

PROGRAM NOTES

# ANTHONY DAVIS

January 16, 1981 8:30pm

MUSIC FROM THE WAYANG SERIES

ANTHONY DAVIS' compositions will be performed by the ensemble EPISTEME, whose members are:

Pheeroan AkLaff : Percussion  
Dwight Andrews : Flute, piccolo, clarinet, bass clarinet  
John Clark : Horn  
Terry King : Violin  
Rick Rozie : Bass  
Warren Smith : Vibraphone, marimba  
Abdul Wadud : Cello

The program will include:

Wayang No. 4 (Under the Double Moon)  
Wayang No. 2 (Shadowdance)

Intermission

Lady of the Mirrors

The Enemy of Light

1. Drones and Clones
2. The Enemy of Light (Romantic Interlude)
3. Reprieve

A Walk Through The Shadow (for Martin Luther King)

Each composition on this concert concerns itself with varying forms of repetition. The repetition can be a mixture of metric and non-metric motives as in Wayang No. 4 or Drones and Clones, strictly metric as in Wayang No. 2, textural as in Lady of the Mirrors, or a harmonic drone as in the Enemy Of Light or A Walk Through The Shadow.

WAYANG No. 4 (Under the Double Moon) 1978

The essential outline of this piece was written in 1978 and has been elaborated and refined up to the present date. This composition, written for a septet of woodwinds, horn, violin, cello, vibes and marimba, piano and drums, creates a dense rhythmic texture using metric and nonmetric repetition. The piece begins with a slow chordal figure and gathers momentum as the texture becomes more dense and rhythmically involved. Over a recurring 6/8 figure in the piano are juxtaposed contrasting rhythmic textures. Some, like the marimba-flute and violin-cello rhythm use a shifting metric system. The piece also employs a recurring vamp in 7/4 which is later explored thematically in the improvisation, and a sharply defined melody, which, although is no particular meter, has a strong rhythmic momentum behind it. In the improvisation the rhythmic motives of the piece are explored further.

The rhythmic melody is played by the violin and parodied by the marimba, and later played by the cello and bass clarinet and again distorted by the improvisor. The improvisation functions as a narrow thread linking predetermined textures. The textures have been thematically developed from earlier sections of the piece.

WAYANG No. 2 (Shadowdance) 1977 is written for a quartet of vibraphone, violin, cello and piano. It employs short contrasting motives which are developed freely by the improvisor. Each motif in the piece implies a contrasting texture.

THE ENEMY OF LIGHT (1980) is a suite in three movements. The first movement "Drones and Clones" involves a systematic exploration of rhythmic repetition. The piece begins with a simple motif in 4/4, then adds additional counter rhythms through ten distinct steps until the initial motif is abandoned. Before a recapitulation, the piece utilizes a slow canon for violin, clarinet, horn, and cello, which is a thematic variation of the final motif.

The second movement begins with a variation of the third step in Drones and Clones. It moves to a melodic section over a piano drone, then moves away from the drone into a piano solo. The piece works its way into a less defined tonal area. The third movement, "Reprieve", brings in Step No. 4, a bass vamp in 11/8 from Drones and Clones. A new melody is played over the vamp leading into a violin solo. Some earlier material from "Step VIII" in Drones and Clones is played at the end of the violin solo leading into a collective improvisation. "Step III" of Drones and Clones is repeated over the "Step IV" bass vamp to end the piece.

A WALK THROUGH THE SHADOW (1980) is inspired by the Twenty-Third Psalm and is written for Martin Luther King. It begins with a piano solo over a slow harmonic drone. An alternating system of harmonic tension and release is used in the drone. This continues throughout the piece and is played by the ensemble under a bass clarinet solo. The piece ends with a melodic statement by the clarinet, cello, and violin under a horn solo.