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UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

MUSIC TODAY
FESTIVAL²⁰²⁰

VANGUARD CONCERT & WORKSHOP SERIES

Oregon Composers Forum



featuring Guest Artist
Delgani String Quartet

Jannie Wei and Wyatt True, violins

Kimberlee Uwate, viola

Eric Alterman, cello

“Premieres of Nine Works by UO Composers”

Beall Concert Hall

Monday, Feb. 25, 2020 | 8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Contrasts (String Quartet No. 2)	S. J. Dinsfriend (b. 1989)
Abandoned Cathedral	Kathryn Edom (b. 1993)
Anticipation	Sarah Jordan (b. 1992)
String Quartet in A Minor	Johnathan Sherpa (b. 1997)
<i>I. Fugue</i>	
<i>II. Scherzo on a Theme by Reincken</i>	
Nunca Mas	Washington Plada (b. 1980)

— INTERMISSION —

Detachment	Alex Didier (b. 1993)
<i>I. Beginning</i>	
<i>II. Regression</i>	
<i>III. Awakening</i>	
String Quartet No. 1	Jake Logsdon (b. 1995)
Putting it together	Daniel DeTogni (b. 1993)
No Return	Jared Knight (b. 1993)
<i>I. Hells Canyon</i>	
<i>II. Salmon and Snake</i>	
<i>III. Seven Devils</i>	

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Contrasts (String Quartet No. 2)**S. J. Dinsfriend (b. 1989)**

At the very start of this residency with the Delgani String Quartet, we were asked to bring in our initial “seed” idea. I had trouble deciding between two of my seed ideas (one derived from the octatonic scale and the other utilized dissonant double stops in a harmonic minor mode). Ultimately, I grafted the seedlings into one, which resulted in some contrasting motives, harmonies and textures (hence, *String Quartet No. 2: Contrasts*). I explored this concept of contrasts throughout the piece with different compositional elements: contrasts exist between the four pitches (players) at the very beginning (each interval is one step apart, creating a cluster of A-G-F-E); this cluster of stepwise pitches is then presented in a different mode (from the octatonic scale, E-D#-C#-C), intentionally juxtaposed against the clusters derived from D-minor. This slow, contemplative texture is then immediately contrasted by an intense, driving section. The two double stops between the violins introduce a thematic, vertical contrast, the major-seventh between the lowest and highest notes (Bb-A), and the tritone (Bb-E). Simultaneously, we hear both a rhythmic contrast (of the viola and cello playing accented double stops on the off-beats in 5/8, opposite of the violins) and harmonic contrast (the viola and cello are playing chords that create instances of polytonality against the violins). Overall, listen for the development of contrasts throughout: contrasts of mode-against-mode, textures (*pizzicato* duet followed by *arco* duet, e.g.), and rhythm (hemiola created in the 7/8 *pizzicato* section, e.g.). I am very grateful for this collaboration with the inimitable Delgani String Quartet.

Abandoned Cathedral**Kathryn Edom (b. 1993)**

When searching for my inspiration for *Abandoned Cathedral*, I was struck by the image of a cathedral. Initially, it was a very generic image, but I was drawn to the massive interior space created by the high ceilings in Gothic cathedrals and the acoustics that go with it. The first half of the title didn’t come until after the piece was finished, when my roommate mentioned she thought of walking through a forest when she heard it. After some thought,

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these ideas combined in the image of a cathedral that had been abandoned for decades, to the point that it had been overrun by nature. Shrubs and even trees had started to grow around and inside the building, and various forms of wildlife had made their nests in all the nooks and crannies created by years of neglect. While part of this image didn't come until after the music had been written, it has become central to the piece, earning it the title *Abandoned Cathedral*.

Anticipation

Sarah Jordan (b. 1992)

an·tic·i·pa·tion
/ənˈtɪsəpāsh(ə)n/

1. the action of anticipating something; expectation or prediction.

String Quartet in A Minor

Johnathan Sherpa (b. 1997)

This string quartet is a manifestation of my love for the music of Bach and Baroque musical idioms. Starting with a slow fugue, the first movement is built upon a musical subject that I composed years prior. This subject was one that I felt confident in but was also one that I chose to reserve using, as I felt that my skill as a composer at that point wasn't great enough to build a fugue from it. With the opportunity to write this quartet, I felt confident enough to use this subject, and the resulting fugue is one that embodies both my love of counterpoint and the expressive qualities inherent to the fugal technique.

The second movement is a Scherzo built on a fugue subject by Johann Adam Reincken, whose music Bach was profoundly interested in. Bach himself wrote a fugue based on this same subject, and I attempted a similar process by using it as the musical basis for this movement of the Quartet. However, I took some liberties in terms of the form and tonal centers while still retaining the traditional Scherzo form.

Nunca Mas**Washington Plada (b. 1980)**

The title for this piece, *Nunca Mas* (meaning “Never Again”), references a mantra known throughout Latin America in remembrance of and in protest against a series of violent, military dictatorships that rose to power throughout Latin America during the 1970s and 1980s. The phrase, *Nunca Mas*, was itself originally adopted from the title of a document uncovering the detainment, torture, and disappearance of as many as 30,000 people committed by the military dictatorship in Argentina. Still used today, *Nunca Mas* serves as a powerful phrase of protest and promise to never again allow this painful chapter in Latin American history to repeat itself.

