

**Music Council of Australia 18th Annual Assembly
Reception, ACT Legislative Assembly**
Hosted by ACT Minister for the Arts, Joy Burch MLA
5pm Saturday September 10 2011

**Musical Items by ANU DRUMatiX Percussion Group
Gary France Artistic/Educational Director**

Music for Pieces of Wood by Steve Reich

Minimalism in music has received increased attention since its introduction to music in the late 1960s by composers such as Reich and Riley. Its style has provided a fresh compositional alternative to atonality and serialism in the twentieth century. Steve Reich's *Music for Pieces of Wood* received its premiere performance in 1973. I first performed *Music for Pieces of Wood* in 1979 with the Abraxas Percussion Group for the Music Educators National Conference in Atlantic City USA under the supervision of the composer. *Music for Pieces of Wood* requires African Claves specially tuned to D#, B, A, C#, D# 8va. As these instruments are not available commercially I commissioned Chris Murdock, instrument maker and artist, better known for his audio work at the W.A. Academy of Performing Arts, to reproduce the instruments specified by Reich.

Fluffy Ruffles by George H. Green. Arr. Bob Becker/Christina Hopgood

Marimba Band: Charles Martin, Yvonne Lam, Jonathan Griffiths, Stephen Fitzgerald, Gary France.

Soprano: Krystle Innes.

Many percussionists know this piece as a xylophone solo, but it was actually originally published as a piano novelty song with lyrics. Today, the marimba band is playing parts from Bob Becker's arrangement while I play a mixture of the xylophone solo and a simplified version of the melody. The published xylophone solo is one of the more challenging when played quickly, so playing a simplified version not only gives my hands a bit of a break but also reveals the cute melody that was hidden underneath all the "ruffles", or embellishments.

It is rumoured that Fluffy Ruffles was George Green's nickname for his wife, Georgia. He must have thought she was very cute, because this is one of the most charming and happy pieces of his that I know.

Fluffy ruffles is a girlie so sweet, To know her surely is a treat! She's the kind that causes fellows to rave, When you're out with her you just can't behave! Fluffy Ruffles has a wonderful way, Of making all the fellows fall. She will smile at you, then droop her eyes, And that's what catches them all!
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But she's a baby, She is sure some lady! With her eyes she'll haunt you, Eyes that say 'I want you'! All the fellows love her, No-one can resist her, There is just one Fluffy Ruffles, She's some girl!

About THE DRUMatiX PERCUSSION GROUP

THE DRUMatiX PERCUSSION GROUP is the resident percussion ensemble at the Australian National University School of Music. Operating under their present name since the beginning of 2003, they are comprised of percussion students studying at the ANU. An ensemble dedicated to presenting the rich and diverse repertoire written exclusively for percussion.

The DRUMatiX have won numerous national prizes for their presentation of percussion music across all genres including a Canberra Critics Circle Award in 2004. Under the direction of Gary France, the ANU Percussion program has hosted and convened numerous international symposiums, master schools and conferences.

—Programme notes by Gary France