
The
Contemporary Saxophone

John Sampen
saxophones

Marilyn Shrude
piano

MARILYN SHRUDE • *Renewing the Myth* (1988)

MILTON BABBITT • *Images* (1979)

CHARLES WUORINEN • *Divertimento* (1982)

MORTON SUBOTNICK • *In Two Worlds* (1987)

Marilyn Shrude • *Renewing the Myth*

The music of Chicago-born composer **Marilyn Shrude** (b. 1946) is recognized for its “shimmering sounds” and “sensuous beauty.” Marilyn Shrude received degrees from Alverno College (Alumna of the Year—1989) and Northwestern University. Her honors include the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award for Orchestral Music, the Faircy Award for Creative Music, the Toledo Women in Communications Award, and grants from the Ohio Arts Council. Since 1977, she has been on the faculty of Bowling Green State University, where she teaches, directs the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music and co-directs the Annual New Music and Art Festival. Marilyn Shrude is also active as a consultant and performer of contemporary piano literature.

Written in 1988 for John Sampen, *Renewing the Myth* exploits both the theme and legend of Niccolò Paganini's 24th Caprice for violin. Germinal motives from the Caprice are introduced in both the saxophone and piano and become increasingly complex in a mildly atonal framework. The cadenza incorporates not only the Paganini, but bits of famous saxophone literature as well. As the piece unfolds, the increasing technical difficulty recalls the myth—the composer/violinist had exchanged his soul for his virtuosity. The piece was premiered by John Sampen and Marilyn Shrude at the 9th World Saxophone Congress in Tokyo.

Milton Babbitt • *Images*

“A man with legendary brilliance,” **Milton Babbitt** (b. 1916) is well-known as a composer, teacher, writer and spokesman for new music. A student of Roger Sessions, Babbitt is an accomplished musician and mathematician and taught both disciplines at Princeton for many years before retiring in 1984. He continues to maintain a prolific life of composition, visiting residencies, and teaching at the Julliard School. Special awards include the William Shubael Conant Professor Emeritus (Princeton) and the MacArthur Fellowship.

Although Milton Babbitt is renowned as one of the fathers of electronic music, he has written only three purely electronic works. He has, however, composed numerous works for live performer and tape. *Images*, for saxophones and synthesized tape, was composed for Harvey Pittell in 1979. Babbitt explains that the title is less a reflection of the impressionistic qualities of the title word than of certain relationships between this work, two other pieces for live performer and tape (*Correspondences* and *Reflections*) and the much earlier *Ensembles for Synthesizer*. According to Mr. Babbitt, *Images*, like *Correspondences* and *Reflections*, projects the “multiple mutualities” of the musics issuing from the performer and the tape. He adds that, like *Ensembles*, the large-scale structure is suggested and defined by certain events that occur both close to one another and distantly. Other conspicuous boundaries of the large-scale architecture are the use of different instruments—alto saxophone in the first and third sections, and soprano and sopranino in the central section.

—Joel Sachs

Charles Wuorinen • *Divertimento*

Michael Steinberg describes **Charles Wuorinen** (b. 1938) as a 'maximalist' through and through, writing music dense with notes, with event, with cross reference and allusion. Active as a pianist, conductor and composer, Wuorinen has taught at Columbia, Manhattan and Rutgers and was Composer-in-Residence with the San Francisco Symphony (1985-89). The youngest composer to win the Pulitzer Prize (1970), he is also recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship. Other honors include grants from the Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundations and commissions from the Ford, Frmm and Koussevitzky Foundations.

Charles Wuorinen's *Divertimento* for alto saxophone and piano was commissioned by Christopher Ford and received its 1983 premiere at Weill Hall with Mr. Ford and Charles Wuorinen. The composer has forsworn the writing or discussion of program notes and prefers that the "listener should simply listen" to the music and enjoy the experience. One might mention, however, that the composition's macrocosmic construction is one of gradual growth in density, speed and intensity.

Morton Subotnick • *In Two Worlds*

Morton Subotnick is recognized as “the first sonic virtuoso” by Newsweek magazine. Working with electronic sounds since 1959, Subotnick has proven to be an international leader and pioneer in new music technology with a special interest in exploring relationships between conventional and electronic or synthesized sounds. His all-electronic work *Silver Apples of the Moon* (1967) was the first such piece written for the phonograph medium. His honors include awards and grants from the NEA, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundations, and an ASCAP award.

