Program

Awed by the Beauty
   Tiffany Oestreich, Blyn Redden, Meghan Gustainis,
   Cassandra Cook, Michel Flock, Jeanne Lodge, Michelle Abad
   Jeremy Dupea, Sean La Shier, Matthew Woodard,
   Mitchell Armstrong Murphy Roeder, Jason Prindle,
   Ben Peterson, Nils Thompson

Four Movements for Alto Saxophone and Drone
   Commissioned by Birkin Owart

   Birkin Owart, *alto-saxophone*

Folk Medley (for Fr. David Shank)
   Sarah Sokol, *fiddle*
   Nick Sokol, *Mandolin*
   Skyler Mehal, *guitar*
   Marina Christopher, *bass*

Atmosphere
   Nick Sokol, *saxophones and electronics*

Corn, Cider and Pumpkins
   Birkin Owart, *soprano saxophone*
   Terrell Stephens, *tenor saxophone*
   Aaron Julyan, *marimba*
   Josh Gianola, *marimba*

Yertle the Turtle
   Sarah Sokol, *voice*
   Clare Bresnahan and Vanessa Moss, *violin*
   Kathryn Kibbe, *viola*
   Alex Abrams, *cello*
   Kevin Lane, *clarinets*
   Aaron Julyan and Josh Gianola, *percussion*
   Nick Sokol, *conductor*

Nick Sokol
Senior Composition Recital

Nick is from the studio of Dr. Elaine Ross

Central Washington University
Department of Music

Presents:

Music Building Recital Hall
Saturday, April 23, 2011
7:00 PM
Awed by the Beauty is an unaccompanied choral work set to the text of an ancient Eastern Orthodox church-hymn. This type of short song in praise of the mother of God or Theotokos is known in the Orthodox church as a Theotokian, and is often sung during weekly services as well as weddings. This particular setting of the texts bears little resemblance to the original melody of the hymn, but seeks to convey the same sense of reverence and spirituality.

Awed by the beauty of thy virginity and the exceeding radiance of thy purity,
Gabriel stood amazed and cried to thee, Oh Mother of God:
What praise can I offer unto thee?
By what name shall I call thee?
I am lost and bewildered.
Wherefore as commanded, I cry to thee:
Rejoice. Oh Full of Grace!

Four Movements for Alto Saxophone and Drone: Unique extended techniques and swirling, virtuosic passages make this piece a challenge for the advanced saxophonist. The composition is comprised of four movements, the first and last of which are merely a short, unaccompanied introduction and coda. The middle two movements are what comprise the main body of the piece. Each of the middle two movements conveys a different mood. Movement II, Give Thanks, was originally intended to be a meditation but eventually took on a life that made it impractical for use as such. The movement has a very spiritual sound and is based entirely on the Lydian mode. The third movement, Burning Tears, takes its name from the frustration and subdued anger that it conveys. This movement starts out in the Lydian mode but gradually morphs into an octatonic scale as the energy of movement builds. Both movements have simple themes that are developed and expanded upon throughout the course of the piece. As a whole, the piece focuses on the gradual development of energy over a simple sustained accompaniment.

Folk Medley is a combination of original composed material and traditional Celtic and American folk tunes. Much of the medley is played in a traditional folk style and setting with guitar and bass accompaniment and fiddle and melodies. The piece explores the composer’s origins as a folk mandolinist and represents his passion for traditional and new folk music. The medley was put together as a tribute to honor the composer’s recently deceased godfather, Fr. David Shank, who was a folk musician and played a major role in the composer’s early musical development.

Atmosphere was written by the composer to give himself the opportunity to improvise on the saxophone within set parameters in an integrated acoustic/electronic setting. Incorporating electronic sounds, pre-recorded sounds as well as live improvisation, the composer has set up an environment in which to express himself uniquely and to go beyond the bounds of his acoustic instrument.

Corn, Cider and Pumpkins takes its name simply from the fact that it was written in October and was consequently inspired by the fall season. The format for the instrumentation (soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone and two marimbas) was derived from the traditional piano trio setting, with the soprano saxophone taking the place of the violin, the tenor replacing the cello and two marimbas rather than a piano. The piece uses pentatonic, folk-like melodies over percussive ostinato patterns. The composition contains clear influences from folk music, jazz and minimalism.

Yertle the Turtle is an avant-garde composition for voice, string quartet, clarinet and percussion. The piece is wrought with aleatoric elements, allowing the musicians and the conductor to interpret or even improvise according to a very specific set of parameters. The composition incorporates numerous extended techniques for the instrumentalists, including some unusual sounds in the percussion section. As its name implies, the work is set to the poem by Dr. Seuss entitled, Yertle the Turtle which is to be read in its entirety during the piece. While the poem implies a clear story line, the music of this composition is only a little programmatic. The music was not intended to be an accompaniment, or soundtrack to the piece, but rather, all of the sounds were meant to blend together in harmony to create a cohesive musical statement.