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2004 PAS Composition Contest Winners

BY MARIO GAETANO

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 was the 31st year the contest was held, and it featured two contrasting categories: vibraphone solo and percussion quartet. First prize in each category was \$1,000, with \$300 and \$200 going to second and third place, respectively. The winning composition in the vibraphone solo category will be published by HoneyRock, and the winning percussion quartet will be published by Meredith Music Publications.

There were 54 entries in this year's contest: 20 entries in the vibraphone solo category and 34 entries in the percussion quartet category. The judges for the vibraphone solo category were Victor Mendoza, Janis Potter, Kevin Bobo, Steve Hemphill, and Jon Metzger. Percussion quartet category judges were Julie Davila, Paul Elwood, Brain Zator, Scott Harris, and Jeffrey Peyton.

VIBRAPHONE SOLO

First Place: "The Labyrinth" by Chappell Kingsland (Honeoye Falls, NY)

"The Labyrinth" displays a clear influence of jazz styles through its tonal, but colorful, harmonies of added 2nds, 7ths, 11ths, etc., its "blues-like" scales and melodic inflections, and rapid passage work reminiscent of complicated bebop licks. It is a wonderfully constructed piece—episodic with rapidly changing moods. It is highly unified by a small number of musical ideas that undergo constant variation such as transposition; changes in voicings, register and color; rhythmic alterations and tempo changes; and general style changes notated by the composer as "tempestuous," "wild," "distant," "singing," "dancelike," "ferocious," "flowing," etc.

The 11-minute work is certainly technically challenging. The player must often execute rapid, *moto-perpetuo*

single-line passages that are disjunct, encompassing the entire range of the instrument, while holding four mallets. The sticking for these particular sections must be carefully worked out by the player; no sticking suggestions are provided. Although meter signatures are used throughout the work in a traditional manner, most of the work sounds "free flowing" due to its rhythmic complexity. However, the last major section of the work is in strict tempo and employs a distinct, syncopated rhythmic pattern. This section has an infectious groove to it. This is a serious, sophisticated, and challenging work for the instrument.

Second Place: "Floes" by Alan Chan (Kansas City, MO)

Although barlines are used throughout this piece, the work gives the general impression of being free flowing and unmeasured due to the frequent use of graphic and spatial notation. Even passages that are notated in distinct rhythms are often to be played rubato and freely. Harmonically, it is a very eclectic piece. Traditional major and minor chords and arpeggios are often juxtaposed with sonorities and passage work containing stark dissonances. Overall the work is a very atonal, modern soundscape. Often the vibraphone pedal is depressed and clusters of sounds are allowed to "pile up" and ring together.

The work is of a medium difficulty and most of the playing lies very comfortably on the instrument. The biggest challenge is executing the numerous, rapid mallet changes and sound effects in this seven-minute piece. Three sets of vibre mallets (soft, medium, hard), along with a bass bow are used. There is also an unusual sound effect employed—that of laying a brass mallet against a ringing bar. The effect is an "icy cold" metallic buzz. Often the player has to quickly lay down two vibre mallets and pick up the brass mallet, or vice versa. There are many motor effects employed also. The player must often turn the vibre motor on and off or

change the motor speed. Having a vibraphone that allows the rotating fins to return to the "open" position when the motor is turned off would be a great advantage for playing this piece.

Third Place: "Market Day" by Saverio Tasca (Bassano Delgrappa, Italy)

What a delightful piece of music! "Market Day" clearly shows the influence of folk music with its repetitive, diatonic melodies, and infectious rhythmic drive. Much of the piece reminds me of an African mbira song, or something similar. The title is entirely appropriate, reflecting the hustle and bustle of a world market day.

It is a very tonal work, almost entirely diatonic on the levels of F and C. The opening section is very slow and rubato. The player must bow sustained notes in the right hand (both up and down bows as indicated) while the left hand executes scale passages complete with mallet dampening. This is the first technical challenge of the work. This slow section accelerates and gives way to a steady eighth-note ostinato (7:8) in the left hand while the right plays melodic material in quarters and halves.

