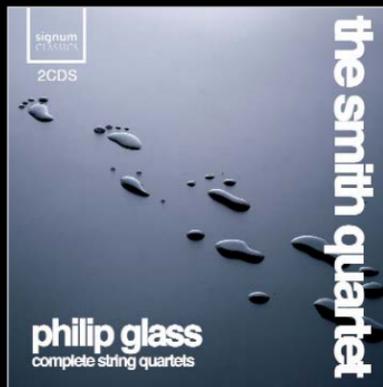


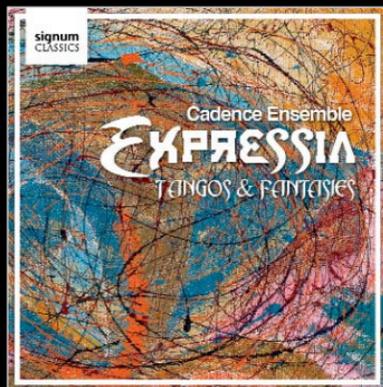
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1 **Lessons of the Sky** for Soprano Saxophone and Piano

Rodney Rogers (b. 1953)

The title *Lessons of the Sky* comes from the essay *The Star Thrower* by Loren Eiseley (found in a collection of essays under the same title). Here, the sky represents that which is open, alive and infinite. 'Lessons' suggests the knowledge gained through observation of the world around and above us - the endlessly varied designs that nature provides as building blocks for life.

The music is based on short motives and chord progressions that are continually varied and juxtaposed. There are three sections in the composition, forming a fast/slow/fast structure. While sections one and three emphasize patterns that are fast and rhythmic - with no variation in speed - the rate at which chord changes occur varies widely. Early in the piece the harmonies move quickly underneath the many motives; but as the first section progresses, a single motive/pattern is periodically isolated and repeated over very slow chord changes. The surface rhythm of the pattern remains fast and constant during these harmonically stable sections, yet there is a general perception that the music is calmer.

The interplay between the soprano saxophone and piano is another important aspect of the piece. The two instruments tend to share ideas, tossing motives back and forth in an improvised manner, but in the lyric slow section the soprano saxophone is featured and the piano takes on an accompanying role. Occasionally the piano makes an unexpected percussive sound when the pianist dampens a string with fingers of the left hand whilst playing the keyboard with the right hand. A single low piano note is dampened throughout the entire composition with a rubber wedge (which, when struck softly during the slow middle section, takes on a gong-like character). The piece closes with a return of the fast music, beginning with harmonically stable repeating figures and then moving into the short and quickly juxtaposed motives that began the piece. This loosely designed reverse order results in an arch-like shape for the whole composition.

Rodney Rogers

Rodney Rogers writes both instrumental and vocal music, and his CD *Complicated Optimism*, features many of his works. Four of Rogers' works received their New York premieres at Carnegie Recital Hall (Weiss Hall), and US performances of his compositions for wind and brass have taken place

at Juilliard, Eastman, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Florida State University, Indiana University, the University of Michigan, the University of North Texas, Northwestern University and the University of Washington. European performances have taken place in Belgium, Germany, Great Britain and Italy; those in Asia and the Pacific Rim include Australia, China, Japan and Korea.

Rogers is the recipient of composition awards from BMI, ASCAP, and the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA). He has received commissions from the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA, 50th Anniversary), the MTNA, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA Consortium Commission), and numerous individual performers and chamber groups. Fellowships in composition include Tanglewood, the MacDowell Colony, and the Yaddo Artist Colony. His music is published by Hal Leonard and Carl Fischer and is also available through the composer. Rogers received his PhD. from the University of Iowa, has taught composition at Louisiana State University and Lawrence University (Appleton, WI), and is currently on the composition faculty at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona.

Lessons of the Sky is published by Dorn Publications Inc.

2 - 3 **Sonata Op. 29** for Alto Saxophone and Piano **Robert Muczynski (b. 1929)**

A well-known work in the saxophone repertory, this Sonata was written in 1970 and dedicated to saxophonist Trent Kynaston. It comprises two movements: I. Andante maestoso, and II. Allegro energico.

Muczynski's compositional style is characterised by distinctive motives and texture. Melodic lines in the Sonata are strong, and express mood and atmosphere through undulating dynamic use of tonal range, warm expression and dark, brooding lyricism. His typically rhythmic and percussive writing in the second movement frequently exploits irregular meter to great effect, which, combined with his artful use of both dynamic contrast and the saxophone's extended tonal range, creates great excitement and drive. His pieces are designed to highlight the artistry of the performer and remain sympathetic to the idiom of their particular instrument, while logical development and clarity of intention are traits of Muczynski's concise and unpretentious writing.

