

SONOKLECT '07-'08

A Concert Series of Modern Music

DOUG SCARBOROUGH, DIRECTOR

Natural Energy

Featuring the McLean Mix

music/media performance duo in

a live interactive music media concert

WILSON HALL

LENFEST CENTER FOR THE ARTS

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

2 FEBRUARY 2008

8:00 PM

— PROGRAM —

July Dance (2002)

Priscilla McLean

Priscilla McLean — Stereo Electroacoustic Music & Video
*Commissioned by iEAR Studios of Rensselaer Polytechnic
Institute in its Artist-in-Residence program*

The Playpen Etudes (2006-8)

Barton McLean

WORLD PREMIERE
Collapsed Rhythm
Leaky Melodies (*with apologies to PDQ Bach*)
Energized Harmonies

Barton McLean — keyboards, synthesizers, controllers, computers

Magic at Xanadu (MAX) (2007)

Barton McLean

WORLD PREMIERE
Live Performance
Barton McLean — keyboards, synthesizers, controllers, computers, video
*Made possible with support from a CAP grant
through the American Music Center*

— VERY SHORT INTERMISSION OF TEN MINUTES —

Xakaalawe (Flowing) (2004)

Priscilla McLean

WORLD PREMIERE
Priscilla McLean — Stereo Electroacoustic Music & Video
*Commissioned through Artist-in-Residence program,
Rocky Mountain National Park*

Natural Energy (2007-8)

Barton & Priscilla McLean

WORLD PREMIERE
Live Performance with Video
Barton McLean — keyboards, controllers, soprano recorder,
mbira, bicycle wheel, found instruments, computers
Priscilla McLean — voice, processors, violin, percussion, slide whistle

— NOTES —

JULY DANCE is a brief frolic with summer, with all the Northeast in celebration, from jiving birch trees to children playing with balloons. The composer accompanies all with her ad hoc percussion "table" of skinned firewood logs and croquet posts strewn upon resonators and placed in a neighbor's 200-acre field, to dance with the blowing wind as she plays. The main video instrument used is a Videonics Digital Video Mixer. Some of the other unusual visual effects were created thanks to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, and their 2001-2 artist-in-residence commission and use of the iEAR Electronic Arts Studio. Priscilla McLean worked with Joseph Reinsel and the Photoshop Video After Effects computer program, which allowed McLean as percussion player to roll up in a ball and blow away in the wind! Besides the logs, other sounds are a wooden recorder and ocarina, a microphone cord and balloons squealing, a metal pizza pan, flexatone, violin (all performed by the composer), children laughing, and the Korg WaveStation Digital Synthesizer.

THE PLAYPEN ETUDES: With McLean's "Composers Playpen" MAX/MSP software projected on the video screen, Bart transports the audience into a new world of creative exploration by performing and demonstrating several short "etudes," each featuring another aspect of the "Playpen." The rhythms do actually "collapse," the melodies do "leak," and the harmonies find themselves becoming metamorphosed as the "Playpen" works its magic. Thus, the audience immediately gains insight into the inner workings of this creative vehicle used in the next larger work, "Magic at Xanadu."

MAGIC AT XANADU: Inspired by the poem "Kubla Kahn: Or a Vision in a Dream" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, this work taps, through evocative music and video, into the deepest recess of the mind whose visions evoke that special "paradise" of ecstatic wonder always beckoning but out of reach. The sensuous, pulsating music has a somewhat oriental flavor, evoking images in the poem of "deep romantic chasm," "the sacred river," "a stately pleasure dome," and others. The "Composers Playpen" is again the vehicle for this live-performed work, and is projected on the screen as the composer performs. This work is performed completely live, with no "canned" CD or DVD material.

A very unique artistic mix of video and composed music, **XAKAALAWE (Flowing)** was filmed in Rocky Mountain National Park in September of 2002, during elk bugling season, while Priscilla undertook an artist residency in Rocky Mountain National Park, assisted by Bart as videographer. The piece features a fascinating mix of waterfalls, streams, and elk, using new video techniques and the virtuosic mix of (once) live performance with samples and processing, all in a very natural way.

