UMD School of Music Presents:
UMD Wind Orchestra

REYKJAVÍK, LOS ANGELES, NEW ORLEANS
Friday, February 27, 2015 . 8PM
Elsie & Marvin Dekelboum Concert Hall

Program

JÓN “JÓNSI” BIRGISSON
   Kolnidur (Coal-black)
   Hengilas (Padlock)
   Go Do

DONALD CROCKETT
Dance Concerto (2013)
   I. Might Not Be A Rumba
   II. Slow Dance
   III. Last Dance

   Paul Cigan, Clarinet Soloist

   Eastern United States premiere

-INTERMISSION-

JAMES SYLER
Three Places in Jazz
   I. Congo Square (2014)
   II. Storyville (1996)
   III. Minton’s Playhouse (1994)

   World premiere of complete work

This performance will last approximately 90 minutes
with a 15-minute intermission.

Video or audio recording of the production is strictly prohibited.
Michael Votta Jr. has been hailed by critics as “a conductor with the drive and ability to fully relay artistic thoughts” and praised for his “interpretations of definition, precision and most importantly, unmitigated joy.” Ensembles under his direction have received critical acclaim in the United States and Europe for their “exceptional spirit, verve and precision,” their “sterling examples of innovative programming” and “the kind of artistry that is often thought to be the exclusive purview of top symphonic ensembles.”

He currently serves as Director of Wind Activities at the University of Maryland where he holds the rank of professor. Under his leadership, the UMD Wind Orchestra has been invited to perform at national and regional conferences of the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA), and has collaborated with major artists such as the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, eighth blackbird, the Imani Winds and Daniel Bernard Roumain.

His performances have been heard in broadcasts throughout the United States, on Austrian National Radio (ÖRF) and Southwest German Television, and have been released internationally on the Primavera label. Numerous major composers including George Crumb, Christopher Rouse, Louis Andriessen, Karel Husa, Olly Wilson, Barbara Kolb and Warren Benson have praised his performances of their works.

Votta has taught conducting seminars in the U.S. and Israel, and has guest conducted and lectured at institutions such as the Prague Conservatory, the Eastman School of Music, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the National Arts Camp at Interlochen. He has also conducted and taught at the Midwest Clinic, and at conferences of the CBDNA and the Conductors Guild.

He is the author of numerous articles on wind literature and conducting. His arrangements and editions for winds have been performed and recorded by university and professional wind ensembles in the U.S., Europe and Japan. He is currently the Vice-President of the Eastern Division of the CBDNA, and has served as Editor of the CBDNA Journal, as a member of the Executive Board of the International Society for the Investigation of Wind Music (IGEB) and on the board of the Conductors Guild.

Before his appointment at Maryland, Votta held conducting positions at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Duke University, Ithaca College, the University of South Florida, Miami University (Ohio) and Hope College.

Votta holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Conducting degree from the Eastman School of Music where he served as Assistant Conductor of the Eastman Wind Ensemble and studied with Donald Hunsberger. A native of Michigan, Votta received his undergraduate training and Master of Music degrees from the University of Michigan, where he studied with H. Robert Reynolds.

As a clarinetist, Votta has performed as a soloist throughout the U.S. and Europe. His solo and chamber music recordings are available on the Partridge and Albany labels.

Paul Cigan began his musical education at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying with San Francisco Symphony clarinetists David Breeden and David Neuman. After transferring to Temple University in Philadelphia to continue studies with Anthony Gigliotti, former principal clarinetist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Cigan began freelancing with local groups including the Concerto Soloists Chamber Orchestra. Professional orchestra positions soon followed, serving as principal clarinetist of the Virginia Symphony, Colorado Symphony and San Antonio Symphony. Appointed by Maestro Leonard Slatkin, Cigan is currently second clarinetist with the National Symphony Orchestra and an active chamber musician and teacher in the Washington DC area. During his tenure with the NSO, Cigan has appeared as concerto soloist and given chamber music performances and masterclasses across the
Jónsi Music
JÓN “JÓNSI” BIRGISSON
Born April 23, 1975
Instrumentation: Rock Band
Duration: 10 minutes
Transcription: Chamber Ensemble by David Vickerman
Composed: 2010

