



Pittsburg State University

2003

Festival of New Music

February 20-23

A Centennial Celebration Event



Pittsburg State University ◇ Department of Music

presents

THE SOUTHEAST KANSAS SYMPHONY

Stella Hastings, Artistic Director and Conductor

Julie James, Guest Conductor

Phillip Schroeder, Guest Conductor

Festival of New Music

Sunday, February 23, 2003 ◇ 3:00 p.m.

Pittsburg Memorial Auditorium

Trumpet Fanfare..... John Ross

directed by Dr. Todd Hastings

Inevitable Dawn..... Persis Vehar

La Tristesse de Ceres*..... John Ross

featuring Dr. Reena Berger, piano

INTERMISSION

Surrender To Another..... Phillip Schroeder

In Celebration..... Persis Vehar

featuring Persis Vehar, piano

Centennial*..... John Ross

** indicates world premiere pieces*

Reception to follow in the Main Lobby

Program Notes

Trumpet Fanfare

Written at the request of Dr. Todd Hastings and the trumpet students of his studio, *Fanfare* was composed for the Commencement ceremonies of the College of Arts and Sciences at Pittsburg State University, in Pittsburg, Kansas, on 17 May 2002.

- John Ross

The Inevitable Dawn

Canisius College Composer-In-Residence Persis Parshall Vehar was commissioned to write *The Inevitable Dawn* by the Cheektowaga Symphony Orchestra, John Landis, Conductor, for their Centennial Concert on March 31, 1996. *The Inevitable Dawn* is written in what the composer refers to as "circular form." This form is based on circular thinking which concerns itself with many ideas at once. The piece has three ideas that develop simultaneously, often overlapping each other. At the conclusion, the motive, stated in the 1st measure, turns into a hymn, 'Now Thank We All Our God,' and is combined with the other two fully developed themes.

In *The Buffalo News*, Lynna Sedlak wrote, "Progressing from a hushed string and wood block entrance, bits of tunes interject throughout the reed and brass sections. They eventually coalesce into an extended theme. Finally the hymn tune 'Now Thank We All Our God,' well-sustained by the trombone section, wells up within the theme. Dawn is fully realized in a densely chorded ending.

As described in the title, there is inevitability to the development that is no less spectacular for its expectation. There is a spiritual content in this celebration that Vehar integrates naturally. It never seems superimposed...the climax was all it should be, full and balanced."

-Persis Vehar

La Tristesse de Ceres

I had thought of calling this piece simply "Winter." But as often happens, when I compose music, so many things come to mind—peculiar states of feeling, events, and people that I wish to commemorate in some manner—that when it comes time to naming the work, I seek a word or phrase that attempts to capture all that writing the piece has brought before my mind's eye. This time, I turned to mythology to give aid.

Ceres, the Roman goddess of spring and the fruitful earth (the Greek Demeter) had a daughter, Proserpine who loved to wander about the nether regions of the earth in Pluto's realm. One of Pluto's enemies persuades the boy Cupid to shoot one of his love-poisoned arrows at Pluto while Proserpine is wandering nearby. The arrow hits its mark and Pluto, enamored with Ceres' daughter, makes her his wife. Meanwhile, the despondent mother searches the world for her beloved Proserpine. Discovering her captive in Pluto's kingdom, she demands her return, for it is law among the gods that no one could be compelled to stay in Pluto's inhospitable realm unless they eat of the fruit therein. As it happens, Proserpine had eaten: she had sucked on a few pomegranate seeds. Since she had not eaten an entire fruit but only part, a compromise was reached: Proserpine would only stay part of the year, returning to her mother's springtime realm for the remainder. Hence, while her daughter fulfills her annual obligation to dwell part of the year with Pluto, Ceres pines for her daughter, and the fruitful earth grows cold, the days grow shorter, and trees give up their leaves until Proserpine returns again.

Also, as a nod to my youthful fascination with Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, I used the French title in order to acknowledge indirectly my quotation of the Tristan chord—the half-diminished seventh chord. Ceres' sorrow over her loss and Tristan's over his honorable separation from his beloved reminded me of a lost love of my own. And since I composed most of this work during the fall and winter of 2002 it occurred to me how fittingly the ancients saw in winter the expression of sorrow.

- John Ross

Surrender to Another

Surrender to Another is an expression of the act of love, a process in which the individual relinquishes, submits, and surrenders their self to the good of the other, through devotion, adoration, esteem, and intimacy, often resulting in profound emotional and spiritual states ranging from longing to contentment to rapture.

At the beginning of August of 1999 a three-week lull presented itself for the composing of *Surrender to Another*. This followed a trip to the Czech Republic, where the Moravian Philharmonic recorded my *Fantasy for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra*, and wanderings through Vienna and Salzburg for leisure and stimulation. In addition, the music is a tribute to the aesthetics of late Romanticism, especially to Mahler, early Schoenberg, and Strauss.

