



School of Music  
University of Missouri

2021-2022 Series | Guest Recital

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# The [Switch~ Ensemble]

Zach Sheets, flutes

Madison Greenstone, clarinets

Leo Saguiguit, saxophones

Lauren Cauley, violin

TJ Borden, cello

Megan Arns, percussion

Wei-Han Wu, piano/conductor

Jason Thorpe Buchanan, conductor/electronics

February 15, 2022 | 7:30pm

Sheryl Crow Hall

## Program

- Wings (2007-08)** ..... **Cathy van Eck**  
(b. 1979)
- Black Petal (2021)**.....**Oswald Huynh**  
(b. 1998)
- Uttered (2020)**.....**Anna-Louise Walton**  
(b. 1991)
- Invisible Heritage (2021)**.....**Luis Hermano Bezerra**  
(b. 1996)
- soliloquios del viento (2017)**.....**Jason Thorpe Buchanan**  
(b. 1986)

## Program Notes and Composer Biographies

### Wings

One loudspeaker and three microphones are placed opposite each other. The volume is turned up, and acoustic feedback occurs between the microphones and speaker. Three performers manipulate the feedback by shifting foam-board panels around, creating new spaces with every movement and therefore also changing the space, in which the feedback can resonate. Depending on the placement of the shields and of the pitches of the feedback, the sound is processed differently by the compute

-- Cathy van Eck

### Cathy van Eck

Cathy van Eck is a composer, sound artist, and researcher in the arts. She focuses on composing relationships between everyday objects, human performers, and sound. Her artistic work includes performances with live-electronics and installations with sound objects which she often designs herself. She is interested in setting her gestures into relationships with sounds, mainly by electronic means. The result could be called “performative sound art”, since it combines elements from performance art, electronic music, and visual arts. Her work transcends genres and is presented at occasions as diverse as experimental or electronic music concerts, open air festivals, sound art gallery venues, digital art events, or performance art festivals. She is a member of [iii \(instrument inventors initiative\)](#), an artist run, community platform supporting new interdisciplinary practices linking performance, technology and the human senses.

Cathy has a permanent teaching position at the [Department for Sound Arts of the University of the Arts in Bern, Switzerland](#). She is a regular guest lecturer at other art and music universities. In her PhD-research *Between Air and Electricity* (supervisors Richard Barrett, Marcel Cobussen and Frans de Ruiter; accepted in 2013 by the University of Leiden, The Netherlands), she investigated the use of microphones and loudspeakers as musical instruments. Her book [Between Air and Electricity – Microphones and Loudspeakers as Musical Instruments](#) has been published in 2017 and she writes regularly on [www.microphonesandloudspeakers.com](http://www.microphonesandloudspeakers.com).

### Black Petal

*Black Petal* is inspired a poem of the same title by Li-Young Lee from his book, *Book of My Nights*. My aim was to translate the poem into music and to interpret the emotion and themes into a meditative soundscape. For the purposes of this composition, I divide the poem into three sections that align with the work’s three movements.

The poem begins with a character who reminisces about their dead brother, “I keep him under my pillow, a dear wish / that colors my laughing and crying.” In this first section, the persona speaks of the absence that their brother’s passing has left in their life. It acts as a reminder of the inevitability of death and, in a larger scope, the brevity of life: “He died too young to learn his name. / Now he answers to Vacant Boat, / Burning Wing, My Black Petal.”

The second section is a dialogue between the two in which the brother answers the persona’s questions. This acts as a continuation of the first movement’s themes of death, but the replies lay a foundation for acceptance and reconciliation. “Does someone want to know the way to spring? /” the character asks. “He’ll remind you / the flower was never meant to survive / the fruit’s triumph.”

The final section begins with a sentiment of memory: “He says an apple’s most secret cargo / is the enduring odor of a human childhood.” So long as we allow people to live on in our memories, they are never truly absent; the past, in essence, gives comfort and hope to the present. The character also learns to recognize the cycle of generations that is inherent to existence, which provides a reason to look towards the future. “His voice / weighs nothing / but the far years between / stars in their massive dying, / and I grow quiet hearing / how many of both

of our tomorrows / lie waiting inside it to be born.”

