

SCHOOL OF MUSIC



ANU

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

# GARY FRANCE & THE DRUMatiX

## COMING TOGETHER

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS  
TUZA AFUTU, ERIC C. AJAYE & MIROSLAV BUKOVSKY

Friday 1 June 2007, 7:30pm  
Saturday 2 June 2007, 12:30pm  
Arts Centre  
The Australian National University

*I think the combination of age and a greater coming together is responsible for the speed of the passing time. It's six months now, and I can tell you truthfully few periods in my life have passed so quickly. I am in excellent physical and emotional health. There are doubtless subtle surprises ahead, but I feel secure and ready...*

Sam Melville 1972



ANU COLLEGE OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



## PROGRAM

*Strings Attached* Erik Griswold (1999)

Gary France & the DRUMatiX

*Sound-Scape No.1* DRUMatiX Pretertiary Ensemble (2007)

Dimitri Diamand, Ella Sayers, Katrina Leske, Josh Andrews

*Sextet* Steve Reich (1984/5)

Jacinta Dunlop, Veronica Walshaw, Adam Dickson, Chi hsia Lai (percussion)

Anna Ransom, Edwina Berry (keyboards)

## INTERVAL

*Coming Together* Fredric Rzewski (1972)

The DRUMatiX Percussion Group with special guests Eric C Ajaye (vocals), Miroslav Bukowsky (trumpet), Nicole Bates (bass clarinet), Liam Morrissey (cello), Daniel Pikler (piano), Alistair Clarke (trombone), Hannah Vermeesch (drums)

*Kpalango* Ghanaian Traditional

The ANU World Music Ensemble, Gary France (Director) **with Special Guest Tuza Afutu** and Alex Morton, Amber Robertson, Beth Monzo, Celena Hobbins, Fiona Fraser, Hannah Richardson, Kylie Loveland, Lada Marcelja, Oliver Hague, Veronica Walshaw, Matthew Sykes, Moriya Rosenberg, David Rodrigrez-Lovebond, Frances Rouse, Josuha Creek.

## PROGRAM NOTES

*Sextet* - Steve Reich (1984/5)

*Sextet* was commissioned by Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians, and by the French government for the Nexus percussion ensemble, and was written in 1984. The first performance under the title Music for Percussion and Keyboards was given by Nexus at the Centre Pompidou in Paris on December 10, 1984, with guest artists playing keyboards. The last movement was then revised in January 1985 and the title shortened to *Sextet*. *Sextet* is in five movements played without pause. The relationship of the five movements is that of an arch form, A-B-C-B-A. The first and last movements are fast, the second and fourth movements moderate, and the third slow. Changes of tempo are made abruptly at the beginning of new movements by means of metric modulation, to get either slower or faster. Movements are also organized harmonically, with one chord cycle for the first and fifth, another for the second and fourth, and yet another for the third. The harmonies used are largely dominant chords with added tones creating a somewhat darker, chromatic, and more varied harmonic language than in my earlier works. Both the cyclical movement and structure, and the general harmonic language, were suggested by *The Desert Music* (1984). Percussion instruments mostly produce sounds of relatively short duration. In this piece, I was interested in overcoming that limitation. The use of the bowed vibraphone was one means of obtaining long sustained sounds not possible with a piano. The mallet instruments (marimba, vibraphone, etc.) are basically instruments of high and middle register without a low range. To overcome this limit, the bass drum was used doubling the piano or synthesizer—particularly in the second, third, and fourth movements. - Steve Reich

### ***Coming Together* - Fredric Rzewski (1971)**

The fiercely political American composer Frederic Rzewski composed *Coming Together* in the early seventies, based on a letter that was published in the *New York Times* and written by Sam Melville, a prisoner in the Attica Correctional Facility who was later murdered in the Attica uprising. "Rzewski was obsessed with this letter, read it over and over again, and the music reflects his obsession," says Evan Ziporyn. "The sentences evolve slowly, repeat, almost like a gigantic palindrome or a big Escher drawing. The performers are allowed freedom to improvise within the structure, but there is no instruction as to what the effect should be or how you are supposed to feel. It has been performed as an angry, violent piece, but the text is a lot more open-ended than that. One thing we do that is different is move the text around, so that the character of the piece shifts with each voice."

- *Bang on the Can Archive*

### ***Strings Attached* - Eric Griswold (1999)**

Eclectic Australian-American musician Erik Griswold fuses experimental, jazz and world music traditions to create works of striking originality. Specializing in prepared piano, percussion and toy instruments, he has created a musical universe all his own that is "sincere" (*neural.it*), "playful" (*igloo magazine*), "colourful and refreshingly unpretentious" (*Paris Transatlantic*). Griswold performs as a soloist, in *Clocked Out Duo* (with percussionist Vanessa Tomlinson), and collaborates with musicians from diverse backgrounds as well as visual artists, writers, dancers and circus performers. In *Strings Attached*, six percussionists perform with nylon ropes attaching their sticks to each others' (Players 1 & 2), or to a 3 m (10 ft) pole in the centre of the stage (Players 3-6). Playing snare drums in a relatively conventional manner produces a variety of visual wave patterns both simple and chaotic. The visual aspect has been described as "kinetic sculpture" and compared to "cat's cradle" games. Although these notes will primarily address the visual component, it is my intention that the visual and sonic have equal importance. - *Eric Griswold*