The decision to write a large work for ten string parts, dividing each section of the traditional string orchestra, did not result from my usual practice of composing for specific performers. The long lyric melodies, opulent harmonies, textures laden with accented dissonances and counter-melodies, intense emotional expression, and aesthetic quality had been resonating in me for years. For a change I wrote something strictly for myself.

- Phillip Schroeder

In Celebration

In Celebration was commissioned by Edwin H. Wolf for his wife Judith to celebrate their wedding anniversary.

It was premiered at the opening of the newly renovated Rockwell Concert Hall, State University of New York College at Buffalo on October 19, 1987. The performers were Composer/Piano Persis Parshall Vehar and the Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra (members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra string section), Marylouise Nanna, Conductor.

The Buffalo News Music Critic Herman Trotter wrote, "Vehar's 'In Celebration' is a concertino for piano and orchestra whose three movements are titled Joy, Romance and Exultation. It made a very good first impression. The interest sustained throughout...the piano was played by the composer, who imparted infectious rhythmic and celebratory energy to the performance of this rippling, rolling music. The Romance movement seemed built on a long decrescendo, with a rather measured, treading undercurrent, and after the finale's long introduction with piano flourishes, the music seems to dance all around the expression of exultation we expect from the title before really coming to grips with it at the end."

- Persis Vehar

Centennial

Centennial (2003) was written for the brass and percussion performers of Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas, at the request of Professor Stella Hastings. It was intended to help commemorate the first Festival of New Music, an idea that she persuaded me of in 2002.

Centennial was completed on February 2, 2003, the day the space shuttle Columbia broke up reëntering the Earth's atmosphere and all seven crew members perished. For me, this work also commemorates those seven, and the relentless spirit of exploration they embodied. May that spirit live on.

- John Ross

Julie James began her career in music as a classical saxophonist, studying at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts from 1988 to 1990. Following the path of former NOCCA students like Branford Marsalis, and Harry Connick, Jr., Ms. James frequently represented the school in performances on local news and television broadcasts, cultural events such as the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, and at various fundraising events. In 1990 she received first prize in the "Overture to the Cultural Season" competition in New Orleans, and was simultaneously awarded the largest performance scholarship ever given for music study at Boston University. Ms. James studied saxophone with Kenneth Radnofsky, first at B. U., then later at the New England Conservatory of Music, where she received her B. M. degree in 1995 with Distinction in performance. As a student in Boston, she had the occasion to work with virtuoso saxophonists Claude Delangle and Jean Yves Formeau, the Berlin and Amherst Saxophone Quartets, as well as accomplished composers such as Gunther Schuller, Karel Husa, John Harbison, Michael Colgrass, Luciano Berio, Warren Benson, and Sir Michael Tippett. In addition, she frequently performed with several Boston-area orchestras, maintained the principle saxophone position in every ensemble, and from 1993 to 1995 she was the assistant to the esteemed wind ensemble conductor, Frank Battisti. It was Mr. Battisti's influence that led her to conducting.

Ms. James obtained her M. M. degree in instrumental conducting from Loyola University, New Orleans in 1997. Attending on scholarship, she studied with Dr. Joseph Hebert, and frequently worked with Colonel John Bourgeois, the former conductor of the "President's Own" Marine Band. Her academic work at Loyola showed a pronounced interest in research and music history, which eventually led her to the University of Kansas in the fall of 1998. At KU, Ms. James was active as a saxophonist, conductor, and teacher. In addition to her regular performances as soloist and soprano saxophonist with the KU Saxophone Quartet, she conducted the KU Wind Ensemble at the Lied Center in Lawrence, and worked with conductor Frederick Fennell on one of his visits to the campus. Currently, Ms. James is the instructor of Music History at Pittsburg State University, and is in the process of completing her Ph. D. in Musicology, with an emphasis on contemporary American music, at the University of Kansas.

A special ovation goes to the following people that helped to make today's concert a success:

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Dr. Craig Fuchs, Chair, Pittsburg State University Department of Music

Phillip Schroeder was born in 1956 in Northern California. His life as a musician began early and has paralleled the diversity of surroundings, now 12 states: trumpet in concert bands, boys and mixed choirs, electric bass in rock bands, orchestral and chamber conducting, experimental improvisation ensembles, and piano performance.

A recipient of numerous awards and commissions, Schroeder has composed music for orchestra, wind ensemble, live-electronics, chamber ensembles, choir, instrumental solos, and voice. His music has been variously described as continuing "a tradition of brilliance and openness" with "powerful expressive qualities that focus on subtle shadings and nuances." He has appeared as a featured guest composer, lecturer, and performer at festivals, conferences, and universities throughout the United States and Europe, and has held residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Palenville Interarts Colony, Millay Colony, and Charles Ives Center for American Music. His awards include the Delius Composition Contest, Rhode Island Philharmonic Composers Award, and New Music for Young Ensembles Competition.

