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2002 PAS Composition Contest Results

BY MARK DORR

The Annual PAS Composition Contest is designed to encourage and reward those who create music for percussion instruments and to increase the number of quality compositions written for percussion. This is the 29th year the contest has been held.

Two contrasting musical categories were selected for inclusion in the 2002 competition. There were 42 entries in this year's competition: 25 in Category I and 17 in Category II. The winning entry in each category received a \$1,000 prize, with \$300 and \$200 going to second and third place, respectively. Southern Music Co. will publish the winning composition in the Multiple Percussion Solo category and C. Alan Publications will publish the winning Timpani Solo with Percussion Ensemble.

Recordings of five of the six winning compositions from the 2002 competition will be available in the Listening Room at this year's PASIC. Depending upon availability, recordings of past PAS Composition Contest prize-winning entries will also be available.

CATEGORY I: MULTIPLE PERCUSSION SOLO (SMALL TO MEDIUM SETUP)

Judges: John Gibson (Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas), Susan Powell (Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio), Gregory W. White (freelance percussionist/timpanist, Dallas, Texas)

First Place: "Canned Heat"
Eckhard Kopetzki (Sulzbach-Rosenberg, Germany)

"Canned Heat" is an outstanding eight-minute *tour de force* for multiple percussion. This solo was written for four bongos, three tom-toms, can, tambourine, and an unspecified instrument that must produce a resonant, metal sound. A detailed setup diagram and notation legend are included in the preface to the score. The can, resonant metal sound, and bongo #2 are at times notated one octave lower to facilitate more convenient reading. The left hand holds

two hard mallets while the right hand holds one.

The work is through composed with four distinctive yet interconnected thematic sections. Tempo indications at the beginning and end are quarter note = 132. The third section is marked dotted-quarter = 66, but the piece begins to build almost immediately toward the fourth section and its frenetic conclusion. Notation is clear, and it is easy to follow the main thematic ideas throughout the work. Pulsating rhythms and accented melodic notes draw the listener directly into the interior groove of the piece. Rhythmically complex, driving, and energetic, this composition commands attention by the performer and listener alike. The piece moves effortlessly between various meters including 4/4, 9/8, 6/8, 7/16, and 5/4. Hemiola figures often set up the next section of the work. Technical demands are many, including one-handed press rolls and quick movements between instruments during virtuosic flourishes.

Definitely at the Grade V+ to VI level, "Canned Heat" promises to be a frequently performed and valuable addition to the multiple percussion repertoire.

Second Place: "Time To Remember"
Guy G. Gauthreaux II (Burke, Virginia)

"Time to Remember" is brimming with energetic rhythms, effective use of instrumental colors, and interesting melodic themes. The contemporary multiple percussion techniques required to perform this piece place it at a Grade V level or higher, and it would make an excellent recital selection for an advanced player.

According to the composer's preface, the title "Time To Remember" reflects the nature of recent world events. Instrumentation consists of one medium spring drum, wind gong, suspended or crash cymbal, sizzle cymbal, bass drum, hi-hat, four concert toms, five temple

blocks, bongos, two cowbells, and a mounted tambourine. A pair of standard snare drum sticks is all that is required to perform this work.

The notation legend is easy to comprehend. A setup diagram and specific instructions regarding instrument selection, background information about the piece, and suggestions for correct interpretation of the work are provided.

Four improvised cadenzas serve as transition points between major sections of the piece. The composer suggests that a performer must infuse these cadenzas with thematic material from the sections preceding and following each in order to provide smoother transitions. The duration of "Time To Remember" is



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seven and a half to eight minutes, depending upon the chosen length of each ad-lib cadenza.

Third Place: "Fire Wire"

Brett William Dietz (Evanston, IL)

"Fire Wire" is a multiple percussion solo scored for one splash cymbal, Chinese cymbal, ribbon crasher, Chinese opera gong, steel pipe, brake drum, high jam block, piccolo snare drum, field drum, large cowbell, bass drum with pedal, a pair of bongos, two congas, and four tuned gongs. Required implements are one pair of snare drum sticks with moleskin wrapped around the tips and two yarn mallets or double-ended sticks. Specialized tonal effects are few, limited to stick/mallet changes, rimshots, and one-handed press rolls. However, the technical challenges are many, placing this composition at a Grade IV to V level.

