



University of Maryland School of Music Presents

WATER - WOOD - WIND

University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble

Monday, December 9, 2024 • 8PM

DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL

AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



**SCHOOL OF
MUSIC**

University of Maryland School of Music
Presents

WATER - WOOD - WIND

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Jonathan Bisesi

Music Director

“Madeira River” Philip Glass
from *Aguas da Amazonia* (b. 1937)
Trent Bowman, Sebastian Gonzalez, Matteo Johnson, Julian Zuzzolo

Otik Trio Hiroya Miura
(b. 1975)
Daniel Melendez, Patrick Bain, Trey Perry

the season of Big rain (Mbura ya Njahi) Nyokabi Kariuki
(b. 1998)
Patrick Bain, Matteo Johnson, Julian Zuzzolo

Suite en Concert André Jolivet
(1905–1974)
Noah Dengler, Sam Goecke, Trey Perry, Trent Bowman

Sarah Frisof, *flute*
Jonathan Bisesi, *conductor*

INTERMISSION

Big Falls, Little Falls Stuart Saunders Smith
(1948–2024)
Daniel Melendez, Patrick Bain, Noah Dengler, Sam Goecke, Trent Bowman,
Sebastian Gonzalez, Matteo Johnson, Julian Zuzzolo

Music for Pieces of Wood Steve Reich
(b. 1936)
Patrick Bain, Trent Bowman, Sebastian Gonzalez,
Matteo Johnson, Julian Zuzzolo

Echoes from the Gorge Chou Wen-Chung
(1923–2019)
Daniel Melendez, Noah Dengler, Sam Goecke, Trey Perry

Jonathan Bisesi, *conductor*



JONATHAN BISESI held the position of percussionist with The “President’s Own” United States Marine Band from 2004-2024 and is currently the director of the percussion studio at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Bisesi received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and a Master of Music degree from Boston University. As a student, he was a fellow of the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan and The Tanglewood Music Center in

Lenox, Massachusetts.

As an active performer and educator, Bisesi has performed with orchestras across the country, including The Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Washington National Opera and Kennedy Center Ballet Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Boston Ballet and The New World Symphony. He currently directs the Percussion Workshop for the Boston University Tanglewood Institute and has presented masterclasses and clinics across the country, including the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, Tanglewood Music Center, Boston Conservatory of Music and the Manhattan School of Music. During the summer of 2020, he was a clinician and co-director of the Dragonfly Online Percussion Experience. Bisesi’s signature xylophone mallets from Dragonfly Percussion were released in 2018.

As a composer, arranger and children’s book author, his works are published by Meredith Music (distributed by GIA Publications), Pocket Publications and Acute By Design. THEN/NOW, his debut solo percussion album, was released in March 2021.

In 2020 Bisesi co-founded and currently holds the position of vice president on the Board of Directors of the Network for Diversity in Concert Percussion. The NDCP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit whose mission is to increase diversity, equity and inclusion in the concert percussion community.



SARAH FRISOF is equally at home in the solo, chamber and orchestral stages, Sarah Frisof is a passionate flutist and educator. As a soloist, Frisof was the second prize winner of both the National Flute Association Young Artist Competition and the Heida Hermanns International Woodwind Competition, and she was a semi-finalist in the 2009 Kobe International Flute Competition. Frisof and her collaborative partner, pianist Daniel Pesca, have released two solo albums. Her most recent album, “Beauty Crying Forth,” a survey of music by female composers across time, was

released in August 2020.

In addition to Frisof’s work as a solo artist, she is an active orchestral and chamber musician, having worked with major symphony orchestras across the country, including the National Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony and many others. Frisof is an enthusiastic member of Sound Impact, a chamber collective of musicians dedicated to serving communities and igniting positive change in the U.S. and abroad through live performances, educational programs and creative collaborations with other artists and art forms.

She has taken her passion for education and community engagement to global audiences, including working with communities and students in both Zimbabwe and Brazil. A graduate of the Eastman School, The Juilliard School, and the University of Michigan, Frisof is currently the associate professor of flute at the University of Maryland, College Park.

