



School of Music
University of Missouri

2022-2023 Series | Large Ensemble

University Percussion Ensemble

Megan Arns, director

Alex Baur
Riley Berens
Miles Bohlman
Jacob Deeter
Mary Emmons
Liz Fetzer
Grace Gard
Olin Guillotte
Chloe Hart
Sarah Hasekamp
Calvin Hinton
Jeremiah Ingram
Colton Johnson
Arren Mallott
Mac McPike
Olivia Sletteland
Emma Smallen
Michael Tiffany
Ethan Welker
Savannah Wittman

March 12, 2023 | 3:00pm
Sheryl Crow Hall

Program

***Trances I* for percussion quartet (2020)..... Ivan Trevino**

Calvin Hinton, Michael Tiffany, Ethan Welker, Savannah Wittman

***Trekking* for percussion quartet and electronics (2023) María Laura Disandro**

Miles Bohlman, Mary Emmons, Sarah Hasekamp, Olivia Sletteland

***Symmetry and Sharing* for SATB percussion quartet (2015) Andrea Mazzariello**

Alex Baur, Miles Bohlman, Mary Emmons, Grace Gard,
Chloe Hart, Sarah Hasekamp, Jeremiah Ingram, Emma Smallen

Intermission

***Triple Point* for percussion quartet (2018) Ayanna Woods**

Riley Berens, Jacob Deeter, Olin Guillotte, Emma Smallen

***Aura* for four percussionists (2011) Anna Thorvaldsdottir**

Sarah Hasekamp, Jeremiah Ingram, Arren Mallott, Mac McPike

***Pillar III* for percussion quartet (2020)..... Andy Akiho**

Mary Emmons, Liz Fetzer, Colton Johnson, Olivia Sletteland

Program Notes

***Trances I* for percussion quartet (2020) by Ivan Trevino**

Trances is a percussion quartet written in three movements. The piece was commissioned by the Green Vibes Project through a consortium of 27 musicians from around the world. *Trances* explores different mediums that induce trance-like states in humans, like flashing lights, smart phone addiction, and hypnotic religious practices.

Trance I is written for mixing bowls and smartphones. Played with dim concert lighting, the goal is to use the bowls to cover and uncover the bright screens of each phone, producing various visual lighting patterns from player to player. The performers create rhythmic interplay by striking the bowls with sticks as they are raised and lowered. The smartphones also produce a pre-composed audio drone, which is manipulated via the movement of the bowls, creating hypnotic, wah-wah pedal type effects.

- Note by the Composer

***Trekking* for percussion quartet and electronics (2023) by María Laura Disandro**

The walking trail Fuente de la Bicha is a place in Granada, Spain where people go for doing sports: walking, running, riding bicycles, etc. People in groups, with their families, alone, old people with walking sticks, children with toys, young people, and adults use to go on Sundays to take some fresh air and renew for the new week that is coming. I used to go there and one day I decided to keep that place as a memory making a recording of that sonorous landscape. *Trekking* aims to express a new imaginary world and intends to transform the recording of that moment of my life into something different. Other soundscapes recordings made in Galicia, Spain, and a timbral percussion quartet contributed to creating this fictional space and telling the story.

- Note by the Composer

***Symmetry and Sharing* for SATB percussion quartet (2015) by Andrea Mazzariello**

Symmetry and Sharing was commissioned by Mobius Percussion, and premiered at Indiana University of Pennsylvania on September 16, 2015. The piece is dedicated to David Degge, Mika Godbole, Yumi Tamashiro, and Frank Tyl, with gratitude for their courage and conviction; and to Robert Honstein, whose offhand generosity inspired the text.

When Mobius approached me and asked me to compose something for them, I don't think they had this in mind; they had heard or played in some of my earlier percussion quartets and wanted something in the same vein, hocketing and metric modulations, heavy beats, etc. I knew, though, of their interest in speaking and singing as part of their performance practice, and that idea really captured my interest. Their voices, by coincidence, mapped onto traditional SATB vocal ranges, so the piece became about how much four humans could reasonably be expected to do as percussionists and singers simultaneously.

I wrote the text as the piece unfolded, and after my friend Robert Honstein made a passing comment that I found quite moving: I'd been withdrawing a bit at a show and he said something like "come back to us, I see you going away." The words became about this imperative, but funneled into domestic or pedestrian concerns: "unmake your bed, unwind your watch." Until they get darker.

