



University of Maryland School of Music Presents

SPRING PERCUSSION CONCERT
University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble

Monday, May 1, 2023 • 8PM

DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL

AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



**SCHOOL OF
MUSIC**

University of Maryland School of Music Presents

SPRING PERCUSSION CONCERT

UMD Percussion Ensemble

Jauvon Gilliam and John McGovern

Music Directors

Sculpture in Wood Rüdiger Pawassar
(b. 1957)

Mudra Bob Becker
(b. 1947)

John McGovern, *snare drum and crotales*

Pillar V Andy Akiho
(b. 1979)

“White Pines” Michael Burritt
from *Home Trilogy* (b. 1962)

Bruce Perry, *marimba*

Toccata for Percussion Carlos Chavez
(1899–1978)

- I. Allegro sempre giusto
- II. Largo
- III. Allegro un poco marziale

Bruce Perry, *conductor*



JUVON 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 National Symphony Orchestra, 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.

Sculpture in Wood (1995)

RÜDIGER PAWASSAR

Born 1964, Lübeck, Germany

Percussionist Rüdiger Pawassar has been *Solo-schlagzeug* with the Staatsorkester in Kassel, Germany since 1990, but his familiarity among American percussionists rests mostly on this lovely, jazz-tinged composition. *Sculpture in Wood* also exists as *Sculpture 3* (for marimba trio) and *Sculpture 2* (for two marimbas, eight hands), but the version we will perform tonight (for four marimbists on four marimbas) is the original.

Sculpture in Wood features a rapidly shifting homophonic texture. Each section of the work — at times each phrases — reshuffles the roles of soloist and accompaniment, and each of the four performers gets their moments of virtuosity.

– Program note by John McGovern

Mudra (1990)

BOB BECKER

Born 1947, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Mudra consists of music which was originally composed to accompany the dance *UrbhاناMudra* by choreographer Joan Phillips. Commissioned by INDE '90 and premiered in Toronto in March 1990 as part of the DuMaurier Quay Works series, *UrbhاناMudra* was awarded the National Arts Centre Award for best collaboration between composer and choreographer. The Music was subsequently edited and reorchestrated as a concert piece for Nexus during May 1990. *Mudra* is scored for marimba, vibraphone, songbells, glockenspiel, crotales, muffled drum and bass drum.

UrbhاناMudra was created, for the most part, using the “dance first” approach, in which the music is composed to fit pre-existing choreography. Thus, the rhythmic structure and overall form reflect the episodic and gestural character of the original choreography, which dealt with the conflict of traditional and modern issues in a multicultural urban society. The term *mudra* refers in general to the narrative use of torso, facial and hand and arm gestures in many Indian dance forms.

The instrumental ensemble in the original piece had a role similar to that found in traditional Indian dance concerts, where a solo drum is the principal voice. However, western instruments were not used to make an “Indian” sound. In response to the choreographic approach, classical Indian musical structures were allowed to influence the formal, rhythmic and harmonic aspects of the music. The interval relationships of the *raga Chandrakauns* (tonic, minor third, fourth, minor sixth and major seventh) were used to determine both the melodic and harmonic content of this piece. Rhythmically, *Mudra* is based on two important and common structures found throughout North Indian music: motivic development (*palta*) and rhythmic cadence formulas (*ti hai*). These structural devices are used most systematically in the final drum solo section of the piece in which rhythmic, rather than harmonic, cadencing is used to create tension and, ultimately, accord.

– Program note by the composer

Pillar V (2020)

ANDY AKIHO

Born 1979, Columbia, South Carolina

In December 2021, critically acclaimed quartet Sandbox Percussion gave the live premiere of an evening-length concert work by Andy Akiho entitled *Seven Pillars*. This monumental work, the product of eight years of collaboration between Akiho and the members of Sandbox (Ian Rosenbaum, Terry Sweeney, Victor Caccese and Jonny Allen), consists of 11 smaller compositions: *Pillars I-VII* and four solo movements, each written for one of the members of the quartet.

The components works of *Seven Pillars* are rapidly entering the percussion repertoire; Maryland is one of many universities excerpting one or more of them for this semester's performances. One of our studio members, Jason Amis, performed all four of the solo movements on a recital earlier this month, as well as the groovy and sonically rich *Pillar V*, which we will be playing here tonight. This performance features a longtime friend of the University of Maryland percussion studio, Sabrina Peterson, on glockenspiel and brake drum.

– Program note by John McGovern

Home Trilogy (2015)

MICHAEL BURRITT

Born 1962

In the score to *Home Trilogy*, Michael Burrirt writes that “*Home* is a reference to both my home in Rochester and ‘our collective home,’ the earth.” This evening we will be performing the second of the three movements, “White Pines.” Burrirt tells us that this movement “was inspired by the energy, crispness and majesty of these snow-covered trees in the winter months.”

Also included in the score are poems written by Kelsey Burrirt for each of the three movements. I reproduce here the one that accompanies “White Pines.”

Snow shakes the limbs
but does not break them,
they hold,
laden with white.
The dusting glints
in sunlight, fastens
to the branch, secured with frost.
There is a way to live.
Each evergreen
bearing snow into the blue sky
knows.
At night,
the pines radiate
a grey opaque
in starlight.

This performance features graduating senior Bruce Perry playing the propulsive and rhythmic part for marimba soloist.

– Program note by John McGovern

Toccata for Percussion (1942)

CARLOS CHAVEZ

Born 1899, Mexico City

Died 1978, Mexico City

Carlos Chavez is a figure of enormous significance in the modern history of music in Mexico. Chavez was, from 1928 to 1949, director of various precursors to the modern-day National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico. He was also director of the National Conservatory of Mexico from 1928 to 1933 and headed Mexico's National Institute of Fine Arts from its founding 1947 to 1952. This was in addition to an international conducting career (notably including appearances with the NBC Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna State Opera and the New York Philharmonic) and a composition career which prompted him to retire from all his administrative duties by 1952.

The Toccata for Percussion, written in 1942, was written at a time when works for ensembles of percussion instruments had already achieved a certain amount of (niche) mainstream acceptance on the concert hall stage. Edgard Varese's *Ionisation* had been premiered in New York 11 years earlier. Chavez' Toccata, however, breaks ground in its own way for both its usage of indigenous Mexican instruments (the bass drum and bongos onstage now being substitutes for *bomba* and *tambor indio*) in the percussion ensemble context, and for using these instruments without any exoticism or implication of "indigenous" *character*. Instead, Chavez selects and composes for these instruments — plus more conventional snare drums, timpani, mallet instruments, cymbals and gongs — for their particular sonic characteristics.

The first movement stands out for its sparse, pointillistic texture. This accompanies a compositional technique — sometimes called "hocketing" — where a straightforward rhythm, often simply running eighth notes, is orchestrated among different players in order to create variances of both pitch and timbre which *are*, effectively, the work's melody. The work's second movement, crawling along at an insistent 58 eighth notes per minute, is eerie, hushed and resonant by contrast, with interlocking canons on xylophone and glockenspiel being accompanied by slow polyrhythms on differently-sized gongs and cymbals. The final movement takes on boisterous, almost violent martial character, anchored by solo interjections from the timpani.

This evening's performance features graduating senior Bruce Perry as conductor.

– Program note by John McGovern

Jauvon Gilliam, *co-director*

John McGovern, *co-director*

Personnel

Jason Amis

Chris Boxall

Kyle Grahm

Jonathan Monk

Joanne Kim

Maia Foley

Devon Rafanelli

Bruce Perry

Special Guest

Sabrina Peterson