

## The Easy Labors of Labor Day Weekend

New York BargeMusic, Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn

09/02/2010 - & September 3, 4, 5, 2010

### The "Here and Now" Series

BargeMusic is making them work this weekend. Over a dozen chamber players, playing two-and-a-half-hours' worth. Last night, tonight, tomorrow night and Sunday afternoon. A few world premieres, a few rare instruments, and three entirely different genres.

All of this with the background of the East River, Manhattan and the threat of a hurricane which might come roaring in, toppling over the rare 20-string koto, a massive drum set, and the intensity of the musicians involved. More than concert, though, the "Here and Now" series started with a musical mantra, a Zen ritualistic solo slowly coming from behind the concert hall up to the stage, and finishing with some breathy pyrotechnics by **James Nyoraku Schlefer**, the American master of the shakuhachi, the Japanese flute.

Like Japanese restaurant live crab, the shakuhach is an acquired taste. Few "pure" Rampal-Galway notes come through. Rather, one must orient oneself to breaths, whispery notes, almost impossible glissandi, and notes which seem to blend in with the atmosphere, rather than playing against it.

But accustomizing oneself is not difficult, not with **Mr. Schlefer's apparent utter mastery of the instrument**. And it became downright simple with his Third Duo played with master koto-player Yumi Kurosawa. The 20-string koto, sounding like a zither on steroids, was in a playful mood for this amiable piece. It was a conservative work in three attached movements, mischievous, tuneful, with little hints at jazziness, a few semi-exotic melodies., and the kind of music which was both comforting and delightfully composed.

*James Nyoraku Schlefer: Brooklyn Sanya for solo shakuhachi – Duo No. 3 for shakuhachi and 20-string koto*

*Justin Dello Joio: Piano Trio "The March of Folly"*

*Scott Wheeler: Selection from Portraits and Tributes: Crowley Meditation; Cookie Galop with Waltz (World Premiere) – Sketching*

*Iannis Xenakis: Mikka "S"*

*Elizabeth Adams: Blurry Edges, Shiny Middles (Commissioned by BargeMusic–World Premiere)*

*Tom Chiu: BABIP (balls in play)*

*Ben Johnston: Duo for two violins*

*Adam B. Silverman: I love my love with a v*

*Jeff Lederer: Sunwatcher – Balls of Simplicity – Hungarian Rock*

*Yumi Kurosawa (Koto), Tom Chiu, Conrad Harris (Violins), Trio Vela: Asmira Woodward-Page (Violin), Amy Barston (Cello), Olga Vinokur (Piano) – Jeff Lederer's "Sunwatcher" Quartet: Jeff Lederer (Saxophones/Clarinet), Jamie Saft, (Piano), Chris Lightcap (Bass) Allison Miller (Drums)*