Recently, political unrest and civil discontent started erupting again in several countries throughout Latin America as frustrated people sought change within their countries for economic, social, and political justice. Among these events was a massive wave of protests in Chile, catalyzed in October 2019 by a secondary-school protest against metro fare hikes and coalescing weeks later into one of the largest public protests in Chile resting on increasing class inequalities and economic distress, and demanding the resignation of Chilean president Pinera. In response, Pinera dissolved his cabinet, called for the re-creation of a new constitution, and rained down unnecessary and excessive police and military force on protestors. Human rights organizations have condemned the response by Pinera, citing violations that include incidents of torture and sexual violence of detained protestors, indiscriminate shooting and killing of protestors, and egregious acts committed by security forces with intent to injure and punish protestors. The violence from these events are all too reminiscent of tactics used by dictatorships to suppress dissidents. I was five years old when the brutal military junta came to an end in Uruguay, and I have inherited the deep pain and sadness felt by my parents and the preceding generation that lost a brother, a cousin, or a friend to the dictatorship. In solidarity with civilian protestors fighting for social change and progress, this piece is dedicated to the remembrance of

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our battered past and a call for a new change in the history of Latin America to heed the writing on the wall... *Nunca Mas.*

This piece begins in the midst of a violent clash between civilian protesters and the military. The recurrence of polychords are used in the main theme, creating and building tension. The piece breaks in the middle with a single quivering note, bringing us now into the intimate thoughts and feelings of a bystander watching the clash unfold. However, the bystander is soon overtaken by the violence and chaos ensues, building to a furious ending.

Detachment

Alex Didier (b. 1993)

The concept of “Detachment” stemmed from the idea of removing my personal identity from the experience of composing this string quartet. Using this technique, I was able to explore a darker side of my compositional ability.

The narrative in the first movement, “Beginning,” is based around the infection of the mind, which slowly enters a dimension of wistful confusion. The second movement, “Regression,” captures the experience of depraved insanity. The infection has spread and there is no light at the end of the tunnel. The third and final movement, “Awakening,” is a reflection of the first two movements. It symbolizes the experience of rising from darkness and moving back into a familiar realm, but feeling changed, solemn, and hollow.

String Quartet No. 1

Jake Logsdon (b.1995)

This piece uses a form that is similar in thematic structure to sonata form; it has a primary theme and a secondary theme that will come back in new ways. However, unlike a classical sonata, the beginning of my piece does not return exactly at the end. The piece also features glissandi, or slides, in which the string players drag their fingers between notes instead of moving between them seamlessly. This technique adds to the mysterious, ethereal quality of the piece. These glissandi often represent instability and are most heavily used in between major sections of the piece as transitions.

In the middle of the piece, it is briefly in two keys at the same time, which is called polytonality. There is a definite spot where the group is split in half, and they get a little confused and have an argument before they figure out how to get back together. This section features small snippets of the primary and secondary themes together, so try to listen for how they interact with each other.

Putting it together**Daniel DeTogni (b. 1993)**

Putting it together is a piece about the importance of community and the struggle of voices aiming to unify themselves. The piece begins with small, fragmented, and very much isolated musical germs that strive to come together as one throughout the course of the piece.

Much of the musical material is inspired by -- though not derived from -- taiko drum patterns. The tapestries of weaving accents and rhythms created by a taiko community sets a backdrop for many sections of *Putting it together*. Community plays a significant role in the taiko community and was a driving force behind the writing of this piece.

No Return**Jared Knight (b. 1993)**

Titled after Idaho's Salmon River, nicknamed the "River of No Return" for its class IV and V whitewater rapids, *No Return* (2020) loosely draws inspiration from Idaho's natural beauty. At Hells Canyon – the deepest river gorge in North America that forms part of the border between Idaho, Oregon, and Washington – the Salmon River converges with the Snake River. This confluence of two rivers combining into one body of water appears to be a dance between two bodies that meander smoothly across a dance floor, occasionally hesitating to linger in one another's eyes. On the east side of the canyon, Idaho's majestic Seven Devils Mountains stand aloof, observing the scenery, while on the peaks, snow melts into water droplets that form high alpine lakes and tributary streams.

ABOUT OUR GUEST

Considered “the state’s finest chamber ensemble” by Oregon Arts Watch, the Delgani String Quartet presents exciting performances of both classic and contemporary repertoire in intimate concert settings. The quartet curates their own subscription series in Portland, Salem, and Eugene while regularly appearing as guest artists throughout the state. Delgani has also performed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC and at Charles University in Prague.

Delgani’s fifth anniversary subscription series (2019/2020) features guests artists on every concert – Russian pianist Asya Gulua, MIT composer Elena Ruehr, Brazilian vocalist/composer Clarice Assad, and Eugene Symphony principal cellist Anne Ridlington. Programming for the series includes contemporary works by Tomas Svoboda and Steve Reich along with Beethoven’s *Serioso* quartet, Schubert’s cello quintet, and Haydn’s *Emperor* quartet, among others.

Equally committed to community engagement, Delgani provides educational engagement to students throughout the Willamette Valley. Their *Classical Spark* program brings the string quartet to third grade classrooms in Lane County to foster an early interest in music. In previous seasons the quartet has held residencies at Umpqua Community College and the Springfield Academy of Arts and Academics. Each summer, Delgani manages two camps for middle and high school students — a Chamber Music Camp for all instruments in Eugene and a Summer Quartet Academy in Cottage Grove, Oregon. Delgani also hosts biannual Adult Chamber Music Workshops for amateur enthusiasts and curates an adult education series prior to each subscription series concert.

Delgani was formed in 2014 with a mission to cultivate an appreciation for chamber music through distinctive performance, innovative programming, educational engagement, and collaboration. The organization operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and has received foundation support from the Oregon Cultural Trust, Oregon Community Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission, Lane Arts Council, Springfield Arts Commission, and Springfield Education Foundation. Delgani is the recipient of consecutive Cultural Development Grants from OCT and consecutive Creative Heights Grant from OCF.

The musicians of Delgani have performed throughout the United States and internationally. They collectively hold twelve degrees in performance from various schools of music and conservatories across the nation.