



School of Music
University of Missouri

2021-2022 Series | Student Ensemble

Mizzou New Music Ensemble

Valentina Arango Sánchez, flutes

Andrew Wiele, clarinets

Johanny Veiga Barbosa, violin

Andy Lewis, cello

Stephen Landy, percussion

Jordan Nielsen, percussion

Eve Werger, piano

Daniel Fitzpatrick, piano

Yoshiaki Onishi, conductor and director

with special guests

Emily Shaw, soprano

Jack Snelling, piano

February 27, 2022 • 7:30pm

Sheryl Crow Hall

Program

Night Blossoms (2017)..... **Ben Colagiovanni**
(b. 1993)

Sagittarius (2021) *..... **Vitor Gorni**
(b. 1955)

Nubian Dances No. 1 (2013) **Fred Onovwerosuoke**
(b. 1960)

Intermission

the things I heard on the radio (2021) * **Emily Shaw**
(b. 2000)

City Swing (2019) **Jack Snelling**
(b. 2000)

*world premiere

Program Notes and Composer Biographies

Night Blossoms (2017)

This composition is deeply significant to me due to the fact that I started composing it a few months before I became seriously ill with an intestinal parasite during the summer of 2016 and didn't finish writing it until I had recovered a year later. The piece is based on a Paul Klee painting from 1930 called "Blossoms in the Night" but, due to the circumstances surrounding its composition, in the years since I finished writing this piece I've also come to think of it as a representation of what can blossom when we face adversity and persevere through the dark night of hardship in search of personal growth and fulfillment. I generally try not to tell people what to listen for in my music in the hopes that they can glean from it what they wish, but listeners might find it helpful to know that the entire piece is based on the opening melodic statement.

-- Ben Colagiovanni

Ben Colagiovanni is a composer and pianist currently based in Los Angeles where he is studying jazz performance, arranging, and composition with Alan Pasqua. Ben has had his music performed by several notable ensembles, including the St. Louis Symphony, Deviant Septet, and Zodiac Trio, as well as multiple jazz luminaries including Christian McBride, Sean Jones, and Randy Brecker. Ben is a proud graduate of the University of Missouri School of Music, where he earned a B.M. in Music Composition under the guidance of Stefan Freund, Carolina Heredia, and W. Thomas McKenney. He also studied classical piano at Mizzou with Peter Miyamoto, and additionally has been mentored by Hal Crook and Gretchen Parlato. When he isn't composing, practicing, or performing Ben enjoys long drives up and down the Pacific Coast Highway, walks along Dockweiler Beach, and cheering on the Los Angeles Lakers.

Sagittarius (2021)

Sagittarius was composed in September of 2021. Johanny Veiga Barbosa, the violinist of the Mizzou New Music Ensemble, and Stefan Freund, the ensemble's co-director at that time invited me to compose a piece for them. After watching several performances of the group online, I started the composition. *Sagittarius* was written vertically; the melody and harmony, played by various instrumental combinations, intertwine and complement each other. The piece also has a modulating characteristic with which I intended to create harmonic and melodic "surprises." The piece is in a suite form where the movements are played one after another without interruption. As I developed this piece, the harmonic and melodic characteristics reminded me of the Universe, the constellations in the various planetary systems. *Sagittarius* is one of the oldest constellations traced in the sky, which explains why it has several legends associated with it. It is also located in the center of the Milky Way and is one of the most crowded constellations with celestial objects. I was born in December and am a *Sagittarius*, so I took advantage of the astrological sign for the inspiration for this composition and naming of the piece.

-- Vitor Gorni (translated by Johanny Veiga Barbosa)

Vitor Hugo Gorni is an avid Brazilian composer, arranger, conductor, and instrumentalist, trained in both classical and popular traditions. Gorni started his musical studies at the age of 7 with the professor and conductor Maestro Andréa Nuzzi. Later he continued his instrumental studies with his uncle Dorival Gorni and with Sebastião Alcântara. He was trained in theory and solfège studies at the private music college Faculdade de Música Mães de Deus (Londrina, Brazil) and later he pursued a postgraduate degree in conducting. He took

lessons in composition and conducting with the well-known Brazilian conductor Maestro Othonio Benvenuto da Silva. Gorni also worked for 30 years as a professional clarinetist in the Symphonic Orchestra of the University of Londrina (OSUEL), where he had the opportunity to serve as a guest conductor and have several of his compositions and arrangements performed by the orchestra. Gorni acted for 18 years as the conductor and artistic director of the Orchestra of Winds Ensemble in Paranavaí (Brazil), where he actively participated in the regional musical movement in both pedagogical and artistic areas. Gorni also participated in several recordings and shows as an instrumentalist, musical director, and arranger where the following CDs were recorded: Vitor Gorni Entre Amigos (Vitor Gorni and friends) and Vitor Gorni Entre Eles (Vitor Gorni with the guys), Big Band Paranavaí, and the Londrina Big Band, the latter being awarded by the prestigious bank Itaú Cultural.