“Madeira River” from *Aguas da Amazonia*

PHILIP GLASS

Born January 31, 1937, Baltimore, MD

The repetitive structures and meditative harmonies of Glass’s music have allowed it to exist in many versions for different musical instruments. Selections from his piano etudes and the solo piano piece *Metamorphosis* were arranged in the late 1990s for a project with the Brazilian musical group Uakti. This version, for Uakti’s unique gamut of custom-made instruments, was part of a project called *Aguas da Amazonia*, in which all of the movements (except for *Metamorphosis* No. 1) were renamed after the Amazon River and its tributaries.

Long-time fans of Glass’s work, and hoping to someday commission the iconic composer for his first percussion ensemble piece, the members of Third Coast Percussion arranged a handful of these pieces for their multi-media project “Paddle to the Sea” in 2016. Drawing on both the Uakti arrangement and the original piano music, TCP reimagined these works using mallet percussion instruments and other unique instrumental colors such as melodica, desk bells, and almglocken (tuned Swiss cowbells). In 2020, TCP made their own arrangements of the rest of the *Aguas da Amazonia*, including “*Metamorphosis*”, to round out the collection, premiering the full cycle at the Philharmonie de Paris in 2021.

– Program Note by Third Coast Percussion

Otik Trio

HIROYA MIURA

Born 1975, Sendai, Japan

Otik Trio is the trio version of my solo marimba piece, *Chromatograph*, which was inspired by Jan Švankmajer’s film, “*Little Otik*”. Švankmajer is a Czech master of stop motion animation, and his meticulous assemblage of frame-by-frame shots breathes life into various inanimate objects, in this case, an anthropomorphous tree stump, which becomes a baby with an insatiable appetite for a childless couple. Rooted in the early 20th-century tradition of surrealism, Švankmajer creates a unique sense of tactility by manipulating the sequence of shots at 24 frames per second, the standard frame rate in film production. Based on how much his object is displaced in one frame to the next—just like a flipbook animation—the perceived movement of the object can be from smooth and organic, to disturbingly jagged and mechanical. The mallet instruments create an illusion of sustained tone through the tremolo technique, which, in a way, is an auditory equivalent of stop-motion animation. By varying the rate of tremolo and other repeated phrases, I had hoped to create a similar contrast between organic and mechanical, in the way Švankmajer was able to create animistic alchemy from his material objects. *Otik Trio* was written for Matt Ward, Matt Gold and Joseph Tompkins.

– Program Note by the Composer

the season of Big rain (Mbura ya Njahĩ)

NYOKABI KARIŪKI

Born 1998, Nairobi, Kenya

I never hesitate to look for guidance and inspiration for my pieces in my home, Kenya. My ethnic group, the Kikuyu, are farmers, and seasons are based on planting and harvest. 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 favorite, 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

Suite en Concert

ANDRÉ JOLIVET

Born August 8, 1905, Paris, France | Died December 20, 1974, Paris, France

Jolivet’s *Suite en Concert*, also known as his second concerto (for flute), was composed at the behest of the eminent French flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal. Rampal had performed Jolivet’s first flute concerto so many times that he finally requested a second concerto from Jolivet. Inspired by the challenge, Jolivet produced a work that flutists everywhere value as one of the most fascinating compositions in the repertory. Devotees of Jolivet’s music note that his choice of instruments is extremely significant because he cherished both flute and percussion as being instruments very near to the “primal” senses and origin of music he saw as essential.

The *Suite en Concert* is technically challenging to play. It stretches the limits of the percussion instruments as well as the flute with a rhythmic structure that is unusual and intricate. The sound has been characterized as primitive in character, giving rise to an almost frenzied energy, but it may be more accurate to describe this as the deep, “primal” sense of music’s origins that Jolivet pursued throughout his career as a composer. In this inner sense of the music in our blood and bones, Jolivet’s listeners hear the unique sound of genius.

