

PAUL DRESHER **Biography**

Paul Dresher is a composer who is internationally noted for his ability to integrate diverse musical influences into his own coherent and unique personal style. He pursues many forms of musical expression including experimental opera and music theater, chamber and orchestral composition, live instrumental electro-acoustic music performances, musical instrument invention, and scores for theater, dance, and film.

He has received commissions from the Library of Congress, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Spoleto Festival USA, the Kronos Quartet, the San Francisco Symphony, California EAR Unit, Zeitgeist, Walker Arts Center, University of Iowa, Meet the Composer, Seattle Chamber Players, Present Music, National Flute Association, and the American Music Theater Festival. He has performed or had his works performed throughout North America, Asia, and Europe at venues including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Munich State Opera, the Festival d'Automne in Paris, the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, the Minnesota Opera, Arts Summit Indonesia '95, and Festival Interlink in Japan.

As part of his Guggenheim Fellowship for 2006-2007 and with the support of Meet the Composer, Dresher is creating an evening-length solo music theater work for percussionist Steven Schick using large-scale invented musical instruments. Dresher has also been commissioned to compose the score for the Berkeley Repertory Theater's production of *To The Lighthouse*, adapted by Adele Shank from the Virginia Woolf novel and directed by Les Waters. This work, for string quartet and voices, will premiere in February of 2007.

Dresher's most recent successes include the Cleveland Opera's premiere (in May 2006) of the final version of the critically-acclaimed solo chamber opera *The Tyrant*, featuring tenor John Duykers. This work, first presented in Seattle in 2005 has already had productions in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Milwaukee, Santa Rosa and San Francisco, all to great critical acclaim. Also in May of 2006, the Dresher Ensemble performed the premiere of his score for *A Slipping Glimpse*, the new evening-length collaboration with the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company involving dancers from both the USA and India. This work will be touring the US and India in future seasons.

In November 2004, his contemporary chamber group, the six-member Paul Dresher Ensemble Electro-Acoustic Band, made its Carnegie Hall debut, performing a concert of Dresher's chamber works as part of the "In Your Ear Festival" curated by John Adams, in conjunction with the New Albion release of Dresher's CD *Cage Machine*. In March of 2005 the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra premiered Dresher's *Still, Rise, Fall, Again*, a commission from the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation.

Other recently completed composing projects include *Snow in June*, a collaboration with playwright Charles Mee and director Chen Shi-Zheng, commissioned by the American Repertory Theatre; and a collaboration with former Kronos Quartet cellist Joan Jeanrenaud on his cello concerto *Unequal Distemperament*. In 2001 Dresher built and composed *Sound Stage*, a music theater work performed on a set comprised entirely of very large-scale invented musical instruments. *Sound Stage* was commissioned and performed with the new music ensemble *Zeitgeist* (with support from the Walker Art Center) and was directed by Rinde Eckert. Dresher has also worked extensively with many choreographers including Margaret Jenkins, Brenda Way/ODC San Francisco, Nancy Karp & Dancers, Wendy Rogers Dance Company, and Allyson Green Dance.

Born in Los Angeles in 1951, Dresher received his BA in Music from UC Berkeley and his MA in Composition from UC San Diego where he studied with Robert Erickson, Roger Reynolds, Pauline Oliveros and Bernard Rands. He has had a longtime interest in the music of Asia and Africa, studying Ghanaian drumming with C.K. and Kobla Ladzekpo, Hindustani classical music with Nikhil Banerjee as well as Balinese and Javanese music. Recordings of his works are available on the Lovely Music, New World (with Ned Rothenberg), CRI, Music and Arts, 0.0. Discs, BMG/Catalyst, MinMax, Starkland, and New Albion labels.