

University of Missouri School of Music  
M.M. Degree Recital • 2021-2022 Series

# Luminous Cycles

## Jordan Nielsen, Percussion

March 19, 2022 • 12:30 PM • Sinefield Music Center • Sheryl Crow Hall

### Program

*Gravity*..... **Marc Mellits**

*percussion quintet*

Featuring: Riley Berens, Liz Fetzer, Darren Long, and Emily Miclon

*Aphasia* ..... **Mark Applebaum**

*for singer and tape*

*As One*..... **Gene Koshinski**

*percussion duo*

Featuring: Jeremiah Ingram

*The Spiral on Your Back*..... **José Martínez**

*for percussion, creative performer, and live electronics*

*Luminosity*..... **Tomasz Goliński**

Mvt. 1

Mvt. 2

*solo marimba*

*Branches* ..... **David Ibbett**

*marimba and bass clarinet duo with electronic tracks*

Featuring: Dr. Yoshiaki Onishi

*This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music Performance degree in percussion performance. Jordan Nielsen is a student of Dr. Megan Arns.*

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Requests for accommodations related to disability need to be made to building coordinator, Susan Worstell, 206 Sinquefield Music Center, 573-884-1604, at least seven days in advance of the event. Events are subject to change. For up-to-date information, please visit our web site:  
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# Luminous Cycles

## *MM Percussion Recital*

March 19, 2022, 12:30 PM | Sinquefield Music Center | Sheryl Crow Hall

### THE PROGRAM

#### *Gravity* by Marc Mellits

Commissioned in 2013, *Gravity* is a keyboard percussion quartet (2 vibraphones and 2 marimbas) with the option of an additional bass marimba part. In Oliver Neil Molina's thesis, "The Percussion Music of Marc Mellits: 1996-2016" he describes Mellits' own portrayal of the work "as having different textures that fall, combine, and get increasingly faster; these textures produce a 'gravitational pull in the music.'" Listeners can expect to be quickly engaged by the wall of sound produced by the performers in unison rhythm and pitch. This line then begins to shift into ascending and descending arpeggiated chord progressions that seem to bounce around the ensemble and return to unison. As is characteristic of Mellits' music, the piece progresses with sudden shifts in tempi and pushes to the end.

- Jordan Nielsen

#### *Aphasia* by Mark Applebaum

*Aphasia*, conceived originally for singer and two-channel tape, was commissioned by the Groupe de Recherches Musicales in Paris, and composed for virtuoso singer Nicholas Isherwood. The tape, an idiosyncratic explosion of warped and mangled sounds, is made up exclusively of vocal samples—all sung by Isherwood and subsequently transformed digitally. Against the backdrop of this audio narrative, the singer performs an elaborate set of hand gestures, and assiduously choreographed sign language of sorts. Each gesture is fastidiously synchronized to the tape in tight rhythmic coordination.

The eccentricity of the hand gestures is perhaps upstaged only by the observation that the singer, however extraordinary, produces no sound in concert. (In fact, the role of the "singer" may be taken by any performer of suitably enthusiastic inclination and conviction.) In that regard, *Aphasia* may be the first piece in the vocal canon that can be performed even when the singer has laryngitis.

Isherwood deemed the piece's rigid synchronization impossible (except perhaps for a dancer) and instead championed a looser, more improvised version I call *Aphasia—Dialect*. (He also included an excerpt from the score in his seminal book *The Techniques of Singing*, Bärenreiter Verlag, 2013.)

Considering his pronouncement a challenge, I learned the piece (it took me four months of constant work to memorize it) and made a video of my performance. The video subsequently attracted dozens of performers—mostly intrepid percussionists—to learn the piece. Ironically it has become my most performed recent piece: I know of some 58 players who champion it and have played it in 17 countries in nearly 200 performances since 2011.

Beginning first with the "Isopangram" movement of *Straitjacket* and then with *Aphasia*, the hand gestures have since been used in several subsequent pieces. They now constitute what I think of as a nonsense sign language of more than 200 gestures. These are catalogued by various qualities such as height; one- versus two-handedness; and whether the gesture lends itself to a static pose, variable rhythmic articulation, or a continuous motion.

- Mark Applebaum

#### *As One* by Gene Koshinski

Multiple percussion duo scored for 5.0-octave marimba, 2 sets of bongos, 2 congas, 2 toms, 1 concert bass drum, and 2 splash cymbals. Both performers have identical set-ups and work "as one" by complementing each

other with complex hocketed music played on marimba (shared: one player on each side) and multiple percussion.

