



University of Maryland School of Music Presents
FALL PERCUSSION CONCERT
UMD Percussion Ensemble

Monday, December 12, 2022 • 8PM
DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL
AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



**SCHOOL OF
MUSIC**

University of Maryland School of Music Presents

FALL PERCUSSION CONCERT

UMD Percussion Ensemble
 Jauvon Gilliam and John McGovern
Music Directors

Second Construction John Cage
 (1912–1992)

“Scherzo” Pyotry Illyich Tchaikovsky
 from Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36 (1840–1893)
 arr. Gordon Peters/Jason Amis

Jason Amis, *conductor*

Fractalia Owen Clayton Condon
 (b. 1978)

Histoire du Tango Ástor Piazzolla
 (1921–1992)

- I. Bordel 1900
- II. Cafe 1930

Robert Rocheteau, *marimba*
 Max Jacobs, *violin*

INTERMISSION

Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows: Ambedo Annika Socolofsky
 (b. 1990)

Trio in a Rudimental Style Joseph Tompkins
 (b. 1970)

the season of Big rain Nyokabi Kariüki
 (b. 1998)

Hikarizatto Percossa
 (Janwillem van der Poll and Niels van Hoorn)

Jauvon Gilliam, *timpani*



JAUVON GILLIAM was named principal timpanist of the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) in 2009.

Gilliam regularly has performed as guest principal timpanist of the Budapest Festival Orchestra. He is also timpanist of the All-Star Orchestra, a made-for-PBS group composed of players from orchestras across the United States.

Gilliam has performed with The Cleveland Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra. He was previously timpanist of the Bear Valley Music Festival for three seasons.

Prior to his NSO appointment, Gilliam was timpanist of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) for seven years. While in Winnipeg, he was also timpanist of the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra and, for a time, played drum set for the WSO pops series.

As an educator, Gilliam has taught clinics at universities, institutions and conventions across Canada and the United States, including the Interlochen Arts Academy, Aspen Music Festival and School, New World Symphony and Percussive Arts Society International Convention. He is the co-director of percussion studies/artist-in-residence at the University of Maryland, College Park, co-founder of the annual Washburgh Timpani Seminar and a timpani coach for the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America. Previously, he was the coordinator of percussion studies at the University of Manitoba.

A native of Gary, Indiana, Gilliam began his musical career playing piano, winning his first national competition at age 11. He received a full scholarship in piano performance to attend Butler University, but later changed to full-time percussion study. He graduated with honors with a degree in arts administration and then continued his graduate studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Gilliam received an honorary doctorate from his alma mater in 2014.

Gilliam proudly endorses Yamaha Musical Instruments, Remo drumheads, Sabian cymbals and Innovative Percussion sticks and mallets.



JOHN MCGOVERN has been the percussion studio graduate assistant at the University of Maryland, College Park since 2017. In this capacity, he is co-director of the University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble for the 2022–23 school year. John’s primary instructor at Maryland is Jauvon Gilliam; he has undertaken additional study with Lee Hinkle and James Wyman. John has appeared extensively as principal timpanist with the D.C.-based Apollo Orchestra. He has also appeared with the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, the Annapolis Opera and the 21st Century Consort, and attended the National Orchestral Institute and the Aspen Music Festival and School. John’s premieres include works for solo percussion by Chris Dench, Dominic Ellis, Sean Klink and Duncan Boatright. John is an avid interpreter of musical works that incorporate theatrical performance; this practice includes a number of multimedia works created in collaboration with the composer Tucker Johnson.

John is a native of South Carolina and grew up in Oldsmar, Florida. He credits formational teenage summers spent at Kinhaven Music School in Weston, Vermont, as a student of John Bannon, for the path he has taken through life. He received a bachelor of music degree from Florida State University in 2017 as a student of John W. Parks IV and a master of music degree from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2019, and anticipates graduating with a doctor of musical arts degree in spring 2023. His dissertation research centers around the process by which the cowbell came to be understood as a percussion instrument by performers, composers and the music-listening public. John loves road cycling (as a fan and as a participant) and baseball (as a fan only), possesses a great fondness for cats and the writing of Michael Chabon, and suffers from a lifelong fascination with cryptozoology.

