

# SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC

## October 2007 *PROJECT MUSE* GUIDE

Lynn Vartan & Shalini Vijayan: Marimba & Violin

The presentation will focus on music for the unique instrument combination of marimba and violin. Compositions by Los Angeles composer and new music icon William Kraft and USC composition professor Steven Gates.

GRAMMY® Award-winner **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. Southwest Chamber Music performs throughout the year at the Armory Center for the Arts, Boston Court, Norton Simon Museum, Colburn School of Performing Arts, and holds a summer festival at The Huntington Library. To find out more about Southwest Chamber Music and our other programs, visit our website at [www.swmusic.org](http://www.swmusic.org).

### PERFORMERS



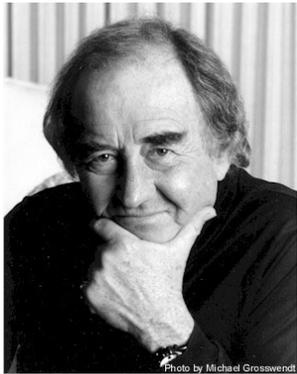
**Lynn Vartan**, percussion, is an active performer and educator who is an advocate for diversity in music. She specializes in new music and commissions new works for percussion. She has been working with Southwest Chamber Music since 2004. Lynn performed with the Tambuco Percussion Ensemble on Southwest Chamber Music's *Complete Chamber Works of Carlos Chavez, Volume 3*, which was nominated as Best Classical Album for the 2005 GRAMMY Awards. She teaches at Citrus College and the Pasadena Conservatory of Music. Lynn has performed with Shalini Vijayan as the marimba and violin duo 61/4.

**Shalini Vijayan**, violinist, is a prominent performer and collaborator in music ranging from the Baroque period to the present. Currently Shalini is a full-time member of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra as well as Principal Second Violin of the Opera Pacific Orchestra. She is also an advocate of modern music and fulfills this role



as Principal Second Violin of the New York based Absolute Ensemble, which she helped found. Since 2003, Shalini has regularly performed with Southwest Chamber Music. She also performs with Lynn Vartan as the marimba and violin duo 61/4.

## **FEATURED COMPOSERS**



**William Kraft (b. 1923)** has had a long and active career as composer, conductor, percussionist, and teacher. He served as chairman of the composition department at UC Santa Barbara. From 1981-85, Mr. Kraft was the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Composer-in-Residence, during which time he founded and directed the orchestra's performing arm for contemporary music, the Philharmonic New Music Group, which continues to this day as the Green Umbrella series. Mr. Kraft had previously been a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic for 26 years; eight years as percussionist, and the last 18 as Principal Timpanist. Mr. Kraft has received numerous awards and commissions and is currently working on *Encounters XV* for Southwest Chamber Music's 2007-2008 Season. He resides in Altadena, California. The piece featured today, *Encounters X*, was written in 1992 and intends for the marimba to "attain a range of expressivity as equal to the violin as possible."

**Steven Gates (b. 1976)** grew up in Northern California, and completed his undergraduate degree in music composition at the University of Denver, Lamont School of Music. He has continued his education at the University of Southern California, where he is working towards his doctoral degree and holds a teaching assistantship in the composition department. Gates has received national recognition for his works, including awards from the Tampa Bay Composers' Forum, Austin Peay State University, and the University of Oregon. He currently resides in Pasadena, California. The piece featured, entitled *Retablo*, was written for Lynn and Shalini.



Come hear Lynn Vartan at Southwest Chamber Music's *Music Unwrapped Family Series* concert **Saturday, December 8 at 11:00 a.m.** at the Luckman Fine Arts Complex-Intimate Theatre, at the Cal State University, Los Angeles.

<http://www.luckmanarts.org/>

## Musical Vocabulary (from the California Standards for the Arts)

- BEAT** unit of measure of rhythmic time.
- CROTALES** sometimes called **antique cymbals**, are [percussion instruments](#) consisting of small, [tuned](#) bronze or brass disks
- DYNAMICS** various degrees of volume in the performance of music, such as loud and soft.
- EXTENDED TECHNIQUE** unconventional, unorthodox or "improper" [techniques](#) of playing [musical instruments](#), in order to expand and explore the possibilities of different instruments.
- HARMONY** the simultaneous combination of tones.
- IMPROVISATION** spontaneous creation of music.
- INTERVAL** the distance in pitch between two tones.
- MALLETS** unwrapped or wrapped mallets, used on [marimba](#), [vibraphone](#) and other instruments with softer keys, have heads of kelon, nylon, acrylic or other medium-hard materials wrapped in softer materials like yarn, cord or latex.
- MARACAS** a musical instrument consisting of two hollow containers, usu. wood, filled with beans or small stones, which are shaken to provide the rhythm
- MELODY** an organized sequence of single notes.
- METER** the grouping of beats by which a piece of music is measured.
- PERCUSSION FAMILY** musical instruments that are played by being struck
- PONTICELLO** playing on the bridge of a string instrument to achieve a special effect
- RHYTHM** 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.
- SCORE** 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** how you interpret what you hear and where you hear it.
- STRING FAMILY** the group of instruments that uses strings to produce sound. The strings are made of gut, steel, or nylon. They are usually played with a **bow** - a long stick that has horsehair attached to it. Usually the bow is drawn across the strings.

This is called bowing. Stringed instruments can also be struck with the bow, or they can be played by plucking or strumming the strings with the fingers.

- TEMPO** the pace at which music moves according to the speed of the underlying beat; fast and slow.
- TIMBRE** tone color or character of sound heard.
- TONALITY (KEY)** the tonal center of a composition.
- TREMOLO** when singing or playing an instrument, 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** to adjust a music instrument to the desired frequency or pitch.



## Links to Follow-up Activities

For more information on Lynn Vartan visit:

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

<http://www.marimba1.com/artists.html>

For more information on Lynn Vartan and Shalini Vijayan: [www.61-4.com](http://www.61-4.com)

For more information on William Kraft and an extensive recordings list go to:

<http://www.presser.com/Composers/info.cfm?Name=WILLIAMKRAFT>

For more information on Mr. Gates see:

<http://www-scf.usc.edu/~stevenga/>

To try to create your own composition visit

<http://www.creatingmusic.com/>

Another excellent interactive website for youth with **information about instruments** is

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

Southwest Chamber Music's educational programs are funded in part by The Ahmanson Foundation, B.C. McCabe Foundation, California Arts Council, The D'Addario Foundation for the Performing Arts, Dwight Stuart Youth Foundation, John F. Merrell Charitable Foundation, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, Lluella Morey Murphey Foundation, Rose Hills Foundation, Weingart Foundation, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.

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