The main melody of the piece begins to undergo numerous variations—increasingly more chromatic, dissonant, and complex. Both hands eventually engage in two-part counterpoint at a presto tempo. It is a virtuoso display, and because of the tonal/tuneful style of the piece, there is no room for wrong notes.

This is a fine piece. It has clear direction and shape. It will greatly challenge any accomplished mallet player and leave an audience entertained and thoroughly impressed.

PERCUSSION QUARTET

First Place: "Wired" by Lynn Glasscock (Durham, NC)

As the title suggests, this piece is a high energy, complex, polyrhythmic web of sound that often borders on the neu-

rotic. With few exceptions, the music is loud, fast, thick, and unsettling. There is nothing subtle about this piece!

The instrumentation is: player 1—marimba, three cowbells, three temple blocks, woodblock, four tom-toms, and splash cymbal; player 2—vibraphone, three brake drums, three woodblocks, congas, triangle, bongos, and splash cymbal; player 3—crotales, log drums, tambourine, four tom-toms, cowbell, bell plate, snare drum, woodblock, and suspended cymbal; player 4—bass drum, two log drums, four tom-toms, snare drum, bongos, and suspended cymbal.

This is a difficult work, both in terms of the individual parts and the quartet as a whole. Each player must be a true multi-percussionist and be able to read two staves simultaneously—one for the keyboard percussion and the other for the non-pitched idiophones (such as cowbells, temple blocks, woodblocks, brake drums, etc.) are written on a five-line staff and are often assigned to a traditional pitch of the chromatic scale. They occupy lines and spaces in the manner of a keyboard percussion part.

The work is rhythmically complex, containing rapid meter changes and many superimpositions (4:3, 5:2, etc.). The meter changes in one short section, for example, read as follows: 3/4, 6/16, 2/4, 6/16, 1/4, 3/16, 12/16, 12/8. The musical lines are often highly syncopated and independent.

The piece appears to be divided into five sections. The opening section contrasts the colors of the keyboard and non-pitched percussion with that of the drums. There are rapidly alternating blocks of sound and color. The melodic percussion employ an octatonic scale, and the material they present throughout the piece is used as much for color and texture as for melody. The second section is steady and driving and features the drums with layers of ostinati and shifting accents. The keyboard percussion return in the third section and, similar to the opening section, they are pitted against the non-pitched percussion. For a brief time the mallet parts become faster, more complex, and almost virtuosic. The next section is in 12/8 and features all the drums and non-pitched idiophones in a polyrhythmic web. In the final section (4/4 time), the players enter one by one with layers of polyrhythms. The contra-

puntal texture is interrupted when all players come together in rhythmic unison (6/16, 9/16, or 12/16). These unison measures occur with increasing frequency and the final 12 measures of the piece are in total unison. This is a fascinating, challenging piece.

Second Place: “Echoes” by David Skidmore (Evanston, IL)

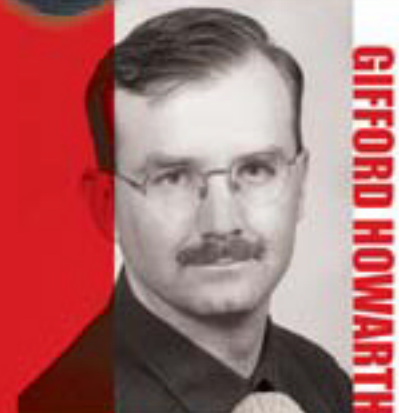
“Echoes” is essentially a drumming piece in two movements. The instrumentation is simple: five concert toms, bongos, congas, and a bass drum. Four woodblocks are also used briefly in the first movement. According to the composer, “This piece explores the relationship between chaos and order by blurring the lines between the constraints of traditional notation and the freedom of aleatoric gestures.”

The opening movement contains some very effective writing. It is played very freely and each player executes “graphic” figures that move from fast to slow. The drums strike the first note of each figure while the remainder of the figure is executed on either woodblocks or rims of the drums. The entrances for each figure are staggered and, as the title of the piece suggests, an “echo” effect is created as the texture thins. A very effective soundscape is created in this movement.

