

University of Missouri School of Music
(Non-Degree) Recital • 2020-2021 Series

SONIC TEXTURES

Jordan Nielsen, percussion

April 16, 2021 • 8:30 PM • Sinefield Music Center 132

Program

Child of Tree **John Cage**

multi-percussion solo

meditation for metal pipes **Emma O'Halloran**

for reverb-drenched percussion quintet

Featuring: Jeremiah Ingram, Stephen Landy, Emily Miclon, and Calien McPike

La sed es de tierra **Sergio Cote**

multi-percussion solo

No wind, no rain, just a subtle mist. **Joe W. Moore III**

solo for prepared vibraphone

*Returning Waves** **Oswald Huynh**

*World Premiere

percussion quartet

Featuring: Jeremiah Ingram, Stephen Landy, and Emily Miclon

To the Earth **Frederic Rzewski**

solo for speaking percussionist

This recital is a non-degree recital.

Jordan Nielsen is a student of Dr. Megan Arns and on the Master of Music Performance Degree path.

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SONIC TEXTURE

a percussion recital

Featuring: Jordan Nielsen

and friends Emily Miclon, Jeremiah Ingram, Stephen Landy, and Calien (Mac) McPike

All performers are students of Dr. Megan Arns.

THE PROGRAM

***Child of Tree* by John Cage**

This work was originally used as music for the choreographed piece by Merce Cunningham entitled *Solo* (aka Animal Solo/Dance), with stage design by Sonja Sekula. While on tour in Arizona with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in 1975, one of the dancers, Charles Moulton, brought a dried cactus to Cage, placed it near his ear, and plucked its spines. This inspired Cage to use cacti as musical instruments in pieces like *Child of Tree* and *Branches*. The score consists solely of performance instructions as to how to select 10 instruments via *I Ching* chance operations. All instruments should be made of plant matter, or be themselves plant materials (e.g., leaves from trees, branches etc.). One of the instruments should be a pod (rattle) from a Poinciana tree, which grow in Mexico. Cage instructs: "Using a stopwatch, the soloist improvises clarifying the time structure by means of the instruments. This improvisation is the performance."

- note from publisher

***meditation for metal pipes* by Emma O'Halloran**

Emma O'Halloran is an Irish vocalist and composer whose works freely intertwine electronic and acoustic musical elements. In her writing she seeks to capture the human experience through complex emotions felt in specific moments in time. O'Halloran's piece "meditation for metal pipes" is a part of the 'Everybody Hits!' commission and is accompanied by five other works. In the score, Emma states "This piece is about really listening to each other and realizing how everything is connected."

"meditation for metal pipes" requires a highly reverberant space and in many venues, this will require the usage of additional digital reverb. Tonight's performance will use the natural acoustics of our recital hall, in its most reverberant state. The fifteen aluminum pipes used were hand tuned using just intonation by Dr. Megan Arns. The usage of just intonation could make some notes sound 'out of tune' if compared to the standard tuning system of equal temperament. Each of the performers have a set of three pipes: large, medium, and small. At various moments the players are required to completely dampen or half-dampen a pipe by putting a hand or a finger on the pipe while simultaneously striking the pipe with the other hand.

- Jordan Nielsen

***To the Earth* by Frederic Rzewski**

"To the Earth" was written in 1985 at the request of the percussionist Jan Williams. Williams asked for a piece using small percussion instruments that could be easily transported. I decided to use four flowerpots. Not only do they have a beautiful sound, but they don't have to be carried around at all: in every place where one plays the piece, they can be bought for a total cost of about one dollar.

The text, recited by the percussionist, is that of the pseudo-homeric hymn "To The Earth Mother of All," probably written in the seventh century B.C. This simple poem is a prayer to Gaia—goddess of the Earth. The Earth is a myth, both ancient and modern. For us today as well, it appears increasingly as something fragile. Because of its humanly altered metabolism, it is rapidly becoming a symbol of the precarious human condition. In this piece the flowerpots are intended to convey this sense of fragility.

