SHADOWS and DAWNING

John Sampen, SAXOPHONE
Marilyn Shrude, PIANO

with
Sax 4th Avenue Saxophone Quartet
Stanley George • Shannon Ford
Kevin Heidbreder • Jason Yost
Internationally-recognized saxophonist John Sampen is dedicated to the promotion and performance of contemporary art music. His sponsorship of new music has resulted in premieres of over sixty works, including commissions by Rands, Subotnick, Cage, Adler and Babbitt. Sampen has also presented first performances of saxophone arrangements by Lutoslawski, Stockhausen and Tower.

John Sampen’s world-wide performances include concerts with the Nürnberg Symphony, the Biel Swiss Symphony, the Osaka Municipal Winds, the Toledo Symphony, the Orchestra Internazionale d’Italia and the New Mexico Symphony. 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 master classes at important universities and conservatories in Asia, Europe and North America. Dr. Sampen is presently Distinguished Artist Professor at Bowling Green State University and past-president of the North American Saxophone Alliance.

Award-winning composer/pianist Marilyn Shrude is an active proponent of contemporary music in America. Her honors include the Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards for Orchestral Music, the Cleveland Arts Prize, Alverno College Alumna of the Year, a Rockefeller Foundation residency in Italy, and an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Shrude’s compositions are recognized for their “shimmering sounds” and “sensuous beauty. She has been performed internationally in Prague’s Smetana Hall, Taiwan’s National Concert Hall, Brussels Town Hall, Carnegie Recital Hall, Merkin Hall, and the Kennedy Center.

Dr. Shrude is founder of the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music and was director of the nationally-acclaimed BGSU New Music & Art Festival for 19 years. She served as chair of the Theory and Composition Department at Interlochen Arts Camp and was a visiting faculty member at Indiana University. She is currently Distinguished Artist Professor and chair of the Musicology/Composition/Theory Department at Bowling Green State University. Shrude has performed as collaborative pianist with John Sampen since 1972.

Since its formation in 1991, Sax 4th Avenue has entertained audiences throughout the Midwest with a unique brand of virtuosity, showmanship, and humor. Saxophonists Stanley George (soprano), Shannon Ford (alto), Kevin Heidbreder (tenor) and Jason Yost (baritone) are graduates of Bowling Green State University and each is an award winning soloist and chamber artist with a wealth of performing and teaching experience. The quartet has received national recognition as guest artists for the United
that the key is F-sharp minor may be important. The third movement is a rapid scherzo that rarely rises above the level of pianissimo. A lengthy recitative for saxophone alone introduces the final ‘Mad Dance’ which contains intimations of American popular styles.

_Shadows and Dawning_ was commissioned and premiered by Theresa Witmer and the composer at the 7th World Saxophone Congress in Nürnberg, Germany (1982). The one-movement work was inspired by nature’s fascinating miracle—the passage of darkness to light, or more simply put, “dawn.” Motivic ideas are presented in a germinal way and are subtly transformed so that a mood of expectancy, hesitancy and mystery finds eventual quasi-resolution in a more relaxed transparent texture. As is typical of Shreve’s music, the work exploits the full range of the saxophone and explores unique color possibilities through microtonality, multiphonics, subtone, flutturtongue, timbre trills and vocal sounds. The piano is not only utilized for its inherent technical prowess, but also for its extended timbral language—pizzicato, muting, harmonics and glissandi.

Composer, clarinetist and video artist Burton Beerman is current director of the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music and founder of the Bowling Green State University New Music Festival. His recent interactive works for computer and live performance have been performed internationally, including presentations in the Netherlands, Austria, France, Hungary and the USA.

_Concerto I for Alto Saxophone and Taped Instruments_ was commissioned and premiered by John Sampen in 1981 and is the first in an ongoing series of works by the composer. The source material for the tape is primarily composed of pre-recorded acoustical instrumental sounds processed electronically, giving the illusion of an accompanying orchestra fitted with microphones. A “purgatory” or middle world is thus created where one is never certain which sounds are produced by the live saxophonist, which are the electronically modified orchestra or which are purely electronic in origin. While the entire concerto comprises two expansive movements, Beerman has indicated that the first movement may stand alone as an independent composition. This disc presents the shortened version.

The electronic material serves as a basis for a subsequent “concerto” series in which the solo voice is varied from work to work but the accompaniment is reprocessed or rearranged. The second concerto (entitled SOLO) is for viola, the third for harp and the fourth for clarinet. This procedure follows the composer’s seven-work _Polygraph_ series in which the tape
parts changed significantly, but the acoustical score remained similar.

Marilyn Shrude’s *Evolution V* for Solo Alto Saxophone and Saxophone Quartet (SATB) was written for John Sampen and the Chicago Saxophone Quartet (Robert Black, Richard Kennell, Walker Smith and James Kasprzyk) and premiered by them at the 5th World Saxophone Congress in London, England (1976). Shrude’s unique instrumental ensemble is designed for the university saxophone teacher—virtuosic, concerto-like proportions for the soloist against a challenging, highly technical quartet accompaniment. The melodic material is a free rendering of a serialized fifteen-note row; rhythm is both strictly metered and more loosely structured in controlled aleatoric gestures.

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