Recordings include *Turning to the Center*, songs for baritone, clarinet and keyboards, and *all rivers at once*, music for oboe, English horn, piano, synthesizer and electronics on the Capstone Records label. *Lux aeterna* is included on a Capstone CD through the Society of Composers, Inc.; *From the Shadows of Angels* appears on a New Ariel Records disc of piano music; and *WiZARdS!* has recorded *Reminiscence* for double-reed quartet on the Dorian label. Additionally, Vienna Modern Masters has released *Salutations* for orchestra and *Fantasy* for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra. Scores are available through Moon of Hope Publications, Recital Publications, and Bocal Music.

Phillip Schroeder is on the faculty at Henderson State University, teaching composition, theory, and aural skills. He received a BM from the University of Redlands, MM at Butler University, and PhD from Kent State University. His compositional studies included work with Barney Childs, Larry Solomon, Michael Schelle, Thomas Janson, and Frank Wiley.

Persis Anne Parshall Vehar's over two hundred vocal and instrumental compositions, ranging from chamber music through large ensembles and including two operas, have been performed internationally. Among the places where her works have been heard are Carnegie Recital Hall (New York City), Royal Festival Hall (London), Graz Music Festival (Graz, Austria), McMaster & Brock Universities (Canada), Piccolo Spoleto Festival (Charleston, SC), and Rockefeller Kennedy Center Voice Competition for Excellence in American Music (New York City). An award-winning composer, she has been the recipient of six Meet the Composer Grants, eighteen annual ASCAP Awards (1984-2003), a Margaret Fairbank Jory Award (1997) and a New York Foundation for the Arts & Buffalo & Erie County Arts Council Special Opportunity Award (2000). Her compositions have been published by Tenuto, Leyerle, & Dorn Publications, Shawnee Press, Boosey & Hawkes, Kendor Music, Plymouth Music Company, Northfield Press and Almitra Music. Ms. Vehar's works may be heard on Aeolian, MMC, Fleur de Son and Mark recordings. Her compositions are regularly broadcast on National Public Radio & Television.

Vehar served as judge for the internationally known Crane Festival of New Music Solo Performer Competition. She has been on the Composition Panel for the New York Foundation for the Arts and is a Consultant to the New York State Council on the Arts. She is included in the International Who's Who in Music, the Inter. Museum's Collection of Distinguished Musicians (London) and the Biblioteque Internationale de Musique Contemporaine (Paris).

Ms. Vehar holds degrees from Ithaca College and the University of Michigan. Her composition studies were with Warren Benson, Ross Lee Finney, Roberto Gerhard and Ned Rorem, President of the American Academy of Arts & Letters. She has had additional advanced composition workshops with Milton Babbitt, John Cage, Jacob Druckman, Leon Kirchner & Roger Sessions. She is Composer-in-Residence at Canisius College in Buffalo, NY. FYI see her web site at persisvehar.com.

John C. Ross received a B.M. degree in Horn Performance from Covenant College, an M.M. in Composition from Florida State University and a Ph.D. in Composition from the University of Iowa. His principle teachers have been John Boda and D. Martin Jenni. He has taught at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas and at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. Currently, he is head of the Theory & Composition Area at Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas.

In addition to receiving grants from ASCAP (including a Young Composer Grant), Mr. Ross received a Fulbright grant to study with French composer Philippe Manoury at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Lyon, France. Other awards include the *Prix Maurice Ravel* from the American Conservatory of Fontainebleau, France, a grant from the John W. Work III Foundation, and the first Abraham Frost Prize from the University of Miami. He received the 2002 Rudolf Nissim Award and was one of three composers chosen for the Sixth International Composer Readings by the Riverside Orchestra in New York City. His music has been performed in France, several Midwest schools, twice at the SCI National Forum, and at the Mid-American Center for Contemporary Music at Bowling Green State University. His works are published with Cimarron Music in Dallas, Texas.

Pianist **Reena Berger** has presented solo and chamber music recitals in Canada, the United States and Israel. They include performances at the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Edward Pickman Hall in Cambridge MA, the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (midday series), the House of the U.S. Ambassador to Israel, and the Christ Church Cathedral, the Chapelle du Bon Pasteur, Salle Claude Champagne and Salle Marie Stéphanie, in Montreal. She was featured on television and radio, most notably in a television documentary pertaining to Czech culture playing the piano pieces of Smetana and Martinu, and on Boston's radio station WGBH in the program "Off the Record". Dr. Berger has also performed in many music festivals they include: The Banff School of Fine Arts (Canada), The Russian School of Music (Freiberg, Germany), The Kent-Blossom Music Festival (U.S.), and the Orford Arts Center (Canada).

