

Florida  
International  
University

School of Music  
Joseph Rohm, Interim Director

Presents

*Teresa Flores*

Percussion

GRADUATE  
LECTURE/RECITAL

*From the studio of Michael Launius*

In partial fulfillment of the Master of Music degree in  
Percussion Performance

Monday, March 27, 2006  
8:30PM

Wertheim Performing Arts Center  
Instrumental Hall

Lecture Topic "The Expansion of Percussion Writing In Modern Day  
Wind Ensemble Repertoire"

PROGRAM

Excerpts from the following:

- Symphony for Band .....Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987)  
Music for Prague 1968.....Karel Husa (b.1921)  
...and the mountains rising nowhere.....Joseph Schwantner (b.1943)  
Déjà Vu.....Michael Colgrass (b.1932)  
A Child's Garden of Dream.....David Maslanka (b.1943)

PROGRAM NOTES

Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987), an American composer who began to study piano at the age five, than later studied organ, double bass, tuba, theory and composition from the Combs College of Music. While in high school, Persichetti was able to support himself performing professionally, on the radio and as a piano accompanist. At the Curtis Institute he studied conducting with Fitz Reiner. He later taught composition at the Julliard School of Music.

Persichetti's *Symphony for Band* has become an important staple in wind literature. Commissioned by the Washington University Band, the composition was completed and premiered in 1956. His writing for the percussion in the symphony was innovative by assigning three percussionists a set of instruments. Composers back in the early part of twentieth century (circa 1900-1955) would write for a small number of percussion instruments usually performed each by one person. Persichetti's use of assigning each percussionist a set number of instruments to be played was ground-breaking for its time.

His use of new techniques and instruments opened up new textures and colors in the wind ensemble. In the second percussion part he uses three different size instruments (soprano, alto, tenor) creating non-pitched timbres that were not heard of in wind ensemble writing before. He also introduced to the wind ensemble a sizzle cymbal (a cymbal typically used by jazz drummers with rivets inserted creating a sizzle effect when struck) for coloristic effects. For example, Persichetti uses brushes on the suspended cymbal or a combination of the sizzle cymbal with the tambourine or triangle to create different color textures.

Persichetti helped create a percussion section that was not simply used for time keeping but also as a viable solo voice in the ensemble. His ground breaking writing for percussion in the wind ensemble helped propel the way future composers would write for the wind ensemble.

Karel Husa (1921) was born in Czechoslovakia where as a young man he attended the Prague Conservatory where he studied composition and conducting. Some of his many

composition teachers included, Nadia Boulanger, Arthur Honegger, and Jaroslav Ridly. Husa has written many works for different genres. One of his most important works for wind ensemble is *Music for Prague 1968* for Concert Band. He was commissioned by Ithaca College to write a piece dedicated to the events accruing after the fall of the capital city of Czechoslovakia.

Husa uses a large assortment of percussion for *Music for Prague 1968* for Concert Band. He is also one of the first composers to write a movement strictly for percussion ensemble. His use of percussion combines traditional instruments and for many of them uses sets of three in order to achieve tambour differences. Husa's greatest contribution to percussion writing in a wind ensemble is the way he is able to make percussion an integral part of the music. For example, the opening statement is played on the timpani which is based on an old Hussite war chant from the 16<sup>th</sup> century (*Ye Warriors of God and His Law*). Nearing the end of the forth movement the same statement returns on the timpani, but this time at fortissimo. Husa immediately gives the percussion an important role in the piece.

In Movement III (*Interlude*) he writes specifically for percussion ensemble and allows the percussion to carry all thematic material. His writing in the *Interlude* for percussion is superb with parts that are technically challenging and demonstrate a broader soloistic view of the percussion section. He specifies in the score what mallets are to be used in order for the percussion to have the correct sound. Husa begins the movement with a snare drum solo that contains ruffs, drags, flams and rolls. He is very specific with dynamics but gives the soloist freedom with time in order to be musical. Once the movement begins the rest of the percussionists all play different metallic instruments creating sustained sounds that lead into each other. Husa ends the movement with another snare drum solo this time in strict time ending with a fortissimo roll aided by two other percussionists (also playing snare drums) which leads into the climatic fourth movement.

Husa broke all rules with his innovative use of composition for percussion in a serious work. He is able to combine the percussion section as both a soloistic and accompanying section in the wind ensemble. Husa's use of a percussion ensemble playing a movement alone created a huge step in wind literature.

Joseph Schwantner (b. 1943), received his composition degree from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. At Northwestern he received both his masters and doctoral degree. He has been on the faculty of both the Eastman and Julliard School of Music. He is currently professor of composition at the Yale School of Music. Schwantner has been commissioned to write for many ensembles including the New York Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, the Boston Symphony, and Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra where he served as composer-in-residence. He was commissioned by the Eastman Wind Ensemble to write his first piece for wind ensemble. His *...and the mountains rising nowhere* (1977) is based on the poem *ARIOSO* by Carol Adler:

arioso                      bells  
sepia  
moon - beams  
an afternoon sun blanked by rain  
and the mountains rising nowhere  
the sound returns  
the sound and the silence    chimes

In *... and the mountains rising nowhere*, Schwantner's style for this piece consists of using different textures, and colors through out the ensemble. Therefore he writes a large group of instruments for six percussionist. The score is written in a graphic format in order to demonstrate different entrances throughout the ensemble. The percussion are utilized for many timbral effects. He focuses on the percussion by using different sounds available with the use of extended techniques. Some of these techniques include dipping a ringing gong in a tub of water to change its pitch. Other techniques are used by bowing a suspended cymbal or gong. Schwantner mainly uses the inherited sustain of the metallic