

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY



Global Music — Master Percussionists

Bob Becker William Cahn
John Wyre Robin Engelman
Russell Hartenberger

Assisted by Christopher McCourry, David Jackson, and Daniel Harris

Friday Evening, March 8, 1991, at 8:00
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PROGRAM

Fauna	William Cahn
Marubattoo	John Wyre
Gankogui	arr. Nexus
Remembrance	Robin Engelman

Assisted by Christopher McCourry, trumpet, David Jackson, trombone,
and Daniel Harris, bass trombone, U-M School of Music graduate students

INTERMISSION

Mudra	Bob Becker
Kichari	arr. Nexus
Teddy at the Throttle (a Mack Sennet film)	arr. Cahn

Nexus is represented by Great World Artists Management Inc., Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
U.S. Representation: Betsy M. Green Associates, Inc., Wayland, Massachusetts.
The box office in the outer lobby is open during intermission for purchase of tickets to upcoming concerts.
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Fauna (1988)

WILLIAM CAHN

Fauna was composed in April and May, 1988. It is an experimental piece combining electronic instruments and acoustic instruments, and it is also programmatic in nature. The electronic instruments are used to generate reproductions of natural sounds (water, loons, voices), as well as reproductions of acoustic musical instruments (drums, marimbas, Chinese opera gongs, penny whistles). These sounds are combined with acoustic instruments such as Australian didgeridoo, conch shell trumpet, melodian, Brazilian rainstick, marimbas, and Chinese opera gongs, to produce music that is constructed around a single melody, harmonized, and repeated in several series of variations. Inspiration for the piece arose from experiences in seeing the gentle and incredibly vulnerable wildlife of Australia during the first visit of Nexus to that continent in 1986.

Marubattoo (1988)

JOHN WYRE

Marubattoo is the expansion of Maruba, commissioned by Ex Tenebris with the support of the Ontario Arts Council. Maruba is a recent composition for marimba and tuba, written for Beverly Johnston and Scott Irvine in the summer of 1987. In developing *Marubattoo* for Nexus, the composer says, "I have given the melody (tuba line) to bass marimba and have added crotales (tuned antique cymbals) to support the melodic line. I have also added another marimba part and a vibraphone part so that there are three voices (two marimbas and one vibraphone) to support the melodic lines in the bass marimba and crotales." *Marubattoo* was completed in October 1988.

Gankogui

arr. Nexus

Gankogui is a Nexus arrangement using traditional African melodies and instruments, including the mbira (thumb piano-gourd), log drums, and gankogui (iron bells).

Remembrance (1988)

ROBIN ENGELMAN

Old familiar tunes, in whole or in part, frequently come to mind. A rhythmic motive or a particular succession of tones can spontaneously remind one of music heard in the past. The resulting juxtaposition of what is being heard and the intrusion of the familiar tune are often bizarre, but not irreverent. *Remembrance* was written in 1988 because of these experiences.

Mudra (1990)

BOB BECKER

Mudra consists of music that was originally composed to accompany the dance UrbhanaMudra by choreographer Joan Phillips. Commissioned by INDE '90 and premièred in Toronto in March 1990 as part of the DuMaurier Quay Works Series, UrbhanaMudra was awarded the National Arts Centre Award for best collaboration between composer and choreographer. The music was subsequently edited and reorchestrated as a concert piece for Nexus during May 1990. *Mudra* is scored for marimba, vibraphone, songbells, glockenspiel, crotales, muffled drum, and bass drum.

UrbhanaMudra was created, for the most part, using the "dance first" approach, in which the music is composed to fit pre-existing choreography. Thus, in this instance, the rhythmic structure and overall form reflect the episodic and gestural character of the original choreography. In Joan Phillips' words: "The content of the piece is set within a multi-cultural urban infrastructure that allows the conflict of traditional and modern issues to surface." Two main sources of inspiration for the choreography were the "system of expression" theory advanced by François Delsarte and Ted Shawn, as well as Ms. Phillips' personal study with Indian choreographer and dancer Menaka Thakkar. The term "mudra" refers in general to the systematic use of facial, torso, and hand and arm gestures in many Indian dance forms.

The composer writes: "In this piece, I knew I wanted to use an instrumental ensemble in an accompaniment role similar to that found in traditional Indian dance concerts

where a solo drum is the principal voice. I did not, however, want to use Indian instruments, nor did I wish to imitate an 'Indian' sound with western instruments. In response to the choreographic approach, I wanted to allow my awareness of classical Indian musical structures to influence the formal, rhythmic, and harmonic aspects of the music.

