In our contemporary world, musicians imagine, create, and perform music in two ways—one, by writing and reading it from the page, and two, by improvising and playing it by ear. A good musical education offers practice and experience in both. In doing so, music education can provide practice and experience in the two most prevalent models for problem solving and cooperative existence in our culture—the hierarchical management model and the cooperative creative consensus model. An Introduction to the Moon combines two distinctly different and wholly essential musical practice—music of the page and music of the ear.

Using a form found in our everyday culture, the partitioned carton, I created a musical container with several partitions or sections. I composed nine unified sections of music which the musicians rehearse and perform in the traditional manner by reading and reproducing exactly what I have written for them. These nine sections surround eight sections which are reserved for music the musicians create themselves by improvising and performing by ear. You might think of the form of my piece as:


In each of the eight EAR sections a poem is read. Each poem refers, in some way, to the moon. During rehearsal for the piece, the musicians listen to each poem and respond musically by improvising their impressions, discussing their improvisations, and deciding among themselves which musical ideas best work with their ideas about the poetry.

And so, An Introduction to the Moon is not my composition, it is our composition—you, the musicians, and me. I hope that you experience our work as poetic in every way and that when the music has left the air, you will have met the moon and remain suspended in its peaceful light.

In consideration of the performers and other members of the audience, please enter or leave a performance at the end of a composition.

Cameras and recording equipment are not permitted. Please turn off all electronic devices, and be sure that all emergency contact cell phones and pagers are set to silent or vibrate.

This event is free to all UNI students, courtesy of the Panther Pass Program.

Performances like this are made possible through private support from patrons like you! Please consider contributing to School of Music scholarships or guest artist programs. Call 319-273-3915 or visit www.uni.edu/music to make your gift.

Wednesd, April 15, 2015 at 7:30 pm  Great Hall, Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center
PROGRAM

Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra

Ancient Places (2008) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Libby Larsen
  I. The Whirling Surface of Day
  II. To Share These Silences
  III. Blue in Motion

What the Monster Saw (1987) . . . . . . . . . . . . Libby Larsen

Women's Chorus and Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra

Today, this Spring (1995) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Libby Larsen
  1. Today, this Spring
  2. She Piped for Us
  3. If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking...

INTERMISSION

Symphonic Band

Grand Rondo: Napoleon Dances the Cancan
  with Italy, Hungary, and Poland (1988) . . . Libby Larsen

Spirituals from Holy Roller . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Libby Larsen
  S.H.O.P. Barbershop quartet

Holy Roller (1998) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Libby Larsen
  arr. John Boyd
  Ann Bradfield, saxophone

An Introduction to the Moon (2005) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Libby Larsen

Special Thanks:
Ms. Larsen’s residency was funded in part by a gift from
Lou and Judy Pine

At the time I composed Grand Rondo, I was very interested in political
cartooning. When I was young, I knew Scott Long, the cartoonist with the
Minneapolis Star and Tribune. I became quite enthralled with political
cartoonists’ abilities to inject their work with satire and cultural criticism. When
Rik Hanson of St. Cloud University asked if I would be interested in composing
a work for concert winds, I wondered what I would write about. I became
interested in wind band history, and Rik and I had long conversations about
the history of the concert winds. Rik gave me a full history of wind ensemble
from Egypt to the present day. I was fascinated with the wind ensemble as a
military ensemble in the 1800s and I began researching wind ensembles, as
they existed around the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s. That’s also the period of
cultural history I study quite a bit to understand American music. I looked to
European history during the same time period, and was inspired to compose
Grand Rondo for concert winds based on political cartoons satirizing
Napoleon III’s exploits in Europe. The piece is subtitled “Napoleon dances the
cancan with Italy, Hungary, and Poland – three of the countries Napoleon III
conquered. Each time he conquered a country he did it in the name of his
government, in order to rule, and then the country threw him out – but never
militantly – they just sort of ignored him and he went away. I found a few
similarities with that political campaign and some of the campaigns that were
going on in our time. My goal was to compose a grand essay in the form of a
Grand Rondo, the idea being that the rondo theme is a political cartoon of
Napoleon III dancing. Each of the A, B and C sections of the Rondo would be
Italy, Hungary and Poland, Napoleon coming into each country, observing
the country, and then being more or less ejected. Each new section of the
piece is introduced by the “Napoleon III” theme.

