



University of Maryland School of Music Presents
“environMent”
University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble

Monday, December 11, 2023 • 8PM

DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL

AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



SCHOOL OF
MUSIC

University of Maryland School of Music

Presents

“environMent”

University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble

Jonathan Bisesi

Music Director

Earth and the Great Weather John Luther Adams
VI. Deep and Distant Thunder (b. 1953)

Wah Juri Seo
(b. 1981)

Sequoia Yaz Lancaster
(b. 2000)

Credo in US John Cage
(1912–1992)

INTERMISSION

Halil Leonard Bernstein
(1918–1990)

Jason Amis, *conductor*

Erica Mari Spear, *flute*

Christopher Adams, *piano*

Marimba Quartet Daniel Levitan
Movement I (b. 1953)
Movement II

Earth and the Great Weather John Luther Adams
I. Drums of Winter (b. 1953)

Earth and the Great Weather

JOHN LUTHER ADAMS

Born 1953, Meridian, Minnesota

"These pieces are drawn from *Earth and the Great Weather*, an evening length "sonic geography" of the Arctic. Although purely "abstract" in form, it is my hope that they are in some small measure informed by the elemental power of natural forces in the Arctic, and by the ecstatic power of Inupiat Eskimo drumming and dancing"

The great sea has set me adrift.
It moves me like a weed
in a great river.
Earth and the great weather move me,
have carried me away
and move my inward parts with joy.

- Uvavnuk, an Iglulik Eskimo shaman

- Program note by John Luther Adams

Wah

JURI SEO

Born 1981, Seoul, Korea

Wah is written for two to five "wah-wah tubes." These tubes are equipped with small holes that can manipulate the sound when struck. When the performer covers the hole with their thumb, it will produce the "wah" sound. This piece contains six sections sandwiched between the intro and outro sections. In the six main sections, Juri Seo draws inspiration from Terry Riley's "In C" by instructing performers to repeat measures within a set range of times. This allows the performers to create syncopated rhythms and "wah" sound effects. Each performer will begin and end each section together while separating in the middle of each section. *Wah* is part of Juri Seo's *Portable Percussion* series, which includes *Spoons*, *Four for Flexatones*, *The Well Seasoned Iron Pan*, *Triangle Trio*, and *Shui*.

- Program note by Bruce Perry

Sequoia

YAZ LANCASTER

Born 2000

This piece is about the recognition of biodiversity loss, through the specific and personal example of redwood trees. It is also about holding space/time to appreciate the natural world around you as this loss is happening; as well as human interaction with nature in a way that isn't destructive.

- Program note by Yaz Lancaster

Credo in US

JOHN CAGE

Born 1912, Los Angeles, California

Died 1992, New York, New York

This work was originally used as music for the eponymous choreographed piece by Merce Cunningham and Jean Erdman, following the phraseology of the dance. It is the first instance wherein Cage uses records or radios, and also incorporates music of other composers (he suggests Dvorak, Beethoven, Sibelius, or Shostakovich). Other Instruments include gongs, tin cans, tom-toms, electric buzzer, piano and radio/phonograph. He noted that if a radio is used, the player should "avoid news programs during national or international emergencies." Written in 1942 after the attack on Pearl Harbor, *Credo In US* is rather explicitly a wartime piece, and as David Revill points out, "the US in 'Credo' concerns not just the first-person plural, but also the United States."

- Program note from johncage.org

Halil

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Born 1918, Lawrence, Massachusetts

Died 1990, New York, New York

Halil honors the life of Yadin Tannenbaum, a nineteen-year-old Israeli flutist who was killed in his tank during the Yom Kippur War of 1973, fifty years ago. Bernstein wrote the following note for the premiere performance of *Halil* by the Israel Philharmonic and Jean-Pierre Rampal:

Halil (the Hebrew word for flute) is formally unlike any other work I have written but is like much of my music in its struggle between tonal and non-tonal forces. In this case, I sense that struggle as involving wars and the threat of wars, the overwhelming desire to live, and the consolations of art, love, and the hope for peace. It is a kind of night-music, which, from its opening 12-tone row to its ambiguously diatonic final cadence, is an ongoing conflict of nocturnal images: wish-dreams, nightmares, repose, sleeplessness, night-terrors and sleep itself, Death's twin brother...

I never knew Yadin Tannenbaum, but I know his spirit.

Halil was originally composed in 1981 for solo flute and chamber orchestra. In 1987, Bernstein crafted a reduced version of the piece for solo flute, piano, and a reduced percussion palette. The University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble will perform with all of the percussion timbres from the 1981 original and the piano part from the 1987 reduction.

Orchestration: percussion (bass drum, chimes, cymbals, suspended cymbals, glockenspiel, high and low gongs, four snare drums, tam-tam, four tom-toms, two triangles, vibraphone, whip, four woodblocks, and xylophone), piano, and solo flute

– Program note by Jason Amis

Marimba Quartet

DANIEL LEVITIN

Born 1957, San Francisco

The Marimba Quartet is a classic piece in the percussion ensemble literature. As the title suggests, it is scored for four marimbas and uses many different styles of strokes, such as lightly played “ghosted” notes and written out muffling to absorb the resonance of the instrument. The slow first movement explores the many different sounds that the instrument can produce. As it progresses, the rhythms become more complex between the players and often are not on the beat. Educationally, this piece is perfect to introduce the concept of listening and not being afraid to enter, as doing so will cause tremendous rhythmic instability. The movement ends with a change in style, moving from the simplicity of single notes to rolled melodies. The second movement is often performed as a stand-alone piece and is marked by a jazzy and groove-oriented mood. Many of the muffling strokes are still present in this movement, but are much more challenging, given the faster tempo.

– Program note by Jonathan Bisesi

University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble
Jonathan Bisesi*Music Director***PERCUSSIONISTS**

Bruce Perry

Bud Wilson

Sam Goecke

Pat Bain

Joanne Kim

Jason Amis

Kyle Graham

Dhruv Srinivasan

Trent Bowman

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Bruce Perry