The second movement employs ostinati and continual layers of sound. The five concert toms are used very melodically throughout the movement. The echo effect is often created as the voices enter imitatively, with identical figures but at different times, constantly overlapping, creating thickening and thinning of the texture. Most of this movement is in common time with simple rhythmic figures. There are occasional superimpositions over barlines, shifting accents, and even a simple metric modulation. At times the piece becomes polyrhythmic with sixteenth notes in one voice against eighth-note triplets in another, against quarter-note triplets in yet another. The piece builds to a climax of swirling rolls and sixteenth notes. The graphic and free style of the opening movement returns briefly at the conclusion of the second movement.

This ten-minute piece is of medium difficulty and could easily be played without a conductor by undergraduate university students. Although the composer does not suggest this, I think it would be great to

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2005 PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY 32ND 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.

2005 CATEGORIES

Category I: Percussion Ensemble (8–12 Players)

First Place: \$1500.00 plus publication by C. Alan Publications

Second Place: \$ 500.00

Third Place: \$ 250.00

Category II: Multiple Percussion Solo (Small to Medium set-up) with CD Accompaniment

The list of acceptable instruments is available from PAS

First Place: \$1500.00 plus publication by HoneyRock Publishing

Second Place: \$ 500.00

Third Place: \$ 250.00

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, 2005.

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

2005 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 _____

2006 CATEGORIES: CATEGORY I: Marimba and Pan (lead or double seconds)
CATEGORY II: Unaccompanied Timpani Solo (four or five drums)

add a spatial element to the piece by visually separating the players on stage as much as possible. This might help the audience see and hear clearly the individual voices, which otherwise have a tendency to be obscured in the “all drum” texture. Other visual effects might be effective as well.

Third Place: “Boogaloo: Rough and Tumble” by William Price (Jemison, AL)

This six-minute work is essentially a keyboard ensemble: xylophone/glockenspiel (played by one player, often in rapid succession!), vibraphone, and two marimbas. There is an assortment of other percussion instruments employed throughout, but they are used only to add splashes of color to the texture and enhance some of the work’s rhythmic drive. Those other instruments include: five drums, two suspended cymbals, two hi-hats, two splash cymbals, an assortment of cowbells and woodblocks, and a police whistle.

According to the composer, the main influence for this piece is the 1950s–early ’60s “boogaloo” pop style. New Orleans funk and soul rhythms are combined to create a syncopated framework that supports “quirky” melodic lines that permeate the piece. The work is quasi-binary. The first section explores small chromatic gestures that extend as the work progresses. The second part is based on quasi-South American rhythmic ostinati and explores sounds of non-pitched percussion.

The mallet parts are fairly difficult, but idiomatic, containing some rapid passage work, scales, arpeggios, double stops, etc. Most of the parts can be executed with two mallets, however. At times, three of the four players must execute passages that go rapidly from a keyboard instrument to a non-pitched instrument, or even play the instruments simultaneously. The melodic lines are highly syncopated, often repetitive, and the composition as a whole certainly “dances” in the boogaloo style. The piece stays in a steady tempo throughout and mostly in 4/4 time with an occasional meter change. This is definitely a toe-tapping, highly entertaining work.

The work is very tonal, centering mostly around E major. Although the piece is rather stagnant throughout, both harmonically and texturally, the large as-

sortment of non-pitched instruments in combination with the various types of keyboard percussion adds enough variety in color to keep the piece interesting and alive. The end of the piece brings the work to an exciting and effective climax, and, in the words of the composer, the music becomes “brutal and driving.”

THE 2005 CONTEST

The 2005 PAS Composition Contest will include the following categories: Percussion Ensemble (8–12 players) and Multiple Percussion Solo (small to medium setup) with CD accompaniment. A list of acceptable instruments for the second category is available from PAS. First prize in each category will be \$1,500, second place \$500, and third place \$250. The winning composition in the percussion ensemble category will be published by C. Alan Publications, and the winning composition in the multiple percussion solo category will be published by HoneyRock Publishing.

