



# Project Muse Guide – March 2011

SOUTHWEST  
CHAMBER  
MUSIC

## SHALINI VIJAYAN - VIOLIN

This presentation will focus on the music of Wadada Leo Smith performed by Shalini Vijayan

### ABOUT SHALINI VIJAYAN



**Shalini Vijayan, violin**, deemed “a vibrant violinist” by Mark Swed of the Los Angeles Times, is an established performer and collaborator on both coasts. A native of California, Shalini studied in New York as a scholarship student at the Manhattan School of Music where she received her B.M. and M.M. degrees under the tutelage of Ariana Bronne and Lucie Robert. Always an advocate for modern music, Shalini was a founding member and is Principal Second Violin of Kristjan Jarvi’s Absolute Ensemble, having recorded several albums with them including 2001 Grammy nominee, *Absolution*. As a part of Absolute, she has performed throughout the United States and Europe. A member of the New World Symphony in Miami Beach, Florida from 1998-2001, Shalini served as concertmaster for Michael Tilson Thomas, John Adams, Reinbert de Leeuw and Oliver Knussen. She was also concertmaster for the world premiere performances and recording of Steven Mackey’s *Tuck and Roll* for RCA records in 2000. In Los Angeles, Shalini is featured regularly with Grammy Award winning Southwest Chamber Music and can be heard on their *Complete Chamber Works of Carlos Chávez, Vol. 3* and the *Encounters* of William Kraft. She is one half of the duo 61/4, with percussionist Lynn Vartan, with performances throughout California and in Mexico. Shalini is a member of the first violin section of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra and served as Principal Second Violin of the Opera Pacific Orchestra from 2003-2008. She has appeared on over a hundred film scores including *The Incredibles*, *Ratatouille*, *Star Trek*, *Up* and *Avatar* as well as on every season of the television show *Lost*. Shalini has been on the faculty of the Sequoia Chamber Music Workshop in Arcata, California since 2003.

### ABOUT SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC



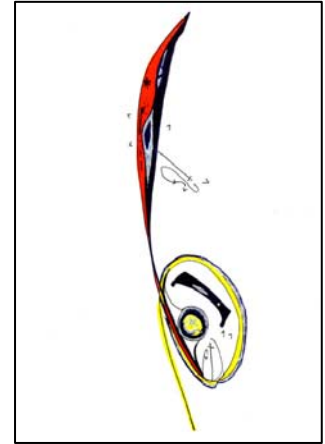
Two-time GRAMMY® Award-winning Southwest Chamber Music has been bringing PROJECT MUSE in-school performances to schools throughout Los Angeles County since 1994 with music that reflects the vast diversity of art music from around the world. We perform throughout the year in venues throughout Los Angeles County, including the Armory Center for the Arts, The Colburn School, and a summer festival at The Huntington Library.

## FEATURED COMPOSER

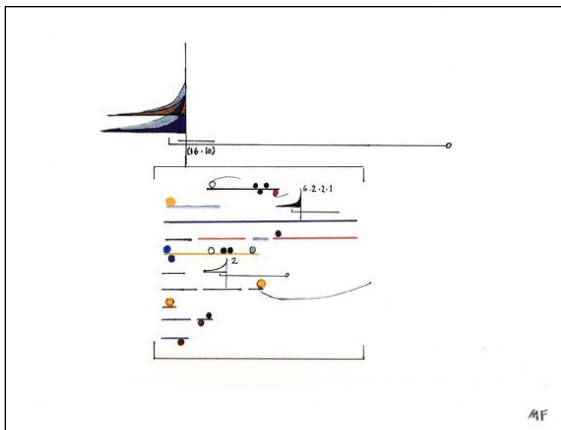


**Wadada Leo Smith** is a jazz composer and trumpet player who grew up in Mississippi, where such legends as B.B. King inspired the young trumpeter. With his notational system of **Ankhrasmation**, he translates the freedom of improvisation into a completely democratic music- Smith's notation is no different for a jazz band, tabla and sitar ensemble or traditional string quartet. This gives his music a bold freedom in the environment of Western classical music.

*"Ankhrasmation music uses no pictures of notes, no designs of notes; it's a symbolic interpretation of what's there. It is a way of making music that has a little bit of both improvisation and composition inside it, but it's an entirely different thing because it's all symbolic." -Wadada Leo Smith*



An example of Ankhrasmation



Wadada Leo Smith developed a type of musical notation that reflected his own artistic expression; which he dubbed Ankhrasmation in 1977. This notational language leaves space for both compositional and improvisational forms; and places all instruments on an equal playing field. On paper, Ankhrasmation uses symbols to create a roadmap for improvisation.

**See the difference in the image to the left.**

How does this compare to traditionally notated music? How would you read this music? Think about your favorite song. What would your musical roadmap look like for that song?

