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# 2003 PAS Composition Contest Winners

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 30th year the contest has been held. Two contrasting musical categories were selected for the 2003 competition. Category I was Marimba Solo. The judging panel for this category was John Baldwin (Boise, ID), John H. Beck (Webster, NY), and Tom Morgan (Topeka, KS). Category II was Percussion Ensemble (6 to 8 players). The judging panel for this category was John Raush (Baton Rouge, LA), Lisa Rogers (Lubbock, TX), and Terry O'Mahoney (Glendale, CA). There were 68 entries in this year's competition; 39 in Category I and 29 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. The first- and second-place compositions in the Marimba Solo category will be published by HoneyRock and the first-place Percussion Ensemble selection will be published by Southern Music Company.

### CATEGORY I: MARIMBA SOLO

#### First Place: "Three Movements for a Solo Dancer"

**Eckhard Kopetzki (Sulzbach-Rosenberg, Germany)**

"Three Movements for a Solo Dancer" is an intriguing and colorful work, filled with technical demands that will challenge an advanced level four-mallet keyboard player. Playable on a low-A instrument and 9 minutes and 40 seconds in total duration, the three movements are balanced in terms of length, sustainable musical interest, and continuing motivic development. They are also musically independent, contrasting in style, and unified through the use of common motivic ideas. The first and third movements contain thematic material in C-sharp Phrygian mode, while the second movement is primarily in F-sharp harmonic minor. Chromaticism abounds

throughout the work, serving primarily to connect thematic ideas and structural sections.

The first movement, "Mysterious Love," opens with a serene chorale that quickly transforms into a faster, syncopated groove. Dead strokes during the phrase endings are very effective. The coda consists of a condensation of rhythmic and thematic ideas taken from the opening section.

"Dance on a Shattered Mirror" is a fast-paced contrast to the previous movement, moving the musical line forward with a constant ebb and flow of emotion. Completely new material is found in the coda, a driving accompaniment played on the lower bars and frame of the marimba against a highly syncopated, lyrical melody.

"Memory of a Mystery" brings together thematic material from the previous two movements. During its middle section, the left hand plays an extended melody while the right hand executes fast sextuplet figures at a tempo that transforms them into essentially an open sounding roll. An exciting flourish brings this work to a glorious finish.

#### Second Place: "Crystal Butterfly"

**Ben Wahlund (Nevada, IA)**

"Crystal Butterfly" is for intermediate to advanced marimbists looking for a different type of challenge, namely that of synchronizing intricate solo lines with an extremely complex pre-recorded accompaniment. According to the composer, one of the philosophical goals when creating the piece was to capture in sound the juxtaposition of digital or "crystal" electronic elements with the visual image of a butterfly in flight. Playable on a low-A marimba, this four-mallet solo is six and a half minutes in length. Included with the score are a CD accompaniment and narrator's part, both integral components of the piece. The synthesized accompaniment includes piano, harp, xylophone, hand drums, drumset, various auxiliary percussion instruments, and electroni-

cally manipulated sound effects. Timing cues and a rhythmic reduction of the accompaniment are written into the marimba score.

"Crystal Butterfly" is through composed, with each section of the work introducing a particular groove that is then manipulated and transformed in various ways. Double stops and hand independence techniques abound. Complex rhythms, gradually shifting harmonies, and effective use of mixed meter to move the thematic material forward in unexpected ways give the work a relentless energy that never subsides until the last note is played.

The piece opens with a free, legato section during which the narrator reads lines from an unidentified poem. Harmonic and rhythmic intensity build gradually until a funk groove emerges. Solos are traded back and forth between the marimba and accompaniment. The accompaniment suddenly subsides, leaving a single marimba motive fading into the distance as the narrator reads the concluding line, "Of peace, love, hope, and life...and life."

#### Third Place: "Variation on Akatonbo"

**Akie Takuda (Boston, MA)**

"Akatonbo" ("The Dragonfly") is a popular children's song in Japan. The inspiration for "Variations on Akatonbo" was drawn from Akie Takuda's familiarity with that children's song. Written for an upper intermediate to advanced level player, "Variations on Akatonbo" is an entertaining and technically demanding four-mallet solo requiring the use of a 5-octave marimba. An abundance of double stops, quick right- and left-hand flourishes, and intricate close-interval sticking patterns make this a wonderful technical study. The piece alternates between reflective and lively moods, with an underlying effervescence that naturally draws the listener into its celebratory spirit.

