

Conference on American Society of University Composers; Bernard Rands is director

February 16, 1979

Composers throughout history have risked popular support to create new sounds and rhythms which often become the traditional music of later generations.

"Most of the composers whose names and works have survived were pioneers," says Bernard Rands, chairman of the University of California, San Diego music department.

Rands, a respected composer and conductor of new music, is director of the 14th annual conference of the American Society of University Composers, scheduled Feb. 28 through March 4 at UC San Diego.

Participants in the conference will include Larry Austin, Ben Johnston, Aurelio de la Vega, Charles Wuorinen and David Ward-Steinman. Former UC San Diego Visiting Professor Edwin London will attend, and James Roy, a BMI (Broadcast Music, Inc.) official will be a featured speaker.

Lectures and discussions are scheduled in the mornings and early afternoons, and performances by UC San Diego and San Diego State University musicians will be offered in the afternoons and evenings. All events will take place in the Mandeville Center and admission is free. The conference is open to the public.

The programs will give the public a chance to learn about contemporary music and to hear the music performed, Rands said. Much of the music which will be performed was written in the last two or three years, he added.

Rands acknowledged that public support of the contemporary composer is minimal. The music often sounds strange to the unaccustomed listener, who may be shocked at the electronic sounds and other new techniques used by modern composers.

The whole sound world is no longer tied to the restraints of former times, which makes it difficult for listeners," Rands said. "There has been in the past a grand unity of style, but that is no longer true. However, as the smoke clears, we see patterns in contemporary music which are more homogeneous than one might have thought.

"A housewife wouldn't cook on 19th century appliances or build a fire in the middle of the floor. The effects of technology on music cannot be denied. The trouble is, music is simply a trivial hobby to most people.

"It takes concentration and attention, and even then, the listener may not like the music," he said. "But if music of quality is played and presented in a quality manner, people are more willing to give time to it."

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TO THE EDITORS: All lectures and performances are open to the-press. Filming or recording of the musicians will be allowed during rehearsals. Complete schedules are available in the UC San Diego music department office, but we have selected some events which you may be interested in covering or reviewing.

Feb. 28 - 8 p.m. Mandeville Auditorium. Concert by SONOR, the UC San Diego contemporary music ensemble; E.V.T.E., the Extended Vocal Techniques Ensemble at UC San Diego, and assorted guest artists.

March 1 - 8 p.m. Mandeville Auditorium. Concert by SONOR, the UCSD Concert Choir and Chamber Singers.

March 2 - 9 a.m. Recital Hall, Mandeville Center. Sessions through 12:30 p.m. on electronic music. 8 p.m. Mandeville Auditorium. Concert by SONOR and the San Diego State University Brass Quintet.

March 3 - 10:15 a.m. Recital Hall, Mandeville Center. Panel discussion on "The Relationship Between the Contemporary Composer and Music Reviewers." 11:30 a.m. Recital Hall, Mandeville Center. Panel discussion on "The Influence of Patterns of Arts Funding on the Composer of the Seventies." 2 p.m. Mandeville Auditorium. Music by Harry Partch, Cris Forster and Paul William Simons will be played on instruments designed by Partch. Good photo possibilities. 8 p.m. Mandeville Auditorium. Concert by UCSD Graduate Student Ensemble, SDSU Brass Quintet and SONOR.

March 4 - 2:15 p.m. Center for Music Experiment, Building 408, Warren campus. Program of electronic music.