Mizzou Percussion Ensemble

Sunday, November 1 – 3:00pm
Missouri Theatre

Megan Arns, Director

Personnel

*Tristan Alderton – Masters, Music Performance – Fellsmere, FL
Carson Allen – Senior, Music Education – Lancaster, MO
*Annika Blackburn – Masters, Music Performance – Rogersville, TN
Keenan Bruno – Masters, Music Performance – St. Peters, MO
Kaden Byers – Freshman, Music Education – Grain Valley, MO
Will Cowgill – Freshman, Music Education – Wentzville, MO
*Austin Eldridge – Masters, Music Performance – St. Louis, MO
Vanessa Graham – Senior, Music Education – Union, MO
Lex Henderson – Junior, Music Performance – Columbia, MO
Mon Ieong Cheok Kai – Masters, Music Performance and Composition – Macau
Scott Janson – Freshman, BA Music – St. Louis, MO
Cody Jones-DeVol – Freshman, Music Performance – Bellevue, NE
Joshua Kremer – Junior, Music Education – Jefferson City, MO
Vinnie Lorraine – Sophomore, Music Education – Steelville, MO
Kelan Meyer – Freshman, Music BA and Engineering IT – Columbia, MO
Dylan Pearce – Junior, Music Education – Kansas City, MO
Nolan Pellegrini – Freshman, Music Education – Wentzville, MO
*Tanner Prewitt – Masters, Music Performance – Mt. Sterling, KY
Geddy Rice – Junior, Music Education – St. Louis, MO
Cooper Snodgrass – Senior, Music Performance – Union, MO
Nathan Stokes – Junior, Music Performance – Grain Valley, MO
Ajay Tosh – Sophomore, Biology and Psychology – Columbia, MO
Gavin Waldrop – Junior, Music Education – Bentonville, AR
Russell Wallace – Masters, Music Performance – Waxhaw, NC
Camihle Williams – Senior, Music Performance – Grain Valley, MO

*Denotes Graduate Teaching Assistant

Program:

Sunny X (2023) **Tyondai Braxton**

Tristan Alderton, Gavin Waldrop, Russell Wallace, Camihle Williams

Perspective (2023) **Jlin**

Paradigm

Annika Blackburn, Tanner Prewitt, Cooper Snodgrass, Camihle Williams
Tristan Alderton, coach

Obscure

Carson Allen, Austin Eldridge, Vanessa Graham, Nathan Stokes
Mon Ieong Cheok Kai, coach

Derivative

Tristan Alderton, Keenan Bruno, Mon Ieong Cheok Kai, Russell Wallace
Austin Eldridge, coach

Fourth Perspective

Geddy Rice, Cooper Snodgrass, Gavin Waldrop, Camihle Williams
Tanner Prewitt, coach

Dissonance

Will Cowgill, Vinnie Lorraine, Dylan Pearce, Nolan Pellegrini
Russell Wallace, coach

Duality

Kaden Byers, Lex Henderson, Scott Janson, Cody Jones-DeVol
Keenan Bruno, coach

Embryo

Austin Eldridge, Joshua Kremer, Kelan Myer, Ajay Tosh
Annika Blackburn, coach

Pillar V (2020) **Andy Akiho**

Annika Blackburn, Keenan Bruno, Lex Henderson, Tanner Prewitt

Collide (2015) **Jacob Remington**

Annika Blackburn, Kaden Byers, Austin Eldridge, Vanessa Graham, Lex Henderson, Scott Janson, Cody Jones-DeVol, Joshua Kremer, Kelan Meyer, Dylan Pearce, Geddy Rice, Cooper Snodgrass, Nathan Stokes, Ajay Tosh, Gavin Waldrop, Russell Wallace, Camihle Williams

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 2026 True/False Film Festival, the 2026 and 2017 Missouri Music Educators Association Conference (MMEA), 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 / Associate School of Music Director
Clif Walker, Director of the Marching Mizzou Drumline / Adjunct Instructor of Percussion
Pete Zambito, Assistant Director of Athletic Bands / Director of Tiger Pans Steel Band
Kimberly Shelley, Adjunct Instructor of Percussion

Program Notes:

Sunny X (2023) by Tyondai Braxton

Tyondai Braxton has been writing and performing music under his own name and collaboratively, under various group titles, since the mid-1990s. He is the former front man of the experimental rock band, Battles, whose debut album, *Mirrored*, was both a critical and commercial success. Braxton has composed commissioned pieces for ensembles such as the Bang on a Can All-Stars, Alarm Will Sound, Brooklyn Rider, and Third Coast Percussion. In 2012, he collaborated with Philip Glass during the ATP I'll Be Your Mirror festival. He has also performed his orchestral work, *Central Market*, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, London Sinfonietta, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and New York's Wordless Music Orchestra.

His 2015 Nonesuch debut, *HIVE1*, was praised by NPR Music for its "playfulness — the feeling that experimenting with sound is a joyful game." Braxton followed that release with the 2016 five-song EP *Oranged Out*, proceeds from which supported the work of Everytown for Gun Safety, and released three new tracks — "Dia," "Phonolydian," and "Multiplay" — this past winter. His album, *Telekinesis*, an 87-piece work for guitars, orchestra, choir + electronics, was released by Nonesuch in 2022. *Record Collector* called it "an astonishing tour de force that gives new meaning to the word 'epic.'"

Braxton was recently appointed to Princeton University's Music Composition faculty as an Assistant Professor of Music. Braxton's work for Third Coast Percussion, *Sunny X*, further develops his previous experiments with electronic sounds and live percussionists in his *HIVE1* project, utilizing more idiosyncratic instruments such as wooden and metal slats, steel pipes, Thai gongs, and crotales, with electronic playback generated with modular synthesizer.