The six-minute work consists of a short introduction followed by four distinctive

variations of contrasting styles. Expressive, warm, and beautiful, the introduction is a chorale that states the original theme in its entirety. The first set of variations, aptly named “Bright” and “Cute,” has a light Caribbean feel. Dead strokes on the bars create a nice effect amidst constantly shifting meters and lengths. The second variation, “Happy,” possesses a samba feel in 4/4 time. Optional foot stomping adds to the overall dance mood. This variation leads quickly into “Sentimental,” a beautiful, albeit brief, chorale. The final variation is simply listed as “Warm, Expressivo.” According to the composer, this variation was inspired by the free improvisations of jazz pianists. Playful syncopations and constantly transforming themes permeate the last section of this work.

#### CATEGORY II: PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE (6 TO 8 PLAYERS)

##### First Place: “The Creation (A Sonic Manifestation)”

**Cayenna Ponchione (Alpine, NY)**

“The Creation” is a 12-minute programmatic piece utilizing a large variety of instruments to contrive in sound the concept of the Big Bang and the formation of our physical and aural universe. Six distinct, yet interconnected, sections make up this intriguing work: “Sonic Fabric,” “Convergence,” “Sun,” “Earth,” “Water,” and “Volcanoes and Ice.”

The theoretical framework of the piece is based loosely upon 20th-century serial techniques. The first marimba presents a complete 12-tone row during the opening section. This row is then manipulated to create the rhythmic and tonal soundscapes of the following sections. Free and uninhibited exploration of sounds, colors, and driving rhythms make this piece particularly effective.

At an advanced level of difficulty overall, this work calls for six multiple percussionists. All but one of the parts includes a keyboard instrument. Instrumentation is extensive, ranging from two 5-octave marimbas, crotales, and vibraphone to ten tom-toms, tenor drum, bass drum, and two snare drums. Auxiliary percussion instruments include ten log drums, eight brake drums, six tam-tams, three triangles, and temple blocks. Implement (mallet/stick) requirements are clearly outlined in the score.

Tonal and technical challenges include rattan handles on suspended cymbals,

one-handed rolls during four-mallet marimba parts, bowed tam-tam and crotales, and half-pedaling on the vibraphone. A number of tempo changes and the use of 19 different meters create an irregular but interesting feel to the work, particularly during the last two sections.

##### Second Place: “Circus Plenus Clamor Ingens Ianuae Tensae” Lane Harder (Dallas, TX)

“Circus Plenus Clamor Ingens Ianuae Tensae” is a six-minute work that is intense and unrelenting in its overall energy. Written for six players on three marimbas, experienced keyboard ensembles will find this advanced level composition technically and musically very demanding. Of the three marimbas required, two must be 4-octave and the third a 5-octave instrument. Brief performance notes are included in the preface to the score.

The literal translation of the title is “The circus is full. An enormous clamor. The gates are bulging.” It was taken from an ancient Roman board game called Lucky Sixes. In that game, a saying was etched or carved into the board comprising six words, each word having six letters. “Circus Plenus,” therefore, is scored for six players, has six formal sections, each bar has six groupings of six notes, and the linear thematic material makes use of hexachords and intervals of major and minor sixths.

The piece moves from quasi-12-tone textures through triadic and modal harmony before all parts conclude on the pitch F, the sixth letter of the roman alphabet. While distinctly independent overall, in several locations all six keyboard parts occur in unison. Dead strokes and rattan tonal effects on the bars are used to help bring out important thematic information.

##### Third Place (tie): “Exploration of Time”

**Eckhard Kopetzki (Sulzbach-Rosenberg, Germany)**

“Exploration of Time” is full of rhythmic vitality, complex rhythmic interplay, and unusual metrical combinations. Written for eight multiple percussionists, the individual and contemporary ensemble techniques required to perform this piece place it at a very advanced level of difficulty. Approximately eight and a half minutes in length, the work sustains a feeling of constant forward motion, aided by frequent changes of meter and tempi, driving sixteenth-note rhythms, and a compression of motivic and rhythmic ideas during the concluding section. Overall structural form is slow-fast-slow-fast, with the coda increasing in speed and intensity to a glorious finish. Many tutti figures and brief solos permeate the overall texture. Meticulously notated dynamics will aid performers in bringing out important rhythmic and melodic mo-

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tives found embedded within the intricate fabric of the piece.

