



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Darrien Spicak, percussion

April 23rd, 2021

8:30 pm

Orchestra Hall

Evergreen (2020)

Robert Honstein (b. 1980)

I. Fading Light

Orion Wysocki, vibraphone/glockenspiel

Prelude I (1984)

Christopher Deane (b. 1957)

Vertigo (2019)

Etienne Houben (b. 1982)

Lydia Marshall, flute

Pulsar (2017)

Francisco Perez (b. 1990)

Six Concert Etudes for Marimba (2014)

Peter Klatzow (b. 1945)

IV. Incantation

V. Dazzle

VI. Whisper of the Cypresses, Play of Water

Alter Ego (2014)

Anika Nilles (b. 1983)

180 (2015)

Michael Burritt (b. 1962)

Bradley Baird, marimba
Emily Magee, marimba
Orion Wysocki, marimba

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master's Degree in Music Performance, with an emphasis in Percussion. Darrien Spicak is a student of Dr. Brian West, Dr. Richard Gipson, Mr. Joseph Carter, and Mr. Jeff Hodge.

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

Program Notes

Evergreen (2020)

Robert Honstein (b. 1980)

I. Fading Light

Orion Wysocki, vibraphone/glock

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. 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.

Evergreen is a thirty minute, five-movement work for Marimba, Vibraphone and Glockenspiel. Honstein writes about the piece: “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.”

Evergreen anticipates, celebrates, and looks beyond the solstice. In Movement I, *Fading Light*, the music builds intensity with ever expanding intervallic patterns, creating a moody space of anticipation and longing. The vibraphone player is tasked with also playing certain melodic notes on the glockenspiel while the marimbaist keeps a soft bed of ostinato eighth notes underneath for the entire piece.

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.

Prelude I (1984)

Christopher Deane (b. 1957)

Christopher Deane is a Professor of Percussion at the University of North Texas College of Music teaching orchestral timpani, mallets, and directing the UNT Percussion Players percussion ensemble. He holds performance degrees from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He studied with James Massie Johnson, former principal timpanist of the St. Louis Symphony, and percussion with Allen Otte. He has also studied independently with Roland Kohloff, N.Y. Philharmonic, Eugene Espino, Cincinnati Symphony, and Leonard Schulman, N.Y. City Opera.

Deane has won both 1st and 2nd prize in the PAS Composition Competition. He studied Composition with Sherwood Shaffer, Robert Ward, and Charles Fussell, and independently with Ben Johnston. He has received numerous commissions including the Percussive Arts Society, University of Oklahoma, and the University of Kentucky. His music has been performed and recorded internationally, and a number of his compositions have become standard literature on concerts and recitals worldwide. Deane has served two terms on the PAS Board of Directors. He is a clinician for the Bergerault/Dynasty Corporation, Black Swamp Percussion, Innovative

Percussion and Sabian Cymbals.

Prelude I is a solo for four timpani that was composed as a musical gift for Carol L Stumpf. Stumpf was the principal timpanist of the Charlotte Symphony orchestra for eighteen years. The solo begins with an expository phrase that is then developed throughout the rest of the piece. Deane takes small rhythmic and melodic ideas from the exposition and creates large sections of the piece with those fragments. The piece requires double-sided mallets with one side being felt and the other side being wood that are switched between very quickly in the middle of phrases. *Prelude I* is a challenging solo that requires the utmost attention to rhythmic accuracy, dynamics, and touch.

Vertigo (2019)

Etienne Houben (b. 1982)

Lydia Marshall, flute

Etienne Houben studied classical percussion and earned his bachelor's degree with highest distinction and master's degree at the Conservatorium Maastricht, in the Netherlands. He worked as timpanist at the Dutch Customs Orchestra and as a percussion teacher. He performed with numerous Dutch professional orchestras as the Limburg and Gelders Symphony Orchestras, Orchestra of the East, André Rieu and the Dutch Royal Marine Band.

Vertigo is a symptom where a person feels as if they or the objects around them are moving when they are not. In Houben's *Vertigo*, a challenging frenzied duet for flute and marimba, that feeling is elicited through the ingeniously frantic and exciting musical material. Throughout the work, Houben uses undulating melodic lines, driving sixteenth-note motives, and varied time signatures to create an unsettling feeling. The piece begins with a marimba ostinato that is highly syncopated and articulate which is then followed by a legato flute melody that is seemingly unconnected to the pulse given by the marimba. Throughout the piece, the listeners will feel the push and pull until the duet gradually comes together in a climatic, unison ending.

Pulsar (2017)

Francisco Perez (b. 1990)

Francisco Perez (b. 1990) is a percussionist, composer, and educator from Pflugerville, TX. As an active performer, he has accepted international engagements in Guatemala, Mexico, Spain, and China, and toured extensively throughout the US including performances at prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, and the nationally-televised Super Bowl XLV. He regularly performs with the Lexington Philharmonic and the blueSHIFT Percussion Quartet.

Perez received his Bachelor of Music Education from Texas Christian University under Dr. Brian West and his Master's in Percussion Performance and Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Kentucky under James Campbell. He currently serves as Assistant Professor of Music (Percussion) at Lamar University in Beaumont, TX, where he oversees all aspects of the percussion studio.

In astrophysics, a "pulsar" is a highly magnetized neutron star which can rotate between 7,000 and 40,000 times per minute. In the world of Tapspace, however, *Pulsar* is a groovy, polyrhythmic snare solo composed by Perez. The piece involves very fast and technical rudimental sticking patterns, as well as requiring a considerable amount of dynamic control and touch. The piece, inspired by Neil deGrasse Tyson's *Cosmos* and the rhythmic style of Mike McIntosh, is performed alongside a beautifully atmospheric soundscape, which was inspired by the

electronic music group Moderat.

Six Concert Etudes for Marimba (2014)

Peter Klatzow (b. 1945)

- IV. Incantation
- V. Dazzle
- VI. Whisper of the Cypresses, Play of Water

In 1964, Peter Klatzow attended the Royal College of Music in London where he studied composition with Bernard Stevens, piano with Kathleen Long, and orchestration with Gordon Jacob. In that year, he won several of the College composition prizes as well as the Royal Philharmonic prize for composition, which was open to any Commonwealth composer under 30. He spent the following years in Italy and Paris, where he studied with Nadia Boulanger.

Since returning to South Africa in 1966, he has worked at the SABC in Johannesburg as a music producer, and in 1973 was appointed to the University of Cape Town, where he was Director of the College of Music and Professor in Composition. In 1986 he was elected to the rank of Fellow of the University of Cape Town for "having performed original distinguished academic work of such quality as to merit special recognition."

He was awarded his DMus for published work in Composition in 1999, and the Cape Tercentenary Foundation's Molteno Gold medal for lifetime achievement in Music in 2002.

His "Six Concert Etudes for Marimba" began as a project originally intended to be written for the famous percussion virtuoso Evelyn Glennie. However, the project fell through but was eventually completed in 2014 when Daniel Heagney initiated a consortium to fund the project.

Tonight, Darrien will be presenting the last three movements: Incantations, Dazzle, and Whisper of the Cypresses, Play of Water.

"Incantations is a study of contrasting textures -- strong, stark octaves juxtaposed against fluid harmonic substrata. They develop longer shapes gradually moving towards resolution. This same type of texture is to be found in the central section of the slow movement of Concerto no 1.

Dazzle is a rhythmic study which pits 5:4. The result is like the incessant patter of raindrops creating a truly dazzling texture which fascinates the ear. There are also smaller rhythmic structures which create patterns of their own.

Whisper of Cypresses, Play of Water is a reminiscence of my visits to the Villa d'Este, just outside Rome, which was a place of retreat for Liszt, whose brooding presence can still be felt there. It is also a study in tremolos, which gradually move up from the bass, through the middle, to the top of the instrument. As with Liszt's *Fountains of the Villa d'Este* this piece should be treated as a meditation rather than an opportunity for virtuosic display."

Alter Ego (2014)

Anika Nilles (b. 1983)

Anika Nilles is a German drummer, composer, solo musician, and musical educator. She launched her career on YouTube during the early 2010s, and has released two full-length albums to date, both with backing band Nevell: *Pikalar* in 2017 and *For a Colorful Soul* in 2020.

Nilles' posted her first original compositions *Wild Boy* in 2013, followed by *Alter Ego* in 2014. These and other music videos usually contain a visual recording of her drumming alongside previously recorded music. In such videos, she has historically cooperated with producer and guitarist Joachim Schneiss. Afterward, Nilles began acquiring work and viral attention outside of her native Germany, such as with a tour of Europe, the United States, and China in 2015.

In 2017, Nilles' debut album *Pikalar* was released, consisting of 10 instrumental tracks. In promotion of the album, Nilles was the cover artist and interviewee for the June 2017 edition of *Modern Drummer Magazine*. In this interview, Nilles stated that she coined the word "pikalar", which is intended "to stand for things that happen in life that you can't describe".

Nilles embarked on a six-date United States clinic tour in October 2018 and performed at venues such as the Chicago Music Exchange, Sweetwater Sound in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Salt City Drums in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Alter Ego is a track that Nilles wrote and performed herself. The presentation tonight is Darrien's transcription of Nilles' drumming from her 2014 YouTube debut of "Alter Ego." Nilles' drumming includes many hemiolas, fast kick drum work, and advanced applications of rudiments around the drum set.

180 (2015)

Michael Burritt

Bradley Baird, marimba
Emily Magee, marimba
Orion Wysocki, marimba

Having performed on four continents and more than forty states, Michael Burritt is one of his generation's leading percussionists. 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 Malletech, 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.”