Jón Þór “Jónsi” Birgisson is the guitarist and vocalist for the Icelandic post-rock band Sigur Rós. He is known for his use of a cello bow on guitar and his falsetto or countertenor voice. Apart from Sigur Rós, Jónsi also performs together with his partner Alex Somers as an art collaboration called Jónsi & Alex. They released their self-titled first book in November 2006, followed by their first album, Riceboy Sleeps, in July 2009.

On December 1, 2009, Jónsi launched his debut solo album, Go, which was released the week of April 5, 2010. After the release of the album, Jónsi promptly started a worldwide tour across North America and Europe, featuring songs from the album plus a few other selections, planning to tour from March to September. Jónsi Music is a three-movement work featuring tracks from the album Go.

In late January 2010, Jónsi announced that Sigur Rós was on “an indefinite hiatus,” as the band had scrapped plans for a new album previously announced to be released in 2010, saying that “they were just rumors.” The band is now back together again and released the album Valtari on May 28, 2012 with a following tour starting in August of the same year, and more recently the album Kveikur on June 18, 2013.

Dance Concerto
DONALD CROCKETT
Born 1951 in Pasadena, California
Instrumentation: Clarinet Soloist and Wind Ensemble
Duration: 19 minutes
Composed: 2013

Donald Crockett is Professor and Chair of the Composition Department and Director of the Contemporary Music Ensemble at the USC Thornton School of Music, and Senior Composer-in-Residence with the Bennington Chamber Music Conference. He has received commissions from the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (Composer-in-Residence, 1991–1997), Kronos Quartet, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Hilliard Ensemble, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble and the California EAR Unit, among many others. Recent projects include commissions from the Harvard Musical Association for violist Kate Vincent and Firebird Ensemble, the Claremont Trio, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, 21st Century Consort and a chamber opera, The Face, based on a novella in verse by poet David St. John. Crockett was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2006, and has also received grants and prizes from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Barlow Endowment, Copland Fund, Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards, Meet the Composer, the National Endowment for the Arts and many others. His music is published by Keiser Classi-
cal and Doberman/Yppan and recorded on the Albany, CRI, ECM, Laurel, Orion and Pro Arte/Fanfare labels. A frequent guest conductor with new music ensembles nationally, Crockett has been very active over the years as a composer and conductor with the venerable and famed Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles. His recordings as a conductor can be found on the Albany, ECM, New World and CRI labels.

The Concerto for clarinet (doubling bass clarinet) and wind ensemble is a dance concerto riffing on the theme of its premiere at the Smithsonian Museum of American Art in Washington DC on April 20, 2013: “Dancing the Night Away Until Dawn.” The original version, a co-commission from Frank M. Hudson and the 21st Century Consort, is scored for soloist and a miniature band of eight instruments without percussion. In this current version, which I had in mind from the initial conception of the piece, the band is considerably enlarged to a wind ensemble of 33 musicians including four percussionist. The soloist in Dance Concerto plays both clarinet and bass clarinet in this virtuosic, three-movement work. All three movements are ‘Dance Music,’ as if the soloist were the leader of some sort of dance band on this or another planet, and they play fast music, slow music and music in between. These are invented dances; the regulars at this particular late-night, cosmopolitan club are very, very good, but even newcomers can join in and dance until the sun comes up.