Amongst his other works for wind instruments is his Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Chamber Orchestra Op. 41 (1981), for which he received a Pulitzer Prize nomination.

Robert Muczynski was born in Chicago in 1929, of Polish and Slovak parentage. He became an accomplished pianist, and while enrolled as a piano major at Chicago's DePaul University, he studied with Walter Knupfer. Alexander Tcherepnin was to become his most important composition teacher and mentor, and at DePaul Muczynski earned his bachelor and masters degrees. Throughout his career Muczynski generally concentrated his output on producing works for solo piano and small chamber combinations, and has recorded most of his own piano works. Aged twenty-nine, he made his New York debut at Carnegie Recital Hall, performing a programme of his own compositions for the instrument. Now considered one of America's most distinguished neo-Classical composers, Muczynski's works are frequently heard in Europe, Asia, and Australia as well as throughout the United States, with performances in venues such as Lincoln Centre, the Kennedy Centre, Orchestra Hall in Chicago and the Wigmore Hall in London.

Muczynski retired as Professor Emeritus from the University Of Arizona, Tucson, in 1988 after serving as Head of the Composition Department and Composer-In-Residence for twenty-three years.

Sonata Op. 29 is published by G. Schirmer Inc.

4 **Here Again** for Soprano Saxophone and Cello **Colin MacDonald**

Written in 1999 as a wedding anniversary gift for my dear friends Zeke and Nicki, this duo for soprano sax and cello marries the masculine and feminine aspects of both instruments. The soprano saxophone sings in the vocal range of the female voice, but has a masculine strength, while the cello sounds in a deep male vocal register, but is often regarded as a feminine instrument. The music attempts to share these qualities, winding the voices together in a marriage of melody and rhythm, and striving to find the balance of play that characterises a strong relationship.

Colin MacDonald

Colin MacDonald is a freelance saxophonist, composer and arranger living in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Primarily self-taught as a composer, Colin has studied jazz arrangement with Fred Stride, world rhythms with Glen Velez and Trichy Sankaran, and Balinese gamelan with Michael Tenzer and Dewa Ketut Alit. His works have been premiered by the Turning Point Ensemble, Continuum Contemporary Music, Ad Mare Wind Quintet, and The Microscore Project. In 2006 he formed his own chamber

orchestra, The Colin MacDonald Pocket Orchestra, to present his original works.

In 2003 he was made an Associate Composer of the Canadian Music Centre.

Here Again is published by Cryptic Music.

5 **Façades** **Philip Glass (b. 1937)**

Façades was composed in 1981 and written for two saxophones or two flutes and strings. This music was originally intended as part of the score for Godfrey Reggio's film *Koyannisqatsi*, which means 'unbalanced life' in the language of the Hopi Indians. The visual work it accompanied consisted of scenes from New York's Wall Street on a Sunday morning, and without actors and dialogue, depicts a clash of cultures; of a technology driven city life and the balance of nature. Apocalyptic images of an empty New York show façades and skyscrapers in Manhattan's deserted Wall Street district.

It was not used for the intended film, but has since become a staple of the live performances of the Philip Glass Ensemble and was included in *Glasspieces*, the production put on at the New York City Ballet in the spring of 1990, choreographed by Jerome Robbins.

Philip Glass was born in 1937 and grew up in Baltimore. He studied mathematics and philosophy at the University of Chicago, then composition at the Juilliard School. By twenty-three, Glass had studied with Vincent Persichetti, Darius Milhaud and William Bergsma. Later he was to study in Europe with Nadia Boulanger. His work, both musically and intellectually, has had an extraordinary and unprecedented global impact.

Glass was the first composer to appeal to a very diverse audience across all generations, finding connections through the opera, the dance world, through film and popular music, and through his personal and professional associations with leading rock, pop and world music artists.

Glass has written more than twenty operas, symphonies, concerti, music for experimental theatre, soundtracks for film, ensembles and solo works; and collaborated with many influential artists including David Bowie, Woody Allen, Ravi Shankar, Paul Simon and Yo-Yo-Ma. He presents lectures, workshops, and solo keyboard performances around the world, and continues to appear regularly with the Philip Glass Ensemble.

Façades is published by Dunvagen Music Publishers.

6-**8** **Sonata** for Alto Saxophone and Piano, Op. 56 **Christopher Painter (b. 1962)**

This sonata was commissioned by Lara James and sets out to explore both the expressive and technical features of the instrument. The musical material of the three movements is constructed from arrays of notes, which are generated from an initial twelve note series and then divided into cells. These cells are then used to create motivic material that is used within, essentially, a tonal framework.

