

## BIOGRAPHY

**Ross Feller** is an accomplished educator, composer, improviser, theorist, and saxophonist. Over the past twenty years he has developed a unique musical vocabulary that features raw, ecstatic layers of material that percolate with refined, virtuosic gestures. John von Rhein (*Chicago Tribune*) characterized Feller's work as "an elaborate show." Mary Lee Roberts, former Technical Director of Princeton University's electronic music studios, found Feller's work to exhibit "a finely defined and personal musical style." Musicologist Ulrich Mosch wrote that Feller's music was "at the same time original and perfectly adapted." Richard Greene found that Feller's "work is notable for its complete lack of slick, commercial finish, and for its commitment to a search for understanding of our world and the human spirit." Composer/theorist Benjamin Boretz was left with "an amazing impression of fun, terror, joy, deep paradox, and absurd perceptions of the contemporary mediatized (sic) world" after experiencing one of Feller's multimedia works. Stanford University composer Brian Ferneyhough has written, "it is not the tired inherited rhetoric of the Postmodern that fuels (Feller's) music, but a lively and irreverent sense of the positive power of 'structural plurality' – a constantly re-enunciated and celebrated 'rigorous informality.'"

Mr. Feller grew up near Chicago, where he came into contact with performers from a thriving avant-garde jazz scene, including the AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians). While still in high school Feller began to systematically explore the boundaries of his instrument through improvisation, and experiment with graphic and indeterminate scores. As a freshman in college he formed a band called Dot Dot Dot with like-minded colleagues Jef Bek, Thymme Jones, and Chris Block. Kyle Gann (*Chicago Reader* and *Village Voice*) wrote that Dot Dot Dot was "a very hot group with plenty of rhythmic interest and the discipline to sustain their ideas." Mr. Feller is a founding member and former board member of New Music Chicago, and is also the founder of The Performance Advocate, an organization devoted to live, site-specific performances. With this group he once performed on the embankment of Chicago's Kennedy Expressway for the rush-hour traffic. Pulitzer Prize winning composer Henry Brant said that this performance, and others like it, "unleashed a deep-felt psychic need in the American public."

Mr. Feller holds doctorate and masters degrees in Composition and Theory from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a B.M. in composition from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. His composition teachers include: Salvatore Martirano, Morgan Powell, Paul Zonn, Darleen Cowles Mitchell, Henry Brant, and Leroy Jenkins. His awards and honors include the ASCAP Raymond Hubbell Composition Award, nominations from the Theodore Presser Foundation and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and grants from the Paul Sacher Stiftung (Basel, Switzerland), Illinois Arts Council, Ingenuity 2007, Ragdale Foundation, Atlantic Center for the Arts, Société des Auteurs et Compositeurs (Brussels, Belgium), and the Gesellschaft für Gute und Gemeinützige (Basel). His compositions have been finalists in the Gaudeamus Foundation International Composer's Competition, ASCAP Young Composer's Competition, Bent Frequency's International Call for Scores, and the Ohio Arts Council's Individual Excellence Award. His works have been commissioned and performed by the Oberlin Conservatory Contemporary Music Ensemble, Oberlin Percussion Group, Oberlin Wind Ensemble, Ciosoni, University of Illinois Contemporary Chamber Players, Prism Saxophone Quartet, Aurelia Saxophone Quartet, Vision Saxophone Quartet, Performers Workshop Ensemble, Sonic Arts Ensemble, Ensemble Luna Nova, Goliard Ensemble, and members of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and the Elision Ensemble. Recordings of his music and

performances are available on New Dynamic Records, Athena Records, Complacency Productions, Savagery Records, Mighty Mouth Records, and UIUC Experimental Music Studios.

His compositions have been performed throughout the USA, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Spain, and Switzerland, at venues including: Roulette (New York City), Symphony Space (New York City), Weiler Concert Hall (New York City), Presser Recital Hall (Philadelphia), Park West (Chicago), Green Mill (Chicago), Hot House (Chicago), Curtis Hall (Chicago), Randolph Street Gallery (Chicago), Links Hall (Chicago), Chicago Public Library Cultural Center, Cleveland Public Theatre, Playhouse Square Center (Cleveland), Warner Concert Hall (Oberlin), Kulas Recital Hall (Oberlin), Allen Memorial Art Museum (Oberlin), Seven Stages Theater (Atlanta), Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (Urbana), De Ijsbreker (Amsterdam), Theatre de Liefde (Amsterdam), Plateau (Brussels), Maison du Spectacle (Brussels), Les Chiroux (Liege), 13a Marato de l'Espectacle (Barcelona), Music Paradise Marathon (Essen), Rigiblick Theater (Zürich), Kulturwerkstatt Kaserne (Basel), and Roxy (Basel), at festivals and conferences including the Society of Composers, Inc., College Music Society, Spoleto, Southeastern Composers League, Cleveland Composers Guild, Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival, North Carolina Computer Music Festival, ThreeTwo Festival of Recent Music, ARTBURST, Einstein Meets Magritte (Brussels), and the Xenakis Legacies Symposium (Guelph), and at universities and colleges including: the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Georgia College & State University, University of Georgia, University of Alabama, University of Iowa, University of South Florida, University of Wisconsin, University of Michigan, University of Guelph, Cleveland State University, University of Central Florida, Stetson University, University of Redlands, Northwestern University, Samford University, Butler University, Mercer University, Minnesota State University, Wabash College, Kenyon College, Kent State University, North Carolina State University, Rollins College, Wesleyan University, DePaul University, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, and the Liege Conservatory.