— Donald Crockett

Three Places in Jazz
JAMES SYLER
Born 1961 in Hyde Park, New York
Instrumentation: Wind Ensemble
Duration: 40 minutes
Trilogy Premiere: February 27, 2015, University of Maryland Wind Orchestra, Dr. Michael Votta Jr., Conductor

In 1994 I composed a bebop-inspired work for saxophone quartet and wind ensemble titled Minton’s Playhouse about the famous 1940’s New York club that was important in the development of modern jazz. In 1996 I composed a companion piece that went back in history to early jazz. Titled Storyville, after the infamous New Orleans red-light district, it featured the mixed musics commonly heard as jazz was developing around the early 1900s. At the time, I felt there was one more work to be written to form a trilogy of works about important places in jazz. That work would address the pre-jazz element and would be inspired by Congo Square in New Orleans. As early as the 1700s slaves were freed on Sunday afternoons to celebrate, dance and make music in a specific place behind the French Quarter, which became known as Congo Square. As the years passed, it has remained a place of music-making and in many ways is the cradle of music in New Orleans and what would become American jazz. These three works — Congo Square, Storyville, Minton’s Playhouse — can be performed independently or as larger trilogy titled Three Places in Jazz.

New Orleans was founded by the French in 1718. Shortly thereafter, the first generation of enslaved arrived. By 1817 a city ordinance was passed confining Sunday slave celebrations to one location — a public space called Congo Square. Throughout its history Congo Square was also the site of public executions, a whipping post and the buying and selling of slaves. It is a place of conflicting emotions and multi-layered meanings. Another often-overlooked reality is the influence of mixed race Creole musicians in New Orleans and Congo Square. During the early 1800s music in New Orleans was often described as more Caribbean than African. This unique mix of African, Creole and Caribbean is what I’ve tried to internalize as I wrote Congo Square.

The antiphonal flugelhorn is heard in the beginning and throughout the work as a kind of warning, similar in sound and meaning to the ancient blasts of the temple shofar. The African
drum quartet represents the West African influence. It begins by quoting an authentic Konkoba war dance in \( \frac{3}{4} \). The polyrhythms of the quartet grow in intensity. The middle section quotes “Salangadou,” an old Creole song about a mother in search of her abducted child. Near the end of the work an early jazz-style song emerges in a stomp style as the drummer plays a traditional New Orleans “Second Line” style groove, both of which suggest the new music that will eventually grow out of Congo Square. These three musics — the African drums, a Creole song and early jazz styles — overlap and sound at the same time to produce the emotional zenith of the work. From the point of view of the past, we hear that past its present, and future music simultaneously. My hope is that it will produce a reflective moment that gives the listener a deeper understanding of the multi-layered realities of Congo Square.

Between 1897 and 1917 the New Orleans neighborhood known as Storyville was the legalized prostitution district for the city. The development of a new music called jazz coincided with these years, and considering many early jazz musicians played in the Storyville district, it served a unique, even ironic, role as one of the patrons of a new American music.

This music is a remembrance of that place, as well as a reminder that a joyful music can be born from the most unlikely of places. It uses the “sigh” of the descending half-step, the harmonic palette of jazz and the multiple musics that would have been commonly heard in Storyville at that time — Ragtime, brass bands, piano music, blues, marches and in particular the hymn “Nearer My God To Thee,” which had a special place in the hearts and minds of Storyville musicians as described by the account below.

As a result of ongoing reform efforts and the final murder of a Navy sailor in the district during World War I, the Navy ordered Storyville to be closed down for good and on November 12, 1917 a stream of residents finally evacuated the neighborhood in one surreal event:

“With all they had in the world reposing in two-wheel carts or on wheelbarrows, pushed by Negro boys or old men, the once Red Light Queens were making their way out of Storyville to the strains of ‘Nearer My God To Thee’ played by a massive combination of all the Negro jazzmen of the Red Light dance halls. By nightfall, the once notorious Red Light District was only a ghost — merely rows of empty cribs. The old Red Light District of New Orleans became history.”

— John A. Provenzano

In acknowledging the historical importance of Storyville to the early history of jazz, I’ve attempted to be true to the original musics that existed there and treat them in a creative way. This is not a glorification of prostitution, but rather an artistic way to remember and capture in music the pain and joy, sadness and hope, of this unique place and its people.

