



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

## Orion Wysocki, percussion

Program

### Evergreen (2020)

I. Fading Light

Robert Honstein (b. 1980)

Darrien Spicak, marimba

### Lute Suite in E minor (1712)

I. Prelude, Presto

II. Allemande

III. Courante

IV. Sarabande

V. Bourrée

VI. Gigue

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

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## Program Notes

### *Evergreen* (2020)

Robert Honstein (b. 1980)

#### I. Fading Light

Darrien Spicak, marimba

Celebrated for his “waves of colorful sounds” (New York Times) and “smart, appealing works” (The New Yorker), Robert Honstein is a New York based composer of orchestral, chamber, and vocal music.

Ensembles and performers of Robert’s music include the Albany Symphony, Dayton Philharmonic, Orchestre Symphonique du Mulhouse, Eighth Blackbird, Ensemble Dal Niente, Mivos Quartet, Del Sol Quartet, Argus Quartet, TIGUE, New Morse Code, Colin Currie, Theo Bleckmann, Doug Perkins, Michael Burritt, Karl Larson, Ashley Bathgate, among others. Interdisciplinary collaborators include photographer Chris McCaw, projection designer Hannash Wasileski, graphic designer Laura Grey, director Daniel Fish and his music has also been choreographed by numerous dance companies including the Cincinnati Ballet. His music has been released by New Focus Records, Soundspells Productions, Cedille Records, and New Amsterdam Records. NPR included his piece ‘Pulse’ from Eighth Blackbird’s ‘Hand Eye’ as one of their top 100 songs of 2016.

Robert is a founding member of the New York-based composer collective Sleeping Giant. With a commitment to building community around the music of our time, Robert has co-founded Fast Forward Austin and Times Two in Boston. As an educator Robert has participated in outreach projects around the country, while also serving as Program Manager and Composition Faculty at NYU, Steinhardt. *Evergreen* is a thirty minute, five-movement work for Marimba, Vibraphone and Glockenspiel. I finished writing this piece in December 2020, approaching the longest night of a very long year. Thinking about the experience of isolation and hardship brought on by a global pandemic, I found hope and solace in Cooper’s poem ‘The Shortest Day’. Her words reminded me of our ancient relationship to the Solstice. How for many cultures, across many generations, it has been a time of celebration and joy. A time where in the midst of dark days and bitter cold we feel the possibility, indeed the inevitability of light triumphing over darkness. For me, the sense of hope and joy expressed in this story, served as a beautiful reminder of our collective resiliency in the face of great difficulty.

Over the course of five movements, *Evergreen* anticipates, celebrates, and looks beyond the solstice. Beginning with *Fading Light* the music builds intensity with ever expanding intervallic patterns, creating a moody space of anticipation and longing. *Sleeping Land*, a sparse, nocturnal respite, follows with a moment of quiet contemplation. *Shortest Day* bursts into an explosion of energy and sound, reflecting the wild celebrations of the solstice itself, while *Longest Night*, expresses an austere, somewhat somber reminder of the darkness that still envelops the winter landscape. Finally, we arrive at the *Rosy-Fingered Dawn*. It is a new day and a quiet optimism emerges. Hushed certitude in the coming light gradually blossoms into a more forceful expression of hope and rebirth.

*Evergreen* was commissioned by arx duo, DoubleBeats, CHannel2 Percussion Duo, The Up:Strike Project - Directed by Matthew Lau and Karen Yu, Taylor Davis, Russell Fisher, Jose-Antonio Caballero, Johnathon Westcott, Darrien Spicak, Orion Wysocki, Eric Whitmer, If + When. It was premiered March 6, 2021 by the Sustain Music Project, Seattle, WA.

