In honor of the 50th anniversary year of the March on Washington and the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Clarice Smith Center’s 2013–2014 Creative Dialogues explore the issues of civil rights in a modern-day context. The right to pursue freedom of all kinds is a founding principle of our nation, but in today’s complex and changing society, freedom can be elusive.

The Creative Dialogues series will address a range of ideas on liberty and justice in the United States — the imbalance of hunger and nutrition, gay rights and marriage, war and pacifism — all with an emphasis on the artists’ experience and interpretation. Sparking discussion and new thinking around all civil liberties, the series will explore such questions as “Are we really free and equal?” and “How far have we come?”

BEYOND SLAVERY: FREDERICK DOUGLASS AND THE QUEST FOR UNIVERSAL RIGHTS
Tuesday, February 4, 2014 . 7:30PM . Dance Theatre . FREE
Dr. Ira Berlin, Department of History, University of Maryland
Colum McCann, Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing, Hunter College
Dr. Patrick O'Shea, Vice President for Research, University of Maryland

This conversation will feature writer and educator Colum McCann who will be joined by UMD Professors Ira Berlin and Patrick O’Shea as we explore the influence Douglass had on religious freedom, gender issues and slavery.

FAST FOOD, SLOW FOOD AND FOOD JUSTICE: GLOBAL POLICIES
CREATING GLOBAL HUNGER
Monday, April 21, 2014 . 7:30PM . Gildenhorn Recital Hall . FREE
Dr. Luka Anrsjuk, School of Languages, Literature and Cultures, University of Maryland
Dr. Perla M. Guerrero, Department of American Studies, University of Maryland
Dr. Orlando R. Serrano Jr., Department of American Studies & Ethnicity, University of Southern California
Dr. Psyche Williams-Forson, Department of American Studies, University of Maryland

Join UMD Professors Perla M. Guerrero, Luka Anrsjuk and Psyche Williams-Forson, along with USC Orlando R. Serrano Jr., as they discuss how food is at the heart of major policy issues and societal disparities in the United States and around the world.

HOMER’S ILIAD: AN ANTI-WAR MANIFESTO?
Thursday, May 1, 2014 . 7:30PM . Dance Theatre . FREE
Dr. Sudip Bose, Emergency Medicine Physician and Founder, The Battle Continues
Drew Cameron, Director, Combat Paper Project
Dr. Lillian Doherty, Department of Classics, University of Maryland
Denis O’Hare, actor

This discussion of Homer’s epic will feature perspectives from actor Denis O’Hare, Iraq veteran and artist Drew Cameron, UMD Classicist and Homerist Lillian Doherty, and emergency medicine physician and combat veteran Sudip Bose, who founded the organization The Battle Continues after his 15-month deployment to the front lines during the Iraq War.

ABOUT KOJO NNAMDI
Kojo Nnamdi is host of The Kojo Nnamdi Show, a live talk show produced by WAMU 88.5 that airs weekdays at noon. Nnamdi welcomes a lineup of interesting and provocative guests who offer new perspectives about current events, political issues, social policy, art, science and other topics. The show encourages listener calls, creating a dynamic dialogue about issues that are important or interesting to the Washington DC region. Nnamdi is a native of Guyana who immigrated to the United States in 1968 to attend college and explore the Civil Rights Movement.

Support for Beyond Slavery: Frederick Douglass and the Quest for Universal Rights
This season is supported in part by an award from the NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS.
PROGRAM

UMD PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE
PERCUSSION CHAMBER MUSIC

MEMBERS:
Logan Seith
Arielle Miller
Robert Bowen
Natalie Hogg
Jan Nguyen
Jonathan Clancy
Laurin Friedland
Curt Armbruster
Maurice Watkins
Zachary Konick
Erin Shupe
Mario Perez
Robert Schroyer
Andy Shin
Graham Atherton

GEOFF SHEIL (b. 1987)
Fuse for Percussion Ensemble (2013)*

STEVE REICH (b. 1936)
Mallet Quartet for Percussion Quartet (2009)
I. Fast
II. Slow
III. Fast
Robert Bowen, Natalie Hogg, Logan Seith, Erin Shupe: marimbas and vibraphones

JOHN CAGE (1912–1992)
Third Construction for Four Percussion Players (1941)
Robert Bowen, Laurin Friedland, Arielle Miller, Robert Schroyer: percussion

*world premiere

Program is approximately one hour and 40 minutes, which includes a 15-minute intermission.

