



School of Music  
University of Missouri

2025-2026 Series | Large Ensemble

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# University of Missouri Percussion Ensemble

**Dr. Megan Arns, director**

**Dr. Julia Montag, assistant director**

**Clif Walker, assistant director**

**Friday, January 30, 2026 | 8:00am**

**Missouri Music Educators Association**

**88th Annual In-Service Workshop & Conference**

**Tan-Tar-a Conference Center, Salon A**

## Program

*Drums of Winter* (1993) ..... **John Luther Adams**

Alex Baur, Anders Harms, Tanner Prewitt, Russell Wallace

*José / beFORe JOHN<sup>5</sup>* (2000) ..... **Aurél Holló**

Matthew Hinkle, Daniel Noonan, Nathan Stokes, Camihle Williams

*Columns* (2025), *world premiere* ..... **Clif Walker**

*Dedicated to Julia Montag celebrating 30 years of service at Mizzou*

Carson Allen, Alex Baur, Austin Eldridge, Vanessa Graham, Anders Harms,  
Chloe Hart, Lex Henderson, Matthew Hinkle, Mon Jeong Cheok Kai,  
Daniel Noonan, Tanner Prewitt, Geddy Rice, Cooper Snodgrass, Nathan Stokes,  
Ajay Tosh, Gavin Waldrop, Russell Wallace, Camihle Williams

*Street Spiders* (2024) ..... **Jessica Flannigan**

Carson Allen, Alex Baur, Austin Eldridge, Vanessa Graham, Anders Harms,  
Chloe Hart, Lex Henderson, Matthew Hinkle, Mon Jeong Cheok Kai,  
Daniel Noonan, Tanner Prewitt, Geddy Rice, Cooper Snodgrass, Nathan Stokes,  
Ajay Tosh, Gavin Waldrop, Russell Wallace, Camihle Williams

## **Mizzou Percussion Personnel**

Carson Allen – Junior, Music Education – Lancaster, MO  
Alex Baur – Senior, Music Education – Osage Beach, MO  
Austin Eldridge – Masters, Music Performance – St. Louis, MO  
Vanessa Graham – Junior, Music Education – Union, MO  
Anders Harms – Senior, Music Performance – Columbia, MO  
Chloe Hart – Senior, Music Education – Bloomington, IL  
Lex Henderson – Sophomore, Music Education – Columbia, MO  
Matthew Hinkle – Masters, Music Performance – St. Charles, MO  
Mon Jeong Cheok Kai – Masters, Music Performance & Composition – Macau  
Daniel Noonan – Masters, Music Performance – Morganton, NC  
Tanner Prewitt – Masters, Music Performance – Mt. Sterling, KY  
Geddy Rice – Sophomore, Music Education – St. Louis, MO  
Cooper Snodgrass – Junior, Music Performance – Union, MO  
Nathan Stokes – Sophomore, Music Performance – Grain Valley, MO  
Ajay Tosh – Sophomore, Biology and Psychology – Columbia, MO  
Gavin Waldrop – Sophomore, Music Education – Bentonville, AR  
Russell Wallace – Masters, Music Performance – Waxhaw, NC  
Camihle Williams - Junior, Music Education – Grain Valley, MO

## Biographies

### Mizzou Percussion Ensemble

The Mizzou Percussion Ensemble, part of the University of Missouri School of Music, is an award-winning group known for its excellence and innovation. The ensemble has been featured in showcase performances at prestigious events, including the 2024 Missouri PAS Day of Percussion, the 2018 Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC), the 2018 Mid-Missouri Percussive Arts Trophy (MMPAT), and the 2014 Midwest Clinic in Chicago. Dedicated to both the legacy and future of percussion music, the ensemble regularly commissions and premieres new works by Mizzou student, faculty, and guest composers through the Mizzou New Music Initiative.

### Mizzou Percussion Faculty

**Megan Arns**, Director of Percussion Studies / Co-Interim Associate School of Music  
Director

**Clif Walker**, Director of the Marching Mizzou Drumline / Instructor of Percussion

**Pete Zambito**, Assistant Director of Athletic Bands / Director of Tiger Pans Steel Band

**Kimberly Shelley**, Instructor of Percussion

### Megan Arns

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 and has served as Director of Percussion Studies at the University of Missouri-Columbia since 2014 and is a recent recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Research and Creative Activity. Before coming to Mizzou, Megan held faculty positions at Mansfield University and at the National Music Conservatory in Amman, Jordan, where she was also principal percussionist and timpanist of the Amman Symphony Orchestra. During the summers, she is a section member of the New Hampshire Music Festival and regularly performs as a substitute with the St. Louis Symphony.

Megan is an advocate for the creation of new music, co-commissioning and premiering over 100 works both as a soloist and as a member of two contemporary chamber groups: the [Switch~ Ensemble] – an electroacoustic ensemble based out of New York City, and DRAX – a saxophone and percussion duo in residence at Mizzou. DRAX's debut CD

*chaos+contemplation* was released on Ravello Records in 2022 and features four commissions of electroacoustic works. Her current solo project features five new commissions in collaboration with the Kinds of Kings Composer Collective. Megan has performed on four continents at venues such as the Kennedy Center, Millennium Park, Smithsonian Institution, and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention.

Megan received her D.M.A. in Percussion Performance & Literature and M.A. in Ethnomusicology at the Eastman School of Music, M.M. in Percussion Performance and Certificate in World Music from Florida State University, and B.M in Percussion Performance at Truman State University where she was recognized as a Presser Scholar. She currently serves on the Board of Directors and as 2nd Vice President on the Executive Committee of the Percussive Arts Society. Megan endorses Vic Firth Sticks & Mallets, Pearl/Adams Musical Instruments, Black Swamp Percussion, Remo Drumheads, and Zildjian Cymbals.