## FEATURED WORK

### *In the Diaspora: Earthquakes & Sunrise Mission*

*In The Diaspora: Earthquakes and Sunrise Mission* is an open form score consisting of four different types of notational material: melodic units, improvisation units, Ankhrasmation units, and glissando forms. The realization of this piece will include examples of all material types, in the following order: melodic unit -- Ankhrasmation unit -- improvisation unit -- Ankhrasmation unit -- glissando forms -- melodic unit.

## **MUSICAL VOCABULARY** (from the California Standards for the Arts, unless noted otherwise)

**DYNAMICS** are various degrees of volume in the performance of music, such as loud and soft.

**EXTENDED TECHNIQUES** are unconventional, unorthodox or “improper” techniques of playing musical instruments, in order to expand and explore the possibilities of different instruments.

**IMPROVISATION** is the spontaneous creation of music.

An **INTERVAL** is the distance in pitch between two tones.

A **MELODY** is an organized sequence of single notes.

The **METER** is the grouping of beats by which a piece of music is measured.

**PONTICELLO** is a string instrument technique where one plays on the bridge of the instrument to achieve a special effect.

**RHYTHM** is the combination of long and short, even and uneven sounds that convey a sense of movement in time.

**SCORDATURA** is an alternate tuning used for the open strings of a string instrument. It is an extended technique used to allow the playing of otherwise impossible melodies, harmonies, figures, chords, or other note combinations.

A **SCORE** is the written form of the entire composition. All players have a part of the score for their instrument, unless they have memorized the notes.

**SOUND PERCEPTION** is how you interpret what you hear and where you hear it.

The **STRING FAMILY** (also called **Chordophones**) is the group of instruments that uses strings to produce sound. The strings are made of gut, steel, or nylon. Stringed instruments can be played with a bow- a long stick that has horsehair attached to it, or they can be played by plucking or strumming the strings with the fingers.

The **TIMBRE** is the tone color or character of sound heard.

The **TONALITY (KEY)** is the tonal center of a composition.

**TREMOLO** is a shaking sound which is achieved by repeating the same note extremely quickly or by playing two notes very quickly, one after the other.

**TUNING** is to adjust a music instrument to the desired frequency or pitch.

### **CONTINUE LEARNING WITH THESE INTERNET RESOURCES:**

*For more information on **Wadada Leo Smith**, visit his website:*

<http://music.calarts.edu/~wls/index.html>

*To learn more about **African Heritage in Classical Music**:*

[www.africlassical.com](http://www.africlassical.com)

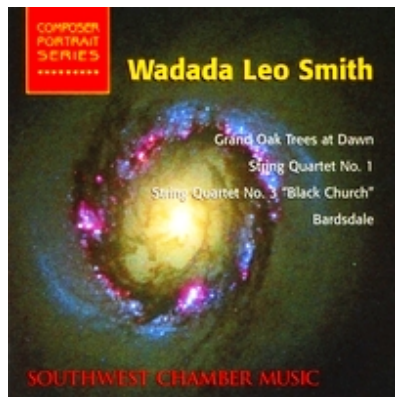
[www.colum.edu/CBMR](http://www.colum.edu/CBMR)

*To try to **create your own composition** at:*

[www.creatingmusic.com](http://www.creatingmusic.com)

*Another excellent interactive website for kids with **information about instruments** is:*

[www.playmusic.org](http://www.playmusic.org)



Look for Southwest Chamber Music's Grammy®-Award  
winning recordings on:

iTunes, [www.classiconline.com](http://www.classiconline.com) &

[www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com)

Check out our recordings of Wadada Leo Smith as part of  
our extensive *Composer Portrait Series*

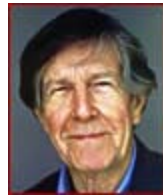
For more information and to access exciting educational videos and podcasts:

1.800.726.7147 or visit our website [www.swmusic.org](http://www.swmusic.org)

And find us on  [www.facebook.com/southwestchambermusic](http://www.facebook.com/southwestchambermusic)

**Come to Our Concerts!**

## **Cage 2012 Festival**



**Colburn School**

200 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, CA 91103

**Saturday, March 26 at 8PM**

**Armory Center for the Arts**

145 N. Raymond Ave., Pasadena, CA 91103

**Friday, April 8 at 8PM**

**Saturday, April 9 at 8PM**

**Sunday, April 10 at 8PM**

Southwest Chamber Music's educational programs are funded in part by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, California Arts Council, The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation, City of Pasadena Cultural Affairs Division, D'Addario Music Foundation, Dept. of Cultural Affairs – City of Los Angeles, Fletcher Jones Foundation, Frieda C. Fox Family Foundation, Henry Family Fund, James Irvine Foundation, Lluella Morey Murphey Foundation, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Metropolitan Associates, National Endowment for the Arts, Pasadena Arts League, Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts, Pasadena Tournament of Roses Foundation, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, and Wells Fargo Foundation.

[www.swmusic.org](http://www.swmusic.org)