

ABOUT DRUMatiX



ABOUT THE DRUMatiX PERCUSSION GROUP

THE DRUMatiX PERCUSSION GROUP is the resident percussion ensemble at the Australian National University School of Music. Operating under their present name since the beginning of 2003, they are comprised of percussion students studying at the ANU. An ensemble dedicated to presenting the rich and diverse repertoire written exclusively for percussion. The DRUMatiX have won numerous national prizes for their presentation of percussion music across all genres including a Canberra Critics Circle Award in 2004. Under the direction of Gary France the ANU Percussion program has hosted and convened numerous international symposiums, master schools and conferences.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE ON OUR MAILING LIST?

Send mail to: Gary@garyfrance.com

We would like to thank and acknowledge the support of:

Natalie Guile and the Staff at Nowra Anglican College, The Sapphire Coast Music Society, The Montague Choristers, William and Elizabeth Hawkey, Olwen and Barry Morris; Bobbie Thaxton; Christina Coull; Bruce and Liz Connor; Noel & Heather Kenway

The ANU Team Belinda Kelly, Benjamin Backhouse, Anne-Maree O'Brien, Julie Cassidy and Professor Adrian Walter.



2009
SOUTH COAST
NSW
CONCERT
TOUR

GARY FRANCE & THE DRUMatiX



SCHOOL OF MUSIC



**Friday 11
September**
Nowra Anglican
College
(in residence)

**Saturday 12
September**
Sapphire Coast
Music Society,
Narooma
High School
Auditorium
at 2.30pm

**Sunday 13
September**
Montague
Choristers
Visiting Artists
Program
2.30pm in
the Wolumla
Community
Centre

PROGRAM

Ghanaian Bells
Gary France (2003)

**Imaginary Landscape
No. 2, or March no. 1**
John Cage (1942)

**One last bar then
Joe can sing**
Gavin Bryers (1994)

**Selection of Solo Music
for the Marimba**
The DRUMatiX
TBA

The Ragtime Robin
G.H. Green (1924)

The Spanish Waltz
G.H. Green (1924)

Log Cabin Blues
G.H. Green (1924)

Xylophonia
G.H. Green (1924)

**The DRUMatiX
Percussion Group**
Izac Sadler, Yvonne Lam,
Christina Hopgood,
*Charles Martin
Gary France - Artistic Director

* ANU Alumni guest artist

PROGRAM NOTES

GHANAIAI BELLS

The compositional basis for Ghanaian Bells is rhythmic displacement of the motivic figure introduced by the Gonkogui (African double bell). The bell pattern is displaced while the Axatsi (gourd shakers) imply a shift in pulse through redefining the rhythmic subdivision. This "aural illusion" in West African Music is one of the most interesting and captivating components of its style. The centre section of Ghanaian Bells includes a section where the four soloists may create subtle changes in their pattern to highlight the melodic and rhythmic counterpoint. I purchased this set of bells while conducting field studies in the Ghana, West Africa in 1999. - Gary France

THE MUSIC OF GEORGE HAMILTON GREEN

Born in Omaha, Nebraska on May 23, 1893, George Hamilton Green, Jr. was a piano prodigy at the age of four. His grandfather, Joseph Green I, began as violinist and violin maker in New York City-later moved to Omaha to work as conductor and baritone horn soloist with the Seventh Ward Silver Cornet Band. In 1889 George Hamilton Green, Jr's father (George Hamilton Green, Sr.) followed his father's footsteps becoming cornet soloist, arranger, and conductor of the Seventh Ward Silver Cornet Band-playing weekly concerts to audiences of 7,000-10,000 in the 1890's. Coming from such a musical background, it is not too surprising that George Jr. was already being called "the world's greatest xylophonist" when he was only eleven years old! The next four decades of recording and composing provide documented evidence to justify the title. In 1915 a review in The United Musician states: "He has begun where every other xylophone player left off. His touch, his attack, his technique, and his powers of interpretation in the rendition of his solos being far different than other performers'. To say his work is marvelous and wonderful would not fully express it." - Bill Cahn

IMAGINARY LANDSCAPE NO. 2.

"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 of waking up to the very life we're living, which is so excellent once one gets one's desire out of the way, and let's it act of its own accord." - John Cage

Imaginary Landscape No. 2 (March) (1942) has a rhythmic structure of 3, 4, 2, 3, 5. The percussion instruments (tin cans, conch shell, ratchet, bass drum, buzzers, water gong, metal wastebasket, lion's roar) are combined with an amplified coil of wire. - John Cage

Imaginary Landscape No. 2, composed in 1942 during World War II, is a roaring, aggressive piece. There is some thought that it is intended to express something of his feelings about the war, but Cage himself has ever since that time been reticent to attribute specific programmatic, "intentional" elements to his music. There are all manner of sounds in the piece, though primarily metallic, including collections of "found objects," such as tin cans, odd pieces of metal, and an amplified metal coil. The score is notated in precise detail; the composer was still concerned with rhythmic structures that would be reflected on the larger-scale formal organization. There is, considering the instrumentation, no concern with pitch, although the composer, in organizing the work's texture, pays considerable attention to timbre, register, dynamics, and so forth. The rhythmic patterns tend to create dense, irregular constellations; repetition is more global on the level of texture and density. The most dramatic moment comes near the end of this six-minute piece, with the deep, evocative call of a conch shell, an instrument from the South Pacific. One should not read too much into this, but considering that world music as a genre had not yet come to be, and that the United States was heavily implicated in the war in that region, one would not be blamed for hearing political resonances in the music. The subtitle, "March No. 1" (this is definitely not music one would march to!), may support this interpretation. - All Music Guide

ONE LAST BAR THEN JOE CAN SING

Gavin Bryers 1994

... The work, Bryers explained in his notes to the 1995 recording, "exploits not only the tremendous virtuosity of Nexus, but rather more their wonderful musicality and subtlety." Indeed, the musical idiom of the piece ranges from unpitched, faux-primitive rhythms in which nuance of touch and timbre are pushed to the fore, to busy minimalist matrices whose complex patterns and figurations demand the utmost physical agility across the keyboards of pitched percussion instruments. Bryers makes particular use of a familiar expanding and contracting gesture created by rapid arpeggiated figures moving in contrary motion, usually above a slow-moving underlying chord progression. It is this combination of busy surface and slowly-unfolding structure that lend the piece a paradoxical sense of momentum and stasis -- the inertia of constant and consistent motion. Bryers adds to this multilayered structure, articulated for the most part by marimbas, a contrasting element consisting of bowed metal keyboard instruments such as vibraphones and crotales (as well as Nexus' set of rare and sonorous "songbells"). The bowed metal keys and discs create an ethereal hum, almost a whistle, that hovers and shimmers in clear tones above the undulating polyphonic textures of the marimba-dominated matrices. This element finds a counterpart in the passages for unpitched percussion as well, as the skin and log drums articulate their rhythms against the rumbling wash of gongs and cymbals.

The curious title of the piece derives in a roundabout way from the fact that its opening gesture, a single measure of unpitched percussion, is borrowed from the last bar of the first part of Bryers' opera Medea. This measure of music is reiterated and slowly transformed, and eventually usurped by pitched percussion instruments. Over the course of the work, the melodic element becomes increasingly prominent, eventually ending with a lyrical line from the bowed instruments above murmuring marimba tremolos. ~ All Music Guide