

raised the bar on what music making could be back when I was an ambitious little 8th grade clarinet/alto/flute player. Once I was hot on the clarinet/bass clarinet path at Indiana University and playing bari and flute in the funk band, the alto was quite neglected. I am animistic composer, meaning I tune in to what the instrument wants to play and write that. Of course drawing on my musical influences and tendencies as a player, but mostly the instruments tell me what to do and I give it structure. The bass clarinet had a lot to say through me, whereas the saxophones, not so much. I have a bari sax quartet piece and 3 tunes I wrote with the funk band I was in in the 90's. Mycroft (the alto saxophone) came out and had its *Revenge* when I started multi-tracking in 1998. That had some aggression to it, and whenever I picked up the alto from then on, as a composer, it was all about aggression. Of course, I had to teach it for over a decade, mostly to beginners, and that was my main connection to it for the end of our relationship (Mycroft the alto saxophone was sold recently). I created these two last pieces in as a tribute, let Mycroft have its final say so to speak then we parted ways." Tonight will be the world premiere of *Mycroft Demand* and *Resolve*.

John Cheetham was born in Taos, New Mexico in 1939 and is now Professor Emeritus of Music Theory and Composition at the University of Missouri at Columbia. His specialty has been the low brass instruments, particularly trombone and euphonium. He has composed pieces for a broad variety of musical ensembles: chamber ensembles, concert bands, orchestras, and choruses. A number of Cheetham's titles reflect the middle-America where he makes his home. Cheetham is very much a centrist himself—he describes himself as an unapologetic conservative. His *Saxophone Sonata*, written for Kenneth Tse, features singable melodies and catchy rhythms.



For more info and tickets: 541-552-6348 and oca.sou.edu/events/

OREGON CENTER FOR THE ARTS AT Southern OREGON UNIVERSITY

Faculty Recital

Rhett Bender, Saxophone

Featuring Guest Artists

Madeline Abel-Kerns, Soprano

Terry Longshore, Percussion

Alexander Tutunov, Piano

Jenifer Knippel, Saxophone

I Never Saw Another Butterfly

Music at SOU

May 27, 2016 ▪ 7:30 p.m.

SOU Music Recital Hall

PERFORMERS

Rhett Bender is in his 20th year as a Professor of Music at Southern Oregon University. He is the founder and soprano saxophonist with the Globe Saxophone Quartet and the Director of the SOU Siskiyou Saxophone Orchestra. In China, Rhett is a guest artist-teacher at the Sichuan Conservatory of Classical Music in Chengdu and a Visiting Professor of Music at the School of Arts of Yantai University. Rhett is a first prize-winner in the Frances Walton Competition for classical musicians. He has been featured on the cover of the *Saxophone Journal*, and in *Strings* magazine for an innovative approach to chamber music education. Yamaha Corp., and Texas Bandmasters have published his clarinet/saxophone pedagogy articles; and his book, *American Saxophone Quartets*, is published by Lambert Academic Publishers. Rhett Bender is a Yamaha Performing Artist.

Madeline Abel-Kerns is a classically trained singer whose opera credits include leading roles in *Aida*, *Albert Herring*, *Die Walküre*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Siegfried*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly* with San Francisco Opera, Sacramento Opera, Frankfurt Alte Oper and Heidelberg Opera, among others. As performer and master teacher, Ms. Abel-Kerns is compelled to find the marrow – in body and spirit – of each individual voice, each character, each piece of music, and each line of text.

Terry Longshore is a percussionist based in Ashland, Oregon whose genre-crossing work exhibits the artistry of the concert stage, the spontaneity of jazz, and the energy of a rock club. He has premiered and recorded countless works by a variety of composers, and collaborates with many artists working in diverse media. Terry Longshore is a Yamaha Performing Artist.

Jenifer Knippel is an SOU saxophone alum. Her interests include composing, programming and performing live electronic pieces—manipulated by various controllers such as the WiiMote, NunChuck, Gametrack, Wacom tablet and an infrared device “blue air.” Jenifer works in the applications of Max/MSP/Jitter and Kyma, she has also dabbled in creating her own controllers with the use of arduino and the LilyPad products. Jenifer has created light-up motion & sound activated apparel such as shoes and super-hero suits for personal use.

