WILLIAM SUSMAN
Scatter My Ashes

OCTET ENSEMBLE
Alan Ferber  Mike Gurfield  Mellissa Hughes  Elaine Kwon
Eleonore Oppenheim  Demetrius Spaneas  William Susman  Greg Zuber
### CAMILLE (2010)
1. I. Vitality 3:35  
2. II. Tranquility 3:06  
3. III. Triumph 2:46  

### SCATTER MY ASHES (2009)
4. Scatter My Ashes 2:08  
5. The Night Tree 3:16  
6. Even in the Dark 1:49  
7. Only Clear Space Inside 1:44  
8. Eternal Light 3:21  

### PIANO CONCERTO (2011) 12:24
9. I. Build-Decay  
   II. Glide  
   III. Spin  
   IV. Jagged  
   V. Ripple  
   Cadenza  
   VI. Shimmer  

### MOVING IN TO AN EMPTY SPACE (1992 - Arranged for Octet 2010)
10. Hot Time 3:41  
11. Begging the Night for Change 2:47  
12. Moving in to an Empty Space 3:50  

**Total Time:** 44:32
OCTET is a New York based music ensemble comprised of stellar instrumentalists performing contemporary compositions that push boundaries. OCTET is dedicated to collaborating with artists in a variety of disciplines, forging a unique, unheard and unseen intermingling of music and media in order to provide audiences an alternative music experience.

Contributing to the unique sound of OCTET is its instrumentation. Essentially, it is a scaled down big band using one each from the brass section plus rhythm: saxophone, trumpet, trombone, drums/percussion, piano, electric piano, vocals, and double bass.

William Susman’s remarkable achievement is to take the familiar instrumentation of American popular music, harmonic and rhythmic influences from jazz and Afro-Cuban music and sinuous melodic lines that are uniquely his own and weave them into something new and fresh, yet timeless and haunting. Memorable yet enigmatic, simple yet profound, Susman’s music is irresistible.

- John Kilgore

Scatter My Ashes
from five poems by Sue Susman

1. SCATTER MY ASHES
Scatter my ashes before I die.
Let me blow and fade in the wind over water into nothing.
Watch me dissolve in air.
Scatter my old bones.
I am keeping the young ones fresh, strong the blood circles and weaves me into a whole piece with long slender red thread buried under my skin.

2. THE NIGHT TREE
In the distance in the dark I talk hard to an old tree. Winding round and round, I am a flame curling upwards and the tree welcomes me. I don’t have to have a reason to be here. There is time enough to understand. I don’t have to explain. My name is the sound of the wind blowing and my spirit is as old. Until the sky grows light, I will stay here wound tightly to the tree and listen to the way the dark feels. The fire in my throat burns more quietly now. I can hear the empty sound of dawn.

3. EVEN IN THE DARK
The forest breathes in and out as I sleep and curl like a cat snuggled into a bigger sleeping body. Even in the dark I wake and see light from above, the moon burning into black earth; stars, glittering chips of glass scatter in a strange design. I keep my eyes open until morning.

4. ONLY CLEAR SPACE INSIDE
Take off the old wood and burn it. I am leaving this part of me here.

And as I light the match to start this fire, I feel the flames begin to jump out of me. I am burning myself up from the inside, and this fire burns clean, leaves no ashes, only clear space inside. Now the wind picks up. The flames grow higher. There is no pain.

5. ETERNAL LIGHT
Heart in the darkness holding on to the light inside. Inside there is a spark, a light that burns and never goes out, never grows dim but burns hard and bright in the dark void of unending night, the vast empty blackness of my self where I can only hear the echo of my cavernous soul and the simple cadence of my healthy heart hurting and healing over and over pumping the life into my veins pushing it through and around so that I am always filled with it so that I am always alive to the light even when I am lost, cold and wandering lonely in the dark.

Moving in to an Empty Space
from three poems by Sue Susman

1. HOT TIME
Hot time this summer in the city in the artificial light of the street. At night people scurry and run together in packs. Too many rats in the cage. Running towards something in the distance, in the dark; something hidden from sight; something they cannot name. They come here to hunt and groan in hot dark rooms filled with sweating, hungry bodies, dancing with fever into the morning. And as the music blasts into flashing strobe-lights, the walls begin to swell and breathe. There are bodies on the street tonight, each with its own hidden secret. You can choose one to take home with you. You can go on alone. You can help yourself. Steal into the night. No one can find you. You become invisible in the dark, invisible to others who may want to hurt you; invisible even to yourself.

2. BEGGING THE NIGHT FOR CHANGE
She approached me in the supermarket’s parking lot, a tired-looking woman with a worn-out face, asking if I had any change. And as I shook my head, I felt the dimes and nickels burrow deeper in my pocket, felt my back stiffen, my hands curl into fists. I couldn’t look her in the face and so I hurried on, shaking my head to lose the fear that one day she could be me, talking to strangers in parking lots, alone in the street, unknown and unseen, begging the night for change.

