Sky (1985)

Rodney Rogers (b. 1953)

San Antonio (1994)

John Harbison (b. 1938)

- I. The Summons
- II. Line Dance
- III. Couples' Dance

Intermission

Wings (1981/1991)

Joan Tower (b. 1938)

Sonata (1988)

David Maslanka (b. 1943)

- I. Moderato

Suite for Saxophone (1992)

Mark Lanz Weiser (b.1968)

- I. Introduction
- II. Lullaby
- III. Waltz
- IV. Finale

RECITAL 2: Notes for this evening's performance

David Stambler, saxophone
Erik Apland, piano
Ulrich Recital Hall, December 4, 2006

Lessons of the Sky - Rodney Rogers

An endearing and enduring piece in the saxophone literature, "Lessons of the Sky" is performed by saxophonist all over the world. Its rhythmic drive and harmonic fluidity are evocative of both "new-age" jazz and classical minimalism.

The work at times seems nearly through-composed, but ultimately adheres to an A-B-A form. Short rhythmic and melodic motives periodically recur, but are slightly altered each time with subtle variations of meter, duration, and placement within the measure. These motives are presented in the urgent but joyous opening and closing sections of the work. The middle section is lyrical and starkly slower, with a pan-tonal approach in predominantly major tonality. The harmonic progressions of Erik Satie's "Three Gymnopédies" are clearly audible, though rhythmically augmented and displaced metrically. The closing section restates the rhythmic and melodic motives of the opening, roughly in reverse order.

In Rogers' words, "the composition's title suggests that by observing the sky—open, alive, seemingly infinite—we may gain knowledge. The music uses a collection of motives presented in a quick and ever-changing rhythmic background to express the energy and quixotic nature of our atmosphere."

Sonata - David Maslanka

The single movement on this evening's program is the first of three in the piece. This movement is almost schizophrenic in nature, shifting between beautifully lyrical melodies, angular melodies with chaotic rhythmic accompaniment, and frantic scalar passages.

The work achieves cohesiveness through the presentation, restatement and variation of thematic groups, separated by starkly contrasting and chaotic interludes. The second interlude is substantial and serves as a contrasting middle section. It features a dense scalar melody in 32nd notes, performed in canon first by the saxophone and then the piano. A sudden return to the second theme ushers in the subdued final section. The closing soliloquy combines the lyrical melody of the opening, with the unsettled, ambiguous rhythmic accompaniment typical of

the middle section. Here, though, achieving ambiguity through silence rather than chaos.

The Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano was commissioned by the North American Saxophone Alliance and was premiered at the United States Navy Band International Saxophone Symposium in 1989.

Wings - Joan Tower

Wings was originally composed for solo clarinet 1981, and transcribed for saxophone by the composer in 1991. Like many works of Tower, it has a symbolic title drawing on imagery and abstract concepts.

A frequently performed work, *Wings* uses long melodic lines and sudden contrasts to evoke the concept of flight - one moment gliding peacefully, and the next changing direction without warning. The suspension of time achieved throughout the work, notated in the piece by the absence of barlines or meter, is reminiscent of Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*. The meandering quality of the work is occasionally interrupted by triplets or 16th notes played with a steady tempo. The most notable of these interruptions consists of 16ths notes and occurs twice, conveying the rare use of traditional tonality in the piece. On both occurrences, the 16ths are followed by suspended trills which help the piece to transition back to the meandering texture. The piece concludes after the second of these interruptions with a brief peaceful and lyrical melody, which rises and is suspended, as if in air.

San Antonio – John Harbison

San Antonio was commissioned by the Worldwide Concurrent Premieres and Commission Fund and completed in 1994. It was premiered in that year by many saxophonists nationwide.