Alexander Tutunov is widely recognized as one of the most outstanding virtuosos of the former Soviet Union. First Prize winner of the Belarusian National Piano Competition and winner of the Russian National Piano Competition, Tutunov's playing was described by Soviet Culture, Moscow, as “exhilarating and inspired, and which demonstrated a unique talent.”

And a little boy walks along it.
A little boy, a sweet boy,
Like that growing blossom.
When the blossom comes to bloom,
The little boy will be no more.

5. *Man Proposes, God Disposes* (Koleba, 1944) (M. Kosek, H. Lowy, Bachner)

Who was helpless back in Prague,
And who was rich before,
He's a poor soul here in Terezin,
His body's bruised and sore.
Who was toughened up before,
He'll survive these days.
But who was used to servants
Will sink into his grave.

6. *The Old House* (Franta Bass)

Deserted here, the old house
stands in silence, asleep.
The old house used to be so nice,
before, standing there,
it was so nice.
Now it is deserted,
rotting in silence —
What a waste of houses,
a waste of hours

Mark Knippel studied composition at Southern Oregon University, under Todd Barton and Wayne Slawson before completing his MM in composition at University of Oregon. Mark works as the Orchestra Manager at Britt Festivals. His saxophone quartet, “At the Loss of Love and Folly”, is published by Dorn Publications. Two of his guitar quartets (“Marenje” and “Attained Elusiveness”) was be recorded by the San Francisco Guitar Quartet. *Echos of an Echo* was commissioned as a duet for Rhett and Jenifer.

Mycroft is a trilogy of three pieces— *Revenge* (1998), *Demand* (2009) and *Resolve* (2013). Bass clarinetist and composer **Cornelius Boots** conveyed this about Mycroft to Rhett Bender in a conversation: “Mycroft was the name of my silver-plated MkVI alto saxophone. I got it at a crucial time in my musical and personal life, and it

That butterfly was the last one.
Butterflies don't live in here,
in the ghetto.

2. *Yes, That's the Way Things Are* (Koleba) (M. Kosek, H. Löwy, Bachner)

In Terezin in the so-called park
A queer old granddad sits
Somewhere there in the so-called park.
He wears a beard down to his lap
And on his head, a little cap.
Hard crusts he crumbles in his gums,
He's only got one single tooth.
My poor old man with working gums,
Instead of soft rolls, lentil soup.
My poor old greybeard!

3. *Birdsong* (Anonymous 1941)

He doesn't know the world at all
Who stays in his nest and doesn't go out.
He doesn't know what birds know best
Nor what I want to sing about,
That the world is full of loveliness.
When dewdrops sparkle in the grass
And earth's aflood with morning light,
A blackbird sings upon a bush
To greet the dawning after night.
Then I know how fine it is to live.
Hey, try to open up your heart
To beauty; go to the woods someday
And weave a wreath of memory there.
Then if the tears obscure your way
You'll know how wonderful it is
To be alive.

4. *The Garden* (Franta Bass)

A little garden
Fragrant and full of roses.
The path is narrow

PROGRAM

Beat Me for solo Tenor Saxophone

Barry Cockcroft
(b 1972)

I Never Saw Another Butterfly

Lori Laitman
(b 1955)

1. The Butterfly poem by Pavel Friedmann
 2. Yes, That's the Way Things Are poem by Koleba
 3. Birdsong by Anonymous
 4. The Garden by Franta Bass
 5. Man Proposes, God Disposes by Koleba
 6. The Old House by Franta Bass
- Madeline Abel-Kerns, soprano

TEN MINUTE INTERMISSION

Echoes of an Echo for Kyma and 2 Channel Live Input

Mark Knippel
(b 1983)

Jenifer Knippel, saxophone
World Premier

Mycroft's Demand for alto saxophone solo

Cornelius Boots
(b 1974)

Mycroft's Resolve for saxophone and 4-piece drumset
Terry Longshore, drumset
World Premier

Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

John Cheetham
(b 1939)