NIGEL WESTLAKE (b. 1958)
Omphalo Centric Lecture for Percussion Quartet (1984)
Graham Atherton, Jonathan Clancy, Mario Perez, Andy Shin: marimbas and percussion

PAUL LANSKY (b. 1944)
Threads for Four Percussionists (2005)
I.
II.
III.
IV.
V.
IX.
Curt Armbruster, Jan Nguyen, Logan Seith, Maurice Watkins: percussion

MINORU MIKI (1930–2011)
Marimba Spiritual (1984)
Erin Shupe: marimba soloist
Laurin Friedland, Arielle Miller, Maurice Watkins: percussion

INTERMISSION
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

*Omphalo Centric Lecture* was composed in 1984 by Nigel Westlake. A diverse musical figure, Westlake’s repertoire spans various genres from movie soundtracks to music for the concert stage. His feature film soundtracks include popular titles such as *Antarctica* and *Babe*. The title, *Omphalo Centric Lecture*, is borrowed from a painting by Paul Klee that was an inspiration to Westlake during the composition of the piece. Drawing heavily on African balafon themes and rhythms, the piece proceeds with a forceful sixteenth-note pulse containing both driving ostinati and polyrhythmic variety.

*Threads*, written by Paul Lansky for So Percussion in 2005, is a ‘cantata’ for percussion quartet in ten short movements. For this evening’s performance, movements one through five and movement nine will be presented. There are three ‘threads’ that are interwoven in the piece: arias and preludes that focus on the metallic pitched sounds; choruses in which drumming predominates; and recitatives made largely from Cage-like ‘noise’ instruments. The aims of the different threads are to highlight the wide range of qualities that percussion instruments are capable of, from lyrical and tender to forceful and aggressive, and weave them into one continuous texture.

*Marimba Spiritual* by Minoru Miki is a marimba concerto with three percussion-playing accompanists. Miki provides us with the following program notes in the score:

This piece was composed from 1983 to the beginning of 1984, keeping in mind the acute period of starvation and famine in Africa which was occurring at that time. The piece is composed in an organic fashion, with the first half of the piece as a static requiem and the last part a lively resurrection. The title is an expression of the total process.

The piece was commissioned by NHK, but marimba player Keiko Abe requested the particular arrangement for marimba. The premiere was on March 18, 1984 in Amsterdam with Ms. Abe and the Nieuwe Slagwek Groep Amsterdam. The rhythm and note patterns are strictly noted throughout the piece, but for the three percussion parts, only the relative pitches and tone qualities (for the first part, metal and wood percussion instruments; for the second part, skin drums) are noted. There is freedom, but the performers should pay much attention to balance in each section.

The rhythm patterns for the second part are taken from the festival drumming of the Chichibu area northwest of Tokyo. The score is set up so the piece can be played as a marimba solo as well.

*Fusıe* was written by Geoff Sheil in 2013 for the University of Maryland Percussion Ensemble. The ten percussionists employed in the piece play on primarily mallet percussion such as marimbas, vibraphones and glockenspiels; and drums such as djembes, bongos, congas and a bass drum. The players implement their hands, standard marimba mallets, hot rods (bundles of small sticks) and brushes to strike the instruments. The resulting effect is a unique timbral palate that varies throughout the work. Proceeding in a strong rhythmic fashion, the drums primarily play a groove that the mallet players use as a foundation for melodic lines.

