

Program Notes

Fields, by Evan Hause, was composed between December 1990 and March 1991. As inscribed in the score:

[It] celebrates the wide-openness and free-spiritedness on the inside and outside of us. I sought to infuse a great deal of personal feeling and expression in this – my only – marimba solo, for I have spent much time learning to play and appreciate the instrument and some of its literature. It is dedicated to my influential percussion teacher, Michael Rosen, and was first performed by Loren Mach in November, 1991.

The expression in *Fields* is achieved largely through the contrasts between dance and lyricism; between extroversion and introspection. The first movement has two sections: a free introduction foreshadows all of the themes of the work in the manner of an overture (entitled "The Open Expanse"), followed by a quirky, virtuosic rag ("Woodrag"). The second movement is an arch form: the moody, lyrical "Pastorale" is punctuated with outbursts which quickly evolve into the agitated "Forked Road" (where the marimba is partitioned into four fields). After the music drives to a single, reiterated pitch at its highpoint, "Echo" follows with a restoration of the lyrical theme heard in "Pastorale" further developed into an impassioned chorale which slowly falls away to the lowest regions of the instrument. "Plain Dance" is another freewheeling, virtuosic dance in fast, irregular meter. Fragments of all themes that have been heard before are eventually thrown into the mix, making for a wild ride to the very end.

A Feast of Thunder (1981), composed by Sherwood Shaffer, was inspired by the power of myths, especially Greek and Roman, and their effect even today upon civilization: their energy, mystery and drive, is expressed by solo timpani. Each of the three movements explores a different myth.

- I. *Vulcan's Forge*, is the workshop where thunderbolts of the gods are made - a site of power and force, electric in its intensity.
- II. *Night over Delphi*, is an atmospheric nocturne of the most famous of the classical oracles: is that haunting sound the voice of prophecy?
- III. *Jupiter Sky-drive*, is about the great god's sun chariot ride across the heavens weaving in and out of clouds, blazing as it goes, surveying the earth creation below.

A Ring of Eyes (Nocturne for Vibraphone) was written by Sherwood Shaffer in 1982 for Christopher Deane – percussion instructor at UNT. According to the composer, the work was inspired by a visual image he saw during a percussion concert: "the stage lighting shone in such a way that it made the vibraphone player's four whirling mallets look like eyes making rings of sound in the air". This nocturne opens with a rhapsodic section which later alternates several times with a more lyrical theme with a music-box-like accompaniment.

Rebonds by Iannis Xenakis was composed between 1987 and 1989 for a multi-percussion set-up consisting of a small group of drums and wood blocks or "skin" and "wood" sounds. The work is in two movements, A and B, to be played in either order. *Rebonds* is a rhythmical force without melody nor harmony. "A" begins with the high bongo and bass drum, then adds the other drums one at a time building in a myriad of rhythms and polyrhythms. "B" is built upon a sixteenth note pulse on the high bongo which is interrupted with the sound of wood before returning to the original rhythmic pulse of sixteenth notes.