The writing of this piece was triggered by reading an article on newly discovered properties of clay, the substance of which pots and golems are made. Among these properties are its capacity to store energy for long periods of time and its complex molecular structure. This idea for clay as something half-alive, a kind of transitional medium between organic and inorganic materials, led me to look at flowerpots. I found, in fact, that some pots are “alive” while others are “dead”: some emit a disappointing “thunk” when you tap them while others seem to burst into resonant song at the slightest touch.

- Frederic Rzewski

Text: Homeric hymn

To the Earth, Mother of all, I will sing: the well-established, the oldest, who nourishes on her surface everything that lives: those things that walk upon the holy ground and those that swim in the sea and those that fly; all these are nourished by your abundance.

It is thanks to you if we humans have healthy children and rich harvest. Great Earth, you have the power to give life to and to take it away from creatures that must die.

Happy are the ones whom you honor with your kindness and gifts; what they have built will not vanish.

Their fields are fertile, their herds prosper, and their houses are full of good things.

Their cities are governed with just laws; their women are beautiful; good fortune and wealth follow them.

Their children are radiant with the joy of youth.

The young women... the young women play... the young women play in the flowery meadows, dancing with happiness in their hearts.

Holy earth, Undying Spirit, so it is with those whom you honor.

Hail to you, Mother of Life, you who are loved by the starry sky; be generous and give me a happy life in return for my song so that I can continue to praise you with my music.

***No wind, no rain, just a subtle mist.* by Joe W. Moore III**

‘No wind, no rain, just a subtle mist.’ was inspired by my experience during hurricane Isaac in the summer of 2012. Hurricane Isaac made it to the coast of Louisiana on August 28, right after the beginning of the fall semester of my second year as a DMA student at LSU. Classes were canceled and people were warned to stay in their homes or find shelter from the storm. However, once the hurricane made it above land it quickly dissipated to a tropical storm then to a tropical depression. When the storm hit Baton Rouge, it was nothing more than strong winds and rain. Hours after the storm, I decided to go outside to take note of the damage the strong winds and rain caused. When I stepped outside there was no wind, no rain, just a subtle mist.

Following that experience, I made a Facebook post that read “no wind, no rain, just a subtle mist.” My friend, Daniel Heagney, saw the post and commented that it would be a great title for a piece. Dan later put together a consortium to commission me for a solo vibraphone work and the title stuck. The vibraphone is prepared in efforts to sonically re-create my experience in the hurricane for the audience. Some bars are prepared with coins to represent rainfall, the instrument is bowed with the motor on to represent wind, and the buzzing of snares/aluminum foil on the facade resonators represent the mist. ‘No wind, no rain, just a subtle mist.’ was commissioned by Dr. Daniel Heagney, Dr. Justin Alexander, Shelby Blezinger, David Carroll, Dr. Christopher Davis, Dr. Timothy Feerst, Oliver Molina, Dr. Luis Rivera, Tim Shuster, Jude Traxler, and Samuel Trevathan.

- Joe W. Moore III

***Returning Waves* by Oswald Huynh (World Premiere)**

"When we look at the ocean, we see that each wave has a beginning and an end. A wave can be compared with other waves, and we can call it more or less beautiful, higher or lower, longer lasting or less long lasting. But if we look more deeply, we see that a wave is made of water. While living the life of a wave, the wave also lives the life of water."

- Thích Nhất Hạnh

I used to be afraid of dying; a vast unknown that we cannot see nor predict. At some point, we all have to come to terms with the fact that life is finite. Over the last few years, death has been a topic that I have thought heavily about and meditating on the subject has allowed in me an acceptance of death—or perhaps more appropriately—

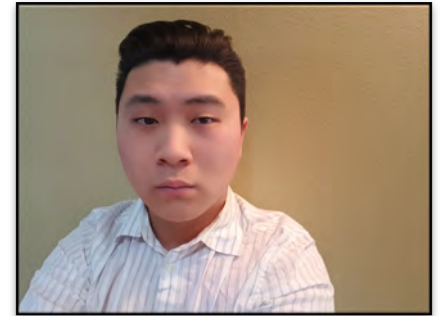
and an appreciation of life. Someday, I will die. And that's okay. All waves, for a brief period of time, will break the shoreline. Just as swiftly, they recede into the ocean.