## **Julia Montag**

Dr. Julia Gaines-Montag is the author of the series *Sequential Studies for Four-Mallet Marimba*. The series published by TapSPACE includes three books with twenty lessons each that break down the strokes involved in four-mallet marimba literature. She also has a solo recording, *Tiger Dance*, that includes recordings of some of the intermediate solos included in these books in addition to other works she has commissioned.

Julia has performed as a soloist throughout the United States and in several countries including Brazil, China, England, and Russia. She has performed in the percussion sections of the Missouri Symphony, the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, the Fox Valley Symphony, the Green Bay Symphony, and the Idaho-Washington Symphony. She has given many clinics at conferences throughout her career as a percussionist including Midwest 2013, 2025 and PASIC 2004, 2008, 2013, and 2019. Her three percussion performance degrees come from the Lawrence Conservatory of Music (BM), the Eastman School of Music (MM and performer's certificate) and the University of Oklahoma (DMA).

Dr. Gaines-Montag is a long-time member of the Percussive Arts Society and has served in several leadership positions for the organization including Secretary of the Executive Committee and Associate Editor of *Percussive Notes*. She has worked at the University of Missouri for thirty years where she began as the Director of Percussion Studies. She became the Director of the School of Music in 2014 and led the school for nearly a decade. Some highlights from her administrative career include spearheading the School of

Music's Centennial Celebration and serving as the point person for the design, construction, and grand opening of the Sinquefield Music Center.

## **Clif Walker**

Clif Walker is an arranger/composer with original works performed at PASIC, TMEA DCI, BOA and The Midwest Band Orchestra Clinic. He was a percussion staff member (2018-2024), design team member (2019-2024), and front ensemble arranger (2020-2024) with the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps, recipients of the 2023 DCI Fred Sanford Award for High Percussion. He serves as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he teaches in the percussion studio as well as directs the Marching Mizzou Drumline. Clif is currently the front ensemble arranger of the Carolina Crown Drum & Bugle Corps.

Clif is a faculty member for the Music For All Summer Symposium and is a member of the BOA and WGI Adjudication Roster. He served as the director of percussion/arranger for BOA Grand National Finalist Blue Springs High School (2011-2015) and at Timber Creek High School in Orlando, Florida (2001-2008), who performed at the Percussive Arts Society International (PASIC) as the high school International Percussion Ensemble Competition winners in 2005. He is the front ensemble arranger for BOA Grand National Finalist Carmel High School and was recently selected as drumline coordinator/arranger for the 2026 Tournament of Rose Parade BOA Honor Band.

Clif holds an MME from the University of Central Florida and is published with Musicon and Tapspace. He is proud to endorse Yamaha Musical Instruments, Evans Drumheads, Zildjian Cymbals and Innovative Percussion Sticks and Mallets.

## Program Notes

### ***Drums of Winter* (1993) by John Luther Adams**

*Drums of Winter* is one of three drum quartet drawn from *Earth and the Great Weather*, an evening length “sonic geography” of the Arctic. Although purely “abstract” in form, it is my hope that they are in some small measure informed by the elemental power of natural forces in the Arctic, and by the ecstatic power of Inupiat Eskimo drumming and dancing.

The great sea has set me adrift.  
It moves me like a weed  
in a great river.  
Earth and the great weather move me,  
have carried me away  
and move my inward parts with joy.

- Uvavnuk, an Iglulik Eskimo shaman

-John Luther Adams

### ***José / beFORe JOHN*<sup>5</sup> (2000) by Aurél Holló**

The basic idea of my piece *José* was born when I was listening to the recording *Oriental Bass* by the ethnic contrabass-player Renaud Garcia-Fons. I wondered many times whether it would be possible to present his fundamentally Spanish style with its’ Arabic and Gypsy effects in an original percussion composition instead of a simple adaptation. My answer to this question is “*José*.”

Besides Garcia-Fons’s recording I also used a theme by Paco de Lucia in this composition. Marimba has the lead through in this short character piece almost exclusively: two players standing face to face play especially virtuoso complementary motives. Most of these figures are based on the traditional xylophone music of Africa. The players use techniques of amadinda and akadinda (traditional percussion instruments from Uganda) yet the scale they cover is typically flamenco-like at the same time. In the end these two players sound a real guitar as well, with the same technique. This rhythmical-melodic source is enriched by the playing of two other musicians who create many interesting and exciting sounds for example with the Spanish cajon or the favorite instrument of Gypsy folk music, the simple sheet-iron can and many more.

I dedicate this piece of mine to Josep Vicent, former artistic leader of Amsterdam Percussion Group.

-Aurél Holló

### ***Columns* (2025) by Clif Walker**

The six, iconic columns on the University of Missouri campus are the only surviving structures from an 1892 fire. They represent lasting strength, endurance and resilience and mirror the dedication, loyalty and consistency of Dr. Julia Montag's thirty years of service at MU. The columns inspired the six-note melody and set of six reoccurring chords used throughout the piece (F d a C G D) and a near constant pedal point foundation (A) that supports the shifting textures and key centers. The growing use of twopart harmony attempts to represent the relationships and friendships Dr. Montag has formed.

The musical goal was pure, natural and authentic sounds brought to life by skilled student musicians: Dr. Montag's greatest legacy.

a hymn. a reflection. a thank you.

*Columns* was commissioned by Dr. Megan Arns and the Mizzou New Music Initiative in recognition of Dr. Julia Montag and her thirty years of service to the students and faculty at MU for the 2026 Missouri Music educators Association 88th Annual State Conference.

-Clif Walker

### ***Street Spiders* (2024) 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, along-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