Second Construction (1940)**JOHN CAGE****Born 1912, Los Angeles****Died 1992, New York**

This work is one of three by the name *Construction* that John Cage wrote between 1939 and 1942 while an accompanist and composer with the dance department at the Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle. At this time Cage was, by exploring both the sonic possibilities of percussion and the potential of unconventional or mundane objects to be used as instruments, creating what can be seen as the ideological foundation of the modern chamber percussion world. The three *Constructions* he wrote during this period, especially the second and third, have been at the core of this repertoire since the 1970s. The instrumentation of the second is not as adventurous as that of the third, but it is still rich with interesting sounds. One can in our performance this evening hear the spectral tones of large South Asian sleigh bells; bowl-like Japanese temple gongs; the mournful wail of a small gong dipped in water; the “thunder sheet,” which is simply a very large piece of sheet metal; and a piano whose sound is manipulated with cardboard, metal and a coffee mug. These coexist with such traditional percussion sounds as maracas, snare drum and congas.

The structure of *Second Construction* is mathematically precise. It consists of 16 sections of 16 bars each; each section is composed of four phrase groupings of four bars, three bars, four bars and five bars respectively. This is, in fact, the same structure by which the 16-bar phrases are related to one another. The rhythmic figure played by the sleigh bells in the piece’s opening (a four-bar phrase) reoccurs frequently and is often treated fugally, especially towards the work’s conclusion.

– Program note by John McGovern

Scherzo from Symphony no. 4**PYOTIR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY****Born 1840, Voktinsk, Russia****Died 1893, Saint Petersburg, Russia****Arr. Gordon Peters and Jason Amis**

Gordon Peters was the very first president of the Percussive Arts Society, a still-extant organization to which many members of this ensemble belong. His musical life was far-ranging and makes for a not at all bad survey of the state of American percussion in the early-mid 20th century. Peters was born in Chicago; he studied as a child with future Chicago Symphony Orchestra percussionist Harry Brabec as well as with Guatemalan marimbist José Bethancourt. Prior to the Korean War he studied with Clair Omar Musser (namesake of one of the best-known percussion manufacturers of the last century); during the war, while stationed at West Point, he studied independently with Juilliard faculty members Morris Goldenberg and Saul Goodman. Following his service, he studied with Bill Street at the Eastman School of Music; following his graduation he was appointed principal percussionist of the Chicago Symphony by Fritz Reiner, a position he held from 1959 to 2001.

This Tchaikovsky arrangement is one of many that Peters wrote for his Marimba Masters ensemble, a marimba orchestra in the classic Musser vein. This style of percussion performance is for us this evening something of a throwback — marimba orchestras were once the most commonly heard kind of percussion-centric music in America, the byproduct of a fascination that listeners had with the novelty of mallet percussion in the 1920s and 1930s. Peters’ arrangement, however, as written consists only of the first third of the movement. Third-year percussion performance major Jason Amis has, in addition to conducting this performance, “completed” Peters’ arrangement, incorporating metal instruments (vibraphone and glockenspiel) that were not part of Peters’ original ensemble.

– Program note by John McGovern

Fractalia (2011)**OWEN CLAYTON CONDON****Born 1978**

Fractalia, as the name might suggest, is inspired by the concept of fractals: the phenomenon of small sections of a larger structure resembling the whole. The word “fractal,” Condon notes, derives from the Latin *fractus*; in English, “broken.” Musically, this is represented by kaleidoscopic overlapping of small melodic gestures between four marimbists. In this, and in the presence of the toms (played both on their heads and shells), the influences of electronic music and taiko drumming can be heard.

– Program note by John McGovern

Histoire du Tango (1985)**ÁSTOR PIAZZOLLA****Born 1921, Mar del Plata, Argentina****Died 1992, Buenos Aires, Argentina**

The composer and bandoneon player Ástor Piazzolla, perhaps the single most famous Argentine composer among American audiences, actually spent his adolescence living in New York City. While there he developed a taste for jazz and the music of Bach along with a taste for the tango music his father would listen to. At the age of 15, he returned to Argentina with his family; two years later he moved to Buenos Aires and quickly became a member of renowned bandoneon player Aníbal Troilo’s orchestra. Concurrently, he studied composition with Alberto Ginastera, and would spend parts of 1952 through 1954 studying with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. The result of all this experience and influence was Piazzolla’s sophisticated personal brand of tango, featuring new instruments and classically influenced structures, which would become one of the most significant musical underpinnings of the *nuevo tango* movement in the last few decades of the 20th century.

