

Vanderbilt University – Blair School of Music

VORTEX percussion

Michael Holland, Artistic Director

VORTEX and New Dialect celebrate Lou Harrison and The American Gamelan



SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2015 – BLAIR SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Celebrate the world music legacy of Henry Cowell and Lou Harrison. East meets West as VORTEX presents the American Gamelan—an instrument so rare that only four exist in the entire world. Experience the Nashville debut of an orchestra comprised of shimmering metal and created from scrap materials. Rare archival photographs, historic film and audio footage let Cowell and Harrison speak to you as VORTEX celebrates the radical inventors of the percussion orchestra.

Witness the influence of Henry Cowell over seven decades as VORTEX performs with Nashville's newest contemporary dance company New Dialect, Blair violinist Carolyn Huebl, composer John Pennington, and Camaldolese Monk and tenor Cyprian Consiglio.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CALL (615) 322-7651

SUNDAY, MARCH 15 – THE DAY'S EVENTS:

MINI SYMPOSIUM NOON TO 3:15

Noon: Documentary film: *LOU HARRISON: A World of Music* Produced by Eva Soltes

Skillfully assembled from over 300 hours of footage and more than two decades of documentation and research, this film paints an intimate portrait of an extraordinary American composer who followed his own dreams with unbridled style. Trading a fast-paced NY career for a remote cabin in the woods to recover from a breakdown, Lou Harrison (1917-2003) confronted his demons by writing beautiful music. Bucking the dissonant sound of the times, he embraced "delight over duty," freely combining western, eastern, and custom-made instruments built by his partner, William Colvig. Harrison's artistic curiosity and courage produced one of the great cross-cultural visions and musical legacies of the 20th century. This engaging documentary deftly manages to capture the spirit of this unique artist.

Watch the trailer: <http://vimeo.com/42001100>

1:30 – 2:00 Break for coffee

2:00 Dr. John Pennington: *Restore and Renew: The American Gamelan of Lou Harrison*

Not sure of what a gamelan is? John Pennington talks about the origins of the American Gamelan, how it was built, and the music composed for this unique instrument. See parts of the American Gamelan up close in an intimate demonstration.

2:45 Thirty-minute concert by John Pennington and Camaldolese Monk Cyprian Consiglio

Musicians Cyprian Consiglio and John Pennington draw from a variety of holy texts, from a variety of traditions, saints grounded in the every day, secular poets grounded in mysticism. Their collaborative creation will be presented in this relaxed and informal mini-recital of music for voice, guitar, and percussion.

6:45 MUSICIRCUS FOR HENRY COWELL AND LOU HARRISON, INGRAM LOBBY & PLAZA

Enter the imaginative world of Cowell and Harrison in an interactive exploration of sound and movement. Created in the festive spirit of John Cage, "You won't hear a thing. You'll hear everything!"

8:00 VORTEX CONCERT, INGRAM HALL

(**Program: Cowell:** *26 Simultaneous Mosaics, Pulse*; **Harrison:** *The Song of Quezalcoatl, Suite for Violin and American Gamelan*; **Rouse:** *Ku Ka Ilimoku*; **Skidmore:** *Ritual Music*; **Pennington:** *Gitanjali: The Poetry of Music*)

ABOUT VORTEX

VORTEX is bold, innovative and cutting edge, regularly crossing the line between rigorous conventional chamber music and unexpected theater. It embraces the free spirit of invention and revolution that historically and currently animates percussion. VORTEX prepares students for the volatile world of 21st-century percussion performance while grounding them in the great historic works of Cage, Cowell, Chávez, Harrison, Antheil, and Partch. It challenges them to move well beyond the printed page, to play with confidence, stage presence, and an ability to embrace 21st century performance dynamics.

On a regular basis, VORTEX works side-by-side with established, visionary artists who willingly share their time and experience with students. Critically acclaimed collaborations include: real-time Pure Data animation with musician/engineer John Harrison, improvisation with electric violinists Tracy Silverman and Daniel Bernard Roumain, actor Jim Lovensheimer, sound designer Brad Bowden, CRASH founder and composer Mary Ellen Childs, a centennial celebration of John Cage with former dancers of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, and the 2013 Southeastern US premiere of the restored original 1926 orchestration for George Antheil's *Ballet mécanique*. At the invitation of the French government, VORTEX will present the Paris premiere of that work in 2016.

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