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4-4-2011

### Percussion Ensemble Concert with Guest Artist Bob Becker, Spring 2011

The Percussion Ensemble

Ryan C. Lewis

*Ouachita Baptist University*, lewisr@obu.edu

Bob Becker

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#### Recommended Citation

The Percussion Ensemble; Lewis, Ryan C.; and Becker, Bob, "Percussion Ensemble Concert with Guest Artist Bob Becker, Spring 2011" (2011). *Student Concert Performances, Programs, and Posters*. 33. <https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/music/33>

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**Bob Becker** was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and holds the degrees Bachelor of Music with Distinction and Master of Music (Performance and Literature) from the Eastman School of Music where he studied percussion with William G. Street and John H. Beck, and composition with Warren Benson and Aldo Provenzano. As an undergraduate, he was also awarded the school's prestigious Performer's Certificate for his concerto performance with the Rochester Philharmonic. Becker later spent four years doing post-graduate study in the World Music program at Wesleyan University where he became intensely involved with the music cultures of North and South India, Africa, and Indonesia.

Becker's performing experience spans nearly all of the musical disciplines where percussion is found. He has been percussionist for the Marlboro Music Festival, timpanist with the Marlboro Festival Orchestra under Pablo Casals, and performed and toured as timpanist with the Kirov Ballet and the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. For several years, Becker toured as drummer and percussionist with the Paul Winter Consort and has performed and recorded with such diverse groups as the Ensemble Intercontemporaine under Pierre Boulez, the Ensemble Modern of Germany, the Schoenberg Ensemble of Amsterdam, and the Boston Chamber Players. Becker has been a regular member of the ensemble Steve Reich and Musicians since 1973, and with this group he has appeared as soloist and featured performer in all of Reich's percussion music. In 1998, the ensemble won a Grammy award for its recording of Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians*.

Becker co-founded the percussion group NEXUS ([www.nexuspercussion.com](http://www.nexuspercussion.com)), which gave its first performances in 1971 and continues to perform around the world. The ensemble has toured extensively throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, performing in chamber music venues as well as with symphony orchestras, and has recorded over twenty-five CDs. With NEXUS, Becker has appeared as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, among many others, and has received the Toronto Arts Award and the Banff Centre for the Arts National Award. In 1999, he and the other members of NEXUS were inducted into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame.

Generally considered to be one of the world's premier virtuoso performers on the xylophone and marimba, Becker's work toward resurrecting the repertoire and performance styles of early twentieth-century xylophone music has been recognized internationally. He has appeared as xylophone soloist with orchestras and concert bands throughout the United States, and, since 2000, has directed an annual ragtime xylophone seminar at the University of Delaware, which has attracted an international student body. In 1998, he was concertmaster, marimba soloist, and xylophone soloist with the 164-member Musser Festival Marimba Orchestra, conducted by Frederick Fennell. In 2005, he was again concertmaster and soloist with the Clair Musser World's Fair Marimba Orchestra at Northwestern University.

Since 1988 he has been associated with the Mallettech Company, where he helped design the Bob Becker Concert Xylophone as well as a successful line of signature xylophone mallets now used by percussionists around the world. As an endorser for the Pearl percussion and Sabian cymbal companies, he has helped design special instruments for applications in symphonic and contemporary chamber contexts. Becker's compositions and arrangements are published by Keyboard Percussion Publications and are performed regularly by percussion groups world-wide. His most recent works include *There is a Time*, commissioned by Rina Singha and the Danny Grossman Dance Company, *Noodrem*, commissioned through the Canada Council by the Dutch ensemble Slagwerkgroep Den Haag, *Turning Point*, composed for the NEXUS ensemble, *Cryin' Time*, a setting of poetry by the Canadian artist Sandra Meigs, *Never in Word and Time in the Rock*, settings of poetry by the American author Conrad Aiken, and *Music On The Moon*, commissioned through the Laidlaw Foundation by the Esprit Orchestra in Toronto.

**For more information about percussion events and studies at Ouachita Baptist University contact:**

**Dr. Ryan Lewis**

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**[www.obu.edu/percussion](http://www.obu.edu/percussion)**



## Ouachita Baptist University Percussion Ensemble

Featuring Guest Artist Bob Becker

Dr. Ryan Lewis, Director

Monday, April 4, 2011 - 7:30pm

W. Francis McBeth Recital Hall

Mabee Fine Arts Building

## The OBU Percussion Ensemble

The OBU Percussion Ensemble consists of percussion students who perform a wide variety of music composed expressly for percussion.

The group presents several concerts each year, including Fall and Spring Semester concerts, as well as special event appearances.

Repertoire selections range from chamber works for trios and quartets to works using large forces of personnel and instruments.

The OBU Percussion Ensemble frequently has the opportunity to perform with visiting guest percussionists hosted by the Division of Music. Recent guest artists include Mika Yoshida, Linda Maxey, and Scott Herring.

## Program

*Away without Leave*

Bob Becker

Free Improvisation

*Mudra*

Bob Becker

– *Brief Intermission* –

*Dotty Dimples*

G. H. Green  
Arr. Becker

*Alabama Moon*

G. H. Green  
Arr. Becker

*Valse Brillante*

G. H. Green  
Arr. Becker

*Whispering Medley*

Arr. Bob Becker

*States Medley*

Arr. Bob Becker

## Percussion Ensemble Personnel

Brian Fowler  
*Hot Springs, Arkansas*

Trey Gosser  
*North Little Rock, Arkansas*

John Hewitt  
*Mesquite, Texas*

Josh Lee  
*Hot Springs, Arkansas*

John Sanders  
*Hot Springs, Arkansas*

Kyle Walker  
*Benton, Arkansas*