



Presents

Darrien Spicak, percussion

September 10th, 2020 7:00 pm, Zoom Recital

Side by Side (1989)

Michio Kitazume (b. 1948)

Alborada Del Gracioso (1905)

Assisted by Emily Magee - marimba

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
arr. by Safri Duo and Arx Duo

Ordering-instincts (2014)

Assisted by Bradley Baird, Emily Magee, Orion Wysocki – percussion

Robert Dillon (b. 1980)

Trilogy (1990)

Tim Huesgen (b.1957)

I. A Vision in a Dream

II. A Fragment

III. With A Mazy Motion

Prím (1984)

Áskell Másson (b. 1953)

Time for Marimba (1968)

Minoru Miki (1930 – 2012)

Side by Side – Michio Kitazume (b. 1948)

Kitazume is a Japanese composer whose primary works have been composed for orchestra. In 1966, he entered the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music where he studied composition with Tomojiro Ikenouchi, Akio Yashiro, Teizo Matsumura, piano with Shozo Tsubota, conducting with Hideo Saito and Masamitsu Takahashi. His music has been performed at "Festival d'automne de Paris", "Kuhmo Festival"(Finland), "Music from Japan"(New York), and many other modern music festivals, concerts, and broadcasts. In 2004, he won the 22nd Nakajima Kenzo Music Prize for his distinguished achievement in music composition. He is currently a director of the Japan Society for Contemporary Music, a guest professor of the Tokyo College of Music, and emeritus professor of Aichi Prefectural University of Fine Arts and Music.

Side by Side is a multi-percussion solo that involves three pairs of instruments and a kick drum. The three pairs of instruments are typically a set of bongos, two congas, and two tom-toms although Kitazume allows for substitutions as long as the instruments are membranophones. The compositional concept that Kitazume chose to base this solo around is the idea of the dotted eighth note and eighth note rhythms fighting for dominance as the presiding sense of pulse. Kitazume chose to write *Side by Side* in a non-traditional format which does not include any time signatures and uses brackets to indicate repetition. He goes on to describe that while he gives recommendations for how long a certain pattern should be repeated, his ultimate goal is that the performer creates their own sense of rhythm. The ambiguous sense of pulse combined with the amorphic form allows for a piece of music that feels truly organic.

Alborada del Gracioso – Maurice Ravel (1875 – 1937)

Maurice Ravel, along with Claude Debussy, is hailed as one of the great composers of French impressionistic music even though both of these composers rejected that term during their lifetime. In the 1920s and 30s, Ravel was internationally regarded as France's greatest living composer. His works incorporate elements of modernism, baroque, neoclassicism, and even jazz. His best-known work is the orchestral piece *Boléro* (1928) and he also made orchestral arrangements of other composers' music, of which the 1922 version of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* is the most popular.

Alborada del gracioso was first composed as a piano piece in 1905 and was then orchestrated in 1918. The piece was originally part of a set of five piano pieces that Ravel called *Miroirs* (Mirrors), which included some of the earliest of the Spanish music that Ravel wrote while in Paris. *Alborada del gracioso* immediately became one of his most popular works after it was transcribed for full orchestra. *Alborada* means morning music, similar to how serenade means night music. In Spanish tradition, it is any music performed at daybreak, often to celebrate a festival or honor a person. *Del gracioso* translates to "of the buffoon," which clouds the picture with the introduction of a grotesque character ala Don Quixote. With this picture in mind, Ravel presents a highly spirited and outrageous dance.

Safri Duo is a Danish percussion duo composed of Uffe Savery and Morten Friis. The Duo arranged *Alborada del gracioso* for marimba duet in 1991 and it is considered by some to be a great milestone in percussion performance. However, the arrangement by Safri Duo leaves out the rubato middle section of the original piece which then would be later added in a performance by Arx Duo in 2014. Arx Duo is an American percussion duo comprised of Garrett Arney and Mari Yoshinaga. One of the primary goals of the duo is to expand the percussion duet repertoire that is currently available. One way that they have been helping to expand the literature is by completing many of their own arrangements of older piano solos for marimba duet. I would like to thank them for personally helping Emily and me to be able to perform the full version of *Alborada del gracioso* for marimba duet.

Ordering-instincts – Robert Dillon (b. 1980)

Robert Dillon is a member of the Grammy-winning percussion quartet Third Coast Percussion, which has performed hundreds of concerts across four continents since its founding in 2005. He holds a Bachelor of Music from Northwestern University and a Master of Music from the New England Conservatory. He is a recipient of the John Cage Award for Outstanding Contribution to Contemporary Music Performance. His teachers include Michael Burritt, James Ross, and Will Hudgins. He has enjoyed a career as an orchestral musician, having served as a member with the Chicago, Boston, San Diego, and Madison Symphony Orchestras. He also finds great success as a solo and chamber musician, as well as an educator for all ages, and since college, has pursued music composition as an additional expressive avenue.

Ordering Instincts draws a big sound from a very compact setup of instruments. The four percussionists share eight wooden planks, an octave of loose crotales, and two tom-toms, from which they create a variety of different sonic colors in tightly interwoven rhythms. All musical content arises from the composite of all the players together; no one player's part forms a complete voice by itself. This piece is dedicated to the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center at the University of Notre Dame, on the occasion of its 10th anniversary, and was written for Third Coast Percussion.

Trilogy – Tim Huesgen (b. 1981)

Tim Huesgen is currently a percussionist with The United States Army Band in Washington, D.C. He received a bachelor of music degree from The University of Tennessee and a master of music degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, where he also served as graduate-teaching assistant. Huesgen has been a featured soloist with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra and the Pittsburgh Chamber Orchestra. His many articles on applying polyrhythms to the drum set have appeared in the *Percussive Notes* magazine.

Trilogy is a vibraphone solo that features three contrasting movements with varying tempi and styles. Due to the variety, the performer has great freedom in terms of tempo and phrasing. Movement one and three are a mixture of melody and accompaniment that include varying contrapuntal textures. Movement two is a soft and slow ballad that tests the performer's musical capabilities.

Prím - Áskell Másson (b. 1953)

Áskell Másson is an Icelandic composer whose works are often credited for their depth of expression and brilliance of sound. He began freelance composing in the 1980s after his percussion music gained international attention because of originality and unusual approach. His music is regularly performed around the world by top ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and many others. Amongst his works are the grand opera *The Ice Palace*, three symphonies, 15 concerti, and numerous orchestral works. In addition to concert music, he has composed music to numerous plays, films, and TV programs.

Prím is a concert snare solo that Másson composed in 1984 after the success of his snare concerto *Konzertstück*. *Prím* (Prime) is based on a rhythmic pattern of the first fifteen of the prime numbers (1,2,3,5,7,11,13,17,19,23,29,31,37,41,43). The rhythms were formed by using the 32nd subdivision as a basic unit. The piece was commissioned by Gert Mortensen, but was popularized by Dame Evelyn Glennie who has performed the piece in most parts of the world.

Time for Marimba – Minoru Miki (1930 – 2012)

Minoru Miki was a Japanese composer who is well known for composing some of the earliest and most important literature for the marimba. He attended the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music where he studied with Tomojiro Ikenouchi and Akira Ifukube. He finished his composition degree in 1955 and has over 200 diverse works to his name. Some other percussion works of note other than *Time for Marimba* that he is known for include *Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra*, *Marimba Spiritual*, and *Z Concerto*.

Time for Marimba is considered a revolutionary piece for the solo marimba due to its unique and innovative compositional techniques. *Time for Marimba* was presented by Keiko Abe in 1968 at what is considered the first solo recital of serious classical music for the marimba, which was entitled “Keiko Abe Evening of Marimba.” Miki was inspired by Indonesian Gamelan music and was able to compose the piece in about ten days using the atmosphere of the Gamelan sound. On the top of the first page, Miki requests that the performer use “soft sticks” but “hard at fortissimo” which spurred on the creation of what is now known as the “two-tone” mallet. The “two-tone” mallet is capable of multiple colors and is able to achieve the contrast that Miki was hoping for, and it is now a common implement that many marimbists use for many different pieces. The piece is based around a hexachord that Miki presents in multiple ways throughout the duration of the music. Miki describes his own approach to composition as improvisatory which informs the percussionist on how to perform *Time for Marimba*. *Time for Marimba* has remained a part of the standard solo repertoire for the marimba for the past fifty years and its legacy towards solo marimba literature can be felt even today.