



**WILLIAM O. SMITH,
THE LEGEND**

**GUEST ARTIST SERIES
ORGAN HALL
APRIL 14, 2017 • 7:30 PM**

MUSIC

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Bill Smith—also known as a “classical” composer under his full name, William O. [Overton] Smith—grew up in Oakland, California, and began playing clarinet when he was ten. He put together a jazz group to play for dances at 13, and at the age of 15 he joined the Oakland Symphony. He idolized Benny Goodman, but after high school, a brief cross-country tour with a dance band ended his romance for the life of a traveling jazz musician. He gave two weeks’ notice when the band reached Washington, D.C., and, encouraged by an older band member to “get the best education you can get,” headed to New York.

He began his formal music studies at the Juilliard School of Music, playing in New York jazz clubs like Kelly’s Stable at night. Uninspired by the Juilliard faculty, he returned to California upon hearing and admiring the music of Darius Milhaud, who was then teaching at Mills College in Oakland. At Mills, he met pianist Dave Brubeck, with whom he has played ever since, in both the famous Dave Brubeck Octet and The Dave Brubeck Quartet, as well as other groups. In 1947, he composed Schizophrenic Scherzo for the Brubeck Octet, one of the earliest works that successfully integrated jazz and classical techniques, a style that later was given the name “third stream” by Gunther Schuller (Mitchell 2001). He studied composition with Roger Sessions at the University of California, Berkeley, where he was graduated with a bachelor’s and a master’s degree.

Winning the Prix de Paris presented Smith the opportunity for two years of study at the Paris Conservatory, and in 1957, he was awarded the prestigious Prix de Rome and spent six years in that city. He has since received numerous other awards, including two Guggenheim grants (Monaghan 1996).

Smith has investigated and cataloged a wide range of extended techniques on the clarinet, including the use of two clarinets simultaneously by a single performer, inspired by images of the ancient aulos encountered during a trip to Greece (Monaghan 1996), numerous multiphonics, playing the instrument with a cork in the bell, and the “clar-flute,” a technique that involves removing the instrument’s mouthpiece and playing it as an end-blown flute.

Program – All compositions by William O. Smith

GREETINGS for clarinet and clarinet ensemble

ENCHANTMENT for clarinet and voices

EMERALD CITY RAG for 2 clarinets and bass clarinet
Patrick Englert, Jack Liang, Jeremy Ruth, clarinets and bass clarinet

EPIGRAMS

Robert Spring, clarinet

Intermission

MUSING for 3 clarinets
Patrick Englert, Jack Liang, Jeremy Ruth, clarinets

BALLAD for clarinet and delay system

CANON for clarinet and delay system

CANTUS ROMANUS for clarinet and clarinet ensemble

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Out of respect for the performers and those audience members around you, please turn all beepers, cell phones and watches to their silent mode. Thank you.



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