

Acknowledgments

Dr. Leroy E. Bynum Jr., Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities
Susan Walsh, Music Department Secretary
The College of Saint Rose Music Department Faculty

Upcoming Concerts

Sunday, December 7, 2:00 PM - Malcom Moran Senior Piano Recital
Sunday, December 7, 8:00 PM - Saint Rose Wind Ensemble
Monday, December 8, 12:00 PM - Saint Rose Opera Workshop
Tuesday, December 9, 8:00 PM - Music Industry Showcase
(in Campus Theatre in front of Hearst Center)

The College of Saint Rose
Department of Music
presents

The Saint Rose New Music Ensemble

Directed by
Dr. Robert E. Thomas

IN CONCERT

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2014

7:30 PM

PICOTTE RECITAL HALL
MASSRY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The College of Saint Rose Music Department is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music and offers Bachelor of Science degrees in Music Education and Music Industry, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music, a minor in Jazz Performance, and a Master of Science degree in Music Education.

Learn more about the Music Department's programs and upcoming concerts by calling 518/454-5178 or by visiting the the College's web site (www.strose.edu).

The Saint Rose New Music Ensemble

presents

from Suite in the Old Style (1972)

1. Pastorale
2. Ballet
3. Minuet
5. Pantomime

Violin: Diana Sofia Ortiz Salazar
Piano: Robert E. Thomas

Meditation (2013)

Violin: Diana Sofia Ortiz Salazar
Piano: Robert E. Thomas

from Cycle of Holy Songs (1951)

Psalm 142
Psalm 150

Tenor: Ian West
Piano: Robert E. Thomas

Music for Three (1984-1987)

Violin: Diana Sofia Ortiz Salazar
Flute: Corey Towne
Voice: Ian West

Night Songs, Op. 22 (1987)

1. Good Night
2. She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep
3. A Variation on "To Say To Go To Sleep"

Tenor: Corey Towne
Piano: Robert E. Thomas

Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998)

Robert E. Thomas (b. 1971)

Ned Rorem (b. 1923)

John Cage (1912-1992)

Lowell Liebermann (b. 1961)

The College of Saint Rose New Music ensemble was formed in the Spring of 2013 to focus on chamber music composed since 1950. In the four concerts since then (counting tonight) the ensemble, eclectic in both instrumentation and repertoire, has performed music by sixteen different composers. Participation in the ensemble is open to all Saint Rose students.

Composers performed:

Judah Adashi
Jay Batzner
Benjamin Britten
John Cage
Christian Carey
Elliott Carter
Eric Ewazen
Lowell Liebermann
Vincent Persichetti
Steve Reich
Ned Rorem
Frederic Rzewski
Alfred Schnittke
Baljinder Sekhon
Robert E. Thomas
Christian Wolff

been carefully prepared. They are then to be played as though from multiple centres in space. The players may sit anywhere within the auditorium with respect to the audience and each other.”

Lowell Liebermann (b. 1961) began piano studies at the age of eight, and composition studies at fourteen. He made his performing debut two years later at Carnegie Recital Hall, playing his Piano Sonata, Op. 1, which he composed when he was fifteen. He is one of America’s most frequently performed and recorded living composers. His music is known for its technical command and audience appeal. He has written over one hundred works in all genres, including two full-length operas, two symphonies, a concerto for orchestra, three piano concertos as well as concertos for many other instruments, four string quartets, and much piano music.

Texts

Good Night

This moonlight lies
like a lovely death
On the darkening eyes,
On the yielded breath
Of the earth,
that turns so quietly now;
Letting its burns
Be soothed some how
In the widening bloom,
In the tender blight.
It has entered our room.
We shall sleep tonight.

She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep

She tells her love while half asleep,
In the dark hours,
With half-words whispered low
As Earth stirs in her winter sleep
And puts out grass and flowers,
Despite the snow,
Despite the falling snow.

A Variation on “To Say To Go To Sleep”

If I could I would sing you to sleep
I would give you my hand to keep
In yours till you fell asleep,
And take it away then, slowly,
I would sit by you and be.
In the world the dark would be deep.
I would watch
And at last I would sleep.
But if rain should star
the stream of your sleep,
I would whisper: “See, you are asleep;”
and, slowly your breath
would change in your dream
Till, ages and ages deep
In the dark, you would say to me:
“I love you.”
I love you,
But I am here always.
Sleep now.
Sleep.

Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998) was a Russian composer of German descent. His music is witty, exuberant, full of energy, and also has a darker side of affecting beauty, sorrow, and catastrophe. Its host of stylistic references can feel schizophrenic. Through an attempt to integrate cultural and stylistic differences in a music which is unified yet also ambivalent and homeless, Schnittke has given artistic and spiritual expression to the perplexing confusion of modern life. The polystylistic nature of his music, both disturbing and stimulating, is a reflection of our divided musical consciousness.

