



tornado alley music

October 2009 Newsletter

Welcome!

Welcome to the first newsletter from Tornado Alley Music. Tornado Alley Music was created to offer composers the opportunity to publish their music through the unlimited reach of the Internet. Currently, all composers involved live in Iowa and want to make their music available to as many interested parties as possible.

Tornado Alley Music is proud to provide new music from Iowa composers at www.tornadoallemusic.com. Visit us for scores and recordings from some of Iowa's most active composers. [Become a member](#) to receive newsletters by email and gain access to our members' area for special downloads. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for updates as new composers and scores are added. We are always interested in receiving feedback from our followers.

We currently host 4 composers, 15 compositions, 20 recordings, 30 scores and 2 complete set of parts with much more available by contacting the composers directly. New compositions are added weekly and can be located under the "What's New?" area of the web site.

Current Events from our Composers

Jonathan Schwabe

Jonathan's new song cycle Superfluous Were the Sun was premiered at UNI in early September by professors Tina Su (horn), Jeff Brich (tenor), and Korey Barret (piano). The cycle consists of four settings of poems by Emily Dickinson and includes:

If I can stop one Heart from breaking
The Soul selects her own society
Superfluous were the Sun
The Daisy follows soft the Sun

At present he is working on a large work for chorus and concert band, based on texts from the Dhammapada, expected to be premiered in May of 2010.

Jeff Young

Jeff's newest work featured on Tornado Alley, *Elegy for Robert Anton Wilson*, is, as the name implies, a tribute to now deceased science fiction writer and futurist Robert Anton Wilson. In Wilson's book *The Illuminatus Trilogy* is a 'scientific' theory called the Law of Fives, thus his choice to put this particular piece of music in 5/4 time. "Harmonically, the piece is fairly simple. Most of the piece is based upon the F Phrygian scale, with the Tenor solo being an F Minor Blues.", says Jeff.

"It's difficult to explain why Wilson's work was important enough to me to write a piece dedicated to him. To most who had read him, his work would seem like pure nonsense, but to those of us who shared a common experience and certain sense of humor, his work was brilliant and he will be missed. I remember I literally stumbled across his book *The Illuminatus Trilogy*. Someone had left it outside my apartment door. I suspect it was a friend of mine and Todd Munnik's (also of Tornado Alley Music, we were roommates at the time), but never thought to ask him. Wilson described himself as an ontological terrorist using words to destroy the common constructs of civilization. Whatever he was, I will miss him and his work."

"I would like to thank Chris Merz and the UNI Jazz Band I for taking on this piece. It is exceptionally difficult, and they performed it well." This work is available on Tornado Alley Music.

Alan Schmitz

During the past few months, Alan Schmitz has been writing a new piece for viola and guitar. This work, entitled "Tango Fantasy," was requested by guitarist Todd Seelye and violist Julia Bullard and written with the welcome support of a grant from the University of Northern Iowa Graduate College Summer Fellowship Program. "Tango Fantasy" will be premiered during the spring, 2010 semester at the UNI School of Music on a date still to be determined.

During the fall, 2009 semester, Schmitz will have two performances of his "Trio D'Anches" (wind trio for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon) by the University of Iowa Center for New Music. The concerts that include this piece will be held at the Iowa City Riverside Recital Hall on September 27 at 7:30 pm and at the joint Iowa Composers Forum/Society of Composers, Inc. Festival at Clarke College (Dubuque, Iowa) on October 9 at 7:30 pm (concert No. 7 of the festival).

Todd Munnik

Todd is currently composing an untitled work for jazz ensemble. Here are his comments on the work. "For some reason or another, I am drawn to the orchestral movie scores of composers such as Hans Zimmer and Thomas Newman. I think it may be the emphasis on melodic composition and the intensity and repetition in the music. Usually the timbres are varied and include unique instrumentation adding terrific contrast when placed with standard orchestral writing. With that said, I am developing those themes in a work for jazz band. At this point in the process, the piece is very through-composed and melodic with a more static harmonic progression. I am hoping for a reading in the spring of 2010."

Munnik is re-orchestrating his *5 Songs for Soprano* (originally for soprano and piano) with a new instrumentation of soprano, piano, cello and clarinet. This piece was first performed 10 years ago on his Master's recital in 1999.

New Composers Join Tornado Alley

We are pleased to welcome Rebecca Burkhardt and Lathon Jernigan to our list of Tornado Alley composers. Lathon is a professor emeritus of composition from the University of Northern Iowa and Rebecca is the Director of Orchestras and Associate Director of the School of Music at UNI, as well as the current president of the College Orchestra Directors' Association. Please visit their composer pages for more information.