BETH CUSTER Résumé

# **Career Summary**

Composer for the concert stage, film, dance, theatre, installations and television. Recording artist, performer, bandleader, clarinet and composition professor, record label owner.

# **Recent Commissions**

**Left Coast Chamber Ensemble** Three commissions: *Bernal Heights Suite* (2006) premiered in the San Francisco Veterans War Memorial Green Room; *Scary Monster String Trio* (2004); Vinculum Symphony (1999) for chamber orchestra and experimental instrument builders, both premiered at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

**Octavio Solis** Three collaborations: *Lethe* musical for Cornerstone Theatre and several elder care facilities, premiered at University of San Francisco (2006); *Terracoma*, an operetta for Overtone Industries premiered at Not a Cornfield in Los Angeles (2006); *The Ballad Of Pancho And Lucy* musical for Campo Santo Theatre premiered at Intersection for the Arts, San Francisco (2005).

Whisper I Commissioned by Science Museum of Minnesota for a traveling national exhibit of composers and birdsong (2006-2013).

*My Grandmother* Silent film score for 1929 Soviet Georgian comedy, commissioned by UC Berkeley's Pacific Film Archive, premiered at The Castro Theatre, San Francisco and Merkin Hall, New York (2002-2005).

**Joe Goode Performance Group** Music composition and musical director for seven dance/theatre productions including *The Maverick Strain*, *Folk*, *Hometown* premiered at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (1990-2005).

*Trip Down Market Street 1905/2005* Live scores for two films by Jack Kuttner and Melinda Stone, for The Exploratorium's centennial celebration of San Francisco, premiered at the Embarcadero Center (2005).

*Periferie* Live soundtrack collaboration with Czech Metamorphosis ensemble for a Martin Blazicek film in homage to Czech filmmaker Alexandr Hackenschmied, premiered in Prague (2004).

Cathy Lee Crane Cameo role and soundtrack for the film *Unoccupied Zone*, premiered at Cornell Cinema, Ithaca NY (2004); soundtracks for *Not For Nuthin'*, *White City*, *Sketches After Halle* for ZDF German TV; (1999-2004)

**Zeitgeist** Contemporary chamber ensemble commission of *Vinculum Symphony Twin Cities* (2002) with ten experimental instrument builders; *All Fall Ends Flight* for mixed chamber group (1995); both premiered at the Southern Theatre, Minneapolis.

**Kronos Quartet** Arrangement of Raymond Scott's *The Penguin*, premiered at Stanford University (1999). **Trimpin** Commissioned for and performed with MacArthur Fellow's inventions including *Toy Piano* installation (2000) premiered at Orange County museum; *Phhhhhht!* (1996) premiered at New Langton Arts; *Music for Extended Winds*, premiered at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts first Other Minds festival (1993).

<u>Other Commissions</u> City Winds, Earplay, CBS, KQED, filmmakers Betsy Bahya, Silt, Kwan & Iger, Craig Baldwin, Will Zavala, Esther Paik; dance companies Osseous Labyrinth, Roco Dance, Knee Jerk; theatre productions of Berkeley and San Diego Repertory Theatres, Magic Theatre, California Shakespeare Company.

### **Recent Awards**

**San Francisco Arts Commission** Individual Artists grants for *Mission: Peace*, solo clarinet performances in California's Mission churches (2006-2007); *My Grandmother* DVD release event (2004).

**Argosy Foundation, Zellerbach Family Fund, American Composers Forum** awards for concerts and recording of *Bernal Heights Suite* with Left Coast Chamber Ensemble (2004-06).

**Meet The Composer New Residency** grant, composer in residence at The Lab, San Francisco in collaboration with Joe Goode, TILT, and Left Coast. Composed and performed extensively, held composing and music business workshops, curated three music series, and produced a CD of the Lab's archival recordings, (2002-2005)

Gerbode Foundation award for Campo Santo musical comedy with writer/director Octavio Solis, (2004).

**CEC Artslink** award for live film score collaboration with Metamorphosis ensemble in Prague (2004). **Aaron Copland Recording Fund** award for *My Grandmother* recording produced by Hans Wendl, (2003).