Performers in the video:

Rocky Mountain Elk bugling

Charlie Tokarz: flute, soprano, alto, and tenor saxophone, bass clarinet

Priscilla McLean: voices, violin, synthesized percussion, synthesizers,
all mixing and processing

The words used in this piece invoke the ancient spirit of the Rocky Mountains, with the Crow and Arapaho tribal languages. These are as natural to the setting as the voices of the elk herd and invoke a dream-like quality to the work.

NATURAL ENERGY: This culminating work explores the connections between human motion resembling that of nature and visa versa, thus becoming a fusion of the two, symbolized by the dance of fire throughout. The recorded video was realized through the MacIntosh Final Cut Express program and features a tribal dance on the island of Formosa resembling an American Indian dance, modern dance ensembles, the London Ballet's Romeo (1957) in "Romeo and Juliet," Appalachian step dancing, water movement, blowing scarves (wind), all blended surrealistically together. The totally live-performed music, using custom MSP software design by Barton McLean, alternates between lively pulsating and more subdued sections in symbiosis with the video. The overall mood is energetic and joyful.





THE McLEAN MIX has performed extensively throughout the U. S. (in 42 states) and around the world since 1974, and full-time since 1983, making this year the 25th anniversary of full-time touring. THE McLEAN MIX has played in over 200 universities, and in forums such as the Zagreb International Muzicki Biennale, Asian Composers League, and the Athens International Film Festival. Recent residencies have included the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), MacDowell Colony (5x), Banff Centre for the Arts, Relache Ensemble at Yellow Springs, Chautauqua Institution, Buffalo North American Music Festival, Universiti Malaysia in Sarawak (Borneo), and the Tunugan '97 (ACL) festival in the Philippines, as well as numerous universities in the U. S.

PRISCILLA McLEAN'S orchestral work "Variations and Mozaics on a Theme of Stravinsky" was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and recorded by the Louisville Orchestra. Her "A Magic Dwells" was the winner of the 1986 Sigvald Thompson Orchestral Composition Competition, Fargo/Moorhead Orchestra; and two other more recent orchestral works have received NEA Composer grants and commissions. Her music has been featured throughout Europe on public radio, and in the U. S. in such public radio forums as All Things Considered, Morning Pro Musica, The Environment Show, and Totally Wired. She has just published a memoir of her life of composing and touring, *Hanging Off the Edge, Revelations of a Modern Troubadour*, which is now in 70 music libraries around the world.

BARTON McLEAN, as former director of the University of Texas-Austin Electronic Music Center, developed one of the largest and most modern computer and electronic music centers in U. S. universities in 1981 and has served as guest lecturer and artist-in-residence at iEAR studios of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is currently on the Artists Advisory Board of the New York Foundation for the Arts. Collectively the composers have been the recipients of five NEA Composer Fellowships and a Media Arts Grant, as well as awards from Rockefeller, Ditson, IMC-Rostrum, Bourges Festival, Asian Society, etc. Their music (performed by other artists) has been played at such major festivals as Warsaw Autumn, Graz, Gaudeamus, Bourges, Asian Composers League, and New Music America.

The McLeans' music can be found on seven CDs released on the Capstone, CRI, and Centaur labels. Their latest CD, (2006), released on the Japanese label EM Records, includes a retrospective sampling of earlier works on Folkways and three new works encased in a stunning 24-page booklet with many historic photos. LPs of their music, some still available, appear on the labels Folkways/Smithsonian, CRI, Louisville Orchestra, Orion, Opus One, Advance, MLC, Centaur, and New World Records.

The McLeans reside and compose in an 1830 vintage restored home in Petersburg, NY, and can be reached at mclmix@cisbec.net or by calling (518) 658 3595, or on the web at:
<http://members.cisbec.net/mclmix/index.html>



2007-2008 SONOKLECT SEASON

Saturday, 20 October

Monty Alexander Trio

A blend of American Jazz with Jamaican roots



Saturday, 2 February

McLean Mix, Natural Energy

Priscilla and Barton McLean

Live interactive music media



Saturday, 22 March

Alexandre Dossin, piano

Recent winner of the Martha Argerich
International Piano Competition

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT SONOKLECT HEADQUARTERS

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