Geoff Sheil is an award-winning Irish composer based in the Washington DC area. Born in Dublin, Ireland, he attended the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he obtained a BM degree in percussion performance and a MM in composition. He then moved to Tampa, Florida to pursue a MM degree on a fellowship from the University of South Florida, and completed a triple concentration in composition, jazz composition and conducting in May 2012. Sheil is now pursuing a DMA in composition at the University of Maryland, College Park, on the prestigious Flagship Fellowship.

*Mallet Quartet* by Steve Reich is an energetic work for four percussionists. The score describes that the piece may be performed on two marimbas and two vibraphones, four marimbas or marimba soloist with prerecorded tape. For this evening’s performance, the piece will be performed on two marimbas and two vibraphones.

Similar to many of Reich’s seminal works for percussion such as *Drumming* and *Piano Phase*, Reich employs a minimalistic musical palate that slowly evolves and changes as the piece progresses. Each player performs rapid sixteenth note based rhythms throughout the duration of the work that complement one another creating a more complicated composite rhythm.

*Mallet Quartet (2009)* is scored for two vibraphones and two five-octave marimbas. Reich provides us with the following program notes:

I had never written for five octave marimbas extending down to cello C. On the one hand I was delighted to have the possibility of a low bass and on the other hand apprehensive since just slightly too hard a mallet that low can produce noise instead of pitch. Eventually, after a bit of experimentation, this was well worked out.

The piece is in three movements, fast, slow, fast. In the two outer fast movements the marimbas set the harmonic background which remains rather static compared to recent pieces of mine like *Double Sextet* (2007). The marimbas interlock in canon, also a procedure I have used in many other works. The vibes present the melodic material first solo and then in canon. However, in the central slow movement the texture changes into a thinner more transparent one with very spare use of notes, particularly in the marimbas. I was originally concerned this movement might just be ‘too thin’, but I think it ends up being the most striking, and certainly the least expected, of the piece.

*Mallet Quartet* is about 15 minutes in duration. It was co-commissioned by the Amadinda Quartet in Budapest (on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary), by Nexus in Toronto, So Percussion in New York and Synergy Percussion in Australia. The world premiere was given by the Amadinda Quartet in Bela Bartòk National Concert Hall on December 6, 2009. The American premiere was given by So Percussion at Stanford University Lively Arts in California on January 9, 2010.
John Cage’s *Third Construction* was composed in 1941 and is the final piece in a series of three works for percussion orchestra all entitled “Construction.” In *Third Construction* the four percussionists perform on both standard percussion instruments and found objects. The instruments include: Northwest Indian rattle (wooden), graduated tin cans, graduated drums (tom-toms), claves, large Chinese cymbal (suspended), maracas, teponaxtle, cowbells, Indo-Chinese rattle (wooden, with many separate chambers), lion’s roar, tambourine, quijadas (jaw bone from a donkey), cricket callers (split bamboo), conch shell, tin can with tacks (rattle), wooden ratchet and bass drum roar.

*Third Construction* is composed of 24 sections of 24 bars each. The rhythmic structure is rotated between the players: 8, 2, 4, 5, 3, 2 for player four; 2, 8, 2, 4, 5, 3 for player one; etc. The driving rhythms on the tin cans and drums continue throughout the piece with the rattles and tambourine providing sustained tones.

American composer, philosopher, poet, artist and music theorist John Cage is one of the most important composers of the 20th century. He is credited with bringing the percussion ensemble (or percussion orchestra as he called it) to prominence on the West Coast of the U.S. along with composer Lou Harrison. Their work in writing dance accompaniment for and with choreographer Merce Cunningham resulted in many of the great works for percussion ensemble.

A fascinating cultural icon in the 1960s, Cage would often be stalked by groups of enthusiasts. An amateur mycologist, Cage was followed miles into the woods by curious observers when he was collecting mushrooms.

His works run the gamut from chance operations to improvisation and have influenced several generations of composers and artists.

— Dr. Lee Hinkle