

NODUS at Miami Art Central
Concert II

Political Musical Statements: A concert of contemporary solo and chamber music with a political message.

Featuring NODUS and guest artist composer performer David Bithell;
Saturday, March 24, 2007 at 8:00 PM

As with visual artists, composers have been interested in using the music to express political views. Some composers have done it in obvious ways with sung, spoken text, titles of works, and even dedications. Others have used melodies and even musical concepts to create political statements. This concert features the music of some of the composers that have made political statements with their musical creations over the last 40 years.

PROGRAM

Les moutons du Panurge Saul Bitran, violin Jennifer Snyder, piano Michael Launius, percussion Orlando Jacinto Garcia, electric guitar	Frederic Rzewski
Come Out Solo tape	Steve Reich
Nixon in China excerpt – Pat’s Aria Karen Neal, soprano Jennifer Snyder, piano	John Adams
olas Saul Bitran, violin Jennifer Snyder, piano	Orlando Jacinto Garcia
The President Has His Photograph Taken David Bithell, trumpet (guest artist)	David Bithell

ABOUT NODUS

Initiated by faculty composer Orlando Jacinto García, NODUS is the contemporary chamber music ensemble in residence at Florida International University's School of Music. Specializing in the cutting edge Art music of our time, the makeup of the ensemble varies for each concert depending on the works being presented. The

ensemble's repertoire includes recent music by composers from around the world as well as works written specifically for the ensemble.

NODUS debut at the FIU Festival of the Arts in November 1998 and shortly thereafter was featured at the January 1999 New Music Miami Festival. Subsequent performances have included the 1999, 2000, and 2001 FIU Music Festival, the 2001 Music of the Americas Festival, the 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004 New Music Miami ISCM Festival, the 2004 International Computer Music Conference, and numerous other concerts held at a variety of South Florida venues over the past several seasons.

The ensemble has been featured at the Norton Museum, Wertheim Performing Arts Center, the Wolfsonian, Spanish Cultural Center, Miami Art Central, among other performing spaces in the region. The musicians in NODUS include internationally acclaimed performers, soprano Michelle Auslander, clarinetist Paul Green, pianists Jose Lopez and Jennifer Snyder, percussionist Michael Launius, violinist Saul Bitran, violist Laura Wilcox, cellist Iris van Eck, contrabassist Luis Gomez Imbert, among others.

Saul Bitran was born in 1961 in Mexico City. He began his violin studies in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, continuing them at the National Conservatory of Chile until 1974, and then at the National Conservatory of Mexico until 1979. From 1980 until 1986, Saul Bitran studied at the Rubin Academy of Tel Aviv, Israel, under Prof. Yair Kless. During his stay in Israel, Saul played in the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and was first violinist of the Rubin Academy String Quartet, with which he performed throughout Israel and Europe. In 1986 he joined the Cuarteto Latinoamericano as first violinist, group with which he has recorded extensively and toured worldwide. The twice Grammy-nominated Cuarteto Latinoamericano has been Quartet in Residence at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh since 1987, and since then, Saul has been Associate Professor and Artist in Residence at the School of Music. Saul Bitran has played as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Seattle Symphony, the San Antonio Symphony, the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa, the Mexico City Philharmonic and others, under conductors Esa-Pekka Salonen, Gerard Schwarz, Eduardo Mata, Keith Lockhart, Juan Pablo Izquierdo, Kery Lynn Wilson, and Carlos Miguel Prieto, among many others. Bitran lives in Boca Raton, FL and Mexico City.

Michael Launius received the BM in percussion performance from the University of Oregon, studying with Jeffrey Peyton and Charles Dowd. He went on to Florida State University as a graduate teaching fellow, earning the MM in percussion performance while studying with Gary Werdeshim. Most recently Michael has performed as timpanist and percussionist with many different groups including the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, the Greater Palm Beach Symphony, the Palm Beach Opera Orchestra, the Miami Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony of the Dominican Republic, and the Charleston Symphony Orchestra (SC). Current positions include timpanist of the Atlantic Classical Orchestra, percussionist with the Southwest Florida Symphony and principal percussionist with the biennial Festival Musical de Santo Domingo.