### ***Lute Suite in E minor* (1712)**

- I. Prelude, Presto
- II. Allemande
- III. Courante
- IV. Sarabande
- V. Bourrée
- VI. Gigue

**J.S. Bach (1685-1750)**

Johann Sebastian Bach was born March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1685 in Eisenach, Germany. After his father's death, Sebastian was taken in by his older brother Christoph who was the organist at St. Michaelis Church, and teacher at the Lyceum in Ohrdruf. Sebastian attended the Lyceum until he was age fifteen and was inspired by the great educator Comenius. Christoph trained Sebastian as an organist and Sebastian taught himself composition by copying scores of Froberger, Kerll, and Pachelbel (Christoph's mentor). Christoph arranged for his brother to be sent north to Luneburg in 1700 where he met composer and organist, Gerog Bohm. As Bach's mentor, Bohm may have advised him to seek out and listen to one of the great organists of northern Germany, J. A. Reincken. Reincken's flashy performance style must have been a revelation for young Bach after having been brought up in the more conservative southern style of playing. Bach is next heard of in Weimar in 1703 as a court musician and later accepted a position as organist in Arnstadt. After getting into fight with a student Bach set off for 3 months to Lubeck to hear the great German composer and organist, Buxtehude. Upon his return to Arnstadt the consistory asked Bach why he had been away for so long. His answers were unsatisfactory and barely civil and was asked to apologize. Instead, Bach demanded he be promoted to musical director, which then led to more fights between Bach and the students. Bach never apologized and the consistory took no further action. Bach had developed exalted ideas about church music from his travels to Lubeck and could not express himself at Arnstadt. Bach grew his reputation during his 3 years at Arnstadt before being offered the organist position at St. Blasius in Muhlhausen where he began taking in pupils. One year later in 1708, Bach performed for the Duke of Weimar who then offered him a post at his court. Bach wrote *Lute Suite no. 1 in E minor* at Weimar as well as fathering six children including Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (god father was Telemann). Bach spent nine years at Weimar, teaching, performing, composing, and repairing instruments. The Duke of Weimar wanted Bach to stay but eventually allowed him to leave in 1717 after finding his replacement in Bach's pupil Schubart. Bach was the second highest paid court official at his new job in Cothen and was held in very high esteem. Bach wrote cantatas during his time there. Around this time, Bach performed a recital on organ at St. Katharinen for the magistracy and the aged Reincken. Bach played in different styles on the chorale *An Wasserflussen Babylon* for almost half an hour. The chorale was chosen by Reincken in that moment and was obviously impressed having said "I thought this art was dead, but I see it still lives in you". On April 22<sup>nd</sup> Bach won an audition for Kantor (Latin and music teacher) at St. Thomas School in Leipzig. Bach hired an assistant to teach Latin since he did not actually want to, and he personally thought the position was a step down the social ladder. What drew Bach to this position was the greater economic and political stability. In April 1729 Bach was promoted to director of the collegium musicum and held the position until 1737. Bach composed mostly secular music such as violin concertos and flute sonatas, and remained in Leipzig, performing, teaching, and repairing instruments until his death in 1750.

*Lute Suite no. 1 in E minor* is the first of only a handful of lute music that Bach composed and follows standard dance suite form. While suites were inspired by dance music of the time, they were written and designed for listening, not dancing. Composers would employ many different dance movements in their suites, the most common being the allemande, courante, saraband, and gigue. The prelude comes from the French overture which was first used by Jean-Baptist Lully. The structure of a French overture is two-part, slow in dotted rhythms and fast in a fugal style. The first section ends on a half cadence which is answered in the second section. The allemande is typically the first dance in an instrumental dance suite. It dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century as a moderate tempo, duple metered dance, with characteristics such as "double knocking" upbeats of one, two or three sixteenth notes. Later composers such as Bach wrote allemandes at a slower tempo much like the pavane. The courante typically follows the allemande and during the Baroque era there were two types of courante; the French and Italian. The Italian version is

faster and more representative of its translation “running”, while the French version is slower described as majestic and grave. The sarabande is a Spanish dance in three and is the slowest of the Baroque dances. The characteristic “halting” is achieved through an emphasis on beat two. The bourrée is dance in two with French origins. It starts on a pickup which creates a more upbeat kind of feel and can be played at a moderate or fast tempo. The gigue originates from the English jig and was adopted in France in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. A gigue is typically in compound meter such as 6/8 and often has a contrapuntal texture. The gigue is very commonly the final movement in a Baroque era dance suite and is performed at a brisk tempo.