McKnight Fellowship for Vinculum Symphony Twin Cities commission with Zeitgeist, (2002).

Meet The Composer Commissioning and Ford Foundation Presenting grants and a Phyllis Wattis Residency for *Vinculum Symphony* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (1999).

#### **Ensembles**

**The Beth Custer Ensemble** Founded in 2001, performs silent films scores, songs and instrumentals in festivals and national venues such as Castro Theatre, Cornell Cinema, Baltimore Film Festival, and Merkin Hall.

**Doña Luz 30 Besos** Rock-n-Español influenced ensemble, performed nationally at Yoshi's, Tonic, Knitting Factory, 1998-2001

**Eighty Mile Beach** Trip hop recording duo founded with DJ Christian Jones in 1994 performed in LA, San Francisco, and New York venues, currently recording a new release for OM Records.

**Trance Mission** Fourth world trance dance music co-founded with didgeridoo player Stephen Kent, performed at international festivals including Vienna, Hamburg, and Berlin world music festivals, 1992-1998.

**Clarinet Thing** Founded in 1990, a quartet of Bay Area clarinetist/composers that performs jazz arrangements and originals in Bay Area venues such as Yoshi's, St. John's Church, and Noe Valley Ministry.

**The Club Foot Orchestra**, first U.S. ensemble to perform original scores to silent classic silent films in international venues including World Financial Center Atrium, New Music America, Symphony Space, Walter Reade, Nuart and Castro Theatres, 1983-present.

#### **Freelance**

Fred Frith, Miya Masaoka, J.A. Deane, William Cepeda, Jin Hi Kim, Will Bernard, Gina Leishman, Grassy Knoll Violent Femmes, Penelope Houston, Snakefinger, Sky Cries Mary, Berkeley and many others.

# Selected Discography

Left Coast Chamber Ensemble/Beth Custer Bernal Heights Suite (BC 9); Vinculum Symphony Live (BC 1) Beth Custer Ensemble Live soundtracks for A Trip Down Market Street 1905/2005 DVD (Exploratorium); N Grandmother DVD (BC 8); Respect as a Religion CD (BC 7)

Clarinet Thing Agony Pipes & Misery Sticks (BC 6)

Beth Custer /The Joe Goode Performance Group The Maverick Strain & Other Stories (BC 4)

Dona Luz 30 Besos (City of Tribes)

**Beth Custer** Digital Empire DJ Girl compilation (KTEL); In The Broken Fields Where I Lie (BC 2); The I Slept In (BC 1)

**Eighty Mile Beach** *Inclement Weather, Arboleda de Manzanitas; There Are No Right Angles Found In Nature* (OM Records)

Trance Mission A Day Out of Time; Head Light; Meanwhile...; Trance Mission (City Of Tribes)

Club Foot Orchestra Live soundtracks for Buster Keaton's Sherlock Jr.; Metropolis (Heyday) Nosferatu;
The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (CFO) Kidnapped/Wild Beasts CD (Rastascan)

### **Teaching**

UC Berkeley; Professor of composition, Youth Music Program, 2006.

**Mills College**, Oakland; Adjunct professor of composition, 2005-present; substitute professor for classes of Fred Frith, Anthony Braxton, 1995-present.

Clarinet Monster, Bay Area; Annual clarinet ensemble workshops, 1990-present.

Private clarinet lessons, 1976-present.

#### **Education**

Masters, Clarinet Performance, San Francisco State University, 1984-1985

Professors: Herb Bielawa, Don Carroll, Eric Moe, Wayne Peterson, Lazlo Varga

Masters Program, Michigan State University, 1980

Clarinet Professor: Else Ludwig-Verdehr

Bachelors, Musical Studies, Clarinet Performance Certificate, 1976-1980

Crane School of Music, State University of New York, Potsdam

Professors: Brock McEleheran, Richard Stephans, Robert Washburn

### **Personal Information**

Born February 25, 1958, South Bend, Indiana; raised in western New York, have lived in San Francisco for 25 years.