"I first became interested in North Indian classical music in 1970. My involvement was, and continues to be, primarily with the tabla drums. At the same time, I began to study the theory of rhythm (tal) and melody (rag), principally as they are expressed in the vocal forms khyal and dhrupad. Although Indian music is usually characterized as being elaborately melodic with no harmony, my personal experience from the beginning has been a strong sensation of implied harmonic movement. This subliminal effect is clearly related to my cultural background and training in western classical music and is the type of uniquely interesting cross-referencing always experienced when one strong cultural expression encounters another.

"I find this effect to be most pronounced in ragas (most simply defined as generalized scales or particularized modes) that contain relatively few tones. In particular, the pentatonic modes containing no fifth scale degree (for example, the ragas Malkauns, Chandrakauns, and others) have, to my ear, the most ambiguous and intriguing harmonic implications. Rag Chandrakauns, traditionally linked to the full moon and late-night hours and with the scale degrees tonic, minor third, fourth, minor sixth, and major seventh, has always attracted me. I used these interval relationships to determine both the melodic and harmonic content of this piece.

"Rhythmically, *Mudra* is based on two important and common structures found throughout North Indian music: motivic development (palta) and rhythmic cadence formulas (ti hai). These structural devices are used most systematically in the final drum solo section of the piece, in which rhythmic rather than harmonic cadencing is used to create tension and, ultimately, accord."

Kichari

arr. Nexus

Kichari is a word from the Hindu, meaning "mixture." This piece is an improvisation and varies with every performance. Nexus first came to world prominence because of its impressive improvisational abilities and techniques, and the ensemble has been asked to improvise for theatre productions, dance performances, and film scores, as well as in its concerts.

Teddy at the Throttle

(a Mack Sennet film — 1916)

arr. WILLIAM CAHN

At the height of the silent film era, from 1915 to about 1930, many musicians were employed by the movie theatres to provide musical accompaniments to the films. Theatre orchestras, organists, and pianists were necessary to add a crucial emotional background to the visual action. The music for "Teddy" has been arranged for Nexus from original theatre orchestras of that period, including the following pieces: "The Wizard of the Nile" (1896) by Victor Herbert, "Dainty Games" (1915) by Charlotte Blake, "Cupid's Garden" (1901) by Max C. Eugene, "Fluffy Ruffles" (1918) by George Hamilton Green, "Zephyr" (1916) by George J. Trinkhaus, and generic film music by Ernst Luz.



About the Artists



Robin Engelman, Bob Becker, John Wyre, Russell Hartenberger, Bill Cahn

Formed in 1971 by Bob Becker, William Cahn, Robin Engelman, Russell Hartenberger, and John Wyre, Nexus has come to be recognized as one of Canada's premier chamber groups and one of the foremost percussion ensembles in the world.

Nexus performs a wide and eclectic range of music, much of which has been composed and/or arranged by members of the ensemble. Contemporary composers who have been commissioned to write for the group include Warren Benson, John Hawkins, Jo Kondo, Bruce Mather, Kirk Nurock, Steve Reich, Toru Takemitsu, and James Tenney. To perform their unique repertoire, the members utilize a huge collection of instruments from all parts of the globe, including assorted drums and rattles, bird calls and bundt pans, marimbas and xylophones, and more exotic instruments such as Chinese gongs, Japanese temple bowls, and West African drums. Their combination of repertoire and instruments has led to appearances with symphony orchestras, in addition to their own ensemble engagements; they have performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, and the National Arts Centre Orchestra (Ottawa), among others.

In celebrating its centennial season this year, Carnegie Hall commissioned Toru Takemitsu to write a work for Nexus and symphony orchestra, which was premiered last October with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Seiji Ozawa.

The same musicians also performed Takemitsu's piece, *From me flows what you call Time*, in Washington's Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, causing the *Washington Post's* reviewer to write: "The Concert Hall literally rang with opulent splendor ... the stage was surrounded by a huge battery of percussion instruments, including sets of bells suspended from the top balcony and played from the stage by means of lengthy colored ribbons. Takemitsu's latest exploration into his storehouse of subtle sounds has produced a work of mesmerizing beauty, whose mildly programmatic spirit the orchestra and soloists captured superbly." This commission will be performed again in late 1991 in Tokyo's Suntory Hall, celebrating the Hall's fifth anniversary.