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

**Gary France** loves to play music, all kinds! You will find him at home in the orchestra pit, a circus band, the concert stage, a jazz club, a Western Swing Band, folk festivals, or just here in Canberra making music with his students! Past performances have taken him to India, Africa, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan, New Zealand all parts of North America, and in July 2007 Brazil. Gary has extensive leadership experience: A former head of the West Australian Conservatorium of Music and the ANU School of Music as well as Convener/Artistic Director of numerous major events such as Heartbeat multi-cultural Music Festival (1995), the Australian National Marimba Festival (2001) the Rhythms of Life Percussion Festival (2002) the Australian National Percussion Symposium (2003) and the Australian Music Educators National Conference (2005). Gary is currently the Lead Principal Investigator in the ANU New Media Laboratory (NML), a research team that explores the multifaceted relationships between digital technology and acoustic instruments. His most recent projects have included composing the sound design and music for the Australian premiere production of QED by Peter Parnell (*West Wing*), the New Directions Music Festival (Singapore 2005), *Video Phase* by Steve Reich with performances at the Taiwan- Australia New Media Art Symposium (AUS 2006) and KOSA International Percussion Festival (USA 2006), collaborative composition and performance for the Southeast Asian segment of the Opening Ceremonies (15th Asian Games DOHA 2006), the 2007 Castlemain State Festival and the 2007 Auckland Festival. Gary France was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the Percussive Arts Society International.

**Miroslav Bukowsky**, born in Czechoslovakia, has a long and established career as one of Australia's leading jazz trumpeters and composers. He has performed with many groups including Bob Bertles' *Moontrane*, the Bruce Cale Orchestra, Sydney Conservatorium Orchestra, KMA Orchestra, the *Freeboppers*, *Renee Geyer*, *Daly-Wilson Big Band*, *Monica and the Moochers*, *Carl Orr*, the *Mighty Reapers* and the Australian Art Orchestra. He formed Ten Part Invention with John Pochee and Roger Frampton and has been active as a composer for this band and for his own band *Major Minority* formed in 1987 to perform original compositions and currently with *Wanderlust* which he formed in 1991. He has won the Jazz Action Society's Jazz Composers competition several times and also teaches and does session work.

## BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

**Eric C. Ajaye** was born in Brooklyn, New York but moved to Los Angeles, California with his parents and brother at an early age. He always loved music and studied violin for nine years before switching to bass. In college Eric studied bass under Buell Neidlinger at California Institute of the Arts where he was on scholarship. While in Los Angeles, Eric's music career included many aspects of the music industry, such as recording albums with artists from Bill Cosby to Chaka Khan, television and film soundtracks, and television commercials. He was a member of the rhythm section in those situations and also played in the orchestra double bass sections. Eric has toured many countries in Asia, Europe, Russia, Central and South America and has been a member of the bands of *Freddie Hubbard*, *Taj Mahal*, *The Jazz Tap Ensemble*, *The Doug MacLeod Band*, and *the Pointer Sisters and Barry White*. He has also backed artists Nancy Wilson, Bennie Maupin, Gary Bartz, George Howard, Sonny Stitt, Joe Williams, Gregory Hines, Harold Nicholas, Todd Cochran (Bayete), Pee Wee Crayton, Joe Louis Walker, Della Reese, and many more. Eric respects the deep, rich history of jazz and feels it plays an important part in the future directions that it and the musicians who perform it will take. The evolution of jazz is what the greats who came before were committed to and it must continue to be a commitment of ours today.

**Tuza Afutu** is a Master Drummer, Dancer, Singer and Percussionist from Ghana, West Africa. Tuza began drumming when he was only 9 years old. Over the years he was disciplined in traditional African drumming and dancing and his passion for music developed. Tuza has worked with Ghana's national cultural troupe *The Dance Factory*, as well as other prominent percussion groups including *The Kusun Ensemble*. In 2001 Tuza formed Wala, a vibrant Ghanaian drum and dance group and over the following years Wala performed extensively across Australia, visiting schools in almost every State and teaching workshops to all levels of percussion students. Tuza has dedicated himself to sharing and upholding the traditional culture of his community. In pursuit of this aim, Tuza funds a teenage drum and dance group in Ghana providing a group of talented young performers with a rigorous education in traditional drum and dance. This group is called *Salaka* and they will be touring Australia in 2008.

**THE DRUMatiX PERCUSSION GROUP** is the resident percussion ensemble of The Australian National University School of Music. Operating under their present name since the beginning of 2003, they are comprised of percussion students and graduates of the ANU and are dedicated to presenting the rich and diverse repertoire written exclusively for percussion. Associate Professor Gary France has directed the percussion program at the ANU since his appointment in 1998.

The DRUMatiX Percussion Group consists of Charles Martin, Veronica Walshaw, Christina Hopgood, Richard Spong and Jacinta Dunlop

**Would you like to be on our mailing list?**

**Send mail to: [Gary@garyfrance.com](mailto:Gary@garyfrance.com)**

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For more information about the School of Music concert diary please contact the School:

T: 02 6125 5700

E: [schoolofmusic@anu.edu.au](mailto:schoolofmusic@anu.edu.au)

W: [www.anu.edu.au/music](http://www.anu.edu.au/music)

