



UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

MUSICTODAY²⁰²⁰
FESTIVAL²⁰²⁰

VANGUARD CONCERT & WORKSHOP SERIES

Oregon Composers Forum

Berwick Hall, Tykeson Rehearsal Space
Tuesday, March 10, 2020 | 8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Song for Mary

Tim Bloch (b. 1945)

Eli Simantel, trumpet
Guy Eckelberger, guitar
Tim Bloch, piano

Static Flow

Kathryn Edom (b. 1993)

Chandler Larsen, Marimba

Inverdant Plea

Mark King (b. 1994)

Scott Jonathan Dinsfriend, violin
Christine Sears, violoncello
Jacob Lee, piano

Maybe I'm Secretly an Octopus

Sarah Kitten (b. 2000)

Sarah Jordan, flute
Mary Krebs, piano

Between

Bryce Daniels (b. 1996)

Bryce Daniels, trumpet
Noah Ochander, trombone
Jake Logsdon, tuba

Piano Suite

Abigail Kellems (b. 1998)

- I. Polytonal
- II. Cell
- III. Free
- IV. Neotonal
- V. Found Melody

Abigail Kellems, piano

Turn

Daniel De Togni (b. 1993)

Clara Fuhrman, violin
Daniel De Togni, piano

Unspoken

Alex Didier (b. 1993)

Jacob Lee, piano
Jonathan Dinsfriend, violin
Austin Bennett, violoncello

Hide and Seek

Joanne Na (b. 1997)

Emily Geoffroy, clarinet
Ian Jett, violin
Haley Slaugh, violoncello
Grant Mack, piano

Song for Mary

Some people speak from the heart, listen from the heart and are centered in the heart.

Mary Burrows was an Oregon stateswoman who inspired everyone who ever knew her: she listened to what you said to her, acted only after thinking, asked questions that bore to the heart of the matter and spoke of worlds that we all dreamed of but only see glimpses of in each other and in the days of our lives. She was moored in faith but spoke from reason, stood with us when it was right but stood apart when she saw farther than we did. She always bore the weight of responsibility with patience and a smile that reflected not only the light that burned within her, but also belied the effort it took to stand when others were falling back. All of us who knew her were blessed by her wisdom, intelligence and warmth; I think that if some people's lives are a song, Mary's was a symphony.

Static Flow

It has been my experience that the majority of new solo pieces published for marimba have been written for five-octave marimba, as opposed to any of its smaller siblings. Given how wonderful the rich lower end can sound, this is no surprise, but many non-professional percussionists have limited or no access to a five-octave, and their repertoire choices are accordingly limited. I kept this in mind when writing Static Flow and intended from the very beginning to write it specifically for a 4.3-octave marimba, and to celebrate the purchase of my own instrument. The foil and parchment paper attached to the resonators gave me different timbres I could add to the marimba sound, contributing to the "static" part of Static Flow. The second half of the title comes from the mellower middle section, which has less of the rough foil and parchment paper, and a smoother sound.

Inverdant Plea

The music begins with a single tree pleading humanity for mercy. Despite its sorrow, it reaches out in hope and with a longing for life, just as nature always has. The last trees of the earth join it in its lament, entreating humanity to change its selfish ways. They remind us of the earth's protection and nurturing of life, of how our world longs to provide shelter and share its vigorous soul. Humanity, however, only hungers for more. The trees are struck with despair when humanity, ignoring the suffering it has caused, arrives on thundering machines. Humanity continues to take what it believes are its rightful possessions; it is apathetic to other forms of life and blind to the home it is destroying. The earth clings to survival, weeping for the end that is upon us all. She begs, but humanity is relentless. She accepts our fate, and the last trees sing of yearning and yet also of forgiveness. They sing until there is only one tree left. Despite its sorrow, it reaches out in hope and with a longing for life, just as nature always has. And quietly, the last tree dies.

Maybe I'm Secretly an Octopus

Even though the last common ancestor of homo sapiens and octopuses was a wormlike thing that lived 750 million years ago, octopuses have been shown to be surprisingly human-like. In captivity, the especially feisty ones destroy lab equipment, squirt researchers, and escape the second you turn your back. In the ocean, they might give a visiting human a tour of their home or throw a hissy fit, depending on their mood. Octopuses don't quite make sense: their bodies change color to reflect moods and environments, but their eyes don't see color; they have intelligence and capabilities that suggest a complex social system, but they don't socialize. But then, do people really make sense either? I'm not always sure I took the right path on the evolutionary tree.

Between

"Between" is part of a larger work, "Dysphoria," which logs the journey from repression to pronouncement. The piece's aleatoric nature shows the overall disorder that one faces while on their exploration. As the piece progresses, multiple instruments can be heard playing a micro-tonal motive representing the feeling of dysphoria. In "Between," this motive is played in different tempi and in different registers. As the penultimate movement of "Dysphoria," "Between" ends abruptly, showing an end to repression and paving the way for the final movement, "Affirmation."

Piano Suite

This suite is a collection of brief movements in which I explore new compositional techniques and tonalities. The first movement, "Polytonal," is a succinct foray into polytonality. In the second movement, "Cell," a single group of four notes is transposed, rearranged, and otherwise manipulated into a cohesive piece. The third movement, "Free," draws on the concepts of ostinato and minimalism. The penultimate movement, "Neotonal," ventures outside strict diatonicism, and may also escape the listener's expectations. The final movement, "Found Melody," develops and recontextualizes melodies from Rachmaninoff's Vespers, Op. 37 No.3.

Turn

Turn is a piece about change, it's about seasons, fall, most specifically,

It's about cicadas, it's about their 17-year slumber for a few days of life.

Turn is a piece about making changes. It is inspired by dancing, by turning, running, spinning,

and making small, incremental changes over time toward something better.

Unspoken

Unspoken... Many of the strongest emotions ever felt throughout the human experience remain dormant in the mind. Our very core, conflicted and afraid to let go of control, often shifts our attention to a task or routine associated with our earliest sense of security. It is only at one's most pivotal point that they truly understand what their soul seeks. Only His ears can hear these words. Only His eyes can see inside. For even the trust we place in ourselves cannot make sense of desire. There will be no resolution for our conflict, at least for now. For now, these words remain "Unspoken."

Hide and Seek

While composing this piece, I imagined people hiding and chasing each other like Tom and Jerry, characters from one of my favorite childhood cartoons. From the excitement of chasing to the hesitancy of hiding and seeking, the piece has various musical moods that are interwoven with chromatic lines, diatonic scales, open chords, and polyrhythms.