The first movement, Moderato, is toccata-like and full of nervous energy. The motives repeat and evolve in a continuous development as ideas are juxtaposed and combined.

The second movement, Lento flessibile, is a languid nocturne with more than a passing nod to the saxophone's "other life" in the jazz world. The mood of this nocturne is one of relaxed contemplation where all is right with the world. A suitable image might be of someone standing on the banks of the Seine at twilight, leaning against a bridge and watching the world go by.

The last movement, Allegro vivo, is a boisterous rondo with five alternating ritornelli and episodes which bring the work to a close.

This work was premiered by Lara James and Jeremy Young at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama at a concert supported by the Welsh Music Guild, in April 2005.

Christopher Painter

Born in Port Talbot, South Wales in 1962, **Christopher Painter** studied music at University College, Cardiff, studying composition with Richard Elfyn Jones and Alun Hoddinott. He studied full-time with Hoddinott until 1989 and complemented these studies with consultations with Samuel Adler, George Benjamin, John McCabe, Edward Gregson, Robert Simpson and Marek Stachowski. After completing his formal studies, Christopher worked for both the BBC and the Welsh National Opera before deciding to leave to further his freelance career. He was the founding conductor of the Richmond Chamber Orchestra and the first musical director of the Swansea Opera Workshop.

Christopher has been commissioned to write for many organisations and events and has been Composer-in-Residence with the National Youth Orchestra of Wales, National Youth Brass Band of Wales, Ensemble Cymru and the Thuringen Philharmonie in Germany.

Christopher Painter was the first recipient of the Afan Thomas Composer's Award, won the National Eisteddfod Composition Prize (Newport, 1988), and was featured in the Welsh Arts Council's "Young Welsh Composer Forum" in 1987. In 1997 he was the first Welsh winner of the "Gregynog Composer Award of Wales", and followed this by winning the "Tlws y Cerddor" at the National Eisteddfod in 2005.

In December 2003, Christopher Painter was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Society of Arts.

Sonata Op. 56 is published by Oriana Publications.

9 Glass for Soprano Saxophone and Piano
Graham Fitkin (b. 1963)

When conceiving this piece I wanted to write some simple music with clarity of intention that didn't try and do too much and didn't try and go too far. It was written in 1998.

Graham Fitkin

Graham Fitkin is a UK composer who works with acoustic and electronic instruments, collaborates with dance, film and digital media alongside concert orchestral and chamber music, and is committed to involvement throughout the chain of

music making - performing, conducting, producing, educating and generally trying to change things. Graham has collaborated with many of today's foremost performers of new music and has worked frequently with choreographers around the world. Performing has always been an important aspect of his work, and his forthcoming projects include further multi-media and interactive collaborations.

Between 1994 and 1996 Graham was resident composer with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, producing five new works. Since then several new works have been commissioned and composed for orchestra, with performances by the Hallé, BBC Philharmonic, Tokyo Symphony, RSNO, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Bournemouth Symphony, Ulster Orchestra and Nederlands Radio Orchestra. He has conducted orchestras in venues from Lincoln Center to the South Bank to Aula Magna, and continues to be involved with community projects, university seminars, masterclasses and workshops in the UK and abroad.

Glass is published by Fitkin.

BIOGRAPHIES

LARA JAMES SAXOPHONES

Lara James is a saxophonist known for her work as a collaborative musician and soloist. She has established herself as a musician with a busy and varied portfolio career ranging from recital, chamber, orchestral and band performances to lecturing, and performs across a variety of musical genres.

She has appeared with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Opera North, Liverpool Philharmonic, Welsh National Opera, the Martel Ensemble, Cornelius Cardew Ensemble and many others and has performed in most of the UK's major concert venues. Her projects for 2007/8 have included concerto performances with world renowned conductor of the wind band repertory, Tim Reynish; and chamber music recitals through the medium of saxophone and piano duo, reed quartet, and a saxophone, cello and piano trio.



© Mark P. Brown

Lara has performed as a concerto soloist and recitalist throughout the UK, while freelance recording work includes sessions for radio, BBC TV and CD recordings, with broadcasts in the UK and the USA.

She has commissioned several works for saxophone by Welsh composers, the most recent of which is Christopher Painter's Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano. Lara is a member of the World Tenor Saxophone Consortium, which commissioned Graham Fitkin to write a substantial new work for saxophone and electronic backing (entitled *Passing*) as a welcome addition to the tenor saxophone repertoire. This work was premiered in several countries simultaneously as a joint project founded by British tenor saxophonist Andy Scott.

