

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC**

Steve Reich at 80

Chamber Works

Andra Bohnet, flutes/piccolo

Kip Franklin, clarinet

Jasmin Arakawa, Wei-Min Patrick, Shawn Wright, pianos

Luis Rivera, Matt Greenwood, Laura Noah, Soren Odom,

Ryan Boehme, Alex White, Emily Weaver, Brandon Benson,

Hunter Curry, Trevor Perez, Kevin Newsome,

Christian Mixson, percussion

Vermont Counterpoint (1982)

Steve Reich (b. 1936)

New York Counterpoint (1985)

Steve Reich

I.

II.

III.

Dance Patterns (2002)

Steve Reich

Eight Lines (1983)

Steve Reich
arranged by Luis Rivera

The Twelfth Concert of Academic Year 2016-2017

RECITAL HALL

LIDLAW PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Wednesday, October 12, 2016

7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM NOTES – by Steve Reich

Vermont Counterpoint was commissioned by flutist Ransom Wilson and is dedicated to Betty Freeman. It is scored for three alto flutes, three flutes, and three piccolos all pre-recorded on tape, plus a live solo part. The live soloist plays alto flute, flute and piccolo, and participates in the ongoing counterpoint as well as more extended melodies. The piece could be performed by eleven flutists, but is intended primarily as a solo with tape. Throughout the piece occurs four sections in four different keys, with the third in a slower tempo. The compositional techniques used are primarily building up canons between short repeating melodic patterns by substituting notes for rests, and then playing melodies that result from their combinations. These resulting melodies then become the basis for the following section as the other surrounding parts in the contrapuntal web fade away. Though the techniques used include several that I discovered as early as 1967, the relatively fast rate of change, metric modulation into and out of a slower tempo, and relatively rapid changes of key create a more concentrated and concise musical impression.

New York Counterpoint was commissioned by The Fromm Music Foundation for clarinetist Richard Stolzman. The piece is a continuation of the ideas found in *Vermont Counterpoint*, where a soloist plays against a pre-recorded tape of him or herself. In *New York Counterpoint* the soloist pre-records ten clarinet and bass clarinet parts and then plays a final 11th part live against the tape. The compositional procedures include several that occur in my earlier music. The opening pulses ultimately come from the opening of *Music for 18 Musicians* (1976). The use of interlocking repeated melodic patterns played by multiples of the same instrument can be found in my earliest works. In the nature of the patterns, their combination harmonically, and in the faster rate of change, the piece reflects my works during this period, particularly *Sextet* (1985). *New York Counterpoint* is in three movements: fast, slow, fast, played one after the other without pause. The change of tempo is abrupt and in the simple relation of 1:2. The piece is in the meter $3/2 = 6/4 = 12/8$. As is often the case when I write in this meter, there is an ambiguity between whether one hears measures of three groups of four eighth-notes, or four groups of three eighth-notes. In the last movement, the bass clarinets function to accent one note first, then the remaining possibilities while the upper clarinets essentially do not change. The effect, by change of accent, is to vary the perception of that which in fact is not changing.

Dance Patterns was composed for choreographer Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker and filmmaker Thierry de Mey. De Mey had completed an hour-long film of de Keersmaecker's choreography entitled *Counterphrases* and asked several composers to write a five- or six-minute piece for a completed section of the film. The pieces were performed live by the Ictus Ensemble, who commissioned all the music, while the film was being shown. *Dance Patterns* is scored for two pianos, two vibraphones, and two xylophones.

Eight Lines is structured in five sections, of which the first and third resemble each other in their moving piano, cello, viola and bass clarinet figures, while the second and fourth sections resemble each other in their longer held tones in the cello. The fifth and final section combines these materials. The transitions between sections is as smooth as possible with some overlapping in the parts so that it is sometimes hard to tell exactly when one section ends and the next begins. In the first, third and fifth sections there are somewhat longer melodic lines in the flute and/or piccolo. This interest in longer melodic lines composed of shorter patterns strung together has its roots in my earlier music as well as my studies in 1976-77 of the cantillation of the Hebrew Scriptures.