***Rebonds (1987-1989)***

- I. A
- II. B

**Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001)**

Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001) was born to Greek parents living in Romania, and his early interests included music and mathematics. While enrolled at Athens Polytechnic to study engineering, Xenakis began to pursue music in earnest. These complementary interests – engineering and music – led to an encounter (and later employment) in Paris with the architect Le Corbusier, who introduced him to two leading members of the musical avant-garde, Varèse and Messaien. In Xenakis’ break-through work, *Metastaseis*, the composer unified architectural space (itself a manifestation of mathematics) and music. His music also reflects an interest in both electronic music and in Greek culture, especially folk culture and ancient Greek drama. Xenakis composed the solo percussion work *Rebonds* in 1987-89, and dedicated it to percussionist Sylvio Gualda. The composer has written the following note:

“*Rebonds* is in two parts, a and b. The order of play is not fixed: either ab or ba, without a break. The metronomic indications are approximate. Part a only uses skins: two bongos, three tom-toms, two bass drums. Part b uses two bongos, one tumba, one tom-tom, bass drum, and a set of five wood blocks. The tuning of the skins and the wood blocks should extend over a very wide range.”

***Fragment (2001)***

Karolina Rimskyte, piano

**John Psathas (b. 1966)**

John Psathas is one of New Zealand’s most frequently performed composers. With works in the repertoire of such high-profile musicians as Evelyn Glennie, Micheal Brecker, the Halle Orchestra and others, he has established an international profile and is receiving regular commission offers from outside New Zealand. Psathas, who grew up in Taumaranui and then Napier, left high school early to study composition and piano at Victoria University of Wellington. Whilst a student, he supported himself by playing jazz gigs. Psathas studied further composer Jacqueline Fontyn in Belgium before returning to New Zealand, where he has since lectured in music at Victoria University and continued to fulfil a busy schedule of commissions. Early success came with *Matre’s Dance* in 1991, a maximum-energy duet for percussion and piano that has since made Psathas’ name internationally, having been championed by percussionists Evelyn Glennie. This work and *Drum Dances* are fast becoming standard repertoire for percussionists throughout the world. Much of his recent work has social and historical commentary at its core. The film *White Lies* (original film score) depicts a head on clash of beliefs and the nature of identity in early NZ European settler society. The epic and experimental *No Man’s Land* project overtly challenges the accepted handling of WWI commemoration. *No Man’s Land* involved filming and integrating 150 musicians from more than 25 different countries, including Oum El Ghait (Morocco), Meeta Pandit (India), Bijan Chemirani (Iran/France), Marta Sebestyen (Hungary), Vagelis Karipis (Greece), Refugees of Rap (Syria), and Derya Turkan and Saddredin Ozcimi (Turkey). In 2019, Psathas was commissioned by TCU to write an original percussion orchestra piece entitled *White Feather*. John’s

music has achieved a level of international success unprecedented in New Zealand history, and he is also now considered one of the three most important living composers of the Greek Diaspora.

*Fragment* is an adaptation of a piano duet originally composed to commemorate the occasion of the retirement of the composer's first piano teacher, Peter Williams. At the time of its composition, Psathas was engaged in writing his double concerto for percussion, piano, and orchestra, *View from Olympus*, and in mood and musical material, *Fragment* is related to the second movement of that work (in fact, it forms an optional encore to the concerto). *Fragment* was given its official premier performance by Kostas Theodorakos and Stavros Kollias on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2003 in the Auditorium of the French Institute, Athens, Greece.