– Program Note by Michael Clive

Big Falls, Little Falls

STUART SAUNDERS SMITH

Born March 16, 1948, Portland, ME | Died June 3, 2024, Sharon, VT

I composed *Big Falls, Little Falls* after watching the many waterfalls in and around the city of Ithaca, New York. As I watched the falls, they both stood still and moved with great force. *Big Falls, Little Falls* is a portrait of the falls in which at any moment it is simultaneously static and dynamic.

Waterfalls cannot exist without certain rock formations. These rock formations shape the water as it is falling. The sound of the falls is the sonic interaction of rock and water—as if the water acts like millions of mallets playing the cavernous resonators of rock.

Stuart Saunders Smith was raised in Portland, Maine. As a student, his primary teachers were Fred Budha, Al Dawson, Alexander Lepak, Thomas Siwe, Edward Diemente and Ben Johnston. Over the course of his professional career, he has created a diverse and unusual body of musical and literary compositions. Totalling more than 150 works, his music is usually chromatic, atonal and rhythmically complex, with his pitch material selected in an intuitive manner rather than via the twelve-tone technique. His compositions have been recorded on multiple labels such as New World Records, Ravello Records and Chen Li. His grants and honors include The Hartt College Distinguished Alumni Award, East/West Artist Award, three Maryland State Artists Fellowships, the National Endowment for the Arts Composer’s Fellowship, Percussive Arts Society Service Award and the Atlantic Center’s Master Artist Award. He is survived by his wife, Sylvia Smith, who is a music publisher and percussionist, currently living in Vermont.

– Program Note by Jonathan Bisesi and Stuart Saunders Smith

Music for Pieces of Wood

STEVE REICH

Born October 3, 1936, New York City, NY

Music for Pieces of Wood arose from the same thought that catalyzed Steve Reich to compose his other seminal work *Clapping Music*: “a desire to make music with the simplest possible instruments.” Written for five performers on claves, *Music for Pieces of Wood* uses the same 12-count rhythm found in *Clapping Music*, following a sequence of rhythmic groups in the pattern 3-2-1-2. Reich applies techniques of rhythmic “build-up” and beat-rest substitutions, which he first explored in his earlier work, *Drumming*, to create compelling composite rhythms and displaced feelings of time within the ensemble. These ideas are then reiterated with an 8-count rhythm and finally a 6-count rhythm to conclude the work, creating a sense of propulsion with the introduction of each truncated phrase.

– Program Note by Patrick Bain

Echoes from the Gorge

CHOU WEN-CHUNG

Born July 28, 1923, Yantai, China | Died October 25, 2019, New York, NY

Echoes from the Gorge is the magnum opus of Wen-chung as it represents a summation of all the concepts, East and West, acquired throughout his career. This work deploys vast timbral resources, yet is unprecedented in the thoroughness with which it codifies certain Western percussion practices according to timbres, articulation in the sticks, and contact location on the instruments. Such extensive codification results in a vast network of intrinsic structures comparable to Chinese ideograms.

Chou Wen-chung's unique canon of work, a contemporary expression of the principles of traditional Chinese aesthetics, has had a momentous impact on the development of modern music in Asia and post-colonial cultures. He exhorted young composers to study their own cultural heritage and warned: "If you don't know where you came from, how do you know where you are going?" His students represent an international mix of accomplished composers, including the acclaimed Tan Dun, Zhou Long, Chen Yi and Bright Sheng. His vision for the music of the future, however, extends far beyond the preservation of any particular heritage. He foresaw a flourishing of creative output, benefitting from a "confluence" of many cultures, but grounded in an understanding of the history and traditions of each.

– Program Note by the Composer

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

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Sarah Frisof, *Soloist*

Percussion

Daniel Melendez

Patrick Bain

Noah Dengler

Sam Goecke

Trey Perry

Trent Bowman

Sebastian Gonzalez

Matteo Johnson

Julian Zuzzolo

Graduate Assistant

Patrick Bain