



SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC

April 2008 *PROJECT MUSE* GUIDE

John Schneider: The Contemporary Adapted Guitar

The presentation will focus on contemporary music for a specialized set of guitars—the adapted guitars of Harry Partch and the steel-string National Steel Guitar. John Schneider will discuss his personal connections to prominent California composers Lou Harrison and Harry Partch and present the unusual guitars their music requires.

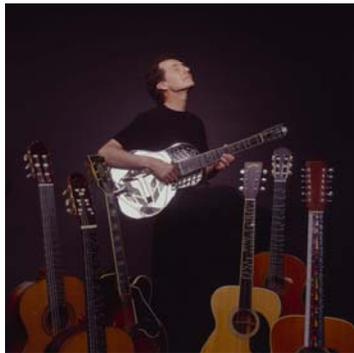
ABOUT SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC

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. We perform throughout the year at the Armory Center for the Arts, Boston Court, Norton Simon Museum, Colburn School of Performing Arts, and 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.

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ABOUT THE FEATURED ARTIST

John Schneider is an internationally recognized guitarist, composer, author and

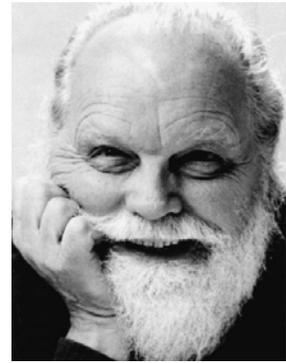


broadcaster whose weekly Thursday morning radio program *Global Village* on local station KPFK brings the sound of *music from around the world and around the block* into thousands of homes. He holds a Ph.D. in Physics & Music from the University of Wales, music degrees from the University of California and the Royal College of Music [London], and is past President of the

Guitar Foundation of America. A specialist in contemporary music, Schneider's *The Contemporary Guitar* (University of California Press) has become the standard text in the field. He is the Director of the ensembles *Just Strings*, *Partch*, and the founding artistic director of *MicroFest*. He has just released a CD, *Lou Harrison – Por Guitaro*, on Mode Records, which features some of the works you'll hear today.

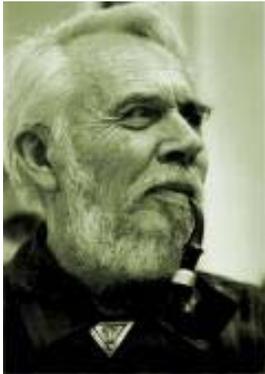
FEATURED COMPOSERS

Lou Harrison (1917-2003) was one of the most innovative American composers, in addition to writing music criticism and poetry, calligraphy and building instruments. Lou traveled extensively throughout Asia, and the influence of world and Eastern music is evident in his compositions, especially his attention to alternate tunings. He also helped to introduce the Indonesian Gamelan to the United States.



Mr. Schneider will perform *Jahla*, the first movement of *the Scenes from Nek Chand*, among other pieces. *Jahla* is a technique from India in which the soloist inserts repeated drone pitches between the notes of a melody.

Harry Partch (1901-1974), born in California, was an iconoclastic composer,



theoretician, an inveterate instrument inventor and proponent of just intonation, a system of tuning unlike the Western 12-tone system that we are all used to hearing. In 1941, while he lived the life of an itinerant hobo, Partch wrote *Barstow*, "a work that takes as its text eight pieces of graffiti he had seen on a highway railing in Barstow, California." The piece, originally for voice and guitar, was transcribed several times throughout his life as his collection of instruments grew. Mr. Schneider will perform this

classic work in the Partch genre, along with two variations of a piece called *The Rose*.

Come hear John Schneider at the next ***Music Unwrapped Family Series*** concert

Saturday, April 12 at 11:00 a.m. at the Luckman Fine Arts Complex-

Intimate Theatre, at the Cal State University, Los Angeles.

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

or Call **1.800.726.7147** or visit our website www.swmusic.org

Southwest Chamber Music's educational programs are funded in part by the B.C. McCabe Foundation, California Arts Council, D'Addario Foundation for the Performing Arts, Dwight Stuart Youth Foundation, Frieda C. Fox Family Foundation, Green Foundation, James Irvine Foundation, Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation, Lluella Morey Murphey Foundation, Pasadena Arts & Culture Commission and the City of Pasadena Cultural Affairs Division, Pasadena Community Foundation, Rose Hills Foundation, Rotary Club of Pasadena, Roth Family Foundation, Supervisor Michael Antonovich, Target Stores, The Capitol Group Companies Charitable Foundation, Weingart Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.

Musical Vocabulary (from the California Standards for the Arts)

An **ADAPTED GUITAR** is a guitar that has had its FINGERBOARDS altered or 'adapted' to provide different scales than the usual Western scale.

A **BEAT** is a unit of measure of rhythmic time.

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

The **FINGERBOARD** (also known as a **FRETBOARD** on fretted instruments) is a thin, long strip of wood that is laminated to the front of the neck of an instrument and above which the strings run. In the playing of such an instrument, a musician presses the strings down towards it in order to change their vibrating lengths, causing changes in pitch. This is called "stopping" the strings.

A **FRET** is one of several ridges set across the fingerboard of a stringed instrument, such as a guitar, which help the fingers to stop the strings at the correct points.

HARMONY is the simultaneous combination of tones.

IMPROVISATION is the spontaneous creation of music.

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

JUST INTONATION is a system of tuning pitches to the simplest (and most beautiful) possible intervals; a system of tuning in which all of the intervals can be represented by ratios of whole numbers, with a strongly-implied preference for the smallest numbers compatible with a given musical purpose.

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

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

PROGRAM or PROGRAMMATIC MUSIC is music which describes a picture or story such as Terry Riley's *Quando Cosas Malas caen del Cielo* or *When Bad Things Fall from the Sky*.

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

A **SOLO** is a part for one instrument.

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** is 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.

The **TEMPO** is the pace at which music moves according to the speed of the underlying beat; fast and slow.

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

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

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

Continue Learning with these Web Links

For more information on **Lou Harrison**, we recommend these links & recordings:

<http://www.archive.org/details/OM8HarrisonScenesfromNikChand>

<http://www.frogpeak.org/fpartists/fpharrison.html>

- **LOU HARRISON: Music for Guitar & Percussion/ Performers:** John Schneider and John Bergamo **Label:** Etcetera [Holland] KTC 1071, 1991
- **Lou Harrison –Por Guitaro/ Performer:** John Schneider **Label:** Mode Records

Harry Partch & his instruments:

<http://www.newband.org/instruments.htm#partch%20instruments>

http://www.corporeal.com/cm_main.html

For more on both **Harrison and Partch**, including **interviews & sound clips**:

- **Just Guitars - Harrison, Partch, Riley, Scholz, Schneider / Performer:** John Schneider **Label:** Bridge Catalog: 9132 CDU Part #: 5880450

<http://musicmavericks.publicradio.org/>

<http://www.otherminds.org>

http://www.artandbuddhism.org/papers/pa_res_co.html

The concept of **Just Intonation** can be explored on

<http://www.justintonation.net/>

http://musicmavericks.publicradio.org/features/essay_justintonation.html

To try to create your own composition visit <http://www.creatingmusic.com/>

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

www.playmusic.org.

For more information:

1.800.726.7147 or visit our website www.swmusic.org

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www.myspace.com/southwestchambermusic or do a search on facebook