for two pianos and two vibraphones
duration: 10:30

*Echoes Fantasy* is one in a continuing series of compositions in which I integrate ideas from historical and modern musical forms. My focus is on the ideas that underlie the surface features—the deeper motivations for form and the overarching poetic gesture. Inevitably particular colors, shapes and movements do present ready images that affect my creative imagination, yet I use no quotation, no mimesis, no direct references. My purpose is to subsume the dialectic of the historical and modern identities within a synthetic whole.

In *Echoes Fantasy* I work with the genre of the solo fantasia as developed from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth century. In particular, I am inspired by pieces in a quasi-improvisational style, that revel in extroversions of elaboration, and that purposefully remain elusive in their generative logic. My realization of this solo genre is by means of an ensemble of four keyboards of similar timbres, selected for their ability to blend and thereby to create the affect of a single complex instrument. I resist the creation of a true polyphonic texture, which would shift the historical exemplar away from the solo to the ensemble fantasia, a type associated more with ingenious tactics of composed melodic imitation than with spontaneous improvisation. Still, while I use no true polyphonic forms, there are allusions to multiple voices through the use of overlapping echoic variations of motives, this more a matter of drama than of structure.

While a historical fantasia provides an overarching idea of form and style of gesture, modern metrical, rhythmic, and pitch-timbral forms provide the elemental level. Symmetries of prime numbers organize both the tempo and the metric structure. Rhythmic divisions and offsets are fluid and set against beats that shift in time value. The tonality is complex, with whole sonorities as focal points, these sonorities often being themselves so complex as to provide timbral rather than harmonic values. These elemental forms I consider not only to be well suited to the fantasia form but actually to give an element of fantasia to many modern compositions not so deliberately identified. In creating *Echoes Fantasy* I adopted the idea of fantasia first of all from the historical form but later found that this was an integral aspect of my modern musical experience.