University of Maryland School of Music Presents
University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble
“environMEnt”
Monday, December 11, 2023 • 8PM
DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL
AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
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 (b. 1953)
   VI. Deep and Distant Thunder .................................................

Wah ............................................................................................................ Juri Seo (b. 1981)

Sequoia .................................................................................................Yaz Lancaster (b. 2000)

Credo in US ......................................................................................... John Cage (1912–1992)

INTERMISSION

Ḥalil ....................................................................................................... .Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

   Jason Amis, conductor
   Erica Mari Spear, flute
   Christopher Adams, piano

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

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

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.

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.

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.”
**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

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

**PERCUSSIONISTS**
Bruce Perry  
Bud Wilson  
Sam Goecke  
Pat Bain  
Joanne Kim

**GRADUATE ASSISTANT**
Bruce Perry  
Jason Amis  
Kyle Graham  
Dhruv Srinivasan  
Trent Bowman