

SMU MEADOWS SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
UPCOMING EVENTS

**Liudmila Georgievskaya and Paul Garner Faculty Chamber
Recital**

Tuesday, September 13, 2016
7:30 pm, Caruth Auditorium

Pamela Paul and Krassimira Jordan Piano Duo

Thursday, September 15, 2016
7:30 pm, Caruth Auditorium

Opera Free For All

Friday, September 16, 2016
1:00 pm, Bob Hope Lobby

Meadows Symphony Orchestra Concert

Saturday, September 24, 2016
Sunday, September 25, 2016
7:30 pm and 2:30 pm, Caruth Auditorium

Marina Lomazov and Joe Rackers Guest Masterclass

Wednesday, September 28, 2016
7:00 pm, Caruth Auditorium

**Emerging Artists – Stefan Engels and Carol Leone Faculty
Recital**

Thursday, September 29, 2016
7:30 pm, Caruth Auditorium

Andres Diaz, Chee-Yun Kim, Wendy Chen Faculty Recital

Saturday, October 1, 2016
7:30 pm, Caruth Auditorium

SMU MEADOWS SCHOOL OF THE ARTS PRESENTS

FACULTY PERCUSSION RECITAL
FEATURING:

DREW LANG, percussion

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12
7:30 PM

CARUTH AUDITORIUM
OWEN ARTS CENTER



PROGRAM

“A Few of My Favorite Things”

Suite for Marimba (1950) Alfred Fissinger (b. 1925)

- I. Mist
- II. Rendezvous in Black
- III. Esch S/ Sure
- IV. Bastonge Convoy

Water and Fire (1983) Donald Skoog (b. 1956)

- I. Water
- II. Fire

A Cross on Wood (1990) G. Bradley Bodine (b. 1960)

Romance (2002) G. Bradley Bodine

INTERMISSION

Marimba Dances Ross Edwards (b. 1943)

- I.
- II.
- III.

Merlin (1985) Andrew Thomas (b. 1939)

- I. Beyond the faint Edge of the World
- II. Time's Way

ARTIST PROFILE

Percussionist **Drew Lang** has commissioned and premiered works for marimba in solo, chamber and concerto settings. An active recitalist and clinician, Lang appears throughout the United States. He has premiered two concertos by G. Bradley Bodine and recorded David Maslanka's *Concerto for Marimba and Band* with the University of Arizona Wind Ensemble, G. Bradley Bodine's *Namaste: Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble* and Dan McCarthy's *Concerto for Marimba, Percussion Ensemble and Synthesizers* with the Meadows Percussion Ensemble. He has also recorded Astor Piazzolla's *Histoire du Tango* with flutist Helen Blackburn on the Breckenridge Music Festival label. Currently, Lang is involved in performing *Namaste* with a consortium of 11 university percussion ensembles. He also performed Eric Ewazen's *Concerto for Marimba and String Orchestra* with the Breckenridge Music Festival in August 2010. As a percussionist, he performs regularly with the Dallas Opera Orchestra and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and is the principal mallet player with the Dallas Wind Symphony and percussionist for Casa Mañana Musicals. He played the world premiere of *Fly* and a newly staged version of *Les Miz* at the Dallas Theater Center and has been the regular percussionist for Broadway shows at the Winspear Opera Hall including *Anything Goes*; *Motown the Musical*; *Newsies*; *Beautiful*; and *Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*. In addition, he spent eight summers as principal percussionist for the Breckenridge Music Festival in Breckenridge, Colo., and one summer as principal percussionist of the Music in the Mountains Festival in Durango, Colo. Lang plays drum set in local symphonies, churches and local venues, including the Dallas-based rock band, Scarlet Vermillion. Lang is on the percussion faculties at Southern Methodist University and Eastfield College. He is also director of the "Marimba Madness" summer Junior High/High School percussion camp and was a guest artist at the 2016 University of North Texas Keyboard Percussion Symposium. Lang is a Vic Firth Sticks and Mallets artist and a Sabian Cymbals artist.

Merlin is just one of those solos that would sound good on anything and is my favorite marimba solo. It's not based on any "technique" per se, but is just a well written piece. Based on the King Arthur's magician, Merlin, the first movement depicts Merlin looking over Camelot's battlements and sensing impending doom. The second movement is time and the dissolution of time "time against time". It's just a great grooving piece.

Merlin was composed for and is dedicated to William Moersch. The poem "Merlin" by Edwin Arlington Robinson is a long narrative retelling of the King Arthur legend and of the destruction of his Court. I have used two quotes from the poem to set the tone of the two movements of the score – Andrew Thomas.

I.

"GAWAINE, GAWAINE, what look ye for to see,
So far beyond the faint edge of the world?
D'ye look to see the lady Vivian,
Pursued by divers ominous vile demons
That have another king more fierce than ours?
Or think ye that if he look far enough
And hard enough into the feathery west
Ye'll have a glimmer of the Grail itself?
And if ye look for neither Grail nor lady,
What look ye for to see, Gawaine, Gawaine?"