Karen Carlisle Neal enjoys performing a broad range of musical styles and languages, mastering a diverse repertoire from Renaissance to modern vocal literature and jazz. Currently, Mrs. Neal is the professor of vocal literature and diction at Florida International University in Miami, Florida and is a member of Dade County Cultural Affairs' network of Miami's Emerging Arts Leaders. She serves as soloist with the Church of the Epiphany and is the first soprano in the professional chamber ensemble, "Seraphic Fire". She has been soloist with ensembles in Paris, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Miami. In South Florida, she has performed extensively as soloist for Florida International University, the Epiphany and Coral Gables Congregational Church concert series, Imagine Events International, the Serenade Ensemble, Simon Salz Productions, Inc., and in recitals for the Biltmore Hotel and the Dranoff Foundation. This past season's highlights include performing with Seraphic Fire and the New World Symphony in a Baroque concert featuring conductor Robert King, working as a background vocalist on Shakira's latest album, and singing Bach's Cantata #52 for the President of the United States.

In 2004-2005, she performed six complete Bach cantatas as part of Epiphany's ecumenical celebration of Bach's works. As oratorio soloist, she has also been seen with the Miami Bach Society and the San Francisco Chorale. In the field of modern music, she was the premier vocalist with New Music Works of Santa Cruz, California, a cutting-edge group committed to presenting the works of contemporary composers.

Mrs. Neal holds a Vocal Performance degree from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. She was also a Tanglewood Fellowship recipient and has studied French repertoire intensively in Nice with Dalton Baldwin, Paris with Jean-Francoise Ballevre, and the Àbbe Royaumont in Asnières-sur-Oise, France with Daniel Ferro.

Jennifer Renee Snyder joined the staff of the Division of Vocal Studies in the fall of 2005. She has worked extensively throughout the United States as a collaborative pianist for musicians in classical, jazz and musical theatre settings. Born on the island of Guam, she began studying piano at the age of five and made her concerto debut at age 11. She received a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance from the Eastman School of Music under Ms. Nelita True, and pursued graduate studies there in accompanying and chamber music with Dr. Jean Barr. She received Eastman's Excellence in Accompanying Award in both 2001 and 2002 for her performances with students and faculty members. Although trained as a classical pianist, Miss Snyder began playing in musical theatre venues as a teenager and has continued as a class, rehearsal and production pianist, as well as a vocal coach. As a pianist for the Kurt Weill Foundation, she has accompanied vocalists in competitions and concerts featuring her own arrangements of his music. She also has a strong interest in new music and has enjoyed working with such distinguished contemporary composers John Zorn, Steve Reich and John Adams.

SEE BELOW FOR DAVID BITHELL AND ORLANDO JACINTO GARCIA

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

Born in Westfield, Massachusetts in 1938, **Frederic Rzewski** studied music at first with Charles Mackey of Springfield, and subsequently with Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, and Milton Babbitt at Harvard and Princeton universities. He went to Italy in 1960, where he studied with Luigi Dallapiccola and met Severino Gazzelloni, with whom he performed in a number of concerts, thus beginning a career as a performer of new piano music. Rzewski's early friendship with Christian Wolff and David Behrman, and (through Wolff) his acquaintance with John Cage and David Tudor strongly influenced his development in both composition and performance. In Rome in the mid-sixties, together with Alvin Curran and Richard Teitelbaum, he formed the MEV (Musica Elettronica Viva) group, which quickly became known for its pioneering work in live electronics and improvisation. Bringing together both classical and jazz avant-gardists (like Steve Lacy and Anthony Braxton), MEV developed an esthetic of music as a spontaneous collective process, an esthetic which was shared with other experimental groups of the same period (e.g. the Living Theatre and the Scratch Orchestra).