In the last few years, I have become comfortable with the idea of death, and I do not desire a legacy or memoir. Knowing I will live on in the memories of the people I care about has always been enough. In writing *Black Petal*, perhaps I am counteracting this philosophy, but I hope that this piece offers an introspective experience.

--Oswald Huynh

### **Oswald Huynh**

Oswald Huynh is a composer and bassoonist from Portland, Oregon. His works navigate Vietnamese aesthetics and tradition, the fragility of the natural world, and the relationship between heritage and identity. Huynh writes music extensively for instrumental forces to create evocative soundscapes that convey underlying narratives and emotions. His orchestral work *Gia Đình* calls to this by exploring the impact of intergenerational trauma, cultural inheritance, and what is lost between eras.

As a composer, Huynh has collaborated with artists such as the Tacet(i) Ensemble, Fear No Music, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Del Sol String Quartet, [Switch~ Ensemble], deaf rabbit duo, Akropolis Reed Quintet, percussionist Payton MacDonald, and composer and clarinetist Yoshiaki Onishi. His music has been performed internationally at the Thailand New Music and Arts Symposium, Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, Ear Taxi Festival, Constellation Chicago, Arts Letters & Numbers, Oregon Bach Festival, Northwestern University New Music Conference, and The Sheldon Concert Hall, among others. Additionally, Huynh has been a fellow at the International Composition Institute of Thailand and is a 2022 resident composer for the Mizzou International Composers Festival.

Huynh holds a Bachelor of Arts from Lewis & Clark College and is currently pursuing a Master of Music at the University of Missouri. Huynh's past studies with distinguished composers have included Narong Prangharen, Emily Koh, George Lewis, Reiko Fütting, Daron Hagen, and Gilda Lyons. During his time at Lewis & Clark, Huynh was presented the Rena J. Ratte Memorial Award, the highest academic honor given to students, for his compositional work at the college. His principal teachers include Stefan Freund, Carolina Heredia, Texu Kim, and Michael Johanson. [www.oswaldhuynh.com](http://www.oswaldhuynh.com)

### **Uttered**

Many of the gestures in this piece are based on the rhythms and cadence of speech. The piano “speaks” the most clearly, guiding the dialogue. The clarinet and cello at times orchestrate the piano, transforming the trio into one instrument, and at other times they imitate or even contradict the piano's utterances

--Anna-Louise Walton

### **Anna-Louise Walton**

Anna-Louise Walton is an American composer of chamber and electronic music. In her music, she explores concepts of limited development, the notation of improvisatory rhythms, and utilization of found objects. She draws inspiration from natural spaces as well as the sounds and rhythms of everyday life.

Her works have been performed by ensembles such as TAK Ensemble, the Bergamot Quartet, Talea Ensemble, Trio Catch, Fonema Consort, Quatuor Diotima, Mivos Quartet, Surplus Ensemble, Ecce Ensemble, Switch~ Ensemble, and Versipel Collective. Her music has also been featured at MATA Festival, IRCAM's ManiFeste, Darmstadt International Summer Course, Heidelberger Frühling Festival, Schloss Summer Academy, impuls Festival, VIPA Festival, Electric LaTeX Festival, New Music on the Bayou, and highSCORE Festival. In 2019, she was awarded a BMI Student Composer Award. In 2020, she served as a mentor for young composers in MATA Jr. Current projects include a new piece for Ekmeles and a commission from [Switch~ Ensemble] with a grant awarded from New Music USA.

Though Walton did not start composing formally until her junior year at Scripps College, where she received a B.A. in music studying under Tom Flaherty, she grew up playing the piano and singing from a young age. She then went on to study composition at Kunstuniversität Graz with Beat Furrer. Walton received an M.A. in music composition from Tulane University in 2018, where she studied with Rick Snow. She then went on to study Sonology at The Royal Conservatory in The Hague. She is currently pursuing a DMA in composition at Columbia University.

### **Invisible Heritage**

Regarded as a heavy influence on the origin of many Brazilian music styles, Jongo is essentially a rural cultural dance directly associated with the African culture in Brazil. This tradition, a form of expression using singing, dancing, and singing, was brought to the country by Bantus. These people resisted the labor they were forced to endure thanks to the strength of their tradition and of a culture that the distance from their homeland was not able to erase. In the new land, the African cultural identity fits in with a new way of life. Associations and groups of Brazilian artists have begun to reconsider this expression of ancient traditions to keep Brazilian folklore alive. As time went by, some traditions gained a “popular” dimension. The Jongo—an ancient dance—was put aside. Put aside, but not extinct.