II.

". . . Time's way with you and me
is our way, in that we are out of Time
And out of tune with Time."

- from "Merlin," by Edwin Arlington Robinson

PROGRAM NOTES

Suite for Marimba – Alfred Fissinger

Notes from the composer:

The Suite for Marimba consists of four movements, each depicting a specific incident experienced by me while serving as an infantryman in Europe during World War II.

I. Mist

To some people, the quiet of an early morning mist is a dreary thing, but perhaps others will think of it as I do: a period of complete solitude which affords one many peaceful moments of contemplation. This is not an original thought. An artist friend of mine, kiddled in World War II, did his finest creative work during such moments as these. With him it was almost a religion. Cold mornings, as well as lovely spring and summer mornings, would find him apart from the others both in body and spirit. In the first movement, I have tried to capture the serenity, the happiness he felt, and the hope he had for others as well as for himself.

II. Rendezvous in Black

Rendezvous in Black depicts a motorized patrol at midnight through the heavily wooded mountains of Luxembourg. It was pitch black and bitter cold, but the men on patrol were in good spirits. As the patrol progressed, however, the seriousness and the danger was realized. The father fast passage work at the end of the movement indicates the speed in which the patrol returned to its base upon completing the mission.

III. Esch s/ Sure

Located in the small country of Luxembourg and completely surrounded by mountains, is the village of Esch on the Sure River. As you approach this tiny village from a road high in the mountains, it appears as a miniature of tiny houses and inns set against a background of snow-capped mountains and time-aged ruins. So complete did this picture of liveliness stir me, that in the third movement of this suite, I have attempted to express in music the peace and tranquility I felt at this time.

IV. Bastonge Convoy

Shortly before Christmas, during the winter of 1944, the German army made what proved to be its last major counterattack of the war. All troops held in reserve were ordered up to the front to stem the tide of the onrushing enemy. As my division was at the moment resting in Metz, France after a hard campaign, we were alerted to move. In the fourth movement, my goal was to recapture the subsequent activities resulting from this emergency.

Alfred J. Fissinger
1950

Notes from the performer:

All of the following pieces have some significance in my career, either directly or indirectly.

Alfred Fissinger's **Suite for Marimba** was the first "big" piece that I played as an undergraduate student. Being written in 1950, it was one of the earliest marimba solos. The first movement – Mist - stands alone as one of my favorite chorales.

Water and Fire by Donald Skoog was the second prize winner in the 1982 PAS composition competition. Another piece played in my undergraduate days, it was one of the top shelf solos of the day. As challenging as FIRE is to play, the first movement is quite well sculpted and presents multiple technical and musical challenges.

Be careful what you ask for, because you just might get it. **A Cross on Wood** was written by my good friend and colleague from the University of Arizona – G. Bradley Bodine. At the time, Brad was a doctoral student studying under Daniel Asia. I had just won the Music Teacher's National Association Collegiate Artist Competition in Percussion. My teacher, Gary Cook, said "if you wanted to make a name for yourself, you need to have pieces written for you." The best place to start is within your own school. I went to Brad's office and just said "do want to hear me play?"

That started a relationship that turned into a marimba solo (*A Cross on Wood*), a marimba concerto (*Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra/Band*) a marimba/flute duo (*Rhapsodia*) and a concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble (*Namaste*).

At the time, I was studying a technique developed by Julie Spencer called the "Horizontal Technique". I wanted Brad to write a piece based on that technique, which he did. Let's call it youthful exuberance . . .

A Cross on Wood was commissioned by the American marimbist, Drew Lang, and was completed in August, 1989. The composition makes extensive use of contemporary marimba techniques which include displaced octaves, fast scale passages, and polyrhythms. The key scheme follows the pattern D-Ab-B-F-D. When this pattern is placed on a circle of fifths chart, it forms a cross, hence the title of the piece. *A Cross on Wood* was premiered by Drew Lang at the Arizona Percussive Arts Society State Convention in Phoenix on March 23, 1990.

Romance is originally written for guitar (which is Brad's main instrument). It was written at the time in Brad's life when things were simple. He made a few changes to make it work on marimba, and I think it turned out really nice.

Marimba Dances is just one of those happy pieces that I just fell in love with. I think I have the distinct honor of being the first American to play it. My wife, Helen Blackburn, and I were at a CD shop in Tucson, Arizona before a Christmas break, when she saw a CD by Michael Askill called Australian Percussion Music. Two of the pieces really stood out – a percussion quartet called Omphalo Centric Lecture by Nigel Westlake and a marimba solo called Marimba Dances by Ross Edwards. I just fell in love with both pieces and checked with the big music source in the US at the time – Steve Weiss Music. They had never heard of it. Coincidentally, a harpist-friend of mine who was going back to Australia for Christmas was able to pick up both scores. They are still two of my favorite works.