**180 (2015)**

Bradley Baird, marimba  
Emily Magee, marimba  
Darrien Spicak, marimba

**Michael Burritt (b. 1962)**

Having performed on four continents and more than forty states, Michael Burritt is one of his generation's leading percussionists. He is in frequent demand, performing concert tours and master classes throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, Australia and Canada. Mr. Burritt has been soloist with the United States Air Force Band, Dallas Wind Symphony, Omaha Symphony, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, Richmond Symphony Orchestra, Nexus, Third Coast Percussion, Ju Percussion Group (Taiwan), Percussion Art Quartet (Germany) and the Amores Percussion Group (Spain). Mr. Burritt has three solo as well as numerous chamber recordings. In 2018 he recorded his *Home Trilogy* with the world-renowned percussion group Nexus, and is soon to release a new recording of solo and chamber works by Alejandro Viñao with the Grammy Award-winning Third Coast Percussion. In 2006 he recorded the Joseph Schwantner Percussion Concerto with the Calgary Wind Ensemble on the Albany label.

He has been a featured artist at nine Percussive Arts Society International Conventions. In 1992 he presented his New York solo debut in Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall and in 1998 performed his London debut in the Purcell Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall. Mr. Burritt has extensive chamber and orchestral experience and has performed with the Chicago Chamber Musicians, The Chicago Symphony, Nexus, Third Coast Percussion and the The Peninsula Music Festival Orchestra.

Mr. Burritt is also active as a composer, with three concertos to his credit as well as numerous solo and chamber works for marimba and percussion. His works for solo marimba have become standard repertoire for the instrument, and are frequently required repertoire on international competitions. Commissions include The World Marimba Competition in Stuttgart Germany, The Paris International Marimba Competition, Nexus and the Paris Percussion Group. Mr. Burritt is published with Keyboard Percussion Publications, C. Alan, Masters Music, and Innovative Percussion. Burritt is also an artist/clinician and product design/consultant for Mallettech, where he has developed his own line of marimba mallets and the MJB Signature Marimba. Mr. Burritt is the President Elect of Percussive Arts Society, was a member of the Board of Directors from 1996 to 2008, a contributing editor for *Percussive Notes* magazine from 1991 to 2006 and was chairman of the PAS Keyboard Committee from 2004 to 2010.

Michael Burritt is currently Professor of Percussion and chair of the Winds, Brass, and Percussion department at the Eastman School of Music. He is only the third person in the history of the school to hold this position. Prior to his appointment at Eastman, Mr. Burritt was Professor of Percussion at Northwestern University from 1995 to 2008, where he developed a program of international distinction. Mr. Burritt received his Bachelor ('84) and Master of Music ('86) Degrees, as well as the prestigious Performers Certificate, from the Eastman School of Music.

“180 is the second of two quartets I have written for marimba, the first having been completed in 2002. The work is laced with canonic passagework explored through rhythmic and melodic hocketing. The idea is to establish a homogenous sound through the 4 marimbas creating the illusion of a single instrument. The work is 360 measures in length and has a seminal tutti moment in measure 180, where all the displaced rhythmic activity comes together for 1 measure and then immediately disperses. 180 was commissioned by a consortium of schools led by Eric Willie at the University of North Carolina Greensboro along with Tennessee Tech University, University of Tennessee, University of South Carolina, Virginia Tech, Lee University, University of North Alabama, Radford University, University of North Carolina Pembroke, University of North Carolina School of the Arts and Frisco Liberty High School. 180 was premiered by the University of North Carolina Greensboro, Eric Willie director, at the 2015 Percussive Arts Society International Convention in San Antonio, Texas.”

### ***Chega de Saudade (1957)***

**Gary Burton (b. 1943)**

Born in 1943 and raised in Indiana, Gary Burton taught himself to play the vibraphone, developing a unique approach that set a new standard for four-mallet playing. At the age of 17, he made his recording debut in Nashville, Tennessee, with guitarists Hank Garland and Chet Atkins. Two years later, Burton left his studies at Berklee College of Music to join George Shearing and subsequently Stan Getz, with whom he worked from 1964-1966.