Since 1975, Nexus has traveled extensively, including tours of Australia and New Zealand, Asia (the first western percussion group to perform in the People's Republic of China), and Europe, as well as regular appearances throughout the United States and Canada. Nexus has been featured at the Adelaide Festival, Holland Festival, Tanglewood Music Festival, John Cage Celebrations at the Los Angeles Festival, the Toronto International Festival, Forum des Percussions in Paris, London's Southbank Festival and BBC Proms, and World Drums Festivals. Other highlights have been the British Percussion Festival and a British tour, the Calgary Olympic Arts Festival, and a return tour to Australia that opened with ten days of performances at Expo '88.

Nexus created and performed the music for the Academy Award-winning documentary film "The Man Who Skied Down Everest." Their activities in radio and television include recordings and performances with Gil Evans, Oscar Peterson, Paul Horn, Chuck Mangione, and David Darling, among many others. Their video, "Super Percussion," was filmed at the Tokyo Music Joy Festival and released in 1988, and in 1989 they received the Toronto Arts Award in Music.

Nexus now returns for a second appearance after its Ann Arbor debut in November 1984, when it participated in the 1984 Percussive Arts Society International Convention hosted by the U-M School of Music.

Nexus has received the support of the Canadian Department of External Affairs, the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council, the Arts Council of Great Britain, the New York State Arts Council, and the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. The recent Toru Takemitsu commission was made possible in part by a grant from Suntory Hall, Tokyo.

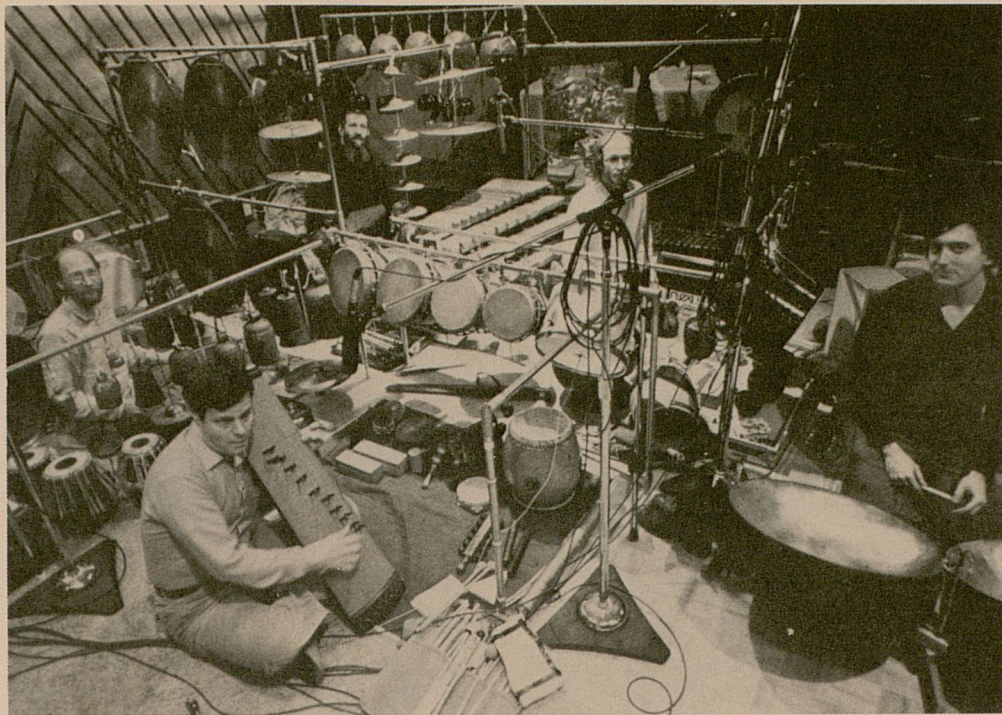
Bob Becker holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied percussion with William Street and John Beck and composition with Warren Benson. He was awarded the school's prestigious Performer's Certificate for his performance as marimba soloist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. He also spent four years doing post-graduate study in the World Music program at Wesleyan University, where he became intensely involved with the music cultures of North and South India, Africa, and Indonesia.

Mr. Becker has been percussionist for the Marlboro Music Festival, timpanist with the Festival Orchestra under Pablo Casals, and for several years was percussionist for the Paul Winter Consort. As soloist, he has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, and Boston Chamber Players. He has also performed and recorded with Gene Bertoncini, Marion Brown, Gil Evans, Paul Horn, Chuck Mangione, and Oscar Peterson. Presently, he performs with American composer Steve Reich's ensemble, as well as appearing regularly as a soloist and clinician on a remarkable variety of instruments.