San Antonio is programmatic in nature, depicting a tourist's visit to San Antonio, and his experience at a dance. The first movement is strikingly rhythmic and Jazz-like. It is almost required that the performer be well versed in jazz in order to convey the rhythmic phrasing. The second movement is pleasantly melodic, with a samba flavor. The third movement is sensual tango, splashed with short energetic cadenzas. Harbison describes the movements:

I. The Summons

The traveler has a free afternoon in San Antonio. It is August, 105 degrees. Expecting to start with the cool promenade along the river, he is instead lured by a sound. He follows it up a long stairway and finds himself in

a little fiesta – a hot square, no, shade, many people, a few dancing to a fast beat, the band playing and singing in Spanish.

II. Line Dance

The first dancers finish, exhausted. Then, as if on cue, the whole crowd gets into a line, all ages, 9 to 90. They all know the steps which change with the phrases.

III. Couples Dance

Then the music changes again, still slower: they go on in couples. No one seems to feel the heat; the band hardly stops. Everyone, the traveler included, sinks into it. Towards the end a young girl asks the traveler to dance. He declines. But a year later, when the tourist jots down the memory of the sounds- something about a saxophone, and a few rhythms – in his distorted memory, he accepts.

The work features an unusual tempo progression from one movement to the next – first fast, then medium, than slow. Though each movement contains a variety of textures, the progression provides a relaxed quality to the whole of the piece.

Suite for Saxophone – Mark Weiser

The Suite for Saxophone was commissioned and premiered by David Stambler in 1992, and since then has been performed dozens of times across the United States and abroad. It is characterized by harmonies which are derivative of Copland, Gershwin, and Bernstein, and driving rhythms reminiscent of American jazz.

The first movement, Introduction, is very short but with high energy. There are numerous shifts of meter, but the lyrical melody helps it achieve cohesiveness. The Lullaby is structured almost like the great popular songs of Gershwin, Cole Porter, and Jerome Kern. Its form is roughly A-B-A, with simple statement and restatement of melodic material. The Waltz is also in an A-B-A form with a contrasting central lyrical section. Moving rapidly and almost imperceptibly between meters, the Waltz is as exciting as it is undancable. The finale opens with a declamatory cadenza by the saxophone. The primary melodic material is then stated by the solo saxophone, and then restated throughout the movement, first in canon between saxophone and piano, then in striking unison. The final phrases are a repeated fragment of the canon melody, stated in unison by both instruments.

Recital 3: 1995-2005

David Stambler, saxophone; Kathy Gattuso Cinatl, piano
April 15, 2006, Gildenhorn Recital Hall

Holy Roller (1997)

Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

Concert Suite (1998)

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

- I. Lively
- II. Like an Old Folksong
- III. Scherzando
- IV. Introduction and Jump

We Sing to Each Other (1996)

Dana Wilson (b. 1946)

- I. Of Beauty and Sadness

Five Portraits (2004/2005)

Jonathan Leshnoff (b. 1973)

- I. Suspension
- II. Vision
- III. Reflection
- IV. Motion
- V. Elegy

RECITAL 3: Notes for this afternoon's performance

David Stambler, saxophone
Kathy Gatusso Cinatl, piano
Gildenhorn Recital Hall, April 15, 2006

Holy Roller – Libby Larsen

Holy Roller is a musical depiction of the frenetic and passionate preaching reminiscent of the Reverend William Seymour of Los Angeles, whose infamous revival meeting is said to have lasted from 1906 to 1909. The congregation was said to have ecstatically responded to Seymour's preaching, creating a call and response of great intensity. Larsen refers to revival sermons as "stunning musical masterpieces of rhythm, tempo, and extraordinary tension and release".

Holy Roller begins with a soliloquy by the saxophone that alternates between serene and frantic. Once the piano enters, the passionate, soaring lines of the saxophone are interspersed with interjections by the piano. Accompanied by Ives-like polytonality, dissonance, and traditional tonality, the main themes are derived from the familiar hymns "Shall We Gather by the River" and "God Be with You 'til We Meet Again", and the popular song "When the Saints Go Marching In".