- Gene Koshinski

*The Spiral on Your Back* by José Martínez

This piece is at the same time many pieces. It is about the idea of resignifying an object by changing its context. With this in mind, one could say this piece consists of two components: a fixed part – the one that is notated – created by the composer, and a flexible part – five loops – created by the performer. The type of loop the performer creates, will completely resignify the perception of the music I wrote; thus, he has the power to create a new interaction between the parts, creating a new piece every time it is performed.

*How is this related to a trip and Suitcase Commissions?* The whole idea came up to me after my first travel to Europe. When we travel we usually have a point of departure and a point of arrival but there are always many possible paths to reach our final destination. One Could take path A, B or C and still arrive to the same place. Path A could be a rocky mountain, B a flat valley and C a highway. In this piece the destination is set but the performer gets to choose the path to take.

- José Martínez

*Luminosity* by Tomasz Goliński

*Luminosity* consists of two movements. The first movement shows a mysterious and dark climate which is reflected in the choral and contrasting rhythmical sections. The second movement contains many virtuosic, fast and furious sections which can be a challenge for any marimba performer. It shows new technical ideas such as repeated extremely fast single or double notes creating the background for the melodic material which is gradually building up in combination with rhythmical irregularities. This piece won the first prize of the Universal Marimba Composition Competition 2010 in Belgium and it has been selected as a set-piece of the same competition in 2013.

- note from the publisher

*Branches* by David Ibbett

I began collaborating with Transient Canvas in early 2015 and was immediately drawn to the many deft and detailed rhythms that emerged organically from clarinet slaps and stabs marimba tones and resonator clangs. I was excited to combine these sounds in complex layers, and thus began a process of electronic sampling and experimentation – *Branches* is the result. Over the course of the piece, contrasting grooves branch out from a central trunk, interweaving lyrical melodies with dance rhythms in an expanding world of sound.”

- David Ibbett



## **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*. Jordan attended Southern Utah University and was able to study with the percussionist, Dr. Lynn Vartan. 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 Daniel Vega, Daniel Fitzpatrick, Niko

Schroeder, and Yoshiaki Onishi. At MU he is currently studying with Dr. Megan Arns, pursuing his Master of Music Performance and an Arts Entrepreneurship Certificate.

He quickly realized a love for teaching, specifically in private studio settings along his undergraduate degree path. While at SUU he taught many lessons to students ranging from 5-to 70 years of age. He has taught all areas 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 and is the current Percussion Coach for the Missouri Symphony Conservatory. Under his leadership, the HHS front ensemble has achieved many high rankings in competitive marching events including the title “Best Percussion Section.”

As a regularly gigging percussionist, Jordan performed with the Missouri Symphony during their summer festival “Hot Summer Nights” and their annual holiday special “Symphony of Toys.” 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.

Jordan currently is interning as the assistant to the Director of Education and Outreach at the Missouri Symphony. In the upcoming summer and fall seasons, Jordan manages the tours and performs with Heartland Marimba. Jordan has also worked as an audio engineer for the Heritage Center Theater, and Simon Fest Theater Company, and on 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. More about him and his work can be found at his website: [jnpercussion.com](http://jnpercussion.com).



### **Riley Berens**

Riley Berens is a Junior at the University of Missouri pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Music Education. He attended Lafayette High school in west county St. Louis, Missouri under the direction of Jay Long and Brad Balog. During his high school career, he was recognized both on the district and state level for solo performances and received the John Philip Sousa award for outstanding musicianship as a senior. Riley was also a very involved and active member of the marching arts, which started in the Lafayette Lancer Regiment and ultimately fostered a love for playing keyboard percussion. From there, he went on to perform in award-winning organizations like Freedom Percussion, Shadow Drum and Bugle

Corps, and the Blue Stars Drum and Bugle Corps all before coming to Mizzou.

At the University of Missouri-Columbia, Riley stays very involved playing in many of our university’s music ensembles, such as the University Percussion Ensemble, the University of Missouri Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble, and the Laboratory Ensemble to stay on top of his music education duties of learning secondary instruments and conducting large ensemble rehearsals. Outside of practicing for ensembles and preparing for lessons, Riley loves to grow and learn about many different varieties of houseplants. His primary educator at the university is the wonderful and inspiring Dr. Megan Arns, whom he takes private lessons under to prepare for juries and a senior recital soon. He will have his student teaching semester in the Fall of 2023 and is incredibly excited to go on to teach secondary music education.