Complex in its rhythmical nature and in its correspondence between periodic tempo transitions, "Fire Wire" exhibits perpetual intensity and a solid groove throughout the work. At seven minutes, twenty seconds in length, this composition creates an energetic forward motion through constantly driving rhythms, repetition, development of motivic material, and continually evolving timbral contrasts.

The piece opens with an ostinato section that immediately creates an overall 5:4 feel. This motivic material is interrupted periodically by a short sixteenth/dotted-eighth-note syncopated figure that serves as a type of interjection or pronouncement and appears repeatedly throughout the work. Frequent meter, tempo, and dynamic changes embody the main elements of this composition. Meters used include 5/8, 7/8, 3/2, 2/4, 5/4, and 11/8. Four distinctive tempi differentiate the primary musical sections of the piece and are intermixed freely as the composition develops.

CATEGORY II: TIMPANI SOLOIST WITH PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE (3-8 PLAYERS)

Judges: William Kraft (University of California, Santa Barbara, California), David Long (Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, Virginia), William Wiggins (Blair School of Music, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee).

First Place: "Concert Piece in 3 Movements"

Allen Houston (Brownsville, Texas)

"Concert Piece in 3 Movements" is a remarkable twelve-minute work for the advanced college to professional timpanist. While the timpani solo part is firmly at the Grade VI level, the remaining ensemble parts would be at least a Grade V and a worthy challenge for an experienced ensemble.

In addition to the timpani solo there are also seven percussion parts. Each part requires the use of multiple instruments ranging from marimba and bongos to concert toms, claves, and sandpaper blocks. The five timpani can be a standard set of 32", 29", 26", and 23" plus a 20" or a second 23" drum. (Some tuning adjustments may be needed on the two smaller timpani to accommodate pitch range requirements.) Pitch changes for the timpani are indicated three different ways and are explained thoroughly in the preface to the score, which also provides a suggested setup for the soloist and ensemble.

Throughout the work there is a close relationship between the thematic material presented by the soloist and the ensemble. These two entities are very interactive and frequently exchange thematic material. During several passages, the timpani pitches are duplicated in one or more of the keyboard parts.

All three movements contain frequent, quick, and difficult pitch changes for the soloist. The player is often asked to change pitches on one or more drums while playing intricate rhythmical passages. Special effects for the soloist are minimal, limited to one passage in the first movement that requires a particular type of dampening, and another in the third movement that utilizes brushes and striking the drum with the left hand. Double stops are used frequently in the first two movements. Double-stop rolls and four-note chords are required in the second movement.

A few unusual effects are required from the ensemble. In addition to tuned crystal glasses, rubber mallets are used to play chime tubes plus various triangle and suspended cymbal effects.

The movements are arranged in order of fast-slow-fast. Generally in a 12/8 and 6/4 feel, the first movement moves

briskly along and drives forward at all times. The second movement sounds more contemporary in harmony and contemplative in nature. The third movement is a syncopated, lively waltz in a feeling of one beat to the bar. There is an extensive, notated cadenza in which the soloist must perform a descending and ascending chromatic scale among other technical and musical challenges.

Second Place: "Divertissement"

Alex A. Orfaly (Tucson, Arizona)

Written for a timpani soloist and five multiple percussionists, "Divertissement" can best be characterized as interactive, contemporary, thematic writing. The solo timpani part requires five drums (31" or 32", 29", 26", 23", 20"). The 20" timpano does not require use of a pedal but the other four drums do. Pitch changes are frequent and quick, often coming in the form of glissandi or glissando rolls.

There are four, brief, written cadenzas for the soloist, three of which have the remainder of the ensemble providing a free, improvisational accompaniment. It is suggested that the soloist use two pairs of timpani mallets in addition to one pair each of maraca sticks and Blasticks. A timpani setup diagram is included.

Each percussion part consists of a large multiple percussion setup incorporating instruments from the keyboard, drum, and auxiliary percussion families. The instrumentation is quite extensive, ranging from crotales, vibraphone, steel drum, and marimba to piccolo snare drum, bass drum, and field drum. Auxiliary percussion instruments include temple blocks, a brake drum, low and high cup bells, glass wind chimes, rhythm crasher, log drum, anvil, two bowl gongs, and both a sizzle and China cymbal.