- Note by the Composer

***Triple Point* for percussion quartet (2018) by Ayanna Woods**

The triple point of a pure substance is the temperature and pressure where it can be a solid, liquid, and gas in equilibrium. That sounds a lot more tranquil than it actually is; you can find videos online of liquid bubbling into gas, rapidly freezing and then exploding and melting into liquid again. In some ways it's always the same, and in some ways, it never stops moving. It's something that's stable on the one hand, and colliding with itself on the other. This title came out of one of our workshops together as the piece was taking shape. We talked about the sound world being meditative and groovy at the same time. That's something that I tried to lean into

as I was writing.

Triple Point was composed as part of Third Coast Percussion's 2017-2018 Emerging Composers Partnership, made possible by generous support from Louise K. Smith, with additional support from the Sargent Family Foundation.

- Note by the Composer

Aura for four percussionists (2011) by Anna Thorvaldsdottir

If the word “aura” is defined as a pervasive atmosphere, then it’s a perfect title for this piece by Anna Thorvaldsdottir, who has a knack for creating vivid sonic environments. Like much of the Icelandic composer’s music, *Aura* teems with extraordinary sounds. They can strike you as otherworldly or born of electronics, but instead they are organic and acoustic, like transmissions from beneath the earth’s crust. It is music that befits an island engendered by eons of volcanic activity.

Revised especially for the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet, Thorvaldsdottir’s gently rumbling, crepuscular music oozes from blackness. It turns out she also has a cinematic eye for atmosphere, calling for a darkened stage with the audience seated around the musicians. The players’ fingers should be illuminated, their shadows projected onto the wall. “The performers become moving lights,” she writes in her performance notes.

The piece opens with the quiet hum of a bowed vibraphone and the swishing of fingers massaging the skin of a bass drum. Soft mallets on metal tubes sound a wind-chime motif that acts as a recurring talisman. Large cowbells are scraped with drumsticks, a gong is tickled with a wire brush and even bows are bowed, with one tip planted on a bass drum. It’s an exceptional storehouse of sound in service to the luminous, evocative textures and timbres — smartly assembled — that have quickly come to identify Thorvaldsdottir as a singular voice in contemporary music.

- Note by Tom Huizenga

Pillar III for percussion quartet (2020) by Andy Akiho

Seven Pillars by Andy Akiho explores the free spaces created within an organized structure. This evening-length work, comprising seven quartets and four solos, began with its central movement, *Pillar IV*. Originally commissioned as a stand-alone work, this piece contained a rigorous structure and motivic content that Akiho felt compelled to expand beyond its 10-minute capsule. *Pillar IV* became the nucleus for “Seven Pillars,” containing the DNA from which the other six quartets are built.

Pillar III brings us back to earth from *Pillar II*'s otherworldly experience with its firm rhythmic underpinning. Interlocking figures dance around each other and then snap into unison. We are treated to Akiho’s version of a backbeat—in 13 beats rather than in 4— which is layered with complex variations that culminate into a fire-alarm of sound. This irreconcilable tumult collapses into a sedated coda, recuperating from the previous blows.

Pillar III was commissioned by and dedicated to Sandbox Percussion with support from the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University.

- Note by Jonny Allen

About the Director

Dr. Megan Arns is a percussionist, ethnomusicologist, and educator with a diverse set of skills and a driven passion for her craft. She is an Associate Professor at the University of Missouri in Columbia, MO where she has served as Director of Percussion Studies since 2014. Recent past faculty positions include Mansfield University in Pennsylvania and the National Music Conservatory in Amman, Jordan where she was also the Principal Timpanist of the Amman Symphony Orchestra. She is a section member of the New Hampshire Music Festival during the summers and has also performed with the St. Louis, Tallahassee, Sarasota, Missouri, Northwest Florida, Albany, Southern Tier and Macon Symphony Orchestras.

Active as a contemporary chamber percussionist, Megan's recent highlights include collaborative performances in Spain, France, India, Jordan, Costa Rica, Ghana, and the United States at venues such as the Kennedy Center, Millennium Park, Smithsonian Institution, and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention. Megan regularly performs with two contemporary chamber groups: the [Switch~ Ensemble] – an electroacoustic ensemble based out of New York, and DRAX – a saxophone and percussion duo in residence at Mizzou. Through these groups, she has commissioned and premiered dozens of works with living composers.

Megan received her D.M.A. in Percussion Performance & Literature and M.A. in Ethnomusicology at the Eastman School of Music. She was also awarded performance degrees from Florida State University (M.M.) and Truman State University (B.M.), where she was recognized as a Presser Scholar. Her primary teachers include Michael Burritt, John W. Parks IV, Michael Bump, Musekiwa Chingodza, Emmanuel Agbeli, and Nyoman Suadin. Megan endorses Vic Firth Sticks & Mallets, Pearl/Adams Musical Instruments, Black Swamp Percussion, Remo Drumheads, and Zildjian Cymbals.