The final section, marked "Fire and Brimstone", is underscored with an urgent, boogie-woogie-like piano line in ever-changing meters. The saxophone utilizes lyricism, syncopation and extremes of range culminating with one final "scream" of passion. Larsen describes Holy Roller as a "revival sermon captured in the sounds of the saxophone and piano."

Originally from Minnesota, Libby Larsen is one of America's most performed living composers. She has composed over 220 works in a variety of genres including chamber music, opera, orchestral and choral scores, and solo works. In 1973 she co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, which is now the American Composer's Forum.

Concert Suite – William Bolcom

This deceptively simple-sounding piece is a virtuosic exploration of the musical influences of William Bolcom. The Concert Suite was originally composed for saxophone virtuoso Donald Sinta through a commission by the University of Michigan Band Alumni Association, and was originally scored for saxophone solo with wind ensemble. It makes extensive use of the saxophone's altissimo register, making it one of the more challenging works in the saxophone

repertoire. The composer himself states that “the piece is a four movement high wire act”.

Bolcom describes the musical influence of each movement in his score notes:

“The Suite incorporates influences from my composing life. The First movement, *Lively*, is reminiscent of my beloved teacher, Darius Milhaud; the folksong-like second movement incorporates a simple melody that I have heard in my head most of my life. The *Scherzando* is a fast triple-time waltz, followed by *Introduction and Jump*, evoking the detective dramas of early television.”

William Bolcom is Professor of Composition at the University of Michigan, a post he has held since 1973. He was the recipient of the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for Music, and has won several Grammy Awards. He is a prolific composer of orchestral music, choral music, piano rags, and songs which he frequently performs with his wife, singer Joan Morris. His other composition for saxophone, *Lilith*, is among the most difficult and respected pieces in the saxophone repertoire.

We Sing to Each Other – Dana Wilson

We Sing to Each Other is composed for saxophone alone and suggests a dialogue between two or more people. The short melodic fragments are distinguished from each other by the use of contrasting dynamics, contrasting timbre, and space. Throughout the piece the melodies become more intense in both rhythm and volume, and are occasionally even indistinguishable, as in an energetic conversation. Wilson, in his notes on the piece, mentions his enchantment by the similarity of the saxophone sound to that of the human voice: “...I heard this solo saxophone piece as a kind of singing, and the intimate dialogue that is suggested in the counterpoint as a kind of singing to each other.”

We Sing to Each Other is dedicated to saxophonists Steve Mauk and Jamal Rossi, and was premiered by Rossi at the 1996 North American Saxophone Alliance Conference in Gainesville, Florida.

Dana Wilson is well known as a composer of wind and chamber music as well as solo pieces. His compositions have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, and East Asia. He has received several awards, including the Sudler International Composition Prize and the Ostwald Composition Prize. He is currently Charles A. Dana Professor of Music in the School of Music at Ithaca College. His other works for saxophone include a concerto for saxophone and Symphonic Band and entitled *Time Cries, Hoping Otherwise*, and several works for saxophone quartet.

Five Portraits – Jonathan Leshnoff

Jonathan Leshnoff's "Five Portraits" was originally conceived as a sonata in four movements, each of which reflected a different mood or texture. In this final five-movement version, each movement, except the last, is named for an abstract concept which is musically reflected therein: Suspension, Motion, Reflection, Vision, and Elegy. Its original incarnation as a sonata is evident in the developmental recurrence of melody, harmony, and rhythm throughout each movement as well as common between movements.

Suspension is in a three-part form, each of which reflects the element of suspension in a different way: silence and anticipation, lyricism and resonance, and relentless counterpoint. *Vision* is also in a three part form, roughly the textural inversion of the sections in the first movement. The melodies from *Suspension* are presented in a varied form and in a different order, as if to give the listener another "look" at the material just heard. The rhapsodic *Reflection* is serene and beautiful, presenting the saxophone in a highly improvisational manor over a steady accompaniment. *Motion* begins with stark rhythmic unison as did the first movement, but rather than changing texture, it accumulates energy moment by moment. The final *Elegy* is a gentle reminder of the lyrical melodies from the first two movements of the piece.