An instrumentation list and notation key is provided in the preface to the score. Implement preferences are clearly identified. Each individual player's setup is fairly compact. The total number of instruments required is rather extensive, including two pairs of bongos, four tomtoms, two bass drums, two timpani, splash cymbal, crash (suspended) cymbal, four cowbells, three gongs of relative pitch, temple blocks, three cans, two glass bowls, güiro, and shaker. Several unique timbral effects are also required. These include executing a timpani glissandi while rolling on an inverted suspended cymbal placed on that timpani head, bowed cowbell, scraped tam-tam, stick clicks, and glissandi effects on a tom-tom head.

### Third Place (tie): "Mixtures 2"

**David J. Long (Fredericksburg, VA)**

"Mixtures 2" is written for eight multiple percussionists, all of whom must play a keyboard instrument. This ensemble is at a medium level of difficulty. A setup diagram and instrumentation list are included in the preface to the score. Few implement suggestions are provided.

At nine minutes, fifteen seconds in duration, "Mixtures 2" is divided into seven distinctive sections performed without pause, the exception being the start of

the final section. The first six sections feature only one family of percussion instruments at a time in the overall form of palindrome. In order of appearance, they are woods, metals, membranes, membranes, metals, and woods. The seventh section integrates all three families. Overall this is a constantly driving, fast-paced piece. However, during the second section, a slower tempo allows the metallic instruments to combine in predictable yet coloristically effective ways.

A recurring, overall structural theme in this work is a series of accented sixteenth-note patterns interspersed with tutti and/or call-and-response figures. Several duple and triple meters are used. The score calls for over forty instruments that represent the wood, metal, and membrane families of percussion instruments. Included among these are two low-A marimbas, one 5-octave marimba, crotales, two sets of bells, two vibraphones, chimes, two snare drums, five tom-toms, concert bass drum, a pair each of bongos and congas, five brake drums and triangles, five cowbells and woodblocks, medium and large hand drums, and slapstick. Several pitch changes occur in the timpani part. All keyboard parts are playable with two mallets.

Exciting and fast paced, "Mixtures 2" will help less experienced players expand their understanding of musical form and

deepen their appreciation of the infinite palette of tonal colors possible with percussion instruments.

### 2004 AND 2005 PAS COMPOSITION CONTESTS

The 2004 PAS Composition Contest will again be divided into two categories. Category I will be Vibraphone Solo; Category II will be Percussion Quartet. The winner in each category will be awarded a \$1,000 prize, with \$300 and \$200 given to second and third place, respectively. The winning composition in Category I will be published by Studio 4 Music and the winning composition in Category II will be published by Meredith Music Publications.

Composition Contest categories for 2005 will be Percussion Ensemble (8 to 12 players) and Multiple Percussion Solo with CD accompaniment (small to medium set-up). A list of acceptable instruments for the Multiple Percussion Solo category is available from the PAS Office in Lawton. The PAS reserves the right to not award prizes in a particular category if the judging panel determines that the entries were not worthy of such an award.

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

**Mark Dorr** is Director of Symphonic Band and Percussion Studies at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa. He is also Principal Percussionist and Orchestra Personnel Manager with the Des Moines Metro Opera Company, and performs with the Cedar Rapids Symphony. He is 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. He has co-presented PASIC FUNDamentals clinics on timpani and drumset, and is active as a guest conductor, percussion soloist, and clinician throughout the United States and Canada. PN



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## PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY 2004 SOLO VIBRAPHONE CONTEST

**PURPOSE:** To encourage the highest level of artistic expression in the art of performance and literature for solo vibraphone. The contest is designed to select four finalists to compete at the 2004 PASIC. The contest will include cash awards for the finalists as well as matching grants to their respective percussion programs, as follows:

- First Place:** \$1000 plus a matching grant of \$1000
- Second Place:** \$ 750 plus a matching grant of \$ 750
- Third Place:** \$ 500 plus a matching grant of \$ 500
- Fourth Place:** \$ 250 plus a matching grant of \$ 250

The matching grants will be awarded to the institutions represented by the four finalists, and can be used for scholarships, equipment needs or repairs, guest clinicians/performers, or other percussion area needs.