In writing *Returning Waves*, I wanted to invite performer and listener to embrace this idea of being. Imagine yourself as a wave and let your mind drift. Perhaps you will find beauty; perhaps you will find fear. Allow those feelings to manifest. This is not a search for an answer. It is, rather, just a moment of reflection.

- Oswald Huynh

About the composer:

Oswald Huynh is a composer from Portland, Oregon. His music explores narratives and concepts from the nature of Oregon, introspection, and his Vietnamese heritage. Huynh often blends traditional Vietnamese aesthetics with Western techniques to compose music that reflects his multicultural upbringing. He has collaborated with ensembles such as the [Switch~Ensemble], Deaf Rabbit Duo, Akropolis Reed Quintet, Alexander String Quartet, h2 quartet, and The City of Tomorrow. In the past, he has participated in the Wintergreen Music Festival, Mostly Modern Festival, and the Atlantic Music Festival. Huynh has had the opportunity to study with composers such as George Lewis, Daron Hagen, Gilda Lyons, and Zhou Long. In addition to composition, Huynh is an avid bassoonist and chamber musician. Huynh holds a B.A. in music and computer science from Lewis & Clark College and is pursuing a M.M. in Composition at the University of Missouri. His principal teachers include Michael Johanson, Texu Kim, and Carolina Heredia.



***La Sed Es Tierra* by Sergio Cote**

'La sed es tierra' (soloist version, 2018) Thirst is despair. Thirst is not only lack of water, but also the lack of the land that provides it. Human beings, in our anguish, long for the water that only earth can give. The problem is that land is only owned by few. Thirst is not only despair but also struggle.

- Sergio Cote

THE PERFORMERS

Jordan Nielsen



As a percussionist, Jordan Nielsen's 'sharp focus and intense attention' has created many musical opportunities for a young professional. Early on he was captivated with percussionist Lynn Vartan's album *Dancing on the Head of Pin*. Thankfully he now refers to her as a mentor and friend through his attendance at Southern Utah University. After graduating from SUU with his BM and as the 'Outstanding Graduate in Music' he was awarded a Teaching Assistantship at the University of Missouri-Columbia for the position as a percussionist in the school's New Music Ensemble. This ensemble has allowed him to record and/or premiere for a variety of composers, most notably including Oswald Huynh, Daniel Vega, Daniel Fitzpatrick, Niko Schroeder, Yoshiaki Onishi, and George Lewis (upcoming). At MU he is currently pursuing his Master of Music Performance with Dr. Megan Arns and an additional Arts Entrepreneurship Certificate.

Along his undergraduate degree path, he quickly realized a love for teaching, specifically in private studio settings. While at SUU he taught many lessons to students ranging from 5-70 years of age. He has taught all aspects of percussion and beginning piano. Currently in the Columbia, MO area he maintains a private teaching studio; JN Percussion. He is also the Front Ensemble Technician for the Hickman

High School Marching Band. Under his leadership, the HHS front ensemble has achieved many high rankings in competitive marching events including the title “Best Percussion Section.”

As a continually gigging percussionist, his timpani playing has been heard in the opera *Die Fledermaus*, the cantata *Carmina Burana*, and several orchestral settings including the Orchestra of Southern Utah. As a lover of musicals, his drumset/percussion has been heard in runs of *Little Shop of Horrors* (a personal favorite of his), *Fun Home* (Jordan’s all-time favorite musical memory), *Mamma Mia!*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *42nd Street*. In addition, he premiered and arranged the percussion ensemble arrangement of Robert Oetomo’s concerto for marimba *Soar*, in 2019. In competition, he has been awarded 1st place in the Chamber Music category (2015 Utah Day of Percussion), 1st place in the College Timpani Solo category (2017 UDP), 2nd place in the College Keyboard Solo Category (2019 UDP), and achieved a “Superior” rating in the Collegiate Marimba Category at the 2020 Mid-Missouri Percussive Arts Trophy. Upcoming performances will be held throughout Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, and a tour through South America with MU’s New Music Ensemble premiering several works by composers from MU.

