

## PROGRAM NOTES (continued)

Stuart Saunders Smith's *The Authors* is an eleven movement "opera" for solo marimbist/vocalist that uses text from the work of twelve authors. Although there is one performer, the combination of spoken word in various accents, singing, whistling, and the wide range in the marimba part creates the sense of several characters. Along with the use of spoken and sung text, Lee Hinkle writes that "Smith uses irregular rhythms to imitate the irregular rhythms and pitch of human speech patterns," as in many of his other compositions. The composition's tempo indications are also a unique characteristic including quarter note equals pensive, a chant of golden light, erratic, young, and old. When I heard Lee Hinkle perform this piece at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in 2017, I was inspired to bring singing into my percussion performance. Tonight, I will present select movements.

In an earlier stage of his composition career, when Cage was writing based on vocal and dance patterns, he wrote *Forever and Sunsmell*. Incorporating the text from E.E. Cummings' "26" from his *50 Poems*, Cage composed this work for vocalist and two percussionists based on the phraseology of a dance by Jean Erdman. In my search for voice and percussion repertoire, I decided to take on the project of combining this trio into a solo. With its drama, storytelling, polyrhythms, and beauty, learning and performing this composition has really helped me to "find my voice" as a percussionist and artist of the moment.

### About the Performer:

**Jenny Gray** is completing her second year as a candidate for the Master of Music degree in Performance at Southern Oregon University, where she studies with Terry Longshore. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Music with an emphasis in music technology, and studied with Dan Adams at Seattle Pacific University. Gray is currently a member of Left Edge Percussion, the contemporary ensemble in residence at Oregon Center for the Arts (OCA) at Southern Oregon University and has toured the Northwest and Northern California. This past year, she composed and performed a solo percussion score for OCA theatre's production of Sophocles' *Elektra*. She has performed with the Rogue Valley Symphony, Band Du Pays Swing, and Brava Opera.

This recital is given in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Music in Performance and is under the direction of Dr. Terry Longshore.



Music  
presents

## Finding My Voice

Jenny Gray  
Master of Music  
Solo Percussion Recital

Saturday, May 25, 2019, 7:30PM  
SOU Music Recital Hall

## PROGRAM NOTES

### *A note about the program:*

This program tonight is a journey - my journey as a graduate student here at SOU, as well as my musical journey from the time I fell in love with rhythm and song. The title refers to the literal inclusion of my voice as well as the more abstract concept of conveying one's individual voice. The pieces all represent a use of voice in some way: through gesture, openness of composition which requires the performer to decide, finding my own unique sound collection, and encompassing my own literal voice through spoken and sung words. We as musicians and performers all put a little of ourselves into our playing of an instrument, but I wanted to call attention to the way our individual voice shines through in performance. We express ourselves through movement, interpretation, and especially through our individual natural instrument. I find this to be one of the great beauties of live performance.

**Aphasia** for singer and tape is a "choreographed dance work" made up of over a hundred everyday gestures. Each gesture is a specific motion indicated in the score which includes zipper, bus stop, turn doorknob, towel snap, and many others only two of which come from ASL. The tape for the piece consists entirely of transformed vocal samples sung by Nicholas Isherwood. While not your traditional musical performance, *Aphasia* captures the connection of sound and gesture and shows how a person can express themselves in the way they move.

**Entre Funérailles II** for solo vibraphone is one of three interludes Mark Applebaum composed to be performed in-between Brian Ferneyhough's *Funérailles No. 1* and *Funérailles No. 2*. The score is comprised of 32 cells of music arranged in a circle, leaving the performer with the choice of where to begin and the direction in which to play—clockwise or counterclockwise. The piece maintains the pulse but includes various polyrhythms which affect the perceived pace of each rhythmic figure. This piece was premiered by Terry Longshore in 2000.

Considered a seminal percussion work, **The King of Denmark** also earned its title as the anti-percussion piece. What gives it this name is in the instruction for the performer to only play at a soft dynamic with their hands. When putting this program together, I wanted to explore the opportunities for subtle expression as well as include a work for which I would have to find sounds. As for the instrumentation, Feldman gives a general requirement for skins, cymbals, gongs, bells, and triangles as well as a timpano and vibraphone, leaving many choices up to the performer. The openness of the piece extends also to the score itself which is notated in numbers and symbols organized in three rows of cells indicating high, medium, and low pitch registers. This piece offers a great opportunity for gestural expression as well as the development of a sonic palette.

## PROGRAM

*Aphasia* (2010) Mark Applebaum  
(b. 1967)

*Entre Funérailles II* (1999) Mark Applebaum

*The King of Denmark* (1964) Morton Feldman  
(1926-1987)

*The Authors* (2006) Stuart Saunders Smith  
(b. 1948)

- III. *Dickinson*
- V. *Bowles*
- VII. *Stein*
- X. *Sylvia Plath, Edna St. Vincent Millay*

*Forever and Sunsmell* (1944) John Cage  
(1912-1992)