The experience of MEV can be felt in Rzewski's compositions of the late sixties and early seventies, which combine elements derived equally from the worlds of written and improvised music (*Les Moutons de Panurge*, *Coming Together*). During the seventies he experimented further with forms in which style and language are treated as structural elements; the best-known work of this period is *The People United Will Never Be Defeated!*, a 50-minute set of piano variations. A number of pieces for larger ensembles written between 1979 and 1981 show a return to experimental and graphic notation (*Le Silence des Espaces Infinis*, *The Price of Oil*), while much of the work of the eighties explores new ways of using twelve-tone technique (*Antigone-Legend*, *The Persians*). A freer, more spontaneous approach to writing can be found in more recent work (*Whangdoodles*, *Sonata*). Rzewski's largest-scale work to date is *The Triumph of Death* (1987-8), a two-hour oratorio based on texts adapted from Peter Weiss' 1995 play *Die Ermittlung* (*The Investigation*).

Rzewski has recorded *The People United*; *North American Ballads*, and *Squares*; and the *Sonata* and *De Profundis* on hat ART records (CD 6066, 6089, & 6134); *Four Pieces* on Vanguard; and *Bumps*, *Andante con Moto*, and *The Turtle and the Crane* for Newport Classic. *The People United* has also been recorded by Ursula Oppens (Vanguard), Stephen Drury (New Albion), and Yuji Takahashi, and the *Ballads* by Paul Jacobs on Nonesuch. *Song and Dance* is recorded on Nonesuch, *Coming Together* on both Hungaroton and Opus One, and *Antigone* on CRI. *Mayn Yingele* is recorded by Oppens for Music & Arts. *Wails*, *Spots*, and *Crusoe* are recorded by the Zeitgeist group for 00 Records.

Since 1977 Rzewski has been Professor of Composition at the Conservatoire Royal de Musique in Liege, Belgium. He has also taught at the Yale School of Music, the University of Cincinnati, the State University of New York at Buffalo, the California Institute of the Arts, the University of California at San Diego, Mills College, the Royal Conservatory of the Hague, the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin, and the Hochschule für Musik in Karlsruhe.

Steve Reich began his career as a percussionist, and his music is marked by an almost overriding interest in rhythm. He studied philosophy at Cornell before beginning studies in composition, first at Juilliard and then at Mills College in California. It was there, studying with Luciano Berio and Darius Milhaud, that he was introduced to the music of Bali and of Africa. Both of these had a decisive influence on his musical development. In 1971 he traveled to Africa to study drumming with the master drummers of Ghana's Ewe tribe.

Reich's first works were almost exclusively for percussion, and in them he used both the rhythmic energy and repetitive patterns he found in African music and the concept of gradual change that marks Balinese music. The result was a music in which repeating rhythmic ideas slowly go out of phase with each other, creating gradual change and increasing complexity. The basic idea of this can be seen in one of his simplest pieces, *Pendulum Music* (a piece you could easily perform on your own). Here, two microphones are suspended above upturned speakers and then set into motion. As each swings over the center of the speaker, it creates feedback. Since the differing lengths of the microphone wire create a different period of swing, the two sounds keep changing their relationship to each other. And as the force of gravity works on them, they both head toward a "steady state" of feedback. The process of that change is the basis of the piece, and the sound (changing with each performance) is the result of the process. Reich utilizes this process of gradual change with live performers, as well as by means of tape manipulations (such as making two tape loops of the same sound, but of slightly different lengths).

As Reich continued his experiments with rhythm and phases, he began to incorporate other elements (such as melodic motives and harmonic change). Works such as *Music for 18 Musicians* (1976) make use of repeating melodic cells and harmonic progressions that function in the same way as the rhythmic patterns of his earlier works. More recently, he has added the rhythms and inflections of human speech as material for his compositions, especially in *Different Trains* (1988) and *City Life* (1995).

Reich's music, along with that of the other minimalists, causes us to rethink the way we listen to music. Not surprisingly, his approach, steeped in non-Western ideals, violates many of the assumptions about music that have developed in the West (harmonic goals for example, and forms based on a hierarchy of structure). At the same time, it is different from its non-Western models, in that its function as concert music is the same as that of all Western music from the eighteenth century on.