The current PAS Composition Committee members, in addition to Gaetano, include Lynn Glassock (chairman, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill), Christopher Deane (University of North Texas), Mark Dorr (Grinnell College), Jim Lambert (Cameron University), David Long (Mary Washington University), and Steve Riley (Baker University).

Dr. Mario Gaetano is Professor of Percussion at Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina, and Principal Percussionist with the Asheville Symphony Orchestra. He is a past president of the North Carolina chapter of PAS and a member of the PAS Composition Contest Committee. He also edits the percussion column of the *North Carolina Music Educator* (NCMEA journal). An accomplished composer of percussion music, he has over 30 published works to his credit, along with five ASCAP awards. His method book, *The Complete Snare Drum Book*, is published by Mel Bay. **PN**

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**PAID INTERNSHIP OFFERS HOUSING, REAL EXPERIENCE,
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SPEND A SEMESTER WITH PAS & LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**

The Percussive Arts Society is seeking applicants for our six-month internship program beginning in January 2005. Many successful candidates for this position have either used internships at PAS as capstone semesters to complete undergraduate music business degrees or have been recent graduates of such programs. However, all percussion students who wish to gain industry experience as a way of promoting career goals are encouraged to apply.

PAS interns acquire broad industry experience by assisting with a variety of staff projects, including those relating to music products, teaching, concert production, publishing, artist management, and marketing. The spring 2005 intern will be part of the team that produces our next international convention in Columbus OH. Interns are also encouraged to develop projects that will put their specialized interests and skills to work for the organization in various artistic and technical endeavors.

While PAS does not serve as a career placement service to interns, we understand that our interns need to use their experience with us to give themselves a competitive edge in their career pursuits, and we do what we can to encourage their preparation for entering the job market or returning to graduate school. One of our interns moved directly from PAS into a marketing position with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and another is entering one of the top music schools in the nation as a new graduate student this fall.

Interns live in a furnished apartment provided by PAS (water, electricity, and cable bills are also paid). In addition, interns receive a \$500 stipend each month.

We invite prospective candidates to send the following information:

- a résumé of academic and work experiences;
- a copy of a paper submitted in an upper division course;
- a list of persons who have agreed to provide academic and work-related recommendations, along with contact information; and
- a cover letter that both describes the applicant's career goals and also suggests how an internship with PAS could help to realistically promote those goals.

Completed applications can be forwarded as e-mail attachments to museum@pas.org or may be sent to our postal address: Intern Coordinator, Percussive Arts Society, 701 NW Ferris Avenue, Lawton, OK 73507.

Priority will be given to candidates whose applications are received before November 1, 2004.

Please encourage students in your studio or music business program to consider the advantages of six months of industry-related experience with the Percussive Arts Society. Applicants and faculty advisors are encouraged to contact us for additional information.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS PASIC 2005 RESEARCH PROPOSAL INFORMATION

The Scholarly Research Committee of the Percussive Arts Society is pleased to announce the call for research proposals for presentation at PASIC 2005, November 2–5 in Columbus, Ohio. Three papers will be selected for oral presentation and up to eight additional proposals will be selected to be presented as research posters. Some possible topic areas for presentation include: world percussion, historical aspects of percussion, compositional analysis, historical aspects of drumset, physical and medical related issues, notation for percussion, aspects of orchestral repertoire and performance practices within the varied areas of percussion.

Authors selected to give oral presentations will have a 50 minute session in which to present their research and answer questions from the audience. Most media resources will be available upon request.

Those authors whose proposals are selected to present their research in a poster session, will do so at a time when interested attendees may discuss research results and applications with individual authors. Each presenter will prepare a 30" x 40" poster that describes the research and will provide abstracts of the report for interested individuals attending the poster session.

A completed PASIC Session Application must be submitted for either format, in addition to an abstract of approximately 750 words that provides a concise, yet thorough summary of the research project.

Send all proposals and
PASIC 2005 Session Applications to:
Percussive Arts Society,
701 N.W. Ferris Avenue,
Lawton, OK 73507-5442

Additional information regarding the
Scholarly Papers and Research Posters
may be directed
to Laura Franklin
PHONE: (828) 884-8122
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DEADLINE: DECEMBER 17, 2004



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