

*Dr. Charles Rochester Young
21st Century Musician/Educator*

Scholarly/Creative Interest Statement

I am fascinated by the potential in music to illuminate and transform the inner lives of listeners. Creating these experiences is my principal duty as a communicative musician and the reason I was drawn to music in the first place. To achieve this goal, I continually ask the following research questions:

- How do the greatest communicators transcend style and technique to elevate the listeners' experience?
- What questions do the best communicators ask?
- What do the most effective communicators do differently to engage their listeners?

As a composer, I create individual works, each with a unique voice and personality. This approach results in a synthesis of contemporary and traditional composition practices encompassing many styles, techniques and approaches. These works seek a continuous and total stimulation of the senses and focus on the human issues we all share. When I succeed, the listeners and musicians sense that the music has told *our collective story*. This story is ideally bigger than myself.

My recent compositions have increasingly explored interactive communication between performing musicians and listeners. I want listeners to *participate* in a living, breathing dynamic experience rather than passively hear. Since interactive concert environments cannot be replicated at home on their computers, my secondary objective is to ignite an increased desire for audiences to experience live concerts.

As a teacher, I have a strong interest in the pedagogy of musical communication. Since many of my courses are required for every music major, I regularly address the common communicative needs of all musicians. Teaching these classes has raised the following pedagogical questions:

- What communicative skills are essential for musicians in the 21st Century?
- How can the best communicative practices serve as the cornerstone for a 21st Century music curriculum?
- How can the most effective teaching practices from other communicative disciplines (theatre, speech, rhetoric, and language) inform music pedagogy?
- How can we train musicians to better understand and adapt to the needs of their listeners?

The insights gained from a career exploring these questions are further defined in my forthcoming textbooks on audience engagement and beginning composition.