William Cahn has been the principal percussionist of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra since graduating from the Eastman School of Music in 1968. He has appeared regularly as soloist with the Rochester Philharmonic and has also performed as percussion soloist with symphony orchestras and music festivals throughout the United States and Canada. In addition to designing and building his own percussion instruments, Mr. Cahn has composed and arranged dozens of works for percussion, including chamber and symphonic scores. He has performed in concert with many celebrated musicians of widely-differing musical styles, including Leopold Stokowski, Edgard Varèse, John Cage, the Paul Winter Consort, the Chuck Mangione Orchestra, and Chet Atkins.

Russell Hartenberger is professor of percussion at the University of Toronto and holds a Ph.D. in World Music. He performs regularly with New Music Concerts of Toronto and the Steve Reich Ensemble. A graduate of Wesleyan University, Mr. Hartenberger has studied the mrdangam, tabla, West African drumming, and Javanese gamelan. His travels include extensive touring in North and South America, Europe, music studies in Ghana, and attendance at the Carnatic Music Festival in Madras, India. He has also performed with the Oklahoma City Symphony and at the Marlboro Music Festival.





The Grange Recording Studios, Toronto

Robin Engelman studied percussion and composition with Warren Benson and conducting with Don Craig at Ithaca College in New York. He was principal percussionist in three symphony orchestras in the United States before serving in that capacity with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He has taught at the University of Rochester, Ithaca College, York University, and presently conducts the contemporary music and percussion ensembles at the University of Toronto. Throughout North America, he has lectured at universities on composing for percussion and on percussion performance. He has composed numerous works for Nexus, many of which have been recorded.

Mr. Engelman has conducted contemporary music concerts and recordings for the Canadian Broadcasting Company, New Music Concerts, and Chamber Concerts Canada. In July 1989, he conducted the North American première of Manuel de Falla's original chamber version of *El amor brujo* with David Earle's choreography and the Toronto Dance Theatre. He also composed and directed the music for a Tim Wynne Jones original story, with dance, *Once there was only sky*, which was performed at the Young People's Theatre in December of 1989.

John Wyre is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he studied percussion with Fred Hinger. He studied at the Eastman School of Music and performed for eight summers at the Marlboro Music Festival. Before moving to Canada in 1966, he was a member of the Rochester Philharmonic, the Oklahoma City Symphony, and the Milwaukee Symphony. Joining the Toronto Symphony as timpanist in 1966, he served for eleven years as principal timpanist of that ensemble. As soloist, he has performed with the Toronto Symphony, Japan Philharmonic, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

An active composer, Mr. Wyre has received commissions from the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council, the Canadian Broadcasting Company, the Elmer Iseler Singers, and the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. His works have been performed by the New York Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Japan Philharmonic, Tokyo Philharmonic Choir, and the Winnipeg Symphony, among others. Currently, Mr. Wyre is artistic director of World Drums, which presents international drum festivals for such events as Expo '86, the 1987 Winter Olympics in Calgary, and Expo '88 in Australia.



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Opera

Orchestra

A Benefit Concert for
the University Musical Society

James Levine

Jessye Norman

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Eight o'clock
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Benefit Concert

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Program

Ludwig van Beethoven

Scene and Aria, *Ah, Perfido!*, Op.65

Alban Berg

Three Pieces for Orchestra, Op.6

Intermission

Richard Strauss

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme Suite, Op.60

Richard Wagner

"Immolation" Scene from *Götterdämmerung*

University Musical Society
of The University of Michigan
Burton Memorial Tower
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1270

**Gewandhaus Orchestra
of Leipzig**

Kurt Masur, conductor

May 1-4, 1991

8:00 p.m. Hill Auditorium

Midori, violinist
Christian Funke, violinist
Jürnjakob Timm, cellist
Elisabeth Leonskaja, pianist
Claudine Carlson, mezzo-soprano

The Festival Chorus
Thomas Hilbish, director



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Programs

Wednesday, May 1

Sibelius: Violin Concerto in D minor (Midori)
Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3, "Scottish"

Thursday, May 2

Brahms: "Double" Concerto in A minor for Violin,
Cello, and Orchestra (Funke/Timm)
Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D major

Friday, May 3

Prokofiev: Excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet*
Henze: *Seven Love Songs* for Cello and Orchestra
(Timm)
Strauss: *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche*

Saturday, May 4

Glinka: *Ruslan and Ludmila* Overture
Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 2 in G major
(Leonskaja)
Prokofiev: *Alexander Nevsky*, cantata for
Mezzo-soprano, Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra
(Carlson)

programs subject to change



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Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

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