Histoire du Tango was premiered in 1985 and has become one Piazzolla’s most performed works. It owes much of its popularity with both listeners and performers to its flexible instrumentation; that is to say, while originally composed for flute and guitar, it can be performed by a variety of instrumental combinations. This evening’s performance features Maryland percussion doctoral student Robert Rocheteau on marimba and, as a special non-percussion guest, master’s student Max Jacobs on violin.

– Program note by John McGovern

Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows: Ambedo (2018)**ANNIKA SOCOLOFSKY****Born 1990**

The concept for this piece comes from “The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows,” a collection of words invented by John Koenig that “aims to fill a hole in the [English] language—to give a name to emotions we all might experience but don’t yet have a word for.” The title for this piece comes from the definition for “ambedo.”

ambedo

n. a kind of melancholic trance in which you become completely absorbed in vivid sensory details—raindrops skittering down a window, tall trees leaning in the wind, clouds of cream swirling in your coffee—which leads to a dawning awareness of the haunting fragility of life, a mood whose only known cure is the vuvuzela.

– Program note by the composer

Trio in a Rudimental Style (2022)**JOSEPH TOMPKINS****Born 1970**

This trio is one of many works by Tompkins that build on the rudimental vocabulary of composers like Wilcoxon and Pratt in exciting and unconventional ways. His best known work incorporates into this style the French rudimental style, inspired by the writing of Guy Lefevre. This style can be heard in his two collections of *French-American Rudimental Solos* and his standalone work *Walking Down Coolidge* among others. This Trio, however, takes its specific flavor instead from the drumset playing of Steve Gadd. Though the famous drumset hook that Steve Gadd laid down on Paul Simon's "Fifty Ways to Leave Your Lover" is never quoted directly, the piece's opening echoes it, filtered of course through a more traditional (American) rudimental lens.

– Program note by John McGovern

the season of Big rain* (2020)*NYOKABI KARIŪKI****Born 1998**

The season of "big rain" is known as "Mbura ya Njahĩ," which refers to the rain that comes that allows the beans to grow (usually from April to July). When writing the piece, I found myself thinking of the sound of the tapping of rain on the roof of our home in Kĩrĩnyaga, where my father and his sisters grew up. It is one of my most favourite, most peaceful places to be.

The piece therefore follows the journey of a gentle rainstorm, featuring sounds of the glimmer of lightning, the low rumble of thunder and the quiet taps of raindrops — on a leaf, on the ground, and on a rooftop in Kĩrĩnyaga.

– Program note by the composer

Hikarizatto* (2004)*PERCOSSA****(Niels van Hoorn and Janwillem van der Poll)**

Percossa is a Dutch ensemble whose work combines percussion with theater—often humorous, at times even circus-adjacent. Though most of their work is done outside the Anglosphere, American audiences might understand the nature of their work by seeing them as working within an idiom somewhat similar to that of the Blue Man Group—inclusive, kinetic performances musically and visually rich in equal parts. One can on their official YouTube page see excerpts from their live performances wherein they make extraordinary use of boomwhackers (tuned plastic tubes that sound when struck against any object) in theatrical contexts.

Hikarizatto is the musical accompaniment for a ballet created by Israeli-Dutch choreographer Itzik Galili, originally for the Stuttgart Ballet in 2004. The work has since then entered the standard repertoire of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and has also been extensively performed in Galili's native Israel. The title "hikarizatto" can be roughly translated from Japanese as "crowded light;" this speaks both to the influence that Japanese taiko drumming has had on this piece (and on the rest of Percossa's music more broadly) and to the stark way in which the ballet production is illuminated—a light which was itself inspired by the way light travels in Japanese cities, according to Royal Winnipeg Ballet director André Lewis.

– Program note by John McGovern

Jauvon Gilliam, *co-director and timpani soloist*
John McGovern, *co-director and piano preparer*

Personnel

Jason Amis
Chris Boxall
Maia Foley
Kyle Graham
Gwen Hogan
Bruce Perry
John Plate
Jada Twitty

Also featuring

Robert Rocheteau, *marimba*
Max Jacobs, *violin*