John Adams is one of the best known and most often performed of America's composers. As Andrew Porter wrote in *The New Yorker*, Adams was born in Worcester, Massachusetts on 15 February 1947. During his youth, growing up in Vermont and New Hampshire, he was strongly influenced by the intellectual and cultural institutions of New England. He received both his BA and MA degrees from Harvard University, where he was active as a conductor, clarinetist, and composer. His principal teachers included Leon Kirchner, David Del Tredici, and Roger Sessions.

In 1971 Adams began an active career in the San Francisco area, teaching at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (1972-83) and serving as new music adviser and composer-in-residence for the San Francisco Symphony (1978-85). His creative output spans a wide range of media: works for orchestra, opera, video, film, and dance, as well as electronic and instrumental music. Such pieces as *Harmonium*, *Harmonielehre*, *Shaker Loops*, and *The Chairman Dances* are among the best known and most frequently performed of contemporary American music. In these works he has taken minimalism into a new and fresh terrain characterized by luminous sonorities and a powerful and dramatic approach to form. Adams's works have been programmed by every major orchestra in the United States as well as orchestras throughout Europe, Asia, and Australia. His operas have been among the more controversial and widely seen stage events in recent history. John Adams has become increasingly active as a conductor of his own and other new music. From 1987 to 1990 Adams served as creative chair of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, conducting four weeks of concerts and overseeing their new music activities. In 1993, he served as music director of the Ojai Festival.

Winner of the 2003 Pulitzer prize, Adams is also a member of the American Academy of Arts & Letters. He is also the recipient of the Centennial Medal of Harvard University's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences as well as the first ever recipient of the Nemmers Prize in Music Composition. He has been awarded an honorary doctorate by Cambridge University in England as well as an honorary membership in Phi Beta Kappa. In April of 2000 he was given a proclamation by the governor of California for his distinguished service to the arts in his home state.

The music of John Adams has been recorded in multiple versions on the Nonesuch, EMI/Angel, Philips, ECM, Chandos, New Albion, and 1750 Arch labels. Among recent recordings are his *Grand Pianola Music* with the Netherlands Wind Ensemble conducted by Stephen Mosko, a new release of *Harmonielehre* and *The Chairman Dances* conducted by Simon Rattle, and *Harmonium* conducted by Leonard Slatkin. In 1985, *Harmonielehre* was honored as "Best Classical Album" by both *Time* and *USA Today*. *Harmonium*, *Grand Pianola Music*, *Shaker Loops*, *Harmonielehre*, *Phrygian Gates*, and *China Gates* are available in published form from Associated Music Publishers.

Through some one hundred works composed for a wide range of performance genres, **Orlando Jacinto Garcia** has established himself as an important figure in the new music world. The distinctive character of his music has been described as "time suspended-haunting sonic explorations" with "a certain tightness and rigor infrequently found in music of this type" - qualities he developed from his studies with Morton Feldman among others. Born in Havana, Cuba in 1954, Garcia migrated to the United States in 1961 and received his DMA in Music Composition from the University of Miami in 1984. A long list of distinguished soloists, ensembles, and orchestras have presented his music at numerous festivals and recitals in most of the major capitols of the world. Recent premieres of his music include those in Holland, France, Spain, Italy, Romania, England, and throughout Latin America, the US, and Canada.

In demand as a guest composer and lecturer at national and international festivals, he is the recipient of numerous honors and awards from a variety of organizations and cultural institutions. These include two Fulbright artist/lectureships, the first of which took place in Caracas, Venezuela during 1991-92 where Garcia presented master classes, assisted with the set up and development of the Center for Electro-Acoustic Music and Research at the Universidad Central de Venezuela, completed several new works, and conducted and presented premieres of his music. A second Fulbright, this time a Senior Lectureship was realized in Salamanca, Spain during 1996-97 at the Universidad de Salamanca where he presented a graduate analysis course, composition seminars, completed new works, and conducted his music.

