

washington composers orchestra

WACO

The Washington Composers Orchestra (WACO), formed in 2008, came about when long time Seattle residents Robin Holcomb and Wayne Horvitz re-united with recent NY transplant Tom Varner and made plans to re-create the now defunct New York Composers Orchestra (NYCO), an ensemble active from 1986-1999, using Seattle based musicians. WACO has performed at the Earshot Jazz Festival, the Seattle Drum School, and currently performs monthly at Tost, a Seattle venue in the Fremont neighborhood. The band consists of many of Seattle's greatest jazz and improvising musicians.

the band

steve treseler	reeds
mark taylor	reeds
greg sinibaldi	reeds
eric barber	reeds
jim dejoie	reeds
brad allison	trumpet
thomas marriot	trumpet
samantha boshnack	trumpet
nelson bell	trombone
chris stover	trombone
tom varner	french horn
byron vannoy	drums
phil sparks	bass
robin holcomb	piano, conductor
wayne horvitz	piano, conductor

the original ensemble

The NYCO was formed in 1986 by composers Wayne Horvitz and Robin Holcomb, to provide a regular performing ensemble for composers wishing to write for a jazz instrumentation without being confined to traditional notions of jazz and big band styles. This requires musicians who are excellent readers, ensemble players, and improvisers in a variety of idioms. Since its inception, the NYCO has performed commissioned works by Lenny Pickett, Marty Ehrlich, Anthony Braxton, Bobby Previte, Elliott Sharp, Robin Holcomb, Doug Wieselman, Philip Johnston, Butch Morris, Bob Nell and Wayne Horvitz. Initial performances in New York included concerts at Roulette, The Greenwich House Music School, BAM, The Kitchen and the Knitting Factory. In 1988 the NYCO was featured at the Moers Music Festival in Germany.

In 1989, Mr. Horvitz and Ms. Holcomb relocated to Seattle. Since that time the repertoire has been performed by the original NYCO ensemble, a "NYCO West" consisting of Pacific Northwest musicians, and other ensembles including the Jazz Composers Alliance Orchestra (Boston) with Marty Ehrlich and Wayne Horvitz as guest artists and the Perth University Jazz Ensemble (Australia) with Mr. Horvitz directing. Student ensembles that have performed the repertoire include The University of Oregon, Macalaster College and the Clark Terry Institute of Jazz Studies. In 1995, five members of the original NYCO joined eight UK musicians, including trumpeter Kenny Wheeler, to do a two-week British Arts Council tour of England. In the summer of 1996 the NYCO performed at the Verona jazz festival. Featured instrumentalists in the NYCO have included Ron Miles, Ray Anderson, Julian Priester, George Lewis, Ben Goldberg, Jack Walrath, Steven Bernstein, James Zollar and Art Baron. Two CD's are available on the New World label: New York Composers Orchestra (1990) and First Program in Standard Time (1992). Composers writing for NYCO have received commissioning grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer/Reader's Digest Commissioning Program, The Kitchen, Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Fund, and the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust.