



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Alex Price, Percussion

March 1st 2026

8:30 P.M.

Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU

Program

Persistence of Memory

Dave Hall
(b. 1983)

Davis Carr and Logan Scott, percussion

Songbook for Viola and Marimba
IV. Evensong

David Gillingham
(b. 1947)

Abby Douglas, Viola

Seven Solo Dances for Timpani
I. Opening Toccata
II. Minuet
III. Beguine and Samba

George Frock
(b.1988)

Mudra

Bob Becker
(b.1947)

Haley Bruns, Leighann Crocket, Jaden Guinto, and Matthew Hroch, percussion

Houdini's Last Trick

Leigh H. Stevens
(b.1953)

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Percussion Performance.

Alex Price is a student of Joey Carter, Richard C. Gipson, Jeffery S. Hodge, and Brian A. West.

The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.

Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

Program Notes

Persistence of Memory

The Persistence of Memory is based on the well-known Salvador Dali painting of the same name. The painting, which features Dali's famous "melting clocks," is one of the definitive works of the Surrealist Movement in art. It evokes a number of themes that lend themselves well to the music, especially the atrophy of time and shape. Time, pitch, and timbre all "melt" and re-form throughout the piece. The first part (Dreamscapes) depicts the ocean and mountain landscape and employs water triangle and echo chimes to create a dropping, bending, "Doppler" effect with pitches. The clocks are represented somewhat overtly by woodblocks, which persist in a tick-tock fashion through much of the piece. The second section (Gears) is inspired primarily by the war-like ants that are attacking a clock in the painting, suggesting anxiety and the unrelenting nature of time, hence the fast tempo and asymmetric meters. The final section (Melting Clocks) features cacophonous, polyphonic woodblock passages and the further decay of pitch, time, and previous motives. Throughout the piece, rhythms and sounds that first appear to be solid become amorphous, deformed, or completely liquid. The overall effect is reminiscent of a half-remembered dream, a feeling that you've been immersed in a world only vaguely resembling reality.

- Notes by the composer

Multi-percussion solos are always fun to search for and discover new sounds in the percussion soundscape. I'm glad to have put it together with the other two graduate assistants, Davis and Logan. They are great colleagues and I'm extremely grateful for the opportunity to work with them every day.

Songbook for Viola and Marimba- IV Evensong

Movement IV, *Evensong*, is a lovely chorale melody beginning in the marimba in G major and answered by the viola. A small developmental section follows in G-flat major with a return of the chorale in F major and a final modulation back to G major.

- Notes by the composer

This work was enjoyable to put together with my friend, Abby. The combination of marimba and strings is a favorite of mine and in this chorale display of these two voices is so beautiful and I wanted to display this in a space like Van Cliburn Concert Hall.

Seven Solo Dances for the Advanced Timpanist

These solo dances are meant to be performed in groups of three. The first movement, *Opening Toccata*, consists of a motif down the drums that is present throughout. Metric modulations help transition to a couple different speeds that translate to a grand "as fast as possible" ending. Movement II, *Minuet*, is a traditional waltz tempo with heavy emphasis on a smooth and delicate movement throughout. Movement III, *Beguine and Samba*, begins subtle but is quickly launched with dense rhythms that all connect. I decided on these three because of their diversity and change in mood compared to the rest of the compositions on my recital.

Mudra

Mudra consists of music which was originally composed to accompany the dance *UrbhanaMudra* by choreographer Joan Philips. Commissioned by INDE '90 and premiered in Toronto in March, 1990 as a part of the DuMaurier Quay Works series, *UrbhanaMudra* 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 the percussion group NEXUS during May, 1990. *Mudra* is scored for marimba, vibraphone, songbells, glockenspiel, crotales, prepared drum and bass drum.

UrbhanaMudra 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 multi-cultural 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 imitate 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, major seventh) were used to determine both melodic and harmonic content throughout the piece. Rhythmically, *Mudra* is based on two important and common features of North Indian music: 1) motivic development (*palta*) and 2) 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.

- Notes by the composer

During my time at the University of Oklahoma, I had the opportunity to perform this with my friend Carlos on his recital. The time we had together was short, but I always enjoyed playing, learning, and performing beside him for those two years. *Mudra* has always been a bucket list piece to play the drum part for and I'm glad to have supportive studio members to join me.

Houdini's Last Trick

A composition over ten years in the making, Leigh Howard Stevens channels inspiration from the world's greatest escape artist to create a piece reminiscent of a film-noir score. The piece uses “musical illusions,” including what the composer calls “faux motion,” where a distinct melody is heard, but the hands don't move. Despite Houdini tragically dying from a “trick gone wrong,” Houdini's Last Trick will breathe life and excitement into your recital program.

- Notes by the composer

Having watched the composer play this live, I knew I had to add this marimba solo to my bag of tricks... With the display of advanced techniques on marimba, I often think of how my percussion mentors Matt Stephens and Dr. Andrew Richardson first saw my rough, rigged, and harsh approach to the marimba and I hope they can look at me now and know the positive impact they've had on my growth as both a player and person. Getting to work with the TCU faculty has become a dream come true and I learn so much every day. I'm very grateful for the opportunity to study with them and collaborate with the TCU percussion studio members. Thank you and enjoy one last act!