

UNLV
Department of Music
College of Fine Arts

presents an

Artist in Residence

Rhonda Taylor, alto and baritone saxophones

PROGRAM

Ben Carson
(b. 1971)

Anonyme (2009)

Rick Burkhardt
(b. 1970)

El Avion Grande (1996)

Giacinto Scelsi
(1905-1988)

Maknongan (1976)

Avi Tchamni
(b. 1968)

Interstice (1997/2008)

Ben Grosser
(b. 1970)

Not Pitch (1995)

Saturday, April 21, 2012

7:30 p.m.

**Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

Rhonda Taylor is dedicated to the creation and performance of meaningful sonic art of our time. She has worked with a variety of today's most outstanding composers, including Robert Morris, Jeffrey Mumford, Robert Lemay, and Pulitzer Prize winner Bernard Rands. She has also commissioned and premiered works by such emerging composers as Rick Burkhardt, Avi Tchamni, Ben Carson, Justin Rubin, Chris Arell, and Jon Forshee. Her recent activities include lecture recitals on Gerard Grisey's *Anubis et Nout* at institutions in the U.S. and abroad, performances at NASA conferences, World Saxophone Congresses, and new music festivals throughout the United States. Her solo recordings can be found online on cdbaby, itunes, and amazon.com. Upcoming projects include working closely with Guggenheim Award winning composer Steven Takasugi on a new work for solo saxophonist and electronics to be premiered in 2013 as well as taking part in a consortium commission of a new work for baritone saxophone and electronics by Nathan Davis. Her primary teachers were Kelland Thomas at the University of Arizona and John Sampen at Bowling Green State University. Dr. Taylor has been on faculty at New Mexico State University since 2003, where she is the College Assistant Professor of Saxophone and Music Theory. Rhonda Taylor is a Conn-Selmer artist and plays on Selmer Paris saxophones exclusively.

Anonyme was composed for Rhonda Taylor as part of a larger collection of musical works by Ben Carson titled *Lesser Myths*. Taylor premiered *Anonyme* in March 2009 in at Columbia University in New York. Carson writes, "A story of *Anonyme* relates to the paradox of a Neptune worshipper whose sacrifices exceed all expectations, but who takes a special kind of power over the god by remaining anonymous. The essence of worship is to make oneself known, and Neptune can't handle praise that he can credit to no one, so he turns her into a sea anemone." Ben Carson is currently on faculty at UC-Santa Cruz. Rhonda Taylor's recording of *Anonyme* is available online in both physical and digital formats as part of her 2012 CD, *Interstice*.

Rick Burkhardt is a composer, playwright, and songwriter whose original chamber music, theater, and text pieces have been performed in over 40 US cities, as well as in Europe, Mexico, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. In 2006 he received his PhD in Music Composition from the University of California, San Diego, where he studied with Chaya Czernowin. He is a founding member of The Nonsense Company, an award-winning experimental music-theater trio that since 2005 has given hundreds of performances around the country. His original songs (written for the political cabaret duo The Prince Myshkins, for which Burkhardt plays accordion) have been performed and recorded by musicians around the English-speaking world. His play "Conversation Storm," published in the anthology "Plays and Playwrights 2009," will be released as a feature film in 2010, starring The Nonsense Company.

Rick Burkhardt wrote *El Avion Grande* for Kelland Thomas in 1996. Thomas premiered *El Avion Grande* at the 1997 ThreeTwo Festival in New York. The work consists of seven sections, each of which contains a dialogue between two sonic extremes, such as quiet/loud, high/low, short/long, etc. The text is from Federico Garcia Lorca's *Poet in New York*, and is presented throughout the work at varying levels of intelligibility. Burkhardt writes that "*Lorca considered the idea of a poet in New York an oxymoron. Nowadays he would be deported.*" Rhonda Taylor's recording of *El Avion Grande* is available for digital download as part of her 2009 CD, *Audition*.

Maknongan is one of Giacinto Scelsi's (1905-1988) characteristic mature works. Scelsi developed his own compositional style following an emotional breakdown earlier in his career, where, in a form of self-therapy, he repeated single notes at his piano for hours. Scelsi's resulting sensitivity to timbre is evident in his compositions that followed, and his ideas and music from this second half of his life were of particular influence on the spectral composers that emerged in the early 1970s. *Maknongan* is designed to be performed by any low-pitched instrument. A mediation centering around 3 chromatic pitches (012), the piece gradually transitions from an agitated opening to a calm ending.

Avi Tchamni received his B.A. in Music Composition and Musicology from the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel Aviv University. He later on continued his graduate studies to a Masters degree in composition at Northwestern University, and received his Ph.D. in composition from the University of California, San Diego. In 2004 he was a fellow at Akademie Schloss Solitude and in 2005 a Rudolf-Eberle Stiftung fellow. Other grants and awards include IRCAM's composition and computer music stage; the IRCAM-Acanthes summer courses in Avignon and Metz in France; the Royaumont Foundation fellowship; Musique Nouvelle 2000 Domaine Forget fellowship; and a first prize in the William Faricy composition competition. His works have been performed at venues around Germany, France, the U.S., Canada, and Israel including 'Musik der Jahrhunderte', 'Voix Nouvelle' in Royaumont, France, 'Musique Nouvelle' in Quebec, at the Art Institute of Chicago, and at several New Music festivals in San Diego and Santa Cruz. He currently teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Interstice was originally composed for tenor saxophone in 1997. Rhonda Taylor premiered the baritone saxophone version of *Interstice* in March of 2008 at New Mexico State University. Rhonda Taylor's recording of *Interstice* is available online in both physical and digital formats as part of her 2012 CD, *Interstice*.

Benjamin Grosser is an artist and a composer. Currently, Grosser is working full-time to develop an automated art painting machine. This robot will produce affordable original artworks whose composition is influenced by media submitted by the work's future owners. His website is <http://bengrosser.com>.

Not Pitch was written for saxophonist Taimur Sullivan in 1995, and was premiered at the Settlement Music School in Philadelphia, PA. The tape part was produced using software written by the composer. Rhonda Taylor's recording of *Not Pitch* is available online in both physical and digital formats as part of her 2012 CD, *Interstice*.