In Two Worlds is a concerto for alto saxophone, computer and (in its optional version) orchestra. Initial settings of the work also included wind controller but this has been omitted in the final versions. The title refers both to the duality of the media (computer and traditional instruments) and to the synthesis of the musical materials, which consist of recent and more modal concepts of music language. The concerto was commissioned by and written for John Sampen, Kenneth Radnofsky and James Forger with the aid of an NEA Consortium grant.

The world premiere of the complete version was presented in London, England in 1988 with John Sampen and the Electric Symphony. This large scale work casts the saxophonist in an heroic role, performing a variety of romantic and virtuosic passages. Set in a single, expansive movement, the music proceeds without pause through the following sections: 'alone'— 'rushing'— 'celebration'— 'cadenza' — 'alone' — 'combat dance'.

The computer has been programed to sequence accompanying "orchestral" material and to monitor and modify the sound processing unit which enhances the accoustical saxophone sound. State-of-the-art technology allows the soloist to interact with the computer through use of a manual foot pedal. "I am building an integrated and responsive environment that merges performance and technology. In it the technology is aware of and responds to the performers." Sonic material of the saxophone and computer is manipulated to produce similar melodies, rhythms and sound combinations in unusual ways, often with interchanged or altered voicings.

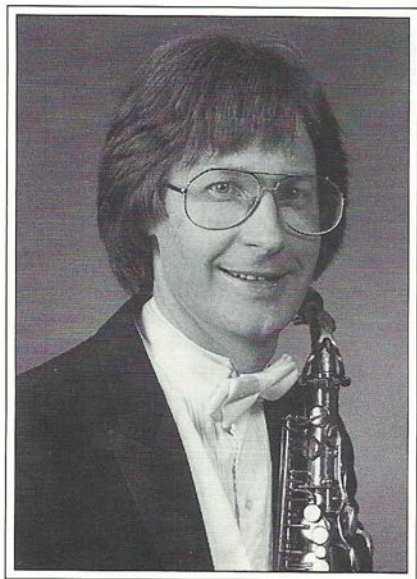
John Sampen

As one of America's leading concert saxophonists, **John Sampen** is particularly distinguished as an artist in contemporary literature. He has commissioned and premiered over forty new works, including compositions by Bolcom, Cage and Ussachevsky, and he has presented saxophone premieres of music by Lutoslawski, Stockhausen and Tower.

In 1970, Sampen was recitalist and certificate winner at the prestigious International Geneva Concours in Switzerland. He has been soloist with ensembles from all over the world, including the Nurnberg Symphony Orchestra, the Biel Symphony (Switzerland), the Osaka Municipal Winds (Japan), Orchestra Internazionale d'Italia, the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, the New Mexico Symphony, and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble.

A recipient of an NEA Consortium Grant, Sampen has recently been involved with commissions and premiers of new music by Babbitt, Martino and Subotnick. His London premiere of Subotnick's *In Two Worlds* with the Electric Symphony (1988) inspired one English critic to write of "the excellence, the musicianship and the total involvement of John Sampen...tremendous passion and eloquence."

John Sampen regularly performs traditional and contemporary literature n recital with pianist/composer Marilyn Shrude. He has recorded with the Belgian and Swiss National Radio, as well as the Capstone, CRI, Neuma and Orion labels. A clinician for the Selmer Company, Sampen has presented many master classes at important universities and conservatories in iEurope, America and Russia. He holds degrees from Northwestern University and has studied with Frederick Hemke, Donald Sinta and Larry Teal. He is presently a professor of music at Bowling Green State University.



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| 1 | MARILYN SHRUDE • <i>Renewing the Myth</i> (1988)
for saxophone and piano | 12:57 |
| 2 | MILTON BABBITT • <i>Images</i> (1979)
for Saxophonist and Synthesized Tape | 10:33 |
| 3 | CHARLES WUORINEN • <i>Divertimento</i> (1982)
for alto saxophone and piano | 9:27 |
| 4 | MORTON SUBOTNICK • <i>In Two Worlds</i> (1987)
for alto saxophone and Interactive computer | 18:45 |
| | Total | 52:06 |

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