

# New Music concert has innovation, risk

By Bill Stuelke  
The Daily Iowan

**T**he lights dimmed, further and further, but no musicians came out on stage to perform.

Instead, two massive speakers dramatically lit from below casting ominous shadows on the sound shell gave the first performance. The audience at the Center for New Music's concert Saturday in Clapp Recital Hall was treated to many works utilizing live musicians, studio works on tape and/or both.

"(Speakers)" by UI graduate student Robert Paredes began the evening's fare. The piece was concerned with "processes and qualities of distance, transformation, dialogue, observation, interaction, expression and place," commented Paredes. The piece executed these concerns excellently. It combined the dimensions of sonic height, width and depth with the time frame that music lives in. It had many references, through different media, to what people would call conventional music. For example, daggers of sound mingled amongst throaty, distorted clarinet sounds, and together they traversed the textural scales. The music was often conversationlike as well — phrases commenting on phrases with ranges of emotion. "(Speakers)" was truly the most captivating piece of the evening — an exquisite work.

Another notable piece by a UI graduate student was Rico Berry's "Kafka on Parade." The piece was wonderfully surrealistic. It combined poetic imagery with sound imagery in a sensually and intellectually successful way. Phrases such as "I'm a giant oscillating cantaloupe" could be discerned

among the array of sound. A particularly interesting and humorous section was one in which the phrase "edaraP no akfaK" (Kafka on Parade backwards) could be heard juxtaposed to the music of "Baby Face." In other sections, the use of repetition that unavoidably led to numbness was an insightful comment on society.

What seemed to be the favorite piece of the audience in general was Jacob Druckman's "Animus 1," written in 1966. Druckman is a composer who studied with Mennin at Juilliard, and Copland at Tanglewood. "Animus 1" is a theater piece written for trombone and tape. It is concerned with the relationship between tape and the live musician. Tape, man's own invention, out-competes the player in a musical "contest." The player leaves the stage in disgust while the tape takes over the performance. Soon, the tape cannot function well without the player, and he returns to finish the piece in a thin balance with the tape. The audience enjoyed the piece because of the theatrical entertainment quality. Unfortunately, the piece dwells too long on sounds and actions that ultimately have only one significant interpretation.

Overall, the Center for New Music's concert was one of high quality — both in composers and works. Hopefully more people will discover the satisfaction that can be gained from listening to this music. The next Center for New Music concert will be Sunday, December 11 at 8 p.m. in Clapp Recital Hall. A more immediate performance of new works can be heard at the New Compositions concert (not affiliated with the center) on Saturday, October 22 at 8 p.m. in Clapp Recital Hall.