3. MOVING IN TO AN EMPTY SPACE
Tonight I stood watching the stars twinkling through the bare branches. The air is cold and I am alone here in this quiet faraway place. And I am at peace, in myself, still somewhat afraid. I stood watching the night sky, as if it would change, as if the tiny white lights would move or rearrange themselves the better to please my eye. But there was no change; the night was fixed, immutable and cold. I am a shifting star, fallen down from the vast empty blackness to burn on the earth. I look up to see where I came from. And the lights return my gaze. There is no message, no sound just the silent reflection of my own face shining in the night to remind me that I have always been here.
WILLIAM SUSMAN
ELECTRIC PIANO, COMPOSER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
The New York Times calls his music “vivid, turbulent, and rich-textured” and Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange praises his album Music for Moving Pictures as “A flawless gem...[of] rare beauty.” His music is notable for his integration of a variety of influences, including the Western classical tradition, Afro-Cuban music, free jazz, and several non-Western folk traditions. His training includes music composition at the University of Illinois and computer-generated sound at Stanford followed by studies at IRCAM.

MELISSA HUGHES – VOCALS
Hailed by Time Out New York as a “dazzling diva, adept at old and new music” soprano Mellissa Hughes enjoys a busy career performing with Alarm Will Sound, eighth blackbird, Newspeak, SIGNAL, and Victoire as well as collaborators Steve Reich, John Zorn, Julia Wolfe, Efterklang, My Brightest Diamond, and The National. Miss Hughes records for Nonesuch, Cantelope, and Naxos Records, and is a New Amsterdam Records artist. She holds degrees from Westminster Choir College, and Yale University.

DEMETRIUS SPANEAS
SAXOPHONE, MUSIC DIRECTOR
Multi-wind instrumentalist, composer, conductor, and recording artist Demetrius Spaneas leads a varied international career and has worked with such diverse artists as John Cage, Ray Charles, and Kyrgyz traditional musicians. He has been a featured soloist and composer at major concert venues and festivals throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. Mr. Spaneas is a native of Lowell, MA and holds both bachelor and master of music degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music.

ALAN FERBER – TROMBONE
Alan Ferber is a grammy-nominated and internationally renowned jazz trombonist, composer and bandleader. He has recorded six albums as a leader and performed on over 100 as a trombonist. The Wall Street Journal affectionately describes his music as “somehow both old school and cutting edge”. As an educator, Ferber currently serves as an adjunct professor at the Cali School of Music, the Peabody Conservatory and New York University.

ELAINE KWON – PIANO
Elaine is a prize-winning concert pianist, martial artist, Lecturer in Music at MIT, and National Music Festival Piano Mentor. She has performed solo and chamber music concerts globally. She received standing ovations at her sold-out Carnegie Hall benefit concerts (2008-2014), and as soloist with numerous orchestras including the Toronto Philharmonia, National Music Festival Symphony, and Slovak Sinfonietta. Elaine is Co-founder/President of the interactive concert series, Savor Your Senses™, and holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Piano Performance.

GREG ZUBER – DRUMS & PERCUSSION
Greg Zuber is principal percussionist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, having joined the orchestra in 1986. Prior to that, from 1985 to 1986, he was principal percussionist with the Toledo Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Zuber is an active soloist, recitalist, composer, and clinician, and performs regularly with Percussionists of the Met and his wife, flutist Patricia Zuber. Mr. Zuber holds a B.A in Music from the University of Illinois and a Masters from Temple University. He is a faculty member of The Juilliard School and the UBS Verbier Music Festival.

MIKE GURFIELD – TRUMPET
Hailed as a “new music veteran” by New York Magazine, this Eastman School of Music alumnus serves as principal trumpet of New York’s Sig-nal Ensemble, Wordless Music Orchestra, is the Artistic Director of the contemporary music collective Deviant Septet, is a founding member of the Brooklyn Brass, and is a regular collaborator with Alarm Will Sound. Gurfield can be heard in recordings on Sony Classical, Warp Records, Warner Brothers Classical, Naxos America and many others.

ELEONORE OPPENHEIM – DOUBLE BASS
Described as “quietly virtuosic” by the New York Times upright and electric bassist Eleonore Oppenheim is quickly gaining a reputation as both a valued ensemble player and an engaging soloist. She has performed with the Philip Glass Ensemble, Victoire, the Wordless Music Orchestra, Signal Ensemble, and the pioneering indie rock band the Instruments. She teaches applied double bass at SUNY Stony Brook, and is an alumna of the Yale School of Music and the Juilliard School.