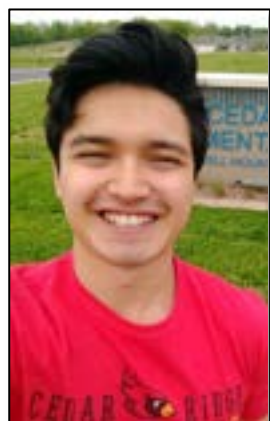
### **Liz Fetzler**

Liz Fetzler is a Junior at the University of Missouri pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Music in Percussion Performance. She attended Kickapoo High school in Springfield, Missouri where she was avidly involved in the Kickapoo Golden Arrow Band and Winter Drumline. She was recognized both on the district and state level during her high school career and performed at MMEA with the Springfield Youth Symphony and Missouri All-State Band.

At the University of Missouri, Liz is very involved and finds herself playing in many ensembles. Although her time has been spent among many groups, she especially loves her time spent with the University Percussion Ensemble, Tiger Pans, and World Percussion Ensemble. Additionally, she enjoys her time participating in the University of Missouri Wind Ensemble and currently works as the Percussion Coordinator for the Columbia Civic Orchestra. Her primary teachers are Dr. Megan Arns and Dr. Troy Hall. Liz hopes to continue her musical education by pursuing a graduate degree in Percussion Performance.

### **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).



### **Darren Long**

Darren Long is a percussionist and music educator from Branson, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the University of Missouri - Columbia, where he studied under Dr. Megan Arns and Mr. William James. Darren has taught with several ensembles in Missouri including the Blue Springs, Battle, and Rockbridge High School Marching Bands. He was a member of Gateway Indoor Percussion during their 2016 season, marched two years as a snare drummer with Marching Mizzou, and spent two tours with the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps (2018, 2019), where he aged out as section leader and center marimba. Darren currently teaches K-5 music at Cedar Ridge Elementary in Columbia, Missouri, and teaches with River City Rhythm Drum and Bugle Corps in Anoka, Minnesota during the summers.

### **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. She was an active participant in music ensembles and a selected performer for the New England Intercollegiate Band Festival in 2018 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.



### **Yoshiaki Onishi**

Japanese-American composer, conductor, and clarinetist Yoshiaki Onishi received his doctorate in music composition from Columbia University in New York in 2015. He is currently the Postdoctoral Fellow in Music Composition at the University of Missouri School of Music. As a composer, he is interested in exploring a wide range of instrumental timbres and finding ways to incorporate them in musical syntaxes and forms that disrupt the sense of expectation. Noted by a New York Times critic Anthony Tommasini for its "varied, eerily alluring sounds," Onishi's music has been performed worldwide by organizations such as New Japan Philharmonic, Asko|Schönberg Ensemble, Klangforum Wien, Nieuw Ensemble, Distractfold Ensemble, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Quatuor Diotima and JACK Quartet. With his 2010 work *Départ dans...*, Onishi became the laureate of the Gaudeamus Prize 2011. He is named a 2018 Guggenheim Fellow. Other recent honors include the Fromm Commission in 2018 and an artistic residency fellowship from Civitella

Ranieri Foundation in Umbertide, Italy. His works are published by Edition Gravis in Berlin, Germany.

As a conductor deeply engaged in promoting the music of today, Onishi currently serves as Director to the Mizzou New Music Ensemble at the University of Missouri. Recent conducting engagements include a portrait concert of Makoto Shinohara at Tokyo Opera City in July 2021. He was one of the founding members of Ensemble Exophonie Tokyo and served as its Artistic Director/Conductor/Composer Associate, as well as a member of IKTUS+, a collective of musicians initiated by Iktus Percussion Ensemble of New York. Onishi has conducted Nieuw Ensemble, ECCE Ensemble, Talea Ensemble, Wet Ink Ensemble, Yale Philharmonia, Ekmeles Vocal Ensemble, working closely with composers of his generation.

Increasingly active as a re-emerged clarinetist and improviser in recent years, Onishi has collaborated with composers George Lewis, Carolina Heredia, Oswald Huynh, Bret Bohman, and Andrew Crossley. Together with Santiago Beis, he plays in the Onishi-Beis Duo, an improvisation duo with live electronics.

LinkTree: <https://linktr.ee/YoshiakiOnishi>