"Divertissement" contains at least three main themes that return at times as direct quotes of the original themes but more commonly as transformed thematic material. Seamless transitions between sections are accomplished primarily through use of abbreviated cadenzas and changes in tempo. A lyrical, slow middle section immediately after the third cadenza is particularly striking in its timbral content and fluid compositional style. Frequent tempo changes and the use of nineteen differ-

ent time signatures create interest without disturbing the overall flow of the piece.

Although the timpani part dominates the overall texture, the percussion parts are always active and seem in equal partnership with the soloist. Ensembles will be challenged to play the various tutti rhythmic figures and to keep up the intense pace of the work. Combined with the virtuosic timpani writing, this twelve-minute piece is at a Grade VI performance level for all involved.

Third Place: "Channels"

Eric Matthew Rodis (Pleasanton, Texas)

"Channels" is a seven-minute work for timpani soloist and eight percussionists. Instrumentation includes four timpani, bass drum, bowed cymbal, field drum, mounted woodblock, hi-hat, sizzle cymbal, bongos, brake drum, and marimba, among others. Four standard size timpani (32", 29", 26", 23") are required for the soloist. Fast moving and full of virtuosic flourishes and quick pitch changes, this work demands a timpanist with advanced technical skills. The ensemble precision and musical demands required from all players places this piece at a Grade VI level.

"Channels" opens with a short cadenza by the soloist. The entire ensemble then enters and states the main thematic material with mechanistic precision. Two distinctive yet musically inter-related thematic sections are presented and developed. Approximately two-thirds of the way through the piece is found an extended, written cadenza for the soloist. A restatement of the two main themes follows with the solo timpani part slightly altered. The brief coda ends in a dramatic and sudden fashion.

Many layers of complexity lie in the active percussion ensemble parts, ranging from brief bursts of rhythmic energy in the snare drum and bongos to metronomic ostinato lines in the woodblock and triangle. This work brings to light the infinite tonal possibilities of various auxiliary instruments as they are used to interject brief thematic material and additional color as the composition develops. Polyrhythmic and polythematic layering throughout the keyboard parts gives added dimension to the overall ensemble sound. Constant shifting between simple and compound meters and

effective use of dynamic contrasts creates a natural ebb and flow in the musical phrases.

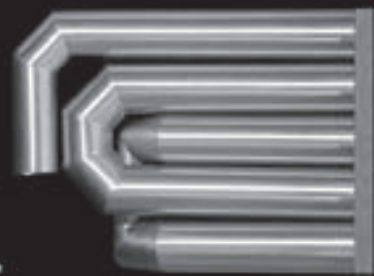
2003 AND 2004 PAS COMPOSITION CONTESTS

The 2003 PAS Composition Contest will again be divided into two categories. Category I will be Marimba Solo; Category II will be Percussion Ensemble (6–8 players). The winner in each category will be awarded a \$1,000 prize, with \$300 and \$200 given to second and third place finishers, respectively. PAS reserves the right to not designate a winner if the judges determine that no entry is worthy of the award(s).

Composition Contest categories for 2004 will be Vibraphone Solo and Percussion Quartet. The winning composition in Category I will be published by HoneyRock and the winning composition in Category II will be published by Southern Music Co.

Current PAS Composition Contest Committee members include Lynn Glasscock, Chair (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina), Christopher Deane (University of North Texas, Denton, Texas), Mark Dorr (Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa), Mario Gaetano (Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina), Steven Hemphill (Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona), and James Lambert (Cameron University, Lawton, Oklahoma).

Mark Dorr is Director of Percussion Studies at Grinnell College and conducts the Grinnell College Symphonic Band, Percussion and Marimba Ensemble, and World Hand Drumming groups. He is Principal Percussionist with the Des Moines Metro Opera Company and performs with the Cedar Rapids Symphony. He is Immediate Past President of the Iowa PAS Chapter, has hosted five Iowa Days of Percussion, and is a member of the PAS Composition Contest and Education Committees. A recipient of the 1995 PAS Outstanding Chapter President Award, he co-presented PASIC FUNDamentals clinics in 1998 (timpani) and 2001 (drumset). He is active as a guest conductor, percussion soloist, and band/percussion adjudicator and clinician throughout the United States.



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