Currently an Affiliate Scholar at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Mr. Feller has taught composition, theory, musicianship, computer music, improvisation, jazz, and saxophone at Georgia College and State University, Georgia's Public Liberal Arts University, Minnesota State University, Moorhead, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Butler University, and has given invited guest lectures at the University of California at San Diego, Basel Conservatory, Liege Conservatory, Free University of Brussels, Catholic University of Leuven, and Columbia College (Chicago). His publications include an interview with Brian Ferneyhough in his *Collected Writings* (Harwood), book chapters in *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought* (Routledge), and *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches* (Cambridge University Press), and articles in *Die Mitteilungen der Paul Sacher Stiftung*, *ex tempore*, and *Semiotica Fennica*. He is also a regular contributor to the *Computer Music Journal* and *The Open Space*, and wrote the liner notes for Nick Didkovsky's compact disc entitled, "Ice Cream Time," on New World Records. He has presented papers at annual meetings of the Dutch Music Theory Society, Music Theory Society of New York State, Music Theory Southeast, College Music Society, Postmodernism in Music Conference, Music and Gesture Conference, EthNoise! Conference, Einstein meets Magritte, British Musicological Societies' Conference, International Congress on Musical Signification, International Musicological Society, Symposium on Systems Research in the Arts: Music, Environmental Design, and the Choreography of Space, and the Creative and Scientific Legacies of Iannis Xenakis Symposium.

As a saxophonist Feller has performed throughout the USA and in Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands with well known improvisers including: George Lewis, Roscoe Mitchell, Leroy Jenkins, Henry Brant, Greg Bendian, Chris Cochrane, David Mott, LaDonna Smith, Bill Smith, Malcolm Goldstein, Peter Evans, Jim O'Rourke, and many others, at venues including: Roulette (New York City), Werkstatt für Improvisierte Musik (Zürich), Plateau (Brussels), De Kaiti (Brussels), New York Brussels Jazz Rally (Brussels), De Beweeging (Antwerp), Sudhaus Warteck (Basel), Eyedrum (Atlanta), Warner Concert Hall (Oberlin), Hilton Hotel (Atlanta), Trio (Macon), Reynolds Plantation (Greensboro), Max Noah Recital Hall (Milledgeville), Amici (Milledgeville), The King and Prince (St. Simon's Island), Birmingham Improv Festival, Warner Robbins Civic Center, Grand Opera House (Macon), Cinema Grill (Fargo), Luigi's (Fargo), Ramada Plaza Suites (Fargo), Roland Dille Center for the Arts (Moorhead), and the White Street Arts Center (Champaign). Kyle Gann (*Chicago Reader*) has described Feller's playing as "beautifully sensitive improvisation." Mr. Feller has played active roles in the experimental music scenes in Chicago, Champaign-Urbana, Fargo (North Dakota), Brussels (Belgium), Basel (Switzerland), central Georgia, Cleveland, and Oberlin (Ohio), in bands and ensembles including: Dot Dot Dot, Walleye, Currier & Ives, Illusion of Safety, Fargo-Moorhead Klezmaniaks, Red Heifers, Maxwell Price Quintet, and the Ross Feller Quintet.

With choreographer Kora Radella he co-founded Double-Edge Dance ([www.double-edgedance.org](http://www.double-edgedance.org)), a collaborative, contemporary dance and music company that has received critical acclaim in the U.S. and Europe. Double-Edge Dance has performed at the Playhouse Square Center (Cleveland), Ingenuity Festival (Cleveland), Cleveland Public Theatre, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (Urbana), American Dance Festival, Ohio Dance Festival, Stewart Theatre (North Carolina State University), Collinwood Arts Center (Cleveland), E. Turner Stump Theatre (Kent), Hill Theatre (Gambier), Columbus Dance Theatre (Columbus), Warner Main Space (Oberlin), Allen Memorial Art Museum (Oberlin), Midsummer Macon, Einstein meets Magritte (Brussels), Revelations: Flannery O'Connor, the Visionary and the Vernacular Conference (Milledgeville), Unitarian Universalist Church (Birmingham), Canopy Studio (Athens, Georgia), Seven Stages Theater (Atlanta), Theater Roxy (Basel), The Dance Experience (Basel), Rigiblick Theatre (Zürich), Seefeld-Tanzprojekt (Zürich), Festival De Jeune Danse Contemporaine (Liège), and the Maison du Spectacle (Brussels).