--Luis Hermano Bezerra

### **Luis Hermano Bezerra**

Luis Hermano Bezerra is a Brazilian composer, bassist, and arranger primarily focused on mixing his Brazilian roots with the classical legacy. His compositions, which are profoundly influenced by popular dances and musical genres, present a variety of traditional musical expressions from his country of origin. As a bassist, he has recorded and toured with many groups and ensembles in Brazil, namely the Northeast Popular Orchestra and the State University of Ceara Symphony Orchestra.

As an educator in Brazil, he worked as an instructor at the Alberto Nepomuceno Music Conservatory teaching theory, aural training, and bass. In the United States, Luis has been working as a Lab Assistant for the Missouri Summer Composition Institute at the University of Missouri in Columbia. In this same institution, he is also a graduate teaching assistant with the Mizzou New Music Initiative working as an instructor of theory and computer technology.

As a composer, Bezerra's music has been commissioned and performed by ensembles and organizations, namely the [Switch~ Ensemble], Sheldon Arts Foundation in St. Louis, Mizzou Brass Quintet, Mizzou Wind Ensemble, and the Mizzou New Music Ensemble, in Columbia, MO.

Luis is a graduate student for the M.M in the composition program at the School of Music of the University of Missouri, where he was awarded the 2022 Sinefield Prize. He has been studying under the mentorship of Dr. Stefan Freund, Dr. Carolina Heredia, and Dr. Yoshiaki Onishi.

### **soliloquios del viento**

*soliloquios del viento* was commissioned by Royaumont Académie Voix Nouvelles, written in August 2016 and premiered by the Talea Ensemble & EXAUDI, conducted by James Baker. This fourteen-minute work is a meditation on eight poems of Pablo Neruda, reflecting love and distance. Six vocalists are set against eight instrumentalists whose fragile and often voiceless sonorities gently color and obscure the murmuring of the text and pointillistic vocal material. The Spanish text is predominantly unintelligible, with the content of Neruda's words instead conjured by the composite texture. He writes of two lovers, their romance characterized by abrasion – a rendezvous between two scorched, ascetic souls, who consume and destroy one another, entangled yet divided by both sublime transfiguration and inexorable chaos. The revised version for sextet and electronics was completed in May 2017 for Ensemble Interface's premiere at the VIPA Festival in Spain, redistributing

vocal, viola, and saxophone parts to the electronics and ensemble.

Neruda's texts evoke not only the conflict between darkness and light in both persons, but through this lens, the experience of being confronted with the subjectivity of another's consciousness. That otherness is manifest in lurid, destructive passions, revealing mutual incoherence, frailty, and sophism beyond endurance. Each poem seems to present discrete, parallel scenarios, some in which each person is awoken by their confrontation rather than destroyed – in others suffering to the point of intolerable anguish and desolation. Eroticism and sunderance run throughout Neruda's powerful imagery, his lover depicted as an enemy with whom he pleads for voice – who has disgraced their love. For the poet, love is the sole means with which two people may “weather” one another. A source of both euphoria and utter devastation, there is a vastness that is evoked in his texts, an attempt to span immeasurable time and distance. Each braves the other, an intimacy and corrosive embrace that both breaks and absolves each person.