Additional recognition for his work has come from the Rockefeller Foundation in the form of a summer residency at their Center in Bellagio, Italy during 1999 where he completed a new work for the Caracas based Orquesta Sinfonica Simon Bolivar. The orchestra premiered the work as part of the Festival Latinoamericano de Musica held in Venezuela in the fall of 2002. A recording of the premiere was released on New Albion Records in 2004 and the work was recently presented by the National Orchestra in El Salvador as part of their 2006 international new music festival. Further support from the Rockefeller Foundation includes a visiting artist residency at the American Academy in Rome during the summer of 2000 where he completed a new piece for the Juilliard based Continuum Ensemble. The new work premiered in the fall of 2000 as part of Continuum's tour of Latin America and as part of the Sonic Boom Festival in the fall of 2001. Garcia is also a two-time Cintas Foundation Fellowship winner (1994-95 and 1999-2000) supporting the creation of new works for distinguished soloists and ensembles.

Other recent awards of note include a 2001 State of Florida composer's fellowship, first prize in Mexico's Nuevas Resonancias competition, and a first prize in the Joyce Dutka Arts Foundation (JDAF) 2001 competition. As part of the prize Garcia completed a new solo cello work for Maya Beiser who premiered it at the JDAF awards ceremony held in NYC 5/01. In the summer of 2001 his work imagenes sonidos congelados for violin and tape was selected as part of the Sonic Circuits competition and was later selected for performance at the 2003 ICMC in Singapore. More recently a new work for solo tape temporal was presented at the 2006 ICMC in New Orleans and at the 2006 International Electro-acoustic Music Festival in Santiago de Chile. Another recent performance of note, his work Auschwitz (nunca se olvidaran) for orchestra and choir, was given its NYC premiere October 2003 by the Brooklyn Philharmonic with the Trinity Church Choir. Currently Garcia is working on a video opera for soprano Joan La Barbara, a flute choir work for the Paris based OFF, a work for the Cuarteto Latinoamericano and the Miami Symphony Orchestra, and a work for the Sequenza Sur ensemble in Mexico, among others.

With over 120 works in his catalog, his music is recorded on O.O. Discs, CRI (Emergency Music, eXchange Series), Albany, North/South, CRS, Capstone, Rugginenti, New Albion, and Opus One Records and is available from Kallisti Music Press, the American Composers Alliance, and North/South Editions. The founder and director of

several international music festivals including the New Music Miami Festival and the Music of the Americas Festival, Garcia is Professor of Music, and director of the Composition Program for the School of Music at Florida International University in Miami.

David Bithell (b. 1976) is a composer/performer whose recent work has been focused on the intersection between experimental music and theater. His genre-bending performances and compositions have always maintained a commitment to exposing new audiences to new media. The use of video, sets and lights, live processing of audio, design and construction of new acoustic instruments, and improvisation create abstract narratives that balance between the tragic and comic.

He has performed his compositions throughout the United States and in Europe in both academic and public settings. Recently, his composition "The President Has His Photograph Taken" for solo trumpet, electronics, and video projection was premiered at the IS ARTI Festival in Kaunas, Lithuania. Other recent performances include those at the MANCA Festival in Nice, France under the auspices of the France/Berkeley fund and in collaboration with UC Berkeley's Center for New Music and Audio Technology (CNMAT) and the Centre National de Création Musicale (CIRM), those with the sfSoundSeries, California Institute for the Arts Vexations Festival, and the Berkeley New Music Project.

As a trumpet player specializing in contemporary and improvised musics he has devoted himself to the exploration of new possibilities for that instrument. He is the trumpet player and co-organizer for the sfSoundGroup (a West Coast experimental music collective) and has played with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, and the La Jolla Symphony. He has also collaborated with many composers on the creation of new works for trumpet live electronics, most notably with Ali Momeni and Olly Wilson, and has performed the United States premieres of works by Ronald Bruce Smith and Jan Marez.

David is co-organizer of the sfSoundSeries, an innovative series of new music and improvisation. In addition, he has organized retrospective concerts of the music of Robert Erickson and Kenneth Gaburo as well as many performances of student compositions and musical theater while at the University of California, San Diego and UC Berkeley.

His interest in ethnomusicology has led him to study central Javanese Gamelan both in Indonesia and at UC Berkeley. He has performed with the Javanese gamelan ensemble Sari Raras for the past four years.