

NEXUS

Bob Becker, Bill Cahn, Russell Hartenberger, Garry Kvistad

Mallets & Madness in the 1920s

A program of 'novelty' ragtime music and a pioneering silent film

Presented In Woodstock, New York - May 29, 2010

NEXUS, the Toronto-based percussion quartet - now in its 40th season of solo performances and symphony orchestra appearances worldwide - performed at the Kleinert/James Arts Center on May 29, 2010 for the Woodstock Byrdcliffe Guild in a unique program of popular music from the 1920s composed by **George Hamilton Green**, and a classic 1926 silent movie accompanied by original music composed by *NEXUS* member, **Bill Cahn**.

Music of George Hamilton Green - arranged by Bob Becker and Bill Cahn

This music-only segment spotlighted the xylophone virtuosity of *NEXUS* member **Bob Becker**, whose solo performance in his own arrangements for *NEXUS* dazzled the audience. All of the music on this segment of the program was composed by George Hamilton Green, who in the 1920s was not only a widely popular composer, but also hailed as the world's greatest xylophonist. His many compositions and transcriptions greatly expanded the xylophone's expressive potential. He recorded hundreds of dance tunes - including his own *Dotty Dimples*, *Frivolity*, and *Fluffy Ruffles* - for virtually every major record label in existence prior to 1930. He was also influential in creating a repertoire of concert pieces for solo xylophone, including *Caprice Valsant*. Of particular interest at this *NEXUS* concert was the fact that George Hamilton Green had also been a resident of Woodstock until his death in 1973. His grave site, marked by a plaque of his own design, can be found in the town's artist's cemetery.

A Page of Madness (1926) - a Silent Film by Teinosuke Kinugasa with music by Bill Cahn

Kinugasa's milestone film, with its sympathetic story of mental illness featured a live musical accompaniment composed by *NEXUS* member, **Bill Cahn**. The hour-long score was performed by *NEXUS*, and in accordance with the requirements of silent film, the musical accompaniment added to the emotional impact of the story. This challenging avant-garde movie not only employed aspects of the classical Japanese arts, but it also utilized pioneering film techniques - stylized images, flashback scenes, double-images and rapid cuts between scenes. The musical accompaniment composed by **Bill Cahn** is centered around percussion instruments (as envisioned by Kinugasa). As in the classical Japanese arts (Gagaku, Kabuki, Haiku) there is a deliberate sense of ambiguity. The mysterious atmosphere of the percussion music enhanced this sense as the story unfolded on the screen.

"In matters of color, nuance and dynamic range, **Nexus offers a stunning virtuoso spectacle**. Even more astonishing is the depth of musicianship and superiority of ensemble these virtuosos brought to bear." - *San Francisco Chronicle*

For More Information, contact: *NEXUS*

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