In the early 1940’s there was a nightclub at 210 West 118th Street in New York called Minton’s Playhouse. The weekly jam sessions and after-hours experimenting that went on there, and other clubs in New York, played an important role in the development of what has become modern jazz and the bebop style. In honor of the 50-year mark of this jazz style this work pays homage to the past, yet moves into the future by combining bebop with modern concert music.

The music is in effect a modern concerto grosso in the tradition of Third Stream works that explore the fusing of Classical and jazz elements. The work is in two sections — slow and fast — and built on an original jazz ballad. The music expresses what might have gone through the minds of so many great musicians who played there as they played a ballad in the last set of the evening. Their thoughts must have been filled with new ideas and the possibilities of a new music.

— James Syler
UMD Wind Orchestra
Michael Votta Jr., music director

FLUTE
Annamarie Dickerson
Laura Kaufman
Jenny Lehtonen

OBOE
Elizabeth Eber
Alison Lowell
Santiago Vivas-Gonzalez

CLARINET
Nina Elhassan
Tessa Gartin
Aaron Logan
Nathan Raderman
Caitlin Rowden

BASS CLARINET
Austin Boroshok

CONTRA ALTO CLARINET
Dan Page

BASSOON
Jacqui Symon
Caitlin Wieners

SAXOPHONE
Dan Janis
Katherine Sabol
Kyle Schick
David Wannlund

HORN
Laura Bent
Laura Brisson
Brian Kavolius
Eric Kuhn

TRUMPET
Bonni Lee Beebe
Ben Lostocco
Tim Moran
Will Yeager

TROMBONE
Josh Gehres
Casey Klint
Nathan Reynolds

BASS TROMBONE
Matt Myers

EUPHONIUM
Ian Kahn

TUBA
Nick Obrigewitch
Craig Potter

HARP
Samantha Bittle

PIANO
Alex Chan

PERCUSSION
Matt Miller
Mario Perez
Logan Seith
Maurice Watkins

SOPRANO
Anna Mendham
The following items and materials related to this performance are available in the collections of the University of Maryland Libraries. For materials held in the Paged Collections Room, please ask at the circulation desk.

**David Froom:**
**Song and Dance — The 21st Century Consort, Christopher Kendall, conductor**
**Location:** Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library — Paged Collections
**Call Number:** MCD 17424
As a principal clarinetist of the National Symphony Orchestra and a member of the 21st Century Consort, Paul Cigan has performed in a wide array of musical genres. The music of American composer David Froom requires just this kind of versatility; in the words of fellow composer Eric Moe, it is “infused with a rhythmic and gestural sensibility that draws excitement and expression from a sea of vernacular, modernist, and post-modernist musical languages.” This recording brings together the influences of Hebrew poetry, medieval and jazz dance, texts by Ralph Waldo Emerson and modern chamber music to create a blend of styles that perfectly showcases the talent and skill of the Consort’s players.

**Ágætis byrjun — Sigur Rós**
**Location:** Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library — Paged Collections
**Call Number:** MCD 17448

**Kveikur — Sigur Rós**
**Location:** Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library — Paged Collections
**Call Number:** MCD 17425
Iceland’s Sigur Rós has released seven albums that blend fantasy and folklore in a cinematic and orchestral amalgam that is all their own. From their debut with 1997’s Von, through their critical and commercial breakthrough with 1999’s Ágætis byrjun, to 2013’s Kveikur, Sigur Rós has created a singular sound that draws on the rock, pop, metal and orchestral traditions while telling stories in their native Icelandic tongue. Despite personnel changes and a switch to a new record label, the band has continued to strike emotional and intellectual chords and provided their listeners with a stream of sounds that is unparalleled in its ethereal beauty.

For more information on these UMD Library materials and other resources relating to the performers, pieces, composers and themes of this program, please visit us at www.lib.umd.edu/mspal/mspal-previews.