Nubian Dances (2013)

Nubian Dances alludes to ancient Sahelian traditions along the Nile River. A set of four tone poems highlighting a wide scope of belief systems – the juvenile exuberance of courtship (*Nubian Dances No. 1*, commissioned by Chicago State University, with gratitude to the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence, for MAVerick Ensemble of Chicago), the joy and fortitude of marriage (*Nubian Dances No. 2*), the hopes of fertility and procreation (*Nubian Dances No. 3*), and the mysteries of life, death, transition and reincarnation (*Nubian Dances No. 4*). Collectively, each work of sorts is inspired by a mosaic of dance imagery.

-- Fred Onovwerosuoke

Born in Ghana to Nigerian parents, award-winning composer **Fred Onovwerosuoke** grew up in both countries before settling in the United States. “FredO,” as friends call him, has spent time in over thirty African countries researching and analyzing some of Africa’s rich music traditions. FredO has also traveled in the American Deep South, the Caribbean, and South America for comparative research in what he calls “traceable musical Africanisms.” In 1994 he founded the St. Louis African Chorus to help nurture African choral music as mainstream repertoire for performance and education in America. Today, the organization’s mission has broadened to include classical/art music by lesser-known composers particularly of African descent and renamed Intercultural Music Initiative.

Onovwerosuoke’s works have been featured in audio recordings, films, documentaries, and radio, including Robert De Niro’s film *The Good Shepherd* and three CDs. He has received awards from ASCAP, the American Music Center, Meet-the-Composer, and Brannen-Cooper Brothers. His books and music have been published by Oxford University Press and AM Publishers. Onovwerosuoke serves on the boards of various organizations and maintains an active schedule as composer-in-residence, guest conductor, and speaker on the subject of art music by African descent composers.

the things I heard on the radio (2021)

the things I heard on the radio is an exploration of the fuzzy world between radio stations. The dark static wraps around the strings and sporadic lines break the static blanket. As the radio picks up on signals from the beyond, fragments of channels come through. Melodies swirl in and out of existence and textures grow and change.

-- Emily Shaw

Emily Shaw is a collector of sounds. She is most interested in using composition as musical world building, creating soundscapes through instrumental and electronic mediums. Sometimes whimsical, sometimes painful,

Emily is fascinated by invoking feelings in the listener that cannot always be named. As a senior undergraduate of music composition at the University of Missouri, her works have been performed by ensembles such as Khemia Ensemble, Quatuor Diotima, the Tesla Quartet, and Mizzou New Music Ensemble. She currently studies composition under Dr. Stefan Freund.

City Swing (2019)

City Swing is a piece of appreciation, dedicated to jazz: the first genre of music I fell in love with. There is always an emphasis on the skill and knowledge of the performer just like most genres, however, more important is the aspect of communication. Rhythm sections and small combos are defined by the way in which they communicate (the “feel” of the group). Ahmad Jamal, one of the most influential jazz pianists and composers in history, is a fantastic concert pianist in his own right. However, when he plays with his trio, he’s a minimalist, only adding exactly what’s required to benefit the “feel” of the group. He’s like a limb of a cohesive unit, where the combo is intrinsically together despite each player improvising their own part. Communication and conversation were major themes in the writing of this piece.

I wrote this piece with the styles of many different American musicians in mind, and each of these musicians influenced the way I play, compose, and think about music. This list includes Count Basie, McCoy Tyner, Bill Evans, Freddie Green, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Milt Jackson, Art Blakey, Duke Ellington, and many others.

-- Jack Snelling

Jack Snelling is an American composer, pianist, and bassoonist, whose influences span many genres from Oscar Peterson and Lili Boulanger to Earth, Wind, and Fire and Ben Folds. His music is commonly characterized by emphasizing improvisation and creativity within interesting parameters. It is not easy to fit Jack’s works into one or two boxes, either; he describes his style as a meshing of all the different artists and performers that inspire him, regardless of their backgrounds or genres.

Hailing from St. Louis, Jack is currently in his fourth year of study towards bachelor’s degrees in Composition and Geography at the University of Missouri-Columbia. As a composer, he is a recipient of the MNMI Composition Scholarship, and his works have been played by a variety of groups, including the the 442’s, Quatuor Diotima, Khemia Ensemble, Tesla Quartet, Matt Wilson, the Mizzou New Music Ensemble, and more. He additionally serves as the pianist of Mizzou’s Concert Jazz Band and the principal bassoonist in the University Wind Ensemble and the University Philharmonic Orchestra. Jack was formerly a founding member of professional Columbia-based jazz quartet Sharp the Nine, and he serves as the president of Mizzou’s chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia.

Jack would like to thank his family and friends for their continued support, and the numerous teachers over the years who continue to inspire him today. He also thanks Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield for their continued support of his musical career. He currently studies composition with Dr. Stefan Freund.

Mizzou New Music Ensemble

The Mizzou New Music Ensemble is dedicated to promoting new music at Mizzou through performances on and off campus. The Ensemble is the repertory group for the Mizzou New Music Initiative, working with faculty, students, and visiting composers, and giving public performances on campus and in the community. The Ensemble is comprised of eight University of Missouri graduate students under the direction of Stefan Freund, a cellist, composer, conductor, professor of composition, and artistic director of the Mizzou New Music Initia-

tive and Yoshiaki Onishi, composer, conductor, clarinetist and Postdoctoral Fellow of Music Composition at the University of Missouri School of Music.

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.