--Jason Thorpe Buchanan

### **Jason Thorpe Buchanan**

Jason Thorpe Buchanan's works explore multiplicity, causality, behavior, and the integration of live performance with technology. A tri-continently active American composer, Jason is Artistic Director of the [Switch~ Ensemble], Chair of Composition, Theory, and Electroacoustic Music at the College of Music, Mahidol University (Thailand), and Interim Managing Director of the Mizzou New Music Initiative at the University of Missouri. Jason is the recipient of a 2010-11 Fulbright Fellowship (Germany), nomination for the 2015 Gaudeamus Prize, an American-Scandinavian Foundation Grant, two ASCAP Morton Gould Awards, the Howard Hanson Orchestral Prize, fellowships and commissions from Royaumont (2016 & 2017), the Mizzou Int'l Composers Festival, MATA, Int'l Horn Society, Eklekto, the Earle Brown Music Foundation, winner of Iron Composer, 2015 AiR at USF Verftet (Norway), and 2018 AiR at the Embassy of Foreign Artists (Switzerland). Commissions have included collaborations with Alarm Will Sound, Talea, Interface (DE), Nikel (Israel), EXAUDI (UK), Slagwerk Den Haag (NL), Eklekto (CH), Iktus Percussion, wild Up, Eastman Musica Nova Ensemble, TACETi, the Blue Water Chamber Orchestra, Académie Voix Nouvelles Ensemble (FR), and the HKNME. Scenes from his multimedia opera *Hunger* received performances at Darmstadt, The Industry's FIRST TAKE (L.A.), and MATA (NYC). He holds a Ph.D. from the Eastman School of Music and has served as Visiting Lecturer in Composition & Interim Director of the Electronic Music Studios (UTEMS) at the Butler School of Music, UT Austin, Executive Director of the VIPA Festival (Spain), Curator for the San Francisco Center for New Music, and Director of the Academy for Young Composers at TICF (Thailand). He is widely sought as a guest composer at institutions such as the University of Chicago, Stanford, TRANSIT (Belgium), MATA, YST Conservatory (Singapore), Chamber Music Campania (Italy), the Bangkok Metropolitan Orchestra, the Bergen Center for Elektronisk Kunst (Norway), and dozens of Universities throughout the United States. [www.jasonthorpebuchanan.com](http://www.jasonthorpebuchanan.com)

### ***The [Switch~ Ensemble]***

A new music ensemble for the 21st Century, the [Switch~ Ensemble] is dedicated to the creation of new works for chamber ensemble: we bring bold new acoustic, electroacoustic, and multimedia projects to life. At the core of each performance is our commitment to the total integration of technology and live musicians. We strive for compelling artistry achieved through the seamless creation, production, and execution of new music, and believe that working directly with composers—in a medium where the score is a point of departure rather than a finish line—allows for new and thrilling musical possibilities.

[Switch~] contributes to the future of the genre by strongly advocating for and commissioning the music of a new generation of emerging young composers. We have enjoyed fruitful collaborations with both emerging and established composers. Recent engagements include performances and residencies at Cornell, Bard College,

the University of Chicago, Ithaca College, Buffalo State University, UC Berkeley, the VIPA Festival (Spain), Eastman School of Music, and Avaloch Farms Music Institute, as well as concerts at the Image/Sound Festival, San Francisco Center for New Music, MATA Interval Series, NYCEMF, Vanguard New Music Series at Kent State University, the Queens New Music Festival, the CD release of Christopher Chandler's *Smoke and Mirrors* on the SEAMUS label, CD releases with composers Juraj Kojcs and Stephen Yip, and more.

Based in New York City and founded in 2012 at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, the [Switch~ Ensemble] looks toward the future of contemporary music. Dedicated to performing high-level chamber music integrated with cutting-edge technology and supporting emerging and early career composers, we are passionate about helping to build a diverse canon of 21st century works that leaves space for all voices—especially those that have historically been excluded from our field. Upcoming engagements include premieres of new commissions from Kelley Sheehan, Forbes Graham, Anna-Louise Walton, Santiago Diez-Fischer, Leilehua Lanzilotti, and Sam Pluta in New York City, and residencies at the University of Missouri, Colby College, and the University at Buffalo. Our 2021-22 season has been made possible with support from the Amphion Foundation, New Music USA, the MAP Fund, Pro Helvetia, the Copland Fund, and the friendly support of the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung. [www.switchensemble.com](http://www.switchensemble.com)

### ***Mizzou New Music Initiative***

The Mizzou New Music Initiative brings together an array of programs intended to position the University of Missouri School of Music as a leading center in the areas of composition and new music. The Initiative is the direct result of the generous support of Dr. Jeanne and Mr. Rex Sinquefield, and the Sinquefield Charitable Foundation. The Sinquefields' vision is to create an incubator for the composition and performance of new music, and to position Missouri as a major center for the music of tomorrow.