The variety of styles in his music is an acknowledgment of the diversity of his roots (he grew up in Vienna and was drawn to the Western avant-garde, yet lived most of his life under the restrictive political pressures of Soviet Russia) and, to some extent, an allegory of conflicting human forces and political creeds.

Schnittke’s concert music often begins with an imitation of Classical or Baroque music whose innocence is gradually overwhelmed by multiple distorting mirrors and adverse forces. There is often an enigmatic balance between sardonic humor and music that is decidedly threatening.

Denied concert performances of his work early in his career, he turned to film music as a matter of economic necessity.

The **Suite in the Old Style** points toward the music of the past and contains polystylistic elements. It is a carefully-crafted parody of a Baroque suite made of pastiche and collage with osmoses of old and new—there are just enough “wrong” elements to be ever-so-slightly unsettling. The first of its five movements, *Pastorale*, hints at Handel or Purcell, but with slightly out-of-style bass dissonances and occasional twentieth-century rhythmic shifts. It ends without cadencing. The third movement, *Minuet*, provides a cross-rhythm in the B section of the Minuet as the melody flirts with $\frac{6}{8}$ while the accompaniment remains firmly in $\frac{3}{4}$. The fifth movement, *Pantomime*, satirizes the banality of run-of-the-mill Baroque material. It opens with ticking thirds on the keyboard, goes on to climax on an extremely dissonant chord (played in one orchestration by oboes) and ends, like the first movement, with an elaborate dominant preparation (which encompasses the entire second ending of the movement)

that never cadences. In fact, the final measures of the fifth movement are an elongation of the closing measures of the first movement, stretching four measures out to seven.

Robert E. Thomas (b. 1971) is an active composer, educator, and scholar whose music has been presented around the country. His main compositional interest is in working with layered structures—an interest he has pursued in both acoustic and electronic works. He is currently on the faculty at The College of Saint Rose, whose Brass Chamber Ensemble recently performed his *OnE*.

I have been fascinated with way both Charles Ives and Alfred Schnittke incorporate different works and styles into their own pieces since I heard a performance of a chamber orchestra arrangement of Schnittke's *Suite in the Old Style* as an undergraduate.

Meditation, which was commissioned and premiered by the violinist James Ruggles last fall, combines a thirteenth-century antiphon (*Veni sancte spiritus*), a hymn for Pentecost ("Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart"), and, in homage to Ives who used it in the second movement of his fourth Violin Sonata, "Jesus Loves Me".

– biography and program note by the composer

Ned Rorem (b. 1923) is an American composer, pianist, and writer who has written lean, elegant, very conservative music since his earliest works of the 1940s. In his prolific writings, he has divided music into either "French" or "German": he places himself firmly in the "French" category.

When it comes to setting words, Rorem is virtually without equal among today's composers. His ear is sensitive to both the meaning and the sound of the words in his texts, and he marries those words to music that feels "right" to the listener.

Cycle of Holy Songs is a set of four Psalms: Psalms 134, 142, 148, and 150. They were composed while Rorem was resident in Paris.

John Cage (1912-1992) was a leader of the postwar avant garde and one of the most influential American composers of the twentieth century. After early studies with Henry Cowell and Arnold Schoenberg, he took a position at the Cornish School of the Arts in Seattle, Washington as a dance accompanist. While there he was asked by the dancer Sylvia Fort to provide music for her solo dance *Bacchanale*. The performance space only allowed for a grand piano. Cage, not trusting that standard piano sounds would fit the dance, transformed the piano into a percussion ensemble by inventing the prepared piano—inserting various objects such as screws, bolts, and pieces of fibrous weather stripping at precise points between the piano's strings. It was also at Cornish that he met the dancer Merce Cunningham, with whom he would develop a lasting relationship.

Around the mid-1940s, after reading sermons of the fourteenth-century mystic Meister Eckhart and works of Hindu and Oriental philosophy and attending Cowell's classes in non-western music as well as classes in Zen Buddhism given by Daisetz Suzuki, Cage began experimenting with creating nonpurposeful, static music. In the last years of the 1940s he began developing an aesthetic of silence; this led in 1950 to the "Lecture on Nothing". Silence was associated with time-based structures which could be filled with completely static or uneventful music—or even no music at all. In 1951 Christian Wolff gave him a copy of the *I Ching*, or *Chinese Book of Changes*, which he used to create his first chance work, *Music of Changes*. Chance operations would be an important component of his work for the rest of his life. Cage's use of chance materials was echoed by New York abstract expressionists dripping paint onto canvasses to achieve random results and by surrealists randomly juxtaposing unrelated images.

Music for ____ (the blank in the title is completed by adding the number of players performing) is a work for variable chamber ensemble. There are seventeen parts (Voice, Trombone, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in B \flat , Trumpet in C, Horn in F, Piano I, Piano II, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and four Percussion), but no score. The performance note specifies that "Each player should prepare his part by himself and learn to play it with his own chronometer. There should be no joint rehearsal until all the parts have