



W.A. CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE
Gary France, Director

1991 SPRING CONCERT

1:15 pm
Music Auditorium
Tuesday 24 September 1991

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS

The Academy incorporating the Conservatorium of Music, is one of the few schools throughout the world that offers a comprehensive performing arts curriculum in Classical Music, Jazz, Dance, Theatre Musical Theatre, Production and Design, Media Performance and Arts Management.



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS
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GARY DOUGLAS FRANCE

Gary is from Syracuse, New York, USA. He performs in both the classical and jazz genres. He received his Bachelor degree in Music Education in 1979 from the State University of New York. He completed his Master degree in Performance in 1987 at North Texas State University where he became the first drummer to direct one of the prestigious Jazz lab Bands. Gary has performed with many Jazz Greats including James Morrison, Richie Cole, Nat Adderly, Mark Murphy, Frank Sinatra Jr to name a few. He has performed many world and national premieres including Peter Brook's *La Tragedie de Carmen* and Sir Michael Tippett's *New Year's Suite* with the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra. Gary has performed in The People's Republic of China (1986), India for *Musica Viva* (1989), Australia and New Zealand (1987), for Yamaha International, and the United States 59 City Tour, 1985. Mr France is President of the Percussive Arts Society International, Australian Chapter.

Western Australian Conservatorium of Music

Percussion Ensemble

The Western Australian Conservatorium of Music, Percussion Ensemble consist of between 3 to 19 players depending on the music. Students from both jazz and classical studies combine to explore, workshop, and perform percussion literature and world musics .

Alison Eddington	Sandy Moor France
Michael Pigneguy	Gavin Darby
Paul Edsall	Owen Smythe
Darryl Mcgeough	Dennis Vrcic
Alice Emor	Thane Mandin
John Crothers	Katrina Ross

Ritmicas 5 and 6

Born in Paris, 1900, Amadeo Roldàn graduated violin at the Conservatory in Madrid, graduating in 1916, and composition with del Campo and Pedro Sanjuán. He settled in Cuba in 1921 where he lived until his death in 1939. During his brief time in Havana, Roldàn led a rather illustrious career. He was Music Director of the Havana Philharmonic Orchestra (1932) and professor of composition at the Havana Conservatory from 1935 until his death. Roldàn's interest in contemporary music led to the formation of the Havana String Quartet (1927), a contemporary string ensemble. A suite from Roldàn's ballet *La Rembambamba* requiring six separate groups of percussion instruments was performed in Havana in 1928.

Ritmica Nos. 1-4 were composed in 1928 for wind quintet and piano. Ritmica No 5 and 6 were composed in 1930 and are believed to be among the first western works for percussion ensemble. Pre-dating Ionisation by one year there are striking similarities in the composers use of densities and aggregates of sound; However the most striking difference is Roldàn's use and reverence of the folkloric traditions of the music of Africa and Cuba. This Afro-Cuban tradition manifests itself in the son clavè, Ritmica No 5, and the Rumba Clave, Ritmica no 6. Like Ionisation, Ritmica No 6 is a highly multimetric work rich in polyrhythms.

Canticle No. 3

Canticle No. 3 and First Construction in Metal continue the W.A. Conservatoriums Percussion ensemble's exploration of the works of the Pacific group of composers.

American composer, Lou Harrison, first left to prominence in the early 1950's when he received glowing praise from Stravinsky for his vocal work *Rapunsel*. His early music, much influenced by his studies with Schoenberg and Cowell, was noteworthy for its keen exploration of percussion, and in this context he shared interests with John Cage. During the 60's his growing committment to the causes of human rights and personal freedom and his general dissatisfaction with the state of American society, led him to make systematic studies of the music of a number of non-Western cultures: Korean court music, Chinese classical music, and Indonesian Gamelan music.

Canticle No 3 pre dates his *Concerto for Violin & Percussion Orchestra* by some 30 years. This early work examines through timbre and structure percussion writing in an innovative way for the period. In *Canticle No 3* Harrison draws on his eastern influence through the use of Chinese instrumentation: temple gongs and nipple gongs, and cymbals. Harrison also foreshadows some of his later works in his use of teponazli, iron pipes, and bells. This orchestration reflects Harrison's early relationship with John Cage and the Pacific group of composers as well as the establishment of "utility music". In addition to exploiting a fascinating palette of percussion sounds the work makes use of fugal and contrapuntal techniques. Both Harrison and Cage were often termed "purist" because their ensembles were written without actual pitches. However, the two composers were very much concerned with timbre. Originally scored for five players, *Canticle No 3* has been published for 7. In the published edition the ocarina and guitar parts are separated from the 5 percussionist. *Canticle No 3* opens with a theme played by the simple folk ocarina (purchased at the Fremantle Markets) and is then performed on the teponazli (crafted by Chris Murdock). The thematic material is ultimately manipulated by ten non-pitched instruments.

First Construction in Metal

The Writing of music is an affirmation of life, not an attempt to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvement in creation but simply a way waking up to the very life we're living which is so excellent once one gets one's mind and one's desire out of the way and let's it act of it's own accord.

John Cage

During the late 1930's a group of composers gravitated around Henry Cowell and his New Music Editions. Working together, to exchange ideas on percussion writing and techniques, these composers, later known as the Pacific Coast Group, were to irretrievably change the shape and boundaries of the conception of musical composition. Two major figures from this group to emerge were John Cage and Lou Harrison.

From 1935 to 1937, Cage studied composition with Arnold Schoenberg. Cage adapted the 12 tone theory, "*No sound any more important than any other...*" [Cage], produced works using strict 12 tone technique, notably *Metamorphosis*, and proceeded to compose music for percussion.

The *First Construction* for 6 players perhaps best demonstrates Cage's Percussion palette. This composition displays Cage's fascination with non conventional sounds. Players perform on 5 graduated Thunder Sheets, 3 Japanese Temple Gongs, Brake Drums, Cow Bells, Gongs, Tam Tams, Water Gong, Turkish Cymbals, Chinese Cymbals, Oxen Bells, and other assorted instruments. Perhaps the most innovative technique of the time is Cage's use of the prepared piano. Cage scores the piano part for assistant with an assortment of metal pipes or slides.

" The Assistant applies a metal rod firmly on the strings used, producing harmonics: Ascend and indicate slow slides of the rod away from or toward the centre of the strings length, producing, respectively, ascending and descending siren like sounds"

The notation is quite precise making great use of polyrhythms. However, Cage seemed interested with disguising the obvious. Often throughout this composition simple lines and duets compete with highly complex individual statements. Throughout this work Cage foreshadows his obsession with the control of pulse. This could well be his fascination with the rise of contemporary dance during the late 1930's and early 1940's, or his interest in rhythmic counterpoint.

Gary France

PROGRAMME

Ritmica No. 5 Amadeo Roldàn (1930)
Allison Eddington (Student Conductor)

Ritmica No. 6 Amadeo Roldàn (1930)

Canticle No.3 Lou Harrison (1940)

First Construction in Metal John Cage (1959)

SEPTEMBER 24, 25, 26, 27, 28



Dialogues of the Carmelites

by Francis Poulenc

DIRECTED BY JOHN MILSON MUSICAL DIRECTOR TOM WOODS