The longest running revival meeting in America took place on Azusa Street in
Los Angeles, California and lasted from 1906 to 1909. Night after night, the
Reverend William Seymour preached so passionately that he brought about
an ecstatic outpouring from all that were there. They wept, shouted and
dropped into dead faints. They spoke in tongues. They jerked uncontrollably.
They danced in the aisles. It is said that the Pentecostal movement in the
United States was born of this three-year revival meeting.

Holy Roller is inspired by classic revival preaching. To me, revival sermons are
stunning musical masterpieces of rhythm, tempo, and extraordinary tension
and release. The music flows directly from the language, cajoling, incanting
and repeating, at the same time magnetizing and mesmerizing the listener
with its irresistible invocations. The music is the language, the language is the
music and the result moves the spirit to other states of being.

I love the way the saxophone speaks. Because of its incredible dynamic range
and its flexibility a fine performer can make the listener hear words, abstract
though they may be. Holy Roller is a revival sermon captured in the sounds of
the alto saxophone and piano.

(continued on back of program)
Program Notes
Written by the composer

When Paul Vance had the idea to commission a symphonic work to observe the centennial of the Winona Symphony Orchestra and the sesquicentennial of Winona State University, it set me to thinking about time, place, and the significance of longevity. I began reading and thinking specifically about Winona and all the places near it. Searching for something specific and immediate, I read authors who wrote about Winona, believing I would find a cultural consensus formed over the past 200 years. Then, about a year ago, I came upon James Armstrong’s poetry. Through his work I came to slowly understand that place is eternal and is defined variously by humans who pass through, notice, name, and bind their identities to it.

I chose three poetic phrases drawn from Armstrong’s volume, Blue Lash, and created an orchestral suite in three movements: Ancient Places I. The Whirling Surface of Day, II. To Share These Silences, III. Blue in Motion.

What we celebrate with the hearing of Ancient Places is, I hope, a particular strong, peaceful, intelligent, and fruitful identity formed by a consensus of the people who have lived in this eternal place for several centuries. I am honored to be part of Winona’s “song of itself.”

What the Monster Saw is an orchestral fantasy based on part two of Mary Shelley’s novel Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus. In this section of the book, the monster confronts Frankenstein. The monster relays his experiences in the world since the day of its creation. Rejected and spurned by Frankenstein, the monster, an innocent, is cast loose and forced to survive alone. Seized by a multiplicity of sensations, it first perceives the world in chaos and fear. Then it learns to distinguish and supply its basic needs (food, clothing, shelter). Finally it conceals itself in the dark corner of a forest cottage. There, by observing some cottages, it learns to speak, to read, to love. When, in search of companionship, the monster at last approaches people, they repel, even attack him. Tragically, he realizes that he is condemned to a lonely, alienated existence. The initial confusion sensed in the monster transforms into one single purpose - revenge.

Today this Spring
This set of three pieces for treble voices and piano was commissioned by David L. Cooper and Thomas Scott in remembrance of David’s wife and Tom’s sister, both of whom succumbed to breast cancer. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Scott both have a close and fond association with The Bel Canto Singers of Minneapolis, Minnesota, the ensemble that premiered the work under the direction of Janice Kimes on May 7th, 1995 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Arden Hills, Minnesota. She piped for us, the second piece of the set, was adapted from a sermon at the memorial service for Kathryn Scott Peterson. (The first line is adapted from Luke 7)

Libby Larsen
Biography

“Music exists in an infinity of sound. I think of all music as existing in the substance of the air itself. It is the composer’s task to order and make sense of sound, in time and space, to communicate something about being alive through music.”