"Five Portraits" was commissioned by David Stambler and the Margot Music Fund. It was premiered in the four-movement version in 2004 at the North American Saxophone Alliance in Greensboro, North Carolina. The current five movement version was premiered at the Towson New Music Festival in 2005.

Composer Jonathan Leshnoff has received many awards including two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, and special distinction in the Rudolph Nissim Prize. He receives frequent commissions, including recent ones by the Buffalo Philharmonic, Columbus, Kansas City, and Phoenix Symphonies, and the "President's Own" United States Marine Band. He is currently Assistant Professor of Music Theory at Towson University near Baltimore.

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Program

Distances Within Me (1979)

John Anthony Lennon
(b. 1950)

Sonata (1984)

William Albright
(1944-1998)

- I. Two-part Invention
- II. La Follia Nuova: a lament for G. Cacioppo
- III. Scherzo "Will O' the Wisp"
- IV. Recitative and Dance

Lilith (1984)

William Bolcom
(b. 1938)

- 1. The Female Demon
- 2. Succuba
- 3. Will O' The Wisp
- 4. Child Stealer
- 5. The Night Dance

Concerto, Op. 41 (1981)

Robert Muczynski
(b. 1929)

- I. Allegro Energico

This recital is being presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts. David Stambler is a student of Dale Underwood.

Program

Holy Roller (1997)

Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

Concert Suite (1998)

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

- I. Lively
- II. Like an Old Folksong
- III. Scherzando
- IV. Introduction and Jump

We Sing to Each Other (1996)

Dana Wilson (b. 1946)

- I. Of Beauty and Sadness

Five Portraits (2004/2005)

Jonathan Leshnoff (b. 1973)

- I. Suspension
- II. Vision
- III. Reflection
- IV. Motion
- V. Elegy

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Program

Lessons of the Sky (1985)

Rodney Rogers
(b. 1953)

San Antonio (1994)

John Harbison
(b. 1938)

- I. The Summons
- II. Line Dance
- III. Couples' Dance

Intermission

Wings (1981/1991)

Joan Tower
(b. 1938)

Sonata (1988)

David Maslanka
(b. 1943)

- I. Moderato

Suite for Saxophone (1992)

Mark Lanz Weiser
(b. 1968)

- I. Introduction
- II. Lullaby
- III. Waltz
- IV. Finale

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about the Center

The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland opens new doors to performance and learning experiences for the many communities within and around the University. Dynamic and spirited, the Center is firmly committed to programming that integrates learning, service and performance, actively engaging people in arts exploration and providing artists with a collaborative environment to nurture their talents and present their art. The Center's mission is reflected in its unusual building design, evocative of a community for the arts, which unites six intimate performance spaces, three performing arts academic departments, a performing arts library and rehearsal and classrooms under one roof.

CLARICE SMITH
PERFORMING ARTS
CENTER AT MARYLAND



Please remember to turn off beepers, watch alarms, and cellular telephones. Photography or recording of any kind without advance permission is prohibited.

Out of consideration for the artists and the audience, please note that no one will be seated while music is being performed. Latecomers will be seated at the first appropriate interval.

NOTICE. For your own safety, look for the nearest exit. In case of emergency, walk, do not run, to that exit.

The University of Maryland School of Music
presents

David Stambler

Saxophone

Erik Apland
Piano

Sunday, December 4, 2005 at 5:30PM
Ulrich Recital Hall
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland

about the Center

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The University of Maryland School of Music
presents

David Stambler
Saxophone

Kathy Gattuso Cinatl
Piano

Saturday, April 15, 2006 at 2:00 PM
Joseph & Alma Gildenhorn Recital Hall
Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland

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The University of Maryland School of Music
presents

David Stambler

Saxophone

Kim Lewis
Piano

April 6, 2005 at 5:30PM
Joseph & Alma Gildenhorn Recital Hall
Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland