

## The Scruncheons

Rob Power, director

Forest Rain (1974)

Neil De Ponte

Timecraft (1994)

Hilton Kean Jones

Ostinato Pianissimo (1953)

Henry Cowell

Dance Barbaro (1965)

Phillip Lambro

### intermission

Music for Pieces of Wood (1980)

Steve Reich

Artspace III.6 (2002)

The Scruncheons

**Performers:** Andrew Dunsmore, Yves Conan, Phil Yetman, John Power, Sarah Smith, Keith Harding, Brad Kilpatrick, Ed Squires, Rob Pittman, Dan Galway, Keith Bartlett, Dave Lane, Amie Watson, Ian Page-Shiner, Rob Power



**Neil Deponte** is the principal percussionist of the Oregon Symphony Orchestra, a position he has held for the past 26 years. He is also music director and conductor of the Oregon Ballet Theatre.

**Hilton Kean Jones** is a composer and keyboard recording artist of both commercial and classical music. He is Music & Video Director of the NFL Super Bowl pre and post games shows, a position he has held since 1992. Jones is an ASCAP composer and president of Where's the Music? Inc., a fine arts production and publication corporation (also an ASCAP affiliate). He recently retired from his position as professor of music at the University of South Florida School of Music (Tampa), where he taught music composition, computer applications in music, and orchestration, and relocated to Honolulu, Hawaii, where he continues his work as a freelance composer and producer.

A tireless musical explorer and inventor, **Henry Cowell** was born in Menlo Park, California, where he grew up surrounded by a wide variety of Oriental musical traditions, his father's Irish folk heritage, and his mother's Midwestern folk tunes. Already composing in his early teens, Cowell began formal training at age 16 with Charles Seeger at the University of California. Further studies focused primarily on world music cultures. His use of varied sound materials, experimental compositional procedures, and a rich palette colored by multiple non-European and folk influences revolutionized American music and popularized, most notably, the tone cluster as an element in compositional design. Cowell's influence is legion, counting among his students John Cage, Lou Harrison, and George Gershwin. Cowell taught at the New School for Social Research in New York and also held posts at the Peabody Conservatory and Columbia University. A plethora of awards, grants, and honorary degrees was capped by his election in 1951 to the American Institute of Arts and Letters.

**Phillip Lambro** was born in Wellesley, Massachusetts. He began studying music during his early teens in Boston where at seventeen he made his debut performing Chopin at the Pianists Fair in Symphony Hall. Later he continued his studies in Miami, Florida and then received a scholarship to The Music Academy of the West in California where his teachers included Donald Pond and Bartok's most celebrated pupil, György Sandor. Lambro was one of the youngest composers ever to be programmed on two separate occasions by the Philadelphia Orchestra, which premiered *Dance Barbaro for Percussion* and *Miraflores for String Orchestra*. Lambro made musical history when the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra gave the world premiere of his *Two Pictures for Solo Percussionist and Orchestra* featuring John Beck as soloist. This was the first time a percussion solo had ever occurred on a classical series concert since the formation of the orchestra.

**Steve Reich** began his career as a percussionist, and his music is marked by an almost overriding interest in rhythm. He studied philosophy at Cornell before beginning studies in composition, first at Juilliard and then at Mills College in California. It was there, studying with Luciano Berio and Darius Milhaud, that he was introduced to the music of Bali and of Africa. Both of these had a decisive influence on his musical development. In 1971 he traveled to Africa to study drumming with the master drummers of Ghana's Ewe tribe. Reich's first works were almost exclusively for percussion, and in them he used both the rhythmic energy and repetitive patterns he found in African music and the concept of gradual change that marks Balinese music. The result was a music in which repeating rhythmic ideas slowly go out of phase with each other, creating gradual change and increasing complexity. As Reich continued his experiments with rhythm and phases, he began to incorporate other elements (such as melodic motives and harmonic change). Works such as *Music for 18 Musicians* (1976) make use of repeating melodic cells and harmonic progressions that function in the same way as the rhythmic patterns of his earlier works. More recently, he has added the rhythms and inflections of human speech as material for his compositions, especially in *Different Trains* (1988) and *City Life* (1995).

The **Scruncheons** were formed by Don Wherry in 1991, and include the percussion majors from the MUN School of Music, former students of Don Wherry, and other serious percussion enthusiasts. The group performs in a wide variety of venues each year, playing contemporary works for percussion ensemble, including many pieces written by the members of the group. Improvisation, collaboration, and experimentation form the basis for many a Scruncheon performance.

Last year's activities included a west coast tour with workshops and performances at Corner Brook's Grenfell College and at the College of the North Atlantic in Stephenville, a performance with the Avalon East District Band, a memorial concert at the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre, a performance of original percussion ensemble pieces at the School of Music, an outdoor show on George Street, several performances and premieres at the Sound Symposium, and a central role at the Victoria Park Lantern Festival.

In the fall of 2001, the Scruncheons had the privilege of performing at a multimedia event in Corner Brook called *Artspace III*, where they composed a piece (titled *Artspace III*) specifically for that venue (a large abandoned warehouse). That December the group performed *Artspace III.5* in the upper concourse of the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre. Tonight they perform the latest incarnation, *Artspace III.6*.