Dr. Berger is a recipient of many awards. She was a winner in the Tel Aviv University - Rubin Academy of Music Piano Competition, the Quebec Festival Competition and the Association of Music Teachers of Quebec Competition. She was awarded the Pulver scholarship for each year of study in Israel and scholarships from the Rubin Academy of Music. In recent years she has received grants from the "Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Québec", the "Fonds les Amis de l'Art", and a "Bourse d'Excellence" from the University of Montreal. Born in Montreal, Dr. Berger studied at the McGill Conservatory of Music, The Rubin Academy of Music (Tel Aviv University), The New England Conservatory of Music, and University of Montreal. Her principal teachers were Marc Durand, Patricia Zander, and Viktor Dervianko. She also worked with Garrick Ohlsson, Menahem Pressler, Georgy Sebok, Vitaly Margulis, Karl Engel, André Laplante, and Anton Kuerti.

Dr. Berger was a teaching assistant to the piano department at New England Conservatory of Music. From 1994 to 1999 she was a lecturer in piano at the University of Montreal. Dr. Berger is currently assistant professor of piano and head of the piano department at Pittsburg State University.

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Stella Hastings, Artistic Director and Conductor

Sarah Gustafson, Graduate Assistant, Casey Brown and Ni Mei, Student Assistants

VIOLIN I

Bruce Daniel, Pittsburg
Jonathan Gayman, Schell City, MO
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Anna Wishall, PSU, Pittsburg
*XiaoGuo Zhu, PSU, Shanghai, China

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*Jodie Frew, PSU, Overland Park
Margaret Myers, Parsons
Byron Pike, PSU, Dodge City
Katherine Stoker, PSU, Overland Park
Gene Vollen, Pittsburg (Ret.)

CELLO

Austin Baldwin, PSU, Pittsburg
Kirt Duffy, Pittsburg
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Kristin Grimmer, ???
Sarah Gustafson, PSU, Independence, MO
Becky Miller, PSU, Prairie Village
Paul Smith, Pittsburg

BASS

Scott Conner, PSU, Overland Park
**Richard Samford*, Pittsburg

PICCOLO

Jenny Marlin, PSU, Aurora, MO

FLUTE

Emily Elkins, PSU, Bartlesville, OK
Bethany Fye, PSU, Kansas City

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**Joanne Britz*, Pittsburg
Ryan Lovell, PSU, Miami, OK

OBOE

Russell Jones, Pittsburg

BASSOON

*Danica Robbins, PSU, Topeka

HORN

*+Scott Conner, PSU, Overland Park
*+Jean Klassen, Ft. Scott
+Jennifer Petty, Pittsburg
+Kim Myers, PSU, Springfield, MO

TRUMPET

*+Katie Burton, PSU, Aurora, MO
#*Craig Fuchs*, Pittsburg
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#Kevin Miller, PSU, Fairland, OK
#Jamie Precht, PSU, Shawnee
#Justin Shaw, PSU, Carthage, MO
#Motoko Takahashi, PSU, Tokyo, Japan

TROMBONE

*+Tim Dodd, PSU, Joplin, MO
+Nathan Dyer, PSU, Kansas City, MO
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+Casey Brown, PSU, Girard

PERCUSSION/TIMPANI

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+*Kenny McDougle*, Pittsburg
+Kellie Napier, PSU, Blue Springs, MO
+Philip Struble, PSU, Anthony
+Carrie House, PSU, Shawnee

PIANO

Barbara York, Kansas City, MO
Italics denote member of PSU faculty
* denotes principal/co-principal
denotes PSU Trumpet Ensemble
+ denotes PSU Brass & Percussion Ensemble

The Southeast Kansas Symphony
2002-2003 Season
continues:

Sunday, April 6, 2003

3:00 p.m.

Pittsburg Memorial Auditorium

“Concerto & Aria Competition Winners’ Concert”

Overture to *Così fan tutte*.....W.A. Mozart

Symphony No. 8 in B minor (“Unfinished”)....F. Schubert

“Czardas” from *Die Fledermaus*.....J. Strauss, Jr.

Capriccio Espagnol.....N. Rimsky-Korsakov

Violin Concerto in D Major, mvmts. 2 and 3.....P. Tchaikovsky

Sunday, May 4, 2003

3:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church

“Oratorio Concert”

PSU Chorale & University Singers

Dr. Susan Marchant, Conductor

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*Sunday, April 6th
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3:00 p.m.*

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*Featuring the PSU Chorale & University Singers
Dr. Susan Marchant, Conductor*

*Sunday, May 4th
3:00 pm
First United Methodist Church*