

## **Sketch Book (2007)**

**Gernot Wolfgang**

"*Sketch Book* is a collection of three short programmatic pieces, *Green Island*, *Night Breeze*, and *Chromatic Train*. The fourteen-minute composition was commissioned in 2007 by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University.

*Green Island* is dedicated to the memory of jazz saxophone great Michael Brecker, who passed away in 2007. Also present in this upbeat movement are memories of two long-ago trips to Ireland, a country that left a deep impression on me. The musical references to this are not that obvious, but can be detected in the main theme at the beginning and the end.

The inspiration for *Night Breeze* was the visualization of a moonlit front porch somewhere in the rural Southern United States. A slight, warm breeze is rustling in the trees, accompanying the dialogue of the violin and the clarinet. At one point it stops...and gently picks up again.

A train pulled by a steam engine was on my mind while composing *Chromatic Train*. It is first encountered leaving the station, slowly chugging along. We then get to listen in on an animated conversation between two passengers (violin and clarinet). The harmony in this section is expanded to include all twelve notes of the chromatic scale. After an interlude, in which the theme reoccurs in a different context, the train speeds up and is finally on its way."

—Gernot Wolfgang

The world premiere of *Sketch Book* was on February 20, 2008 at the Austrian Cultural Forum, Austrian Embassy, Washington, D.C.

Gernot Wolfgang (born 1957, Gastein, Austria) is a graduate of the program "Scoring for Motion Pictures and TV" at the University of Southern California and holds degrees from Berklee College of Music in Boston and the University of Music in Graz, Austria.

He has been commissioned by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, Jazz Festival of the European Broadcasting Union, the Festival International Cervantino (Mexico), the Debussy Trio, Martha's Vineyard Chamber Music Society, Cal State Northridge, Oesterreichische Kammer-symphoniker (Austria), Jazz Bigband (Austria), and three Los Angeles-based chamber music series: Chamber Music Palisades, Pacific Serenades, and South Bay Chamber Music Society. Solo commissions have come from Los Angeles Philharmonic principals Michele Zukovsky (clarinet), Joanne Pearce Martin (keyboard), David Breidenthal (bassoon), and from Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra musicians Gary Gray (clarinet) and Susan Greenberg (flute).

Wolfgang's works have been presented by the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Las Vegas Philharmonic, the Kyushu Symphony Orchestra (Japan), the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (Australia), the Muenchner Rundfunkorchester (Germany), and the Symphonieorchester Vorarlberg (Austria). They have been performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the National Gallery, the Prinzregententheatre (Germany), and the Konzerthaus and the Musikverein (Austria). Festival performances include the New York Chamber Music Festival, the Wiener Festwochen and Wien Modern (Austria), and the Festival Internacional Cervantino (Mexico). His jazz compositions and arrangements have been produced for television and radio in numerous European countries.

Wolfgang works as an orchestrator in the film and television music industry. He has written original music for the animated television series *Zorro* and the motion picture *The Process*. He has arranged music for the soundtrack album of the motion picture *Rounders* and assisted composer Christopher Young on the scores for *The Hurricane*, *Entrapment*, *Playing by Heart*, *Urban Legend*, and *Judas Kiss*.

Awards include the BMI Scholarship for Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television and numerous composition grants from the Austrian Ministry of Education and the Arts. Other awards have come from the Austrian Ministry for Science and Research, Austro Mechana, Berklee College of Music, *Billboard Magazine*, the Fulbright Commission, and the State of Tyrol, Austria.

From 1990–1993, Wolfgang was a lecturer for jazz composition and harmony at the University of Music in Graz, Austria. He has been a guest lecturer and held masterclasses at UCLA, Texas Tech University, the University of Music in Vienna, and the festival Instrumenta Verano in Oaxaca, Mexico. As a guitarist with the Austrian jazz ensemble, The QuARTet, he has played concert tours in Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Poland, and Turkey.

Wolfgang is currently Associate Artistic Director of HEAR NOW—A Festival of New Music by Contemporary Los Angeles Composers. His music is available from Doblinger and Fatrock Ink Music Publishers and can be heard on Polygram, Universal, Koch, Navona, Crystal Records, Yarlung, Capstone, Centaur, and Extraplatte labels.

Additional information is available at [www.gernotwolfgang.com](http://www.gernotwolfgang.com).