Lara studied at the Royal Northern College of Music gaining her degree and professional performance diploma, and the Manhattan School of Music where she became a graduate assistant to the esteemed professor Dr. Paul Cohen. Following her study in the USA Lara went on to complete her Masters degree in musicology at the University of Manchester, where her specialist research area was 'The Saxophone in Britain, c. 1860-1960'. She was an invited performer and lecturer at the 7th British Saxophone Congress and

has contributed various articles and reviews to CASS Magazine, the publication of the British Clarinet & Saxophone Society.

She has been recipient of the Ryan Davies Memorial Award, the Wynford Davies Travelling Scholarship (which enabled her to attend and compete in the 2nd International Adolphe Sax Saxophone Competition in Dinant, Belgium), the Gulf Oil Educational Scholarship, a Brereton International Music Symposium Scholarship for study on summer courses with Dr. Eugene Rousseau and a scholarship for study with Dr. Paul Cohen.

Lara teaches saxophone to undergraduate and postgraduate students at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, and to junior students at the RWCMD Department of Junior Music and Access Studies. She has coached saxophone quartets through chamber music modules at Cardiff University and has also lectured diploma course modules including World Music, Music in Context, The Music Industry, Music Performance Workshops and Music Performance Techniques. She is in demand as an adjudicator for national youth music competitions and as a visiting tutor for national youth music organisations.

www.larasax.com

JEREMY YOUNG PIANO

Jeremy Young performs throughout the world as a chamber musician and soloist. Recent concerts include the Lincoln Center (New York), the Herbst Theater (San Francisco), Esplanade Concert Hall (Singapore), Jin Mao Concert Hall (Shanghai), National Concert Hall (Dublin), performances in Beijing, Hong Kong and Kazakhstan and recitals at the Mecklenberg Voppenmen (Germany) and Graz (Austria) international music festivals. In the UK he gives concerts at the Wigmore Hall, Bridgewater Hall, South Bank Centre and appears in festivals including Lake District, Harrogate, Brighton, Petworth, Endellion, City of London and Dartington. Jeremy has made broadcasts for BBC Radio 3, Classic FM, Lyric FM, BBC TV, Channel 4, S4C, Hong Kong Radio 4 and radio in China, USA, Kazakhstan, Russia and much of Europe. His recordings include CD's with the cellist Li-Wei for EMI Asia and Decca and with Karine Georgian (cello) for the Somm record label. He is a founder member of Ovid Ensemble and the Manchester Piano Trio.

Jeremy studied as a scholar at the Purcell School of Music, the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music. His piano

teachers included Christopher Elton, Frank Wibaut and Vladimir Ovchinkov. He studied chamber music with the Amadeus String Quartet, Andras Schiff and Joseph Seiger at the Royal Academy, Menahem Pressler at the Banff Centre of the Performing Arts in Canada and Dr. Christopher Rowland at the RNCM.

He is a senior professor of piano and Deputy Director of Chamber Music at the Royal Northern College of Music and a visiting lecturer in piano at the University of Manchester. He has also given masterclasses at the University of Huddersfield and the Nanyang Academy of Performing Arts in Singapore. Jeremy is co-founder and artistic director of the Alfriston Summer Music festival in Sussex, England.

In 1997 Jeremy was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM).

www.jeremyyoungpiano.com

KATHRYN PRICE CELLO

One of Britain's most internationally sought after soloists, Welsh 'cellist Kathryn Price is performing to considerable world-wide critical acclaim. After her Wigmore Hall debut, she received a rave review from "The Strad" magazine, which included the comment that 'she seems destined for greatness'. Her New York debuts at Carnegie Hall, and the Alice Tully Hall at New York's Lincoln Center won equally rave reviews from the New York Times, and resulted in a schedule of worldwide travelling with concert tours throughout the USA, Europe, the Far East, and broadcasts for American and British radio and television. Two documentaries recently made about Kate have been shown on the BBC networks and American TV. Many new works have been commissioned especially for her by Arts Institutions both in Britain and the USA, and additionally, she also gave the World Premiere of the George Lloyd Cello Concerto in New York, which was nationally broadcast live in the USA. Engagements in 2007/8 included tours to Spain, France, Switzerland, further concerts in the USA, the Far East and the UK including appearances at the Wigmore Hall; television broadcasts for the BBC, and Spanish, French and American radio.