As a member of Getz's quartet, Burton won Down Beat magazine's Talent Deserving of Wider Recognition award in 1965. By the time he left Getz to form his own quartet in 1967, Burton had also recorded three albums under his name for RCA. Borrowing rhythms and sonorities from rock music, while maintaining jazz's emphasis on improvisation and harmonic complexity, Burton's first quartet attracted large audiences from both sides of the jazz-rock spectrum. Such albums as *Duster* and *Lofty Fake Anagram* established Burton and his band as progenitors of the jazz fusion phenomenon, and Down Beat magazine awarded Burton its Jazzman of the Year award in 1968. During his subsequent association with the ECM label (1973-1988) the Burton Quartet expanded to include the young Pat Metheny on guitar, and the band began to explore a repertoire of modern compositions.

In the 1970s, Burton also began to focus on more intimate contexts for his music. His 1971 album *Alone at Last*, a solo vibraphone concert recorded at the 1971 Montreux Jazz Festival, was honored with a Grammy Award. Burton also turned to the rarely heard duo format, recording with bassist Steve Swallow, guitarist Ralph Towner, and most notably with pianist Chick Corea, thus cementing a long personal and professional relationship that has garnered an additional two Grammy Awards.

Also in the 1970s, Burton began his career with Berklee College of Music in Boston. Burton began as a teacher of percussion and improvisation classes at Berklee in 1971. In 1985 he was named Dean of Curriculum. In 1989, he received an honorary doctorate of music from the college, and in 1996 he was appointed Executive Vice President.

Burton recorded for GRP records in the 1980s and '90s. In 1990, he paired up again with his former protégé Metheny for *Reunion*, which landed him the top spot on Billboard magazine's jazz chart. Burton is now recording for Concord Records. *Departure (Gary Burton & Friends)* was released in 1997 by Concord Records as well as *Native Sense*, a collaboration with Chick Corea, which garnered a Grammy Award in 1998. Also in 1997, Burton recorded his second collection of tango music, *Astor Piazzolla Reunion*, featuring the top tango musicians of Argentina, followed by *Libertango*, another collection of Piazzolla music. His 1998 Concord release, *Like Minds*, featuring his frequent collaborators Chick Corea, Pat Metheny, Roy Haynes, and Dave Holland, was honored with a Grammy, Burton's fifth. Gary's vibraphone tribute CD, *For Hamp, Red, Bags and Cal*, will be released in March 2001 on Concord.

*Chega de Saudade* also known as "No More Blues", is a bossa nova jazz standard. It is often considered to be the first recorded bossa nova song. Like "The Girl from Ipanema", the music for "Chega de Saudade" was composed by Antônio Carlos Jobim, with lyrics written by Vinícius de Moraes. João Gilberto's recording is the most famous. The song was first recorded in 1957 by Brazilian singer Elizete Cardoso and released on her 1958 album entitled *Canção Do Amor Demais*; however, the public took little notice of her release. João Gilberto included the second recorded version of the track in 1958. Released as a single, the song became a hit and would solidify bossa nova as a permanent genre in the Latin music lexicon. The song also appeared on Gilberto's first album *Chega De Saudade*. The title can be translated roughly as "enough longing", though the Portuguese word, *saudade*, carries with it a far more complex meaning. The word implies an intensity of heartfelt connection that is yearned for passionately, not unlike feeling withdrawal symptoms from a drug that makes one feel good. Another good analogy might be an intense homesickness. *Chega*, in this case, means no more, enough. The song form is 68 measures. The first 32 measures are in a minor key, followed by 36 measures in a major key. The key of the original recording by Elizete Cardoso went from D minor (the relative minor of F with one flat) to D major (two sharps). *Alone at Last* is the first solo album by vibraphonist Gary Burton. It is recorded in 1971 featuring three performances from the Montreux Jazz Festival and four studio performances released on the Atlantic label. The album was awarded a Grammy for Best Jazz Performance by a Soloist at the 15th Grammy Awards.