*"Predominantly set up as meditations on small phrases of non-pitched (or *partially* pitched) percussion and mercurial electronics, the piece explores different permutations of these meditations where the relationship between the acoustic and electronic realms seems to work together, slip around and contrast."* —Tyondai Braxton

Sunny X evolved through multiple workshops together in TCP's studio, experimenting with combinations of these unique sounds and discovering musical content that emerges naturally from the idiomatics of the instruments and their physical layout. In particular, a musical and physical gesture that plays prominently in the piece revealed itself when the wooden planks were stacked on top of each other, rather than set side-by-side on a table.

Sunny X was commissioned for Third Coast Percussion by the Sewanee Music Festival, George Mason University, and Carnegie Hall, with additional support from Third Coast Percussion's New Works Fund.

Perspective (2023) by Jlin

Jlin (Jerrilynn Patton) is a producer and composer based in Gary, Indiana. Her unique and evolving electronic sound is rooted in Chicago's iconic footwork style, with additional influences ranging from Nina Simone to Igor Stravinsky. Jlin's work assembles evocative and vivid sounds into a musical style that she describes as "clean, precise, and unpredictable." Her debut album "Dark Energy" was released to critical acclaim in 2015, and her second album "Black Origami" in 2017 to rave reviews from NPR Music and Pitchfork. She has for Kronos Quartet and choreographer Wayne McGregor, and has recently performed at the Big Ears Festival, Whitney Museum of Art, and Toledo Museum of Art, among others.

Her seven-movement work *Perspective* 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.

Pillar V **(2020) by Andy Akiho**

Described as "trailblazing" (Los Angeles Times) and "an imaginative composer" (The New York Times), Andy Akiho is a composer and performer of new music. Akiho has been recognized with many prestigious awards and organizations including the Rome Prize, Lili Boulanger Memorial Prize, Harvard University Fromm Commission, Barlow Endowment, New Music USA, and Chamber Music America. Recent engagements include commissioned premieres by the New York Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony, China Philharmonic, Guangzhou Symphony, Oregon Symphony with Soloist Colin Currie, American Composers Orchestra, and experimental opera company The Industry.

A trained percussionist, Akiho began his musical education in a South Carolina middle school drumline. Later, he spent part of his 20s in Trinidad, where he learned that island's native instrument, the steelpan. Both experiences left their mark on Akiho's musical language, including in *Seven Pillars*, an 11-movement, evening-length cycle for percussion quartet that is Akiho's most substantial achievement to date.

Pillar V requires the vibraphone player to snap a large rubber band against the lowest bar and, in one passage, the performers strike keyboard percussion without lifting their mallets, preventing the instruments from resonating fully. Akiho is drawn to buzzy, "impure" sounds—timbres not always sought in traditional Western concert percussion practice. The results evoke the vigor, aplomb and playful spirit of "trashcan percussion," as sometimes encountered in subways and street corners in bustling metropolitan environments.

Sevan Pillars was commissioned by and dedicated to Sandbox Percussion with support from the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program, and generous funding provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; and the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University.

Collide **(2015) by Jacob Remington**

Jacob Remington is a percussionist/composer from Fort Worth, Texas. He began his musical studies with the piano at the age of seven, and continued with horn and guitar before eventually finding his way to percussion. As a performer, Jake has presented several solo recitals, and has been featured as a soloist in numerous concerts including the premier of Eric Ewazen's *Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble* with the Texas Christian University Percussion Ensemble. He was a semi-finalist in the 2009 Paris International Marimba Competition, and was awarded third place at the 2004 Percussive Arts Society International Convention Marimba Competition. In addition to his work as a soloist, Jake has performed with several professional ensembles such as the London Contemporary Orchestra and the London Sinfonietta. Jake is very passionate about the development and enrichment of percussion repertoire, and actively promotes this by composing new pieces and collaborating with other artists.

Collide was commissioned by Dr. Brian West and the Texas Christian University Percussion Orchestra in June of 2015. The piece was written to depict the process of searching for new subatomic particles (often referred to as "dark matter" or "anti-matter") at the Large Hadron

Collider (LHC) developed by CERN in Switzerland. At 17 miles in circumference, the LHC is the largest sub-atomic particle accelerator in the world, and was built to replicate (on a microscopic scale) the conditions of the universe immediately following the Big Bang. At the beginning of the piece, an alarm goes off as the system is turned on and thousands of particles are slowly fed into the machine going opposite directions, represented by the relentlessly repetitive 16th note patterns in the keyboards. Once all of the particles have been added, ultra-high intensity magnetic fields send pulses at regular intervals to accelerate the particles, which is depicted by the repeating half notes in the low octaves of the marimbas. The particles gradually become faster until they reach 99.99% the speed of light and begin to resemble a solid beam as they travel around the 17- mile loop at 11,000 times per second. At this point, the magnetic pulses can no longer increase the velocity of the particles. The added energy shifts to increasing the mass of the particles until they become 25 times heavier than when at rest.

This is represented musically by a metric change to a slower and more robust feel of 12/8, as well as a tonal shift to heavier drum sounds with longer melodic lines in the keyboards. Once the particles have reached their top speed and highest density, the two sets are gradually directed towards each other so that the particles crash into one another. This produces the most intense collisions ever created by man, and sends the newly-found particles shooting off in unpredictable directions. The music reflects these collisions with unpredictable rhythmic patterns and metric changes that are highly energetic and powerful. The melodic theme from the beginning returns as the piece comes to a close. However, certain melodic and rhythmic patterns are disjunct and broken this time, as the particles have changed their form. The piece ends with the machine being powered down, as scientists begin to contemplate the origins of the universe.