Kathryn has won numerous international prizes and awards for her playing. Additionally, she is the first person to hold the National Welsh American Foundation Scholarship on both sides of the Atlantic, and has been made an Ambassador of the Arts for Wales. Kathryn studied with the internationally renowned 'cellist Lynn Harrell at the Piatigorsky Studio in Los Angeles, and was a student of the legendary William Pleeth in London. Kathryn owns four beautiful cellos, including a Gabrieli and a Rugeri, and she plays on a bow made especially for her by Master Bowmaker, John Stagg of Bristol.

SINFONIA VIVA

ViVA was founded in 1982 and, as a national Orchestra based in the East Midlands, provides classical concerts and outreach activities that make live orchestral music accessible to all.

ViVA has gained national recognition for its integrated approach to concert giving, outreach and audience development, performing in a wide range of venues, from established concert halls to leisure centres. The Orchestra participates regularly in the main concert series of the region and has a busy schedule of outdoor summer concerts. Smaller chamber groups from within the

Orchestra provide access to classical music for many communities in more rural areas. ViVA runs an innovative and diverse education and outreach programme, with new works often being 'devised' by local people working with specialist composers and ViVA musicians.

ViVA is first and foremost a classical chamber orchestra that has evolved into a music-making company of quality, diversity and energy with four distinct strands of activity:

sinfonia ViVA: performing music from over four hundred years as well as newly commissioned works for chamber orchestra.

chamber ViVA: music-making in combinations from duos to octets.

education ViVA: working in, with and for the community.

work ViVA: addressing management and training issues in the workplace through music.

ViVA has toured to Dublin and Ireland (including performing as part of the Cork 2005: European Capital of Culture programme), broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and been part of a project for Granada

Television. André de Ridder was appointed Principal Conductor in 2007 and led the Orchestra in its major Beethoven in New York season in autumn 2008 which included many world and UK premieres. In 2009 André de Ridder and ViVA are embarking on a major Mendelssohn project to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the composer's birth. In addition, ViVA will make its London debut as part of an Indian music festival in London's Kings Place, building on its partnership with top Indian classical violinist Kala Ramnath.

NICHOLAS KOK

Nicholas Kok is an extremely versatile conductor and musician. In the concert hall, the opera house and on radio he has conducted numerous world and British premieres, including works by Birtwistle, Holt, Maxwell Davies, Reich, Turnage and Xenakis. From May 1996 until May 2006 he was Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of sinfonia ViVA, with which he performed an extremely large and varied repertoire. He was recently appointed the orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor.

Besides sinfonia ViVA, other orchestras and ensembles he has worked with include the Philharmonia, London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, Royal Scottish

National, Radio Sinfonie Berlin, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, BBC Scottish Symphony, BBC Concert Orchestra, RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Ulster Orchestra, Hallé, Strasbourg Philharmonique, Het Gelders Orkest, Liepaja Symphony, Munich Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Psappha, London Sinfonietta, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Bournemouth Sinfonietta, Orchestra of St John's Smith Square, Jenaer Philharmonie, Philippines Philharmonic, RNCM and the Almeida, Endymion, Nash, Premiere, Remix and Resonanz Ensembles.

He also works frequently with the BBC Singers and Schola Cantorum of Oxford. He has recorded regularly for radio (including a huge number of recordings with the BBC Singers) and television, and has written and arranged music for both medium as well as working as banda conductor on numerous recordings for Opera Rara and Chandos.

Thanks to: Jeremy Young, Kathryn Price and Chris Painter; Tim Redpath at Horizon Production; Adam Saunders, Nicholas Kok and Sinfonia Viva; Dr. Paul Cohen; Mark P Brown Photography; James Clarke at Ty Cerdd for enabling us to use the recording space; Jennie Porton for page turning and colleagues at the RWCMD; Ty Cerdd, The Welsh Music Guild and Steffan Cole at Ouch Design. Thanks also to my family.

Lara James acknowledges the support of the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama Staff Research Awards in assisting with this project. Lara James endorses Gonzalez reeds and is a Gonzalez performing artist. She performed on this disc playing saxophones by Selmer and Yanagisawa. Jeremy Young performed on this disc using a Bosendorfer Piano



Recorded at Ty Cerdd Studio, Wales Millenium Centre, August and October 2006.

Track 5 recorded at the Derby Assembly Rooms / Serendipity Studio

Recorded and produced - Tim Redpath, Horizon Productions.

Track 5 recorded by Chris Thorpe, edited and produced by Tim Redpath.

Cover Image - Ouch Design Ltd.

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SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx UB6 7JD, UK

+44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: info@signumrecords.com

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