– Libby Larsen

Libby Larsen (b. 24 December 1950, Wilmington, Delaware) is one of America’s most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 400 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral works and over twelve operas. Grammy Award winning and widely recorded, including over fifty CD’s of her work, she is constantly sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists, ensembles, and orchestras around the world, and has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertory.

As a vigorous, articulate advocate for the music and musicians of our time, in 1973 Larsen co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composer’s Forum, which has become an invaluable aid for composers in a transitional time for American arts. A former holder of the Papamarkou Chair at John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, Larsen has also held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony and the Colorado Symphony.

www.libbylarsen.com
Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra
Rebecca Burkhardt, conductor

Violin I
John Chiles, concertmaster
Elizabeth Anderson
Jacob Thiele
Laura Hebbeln
Lydia Pakala
Anne Sloter
Karen Johnson

Violin II
Austin Jacobs, principal
Anna Larson
Jennifer Watters
Bridget Tharp
Julia Hetrick
Megan Tomson
Ryan Joss

Viola
Alyssa Adamec, principal
Jotham Polashek
Nichele Probst
Kathleen Marston
Hanna Gibson
Megan Brown
Coved Oswald
Emily Bachmeier
Andrea Sanchez Ruiz

Cello
Malcolm Burke, principal
John Haverdink
Megan Grey
Kyle Geeseey
Joel Brich
Christopher Fenton
Christian Fosselman

Bass
Tessa Cohen, principal
Joe Mnayer
Daniel Benson
Alex Pershounin*

Harp
Suzanne Sontag

Flute/Piccolo
Mara Miller
Natalie Neshyba
Stephanie Thimmesch

Oboe/English Horn
Emily Cornish
Grace Lau

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet
Nicholas Carlo
Stacia Fortune
Hayley Graham
Nicholas Schumacher

Bassoon/Contra
Joshua Carlo
Laura Grotte
Victoria Piper

Horn
Aaron Anderson
Ashlyn Christensen
Casey Dirksen
Molly Schebler

Trumpet
Jordan Boehm
Benjamin Feuerhelm
Daniel Meier

Trombone
Craig Goettle
Paul Lichly
Nathaniel Welshons

Tuba
Taylor Hicks

Timpani/Percussion
Megan Brasch
Ryan Greiner
Alex Lafrenz
Paige McGrath

Piano/Keyboard
Seth Butler

Women’s Chorus
Amy Kotonis, conductor
Kathleen Meyer, piano

Katlin Armbrecht
Aja Baskerville
Taylor Beers
Kailyn Bruns
Regina Christy
Brooke Craig

Jenny Crumrine
Lauren Day
Madison Diesburg
Alex Faison
Samantha Gaffney
Niccole Giberson

Erin Hart
Amanda Kamp
Courtney Klein
Maggie Martin
Emily Murtha
Courtney Post
Sara Roth

Autumn Sempéré
Katelyn Stanek
Hailey Sullivan
Shelby Warner
Jessica Wegmann
Ashley Wurster

Symphonic Band
Danny Galyen, conductor

Flute
Rylie Graham
Elise Jacobson
Jennifer Michel
Lina Pierson
Lydia Richards

Clarinet
Tiana Heien
Tanner Helms
Elaine Leverington
Claire Liske
Austin Nolan
Marissa Quinn
Austin Wright

Bassoon
Joanna Eyanson
Katherine Plotzke

Saxophone
Sarah Baker
Keegan Little
Nicole Norman
Jessalyn Small
Gage Schmitt
Thomas Sparks

Trumpet
Jessica Bartholomew
Rachel Bearinger
Benjamin Castle
Bailey Debold
Molly Evans
Jennie Pine

Horn
Ryan Black
Daniel Charette
Adam Peters

Trombone
Malcolm Burke

Tuba
Daniel Benson
Nicholas Todd

Percussion
Ryan Greiner
Dallas McDonough
Paige McGrath
Javen Nekola
Zachary Rolf
Sarah Smith

Piano
Taylor Kobberdahl

S.H.O.P. Barbershop Quartet
Austin Nolan, Colby Campbell, Ben Owen, Brandon Schneider