About

Wednesdays@7

Wednesdays@7 continues the mission of experimentation and innovation set forth in 1967 by music department founders Will Ogdon, Robert Erickson and Thomas Nee.

Through the generosity of Dean Seth Lerer, 2013-2014 Wednesdays@7 events are free to the UCSD Community.

Contact Us

For information on upcoming concerts:
Music Box Office: (858) 534-3448
http://music.ucsd.edu/concerts

Audience members are reminded to please silence all phones and noise generating devices before the performance. As a matter of courtesy and copyright law, no unauthorized recording or photographing is allowed in the hall. The Conrad Prebys Music Center is a non-smoking facility.
**Trans (2014)**

Steven Schick, percussion

Lei Liang

**Renga**

**Symphony #80 (1784)**

Franz Josef Haydn

Allegro Spiritoso

Adagio

Menuetto

Finale: Presto

**For Samuel Beckett (1987)**

Morton Feldman

Introducing **Renga**!

We take the name from the centuries-old Japanese practice of collective poetry writing. One person writes a line then passes it to another, who contributes the next line, and then to another for yet another line, and so on. With Renga as both a name and an inspiration, we hope to harness the growing musical energy of San Diego into a collective of likeminded performers committed to collaborative programming and music-making.

And tonight's concert is the unveiling!

We'll combine the vast, ethereal canvas of Morton Feldman's final composition, For Samuel Beckett, with a provocative new percussion piece by Lei Liang, receiving its local premiere tonight, with one of Haydn's freshest and most progressive symphonies. Aesthetic contrast is clearly in abundance! The dates of composition are scattered across the centuries: 1784 for Haydn, 1987 for Feldman, and 2014 for Liang. There are radical dissimilarities in compositional and orchestral strategy. And the cultural ecology from which each piece emerged – that vital combination of practice and place – spans a gamut from the Esterházy court to the percussion studios at UC San Diego.

Perhaps the simple premise of tonight's concert is that boundaries are made for crossing.

But in spite of all their contrasts, these works have important aspects in common. Each composer exhibits a bracing, progressive musical spirit. Each is an experimentalist in the language of his time.

For most of his life Haydn was the court composer for Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, an enviable position that brought with it great notoriety, prosperity, and notoriety. An inveterate experimentalist, Haydn took full advantage of his position, creating, in one of his first efforts for the prince, the small gems of early symphonic writing that we know as Le Matin, Le Midi, and Le Soir. Later, in a less than subtle hint that summer vacation was over and the musicians were eager to leave the prince's summer retreat and return to their families in Eisenstadt, he created an extraordinary mixture of music, theatricality and politics in his 'Farewell Symphony.' Among the most experimental of all is the wild romp in texture and tonality of Number 80. This symphony was written just before the death of Esterházy, an event that eventually led to Haydn's expulsion from the protetive confines of the prince's estate and paved the way for his huge commercial successes in Paris and London. But at the end of his time with Esterházy Haydn shows us what you can accomplish when you have tenure. And he sets a high bar with music that is questioning and fearless; principled and irreverent.

Haydn's Eisenstadt is a long way from the back entrance of the Conrad Prebys Music Centre where Lei Liang collected the sixty pairs of small stones he requires for his work Trans, a percussion solo with significant audience involvement. The work is scored for a small installation of metal, skin and wooden percussion instruments. But where most composers carefully determine and notate sounds, and variations of chord voicing. Feldman's late works range in duration between one and six hours and, like For Samuel Beckett, they seem to this listener to end abruptly and too soon, stopping nearly in mid-sentence. One is left with the question, why should this music end now? Does it die of old age – its weight (as sonic experience) gradually overburdening its skeleton (as musical architecture)!

It seems that there is rightness to this music but not necessarily logic. As John Cage exclaimed when he first heard Feldman's music: 'Isn't it marvelous!'

Finally it is Samuel Beckett himself who, though not writing about Feldman here, comes very close to the heart of this music, his Renga. "only dust and not a sound only what was it it said come and gone was that it only dust and not a sound only what was it it said come and gone come and gone no one come and gone in no time gone in no time."

Steven Schick