Giocoso
Lento
Con moto

Alexander Tutunov, piano

Ars longa vita brevis

PROGRAM NOTES

Barry Cockcroft wrote *Beat Me* as a kind of sequel to his earlier composition *Black & Blue*. This work makes use of different kinds of slap tonguing to simulate bass guitar, multi-phonics to simulate the I, IV, V progression from 'Wild Thing' made famous by Jimi Hendrix, more distortion to emulate the electric guitar, an extended circular breathing passage that is reminiscent of didgeridoo playing and an extended "drum solo" overlaid with a bass guitar riff. This composition explores the idea of getting the saxophonist to do more than one thing at time – sing and play, play notes while beating the keys and play notes and harmonics simultaneously etc.

I Never Saw Another Butterfly is a collection of poems written by children from the Terezin Concentration Camp. One cannot help but be touched by the hope and innocence that these children put into their poetry, despite their terrible surroundings. **Lori Laitman** writes, "As I read these poems, the idea of the saxophone as the sole partner to the voice intrigued me — the sound of the saxophone itself could be haunting, soulful, and reminiscent of Klezmer music. The six poems that I chose have widely different imagery, allowing for a variety of musical styles." *The Butterfly* opens the cycle with a cantorial-style saxophone part, conjuring up images of a fluttering butterfly. The vocal line enters with speech-based rhythms that are melodic and lyric. The saxophone continues to accent and comment on the text, and the long saxophone interlude symbolizes the freedom of the butterfly. The poem was written by Pavel Friedmann, who was born on January 7, 1921, deported to Terezin on April 26, 1942, and died in Auschwitz on September 29, 1944. Despite the tremendous sadness of the text, the message of the poem is one of undying spirit.

Yes, That's the Way Things Are was written by three children — Kosek, Löwry, and Bachner — who wrote under the name "Koleba." Reflecting the irony of the poem, the music has a quasi-folk song feel — a dancing, shifting rhythm, and a modal melody switching between a minor and major seventh, typical of Jewish folk song. Inserted in the middle and at the end of the piece is a type of vocalise often found in Jewish folk music, here sung on the syllables "ba-de-dum." Miroslav Kosek was born on March 30, 1932 at Horelice in Bohemia and was sent to Terezin on February 15, 1942. He died October 19, 1944 at Auschwitz. Hanus Löwy was born in Ostrava on June 29, 1931, deported to Terezin on September 30, 1942, and died in Auschwitz on October 4, 1944. There is no information on Bachner.

The author of *Birdsong* is unknown. The poem is preserved in manuscript. Again in this poem, the author is able to rise above the living conditions to focus on the loveliness of life. Ascending phrases are used to portray hope, and a vocalise is again employed as an interlude and postlude, as the voice and saxophone combine in a passionate duet.

The feelings of hope manifested in the earlier songs die in *The Garden*. The poem was written by Franta Bass, who was born in Brno on September 4, 1930. He was sent to Terezin on December 2, 1941, and died in Auschwitz on October 28, 1944. The little boy walking along the garden path is portrayed by a weaving saxophone part with subtle rhythmic changes. Both parts build to a climax, then abruptly come to a close as "the little boy will be no more."

Man Proposes, God Disposes was also written by the three children who signed their name "Koleba." This text is a commentary on what used to be, and what is. With the ambience of a cabaret song, the vocal line uses a simple melody, and ends each section with a glissando.

The Old House, also written by Franta Bass, ends the cycle. The barren image of the deserted house is captured by the saxophone repeatedly playing one note, like a bell tolling. The voice and saxophone become more expressive as the poet recalls happier days, but then return to the opening texture. The phrase "rotting in silence," is repeated three times, to bring the cycle to a close with the voice alone.

1. *The Butterfly* (Pavel Friedmann, 1942)

The last, the very last
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing
against a white stone....
Such, such a yellow
Is carried lightly 'way up high.
It went away I'm sure because it wished to
kiss the world good-bye.
For seven weeks I've lived in here,
Penned up inside this ghetto.
But I have found what I love here.
The dandelions call to me
And the white chestnut branches in the court.
Only I never saw another butterfly.