Of course, a career in the arts isn’t confined to just one avenue. Jordan has also worked as audio engineer for private hire, for the Heritage Center Theater, and Simon Fest Theater Company, with Heartland Marimba as a performer and engineer, and a special occasion with M.A.R.S. (Mobile Audio Recording Services) on the record *Lou Harrison: Works for Percussion, Violin, and Piano* through Albany Records. He has also worked in the visual arts field as the Graphic Designer and Marketing Specialist for A.P.E.X. Events and currently for Heartland Marimba as the Project Assistant. Jordan is an active member of the Percussive Arts Society and the PAS Diversity Alliance. More about him and his work can be found at his website: www.jnpercussion.com.



Emily Miclon

Emily Miclon is an active and passionate percussion performer and educator based in Columbia, Missouri. Growing up in Enfield, Connecticut, Emily attended Eastern Connecticut State University for her undergraduate degree in Music Performance, where she was an active participant in music ensembles and a selected performer for the New England Intercollegiate Band Festival in 2018 and 2019.

Emily has taken a large interest in pedagogy and musicology research, presenting at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research in 2018 and 2019. Her musicology research focused on Debussy and nature received awards such as the ECSU Exceptional Thesis Award and the J. Eugene Smith Library Research Award.

Emily has taught at high school programs in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and continues her teaching in Columbia, Missouri where she is currently pursuing her Master of Music in Percussion Performance at the University of Missouri. At Mizzou, Emily serves as the Graduate Teaching Assistant in Percussion and is a member of University ensembles such as the Wind Ensemble, University Percussion Ensemble, World Percussion Ensemble, and Steel Band. Emily’s primary teachers include Dr. Megan Arns and Dr. Jeff Calissi.

Jeremiah Ingram

Jeremiah Ingram grew up in Opelika, Alabama. He graduated from Auburn University in 2019 with degrees in percussion performance and music education. While at Auburn, he was under the instruction of Dr. Doug Rosener. As a member of the Auburn University Marching Band (2014-2019), his playing experiences include being a member of the front ensemble for two years and the battery for three years. Mr. Ingram was a tech for the Central High School Drumline (2016) and the Smiths Station High School Drumline (2019) for their summer band camps. Mr. Ingram was also the percussion clinician for the

Middle School Symphonic Band Camp at Auburn University (2016) and the percussion instructor for the Auburn University Youth Orchestra (2016-2019).



Stephen Landy

Stephen Landy is a percussionist, educator, and member of the University of Missouri's New Music Ensemble. Stephen has a B.M. in Music Performance from the University of North Florida where he studied under Dr. Andrea Venet and Kevin Garry. He has performed with notable artists/groups such as, Valerie Naranjo, The Big Trouble, Patience Munjeri, and Andrea Venet as well as premiered pieces by Aaron Perrine, Niko Schroeder, Daniel Fitzpatrick, Luis Bezerra, Daniel Vega, and Andrea Venet. He has also worked as a music educator for many years teaching at various high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools. In 2017, he was a semi-finalist in the Great Plains Marimba Competition and in 2018, he performed with UNF in the Percussive Arts Society International Convention and finished top 5 in the Chamber Percussion Ensemble Competition. He is originally from

Melbourne, Florida, but currently resides in Columbia, Missouri in pursuit of a M.M. degree in Music Performance at MU under the direction of Dr. Megan Arns.

Calien (Mac) McPike

From Quincy, Illinois, Calien "Mac" McPike is an undergraduate pursuing a B.A. in Psychology, a minor in Music, a Neuroscience Certificate, and an Addiction Studies Certificate. He enjoys staying active in the School of Music and participates in Percussion Ensemble and Wind Ensemble.