### PROCEDURES:

- The contest is for college level students who are current Percussive Arts Society members, ages 18–25 years of age at the time of entry.
- Each performer must submit a CD plus 4 copies (5 total) to PAS. The CD must be no longer than 15 minutes in length.
- All entries will be numbered to insure anonymity and will then be evaluated by a panel of judges.
- Each finalist chosen to compete at PASIC 2004 will not have to pay the convention fee but will be expected to assume all costs pertaining to the event including travel, room-board, etc.
- Finalists will be required to verify age.
- Selections on the CD must be from the repertoire listed below. The first work must be a complete work or movement (unedited), additional selections may be shortened to stay within the 15-minute restriction.
- Disqualification will occur if the CD is in excess of 15 minutes, the repertoire included is not from the required list, or selections have been electronically altered or edited (other than shortened to accommodate the time restriction).

### REPERTOIRE LIST:

- "Four Bagatelles" by Gitta Steiner
- "Four Pieces for Solo Vibraphone" by Larry Spivack
- "Links 4 (Monk)" by Stuart S. Smith
- "Omar" by Franco Donatoni
- "Reflections" by Lynn Glassock
- "Schickstuck" by William Hibbard
- "Sonata Brevis" by Raymond Helble
- "Sonic Residue" by Richard Power
- "Six Poems" by Robert Stright
- "The Apocryphal Still Life" by Christopher Deane

**APPLICATION FEE:** \$25 per entry payable to PAS

**SEND CD'S TO: PAS, 701 NW FERRIS AVE., LAWTON, OK 73507**

Performer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ PAS Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP or Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

School enrolled \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS APRIL 15, 2004**

## 2004 PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY 31ST ANNUAL PERCUSSION COMPOSITION CONTEST

**PURPOSE:** The Percussive Arts Society sponsors an annual competition to encourage and reward those who create music for percussion instruments and to increase the number of quality compositions written for percussion.

### 2004 CATEGORIES

#### Category I: Vibraphone Solo

- First Place: \$1000.00 plus publication by Studio 4 Music
- Second Place: \$ 300.00
- Third Place: \$ 200.00

#### Category II: Percussion Quartet

- First Place: \$1000.00 plus publication by Meredith Music Pub.
- Second Place: \$ 300.00
- Third Place: \$ 200.00

Efforts will be made to encourage performances of the winning compositions at a future Percussive Arts Society International Convention or other PAS sponsored events. PAS reserves the right to not designate a winner if the judges determine that no composition is worthy of the award(s).

### ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURES:

- Previously commissioned or published (printed, audio or video) works may not be entered.
- Time limit for each category is 6–12 minutes. Total duration of piece should be stated on manuscript. Compositions must be original (no transcriptions or arrangements).
- Composer should send five complete copies of the score. If not computer generated, neat manuscript is required. Composer's name cannot appear on any of the score pages. Five CDs (preferred) or cassette tapes may be submitted in addition to scores but are not required. All entry materials become property of PAS.
- The difficulty of the composition is left to the discretion of the composer, however, high artistic goals should be coupled with realistic demands to allow for performance at the university level. Instrument demands should also be limited to those commonly found at the university level.

**APPLICATION FEE:** \$25 per composition (non-refundable) should be enclosed with each entry. Make checks payable to the Percussive Arts Society.

**DEADLINE:** All materials (application fee, application form and manuscripts) must be received in the Lawton, Oklahoma PAS office no later than April 15, 2004.

For further information and details, contact PAS, 701 NW Ferris Avenue, Lawton, OK 73507-5442, (580) 353-1455; E-mail: [percarts@pas.org](mailto:percarts@pas.org)

### 2004 PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY 31ST ANNUAL PERCUSSION COMPOSITION CONTEST

Name of Composition \_\_\_\_\_

Composer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (include area code) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

*I hereby certify that the enclosed composition is original and it has not been previously commissioned or published in any format.*

Signature of Composer \_\_\_\_\_

**2005 CATEGORIES:** CATEGORY I PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE (8–12 PLAYERS)

CATEGORY II MULTIPLE PERCUSSION SOLO (SMALL TO MEDIUM SET-UP\*)

WITH CD ACCOMPANIMENT

\*THE LIST OF ACCEPTABLE INSTRUMENTS IS AVAILABLE FROM PAS