

Mayhem by Daniel Montoya Jr.

Daniel Montoya Jr.'s *Mayhem* is an ode to his newborn baby girl. Composed as an "alternative" to the common lullaby-style pieces composers often conjure up for their children, this medium work for large percussion ensemble lovingly kicks at you right from the start. It centers around a rhythmic theme based on his daughter's name: "Mara, Mara Mayhem."

While remaining accessible to developing performers, *Mayhem* navigates many different time signatures while retaining a strong sense of groove throughout. A catchy melody and occasional backbeat give the listener a sense of stability in between kicking sessions! *Mayhem* was commissioned by Megan Wike & Ridgeview Middle School (Round Rock, TX), in honor of their 2016 performance at The Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois.

Bacchanale by Alan Hovhaness

Alan Hovhaness was an American composer of Armenian ancestry. He was one of the most prolific 20th-century composers, with his official catalog comprising 67 numbered symphonies (surviving manuscripts indicate over 70) and 434 opus numbers. The true tally is well over 500 surviving works, since many opus numbers comprise two or more distinct works. *The Boston Globe* music critic Richard Buell wrote: "Although he has been stereotyped as a self-consciously Armenian composer, his output assimilates the music of many cultures. What may be most American about all of it is the way it turns its materials into a kind of exoticism. The atmosphere is hushed, reverential, mystical, nostalgic." *Bacchanale* is a haunting piece for five percussionists scored for all metal pitched and non-pitched instruments.

Ogoun Badagris by Christopher Rouse

Ogoun Badagris derives its inspiration from Haitian drumming patterns, particularly those of the Juba Dance. Hence, it seemed logical to tie in the work with various aspects of Voodoo ritual. Ogoun Badagris is one of the most terrible and violent of all Voodoo loas (deities) and he can be appeased only by human blood sacrifice. This work may thus be interpreted as a dance of appeasement. The four conga drums often act as the focal point in the work and can be compared with the role of the four most basic drums in the Voodoo religion – the be-be, the seconde, the maman, and the asator. The metal plates and sleighbells are to a certain extent parallels of the Haitian ogan. The work begins with a brief *action de grace*, a ceremonial call-to-action in which the high priest shakes the giant rattle known as the asson, here replaced by cabasa. Then the principal dance begins, a *grouillere*: this is a highly erotic and even brutally sexual ceremonial dance which in turn is succeeded by the *Danse Vaudou* at the point at which demonic possession occurs. The word "reler", which the performers must shriek at the conclusion of the work, is the Voodoo equivalent of the Judaeo-Christian *amen*.

Watercolor Sun by Ivan Trevino

Watercolor Sun was commissioned by the Grammy Award winning ensemble, Third Coast Percussion. It was written for the quartet to perform on one single 4.3 octave marimba. I've been

friends with the members of Third Coast for many years, and have watched them from afar with much admiration. It brings me great joy to write music for them.

There are moments in life that create a feeling I can't quite describe. Like waking up in a sunlight room, or sharing a meal with old friends, or going on a road trip with someone you love. There's a jovial, euphoric feeling to it. I feel it when I catch the sunrise with my family, and I feel it when I play music too. Maybe it is gratitude, or peace, or something in between. Whatever this feeling is, it is at the heart of *Watercolor Sun*.

-Ivan Trevino

Derivative by Jlin

Derivative is a part of a seven-movement work *Perspective*, that was written for Third Coast Percussion through a highly collaborative process. Jlin visited TCP at their studio in Chicago multiple times to discuss their musical inspirations and new possibilities, and to explore and sample instruments from TCP's vast collection of percussion sounds. She then created the first version of each of the work's seven movements in FL Studio (a Digital Audio Workstation) using these samples and other sounds from her own library.

The members of Third Coast Percussion then set about determining how to realize these pieces in live performance. Jlin provided the ensemble recordings of the full tracks as well as the stems (individual recorded parts) that make up the track. Diving into each of the tracks, the percussionists found a beautiful complexity—dozens and dozens of stems in each track, patterns that never seem to repeat when one would expect them to, and outrageous sounds that are hard to imagine recreating acoustically. Even typical percussion sounds like snare drum, hi-hat, or kick drum exist in multiple variations, subtle timbral shades in counterpoint or composite sounds. Jlin named her piece *Perspective* as a reference to this unique collaborative process; the same music, interpreted by two different artists and their different modes of expression.

Perspective by Jlin was commissioned for Third Coast Percussion by the Boulanger Initiative, Carnegie Hall, the Lester & Hope Abelson Fund for the Performing Arts at the Chicago Community Foundation, the DEW Foundation, and Third Coast Percussion's New Works Fund.

Blue Soul by Michael Burritt

Blue Soul is the most recent work in my series of "blue" pieces. It was commissioned by Edition Svitzer in collaboration with Daniel Berg, The Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Sweden and the Academy of Music and Drama in Gothenburg, Sweden. The quintet features two vibraphones and two marimbas with rhythmic and timbral reinforcement in the fifth part, primarily comprised of skinned membranes and wooden sounds.

When I think of a blue soul, I don't think of sadness, as might be associated with such a title. It's more of a reflective and present soul, appreciative and fully immersed in the world and people in their lives. Blue is my favorite color and one that reminds me of hope and good things. *Blue Soul*

is in memory of Dex, my dog and best buddy. I'll miss you on my walks, but I'll never forget you pal.

-Michael Burritt

Color Fields in Vector Space by Omar Carmenates

Color Fields in Vector Space was conceived originally as an exploration of timbre and space utilizing multiple small ensembles of like instruments (metals, woods, drums) placed around the audience. However, despite my best efforts, accounting for eighteen performers spread over a large distance using traditional usual staff paper and pencil proved to be too tedious. I eventually came to realize that it would be much easier to compose in a digital environment which simulated the correct spacialization of the performers. This resulted in a reversal of my usual writing process by which I first performed and recorded each of the eighteen parts into a computer before ever committing even a single note to paper. In fact, "writing" the notes - in a traditional sense - comprised only the final few days of the entire composition process.

It was during this time that I remembered the term "vector space", a used by artificial intelligence researchers in the development of real-world artificial intelligence, and especially in the use of autonomous driving technologies. Simply put, a vehicle's cameras capture real-world images and render them into a three-dimensional "vector space" in order to "see" and understand all of the complexities of its surrounding environment and act accordingly. I found this process to be very similar to how this piece was created, and so came the title *Color Fields in Vector Space*.

Early in developing the thematic material for this piece, I found myself unexpectedly channeling long-forgotten composing advice from one of my greatest mentors, percussionist/composer/pedagogue extraordinaire Christopher Deane. I looked forward to sharing this piece with him upon its completion but sadly he passed away before it was finished. Chris' incredible spirit, fatherly kindness, and sagely teachings will undoubtedly live on the legions of colleagues and students who had the chance to know him, and I hope that this piece can earn its way to being one of what will certainly be many tributes to his legacy.

-Omar Carmenates

Street Spiders by Jessica Flannigan

Street Spiders is a game my kids created in the back seat of the car, motivated by the original *Street Fighters* arcade game and Wednesday Addams' hand movements during her dance in *Wednesday*. In their version of the game, players select their "spider" then shape their hands into that character's form for battle. With hints of influence from the *Terminator* and *Stranger Things* soundtracks, a long-standing love for Mark Snow's scores, a little bit of goth dance, and a lot of Metallica, this mix of 80's/90's metal and electronic music sends us into a Terminator-esque dystopia of giant robotic spiders battling in an underground fighting ring.

-Jessica Flannigan