



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

## Fall Student Composers Recital

Wednesday, October 27, 2021

7pm

PepsiCo Recital Hall

### Program

#### **Piano Sonata No. 1**

Andrew Vargas

b. 2000

Andrew Vargas, piano

#### **Reflections on Frost**

Harrison J. Collins

b. 1999

- i. the mountains I raise*
- ii. earth returned their love*
- iii. She went out like a firefly*
- iv. To the midnight sky a sunset glow*
- v. For once, then, something*

Elijah Un-Hao Ong, piano

#### **Experiment #002.1**

ToQuyen Nguyen

b. 2003

ToQuyen Nguyen, piano

#### **The Resurrection of Spring Into Summer Eternal**

Felicity Constance Mazur-Park

b. 1988

- i. Verse One*
- ii. Verse Two*
- iii. Verse Three*

Felicity Mazur-Park, piano

**Convalescence**

Aaron Kline  
b. 1990

Maggie Williams, soprano; Elijah Un-Hao Ong, piano

**Lover's Traffic**

Felicity Constance Mazur-Park  
b. 1988

Elijah Un-Hao Ong, violin; Felicity Mazur-Park, piano

**Two Pieces for String Ensemble:**

Justino Eustacio Pérez

**Funhouse Emprise**

**Rituals of The Two Headed Reptilians**

Alexia Wixom and Elijah Ong, violin 1  
Joao Pérez and Rima Abram, violin 2  
Jacob Burke and Julie Johnson, violas  
Alejandra Ramirez and Giuliano Bucheli, violoncellos  
Bryan Blaine and Chengjin Tian, double basses  
Justino Pérez, conductor

Justino Eustacio Pérez and Harrison J. Collins are students of Dr. Neil Anderson-Himmelspach.

Felicity Constance Mazur-Park and Andrew Vargas are students of Dr. Blaise Ferrandino.

Aaron Kline is a student of Dr. Neil Anderson-Himmelspach and Dr. Blaise Ferrandino.

The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.

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

## Program Notes

### Andrew Vargas - Piano Sonata No. 1

*Piano Sonata No. 1* makes silence into sound. It attempts to illustrate a sense of positive emptiness and timelessness. The influence of Christian themes and the sound world of Eastern Orthodox chant music permeates the work. More tangible, however, is the relationship of this piece to the sound world of Arvo Pärt. There is Christian symbolism in the recapitulation where the key switches to C-sharp major (instead of the enharmonic D-flat major). Seven, the number of perfection, is reflected in the seven sharps of C-sharp major. Also, the use of mode mixture, the lowered third scale degree, in the beginning can be seen as illustrating man's fall from Eden. The piece is filled with tension and musical hesitation. However, there is still a sense of spaciousness and calm. The aim of this work is to go back to the concept of the single note. What does a note mean and what can one note, in and of itself, represent? This piece aims to cultivate a sort of "musical asceticism" and to purge all unnecessary things from the musical experience.

### Harrison J. Collins - Reflections on Frost

*Reflections on Frost* springs from a decision I made at the age of nineteen to expose myself to more poetry. I had admired poetry for a long time but had never found the time to dig into it and find more of what I love and connect with. So, during an outing to Chicago (for the premiere of my orchestral work *Young Voices*), I stopped in a bookstore and decided to buy Robert Frost's *New Hampshire*. I thought to myself, *I've heard his name before, plenty of times. He's supposed to be one of the greats, right?* With that thinking, I began reading his work. It wasn't long before I fell in love with the poems within, and over the course of a year I moved slowly through the book, trying to soak up as much of each poem as I could. Each of the five movements of *Reflections on Frost* are a musical response to one of my favorite poems within the book, and they take their titles from lines found within those poems.

### ToQuyen Nguyen - Experiment #002.1

ToQuyen Nguyen started her compositional journey during the quarantine of 2020, after experiencing a combination of sheer boredom and inspiration from listening to film scores by Hans Zimmer, Joe Hisaishi, and others. It was perhaps an emotional manifestation of how she felt during the pandemic. She has been playing the piano for thirteen years and is heavily inspired by Joe Hisaishi's work from Studio Ghibli's movies. She grew up listening to the soundtracks of those movies and they never fail to evoke a sense of nostalgia and yearning. She sought to create a piece that replicates the same kind of emotional draw of his work. This is her second original composition, and she has yet to come up with a title for the piece, so it is referred to as *Experiment #002.1* in the program. There will be more experiments to come.

## **Felicity Constance Mazur-Park – The Resurrection of Spring**

*The Resurrection of Spring* is a piano solo based on the following poem written by me:

Before the resurrection of Spring,  
There lay ice,  
With the backdrop of the eternal fire.

Spring was resurrected,  
And glory shone through the world,  
And the world sang.

Glorious, glorious spring,  
The heavens offer you glory,  
To share with the fruit of the world.

Originally premiered at The Boston Conservatory in 2008, this delightful piano solo features virtuosic runs juxtaposed against sonorous melodies. It can be interpreted from a religious, or secular perspective. Additionally, the piece can be listened to programmatically, or as absolute music. On a poetic level, the piece describes an idyllic springtime scene which is experienced concurrently throughout the world. I originally conceived this piece at the piano, and it was fully formed in my brain before any of it was notated. It reflects my earlier style, when I was less constrained by preconceived harmonic restrictions or the rules of standard practice.

## **Aaron Kline - Convalescence**

The text of *Convalescence* comes from a poem of the same name by Amy Lowell, an imagist poet. One of Lowell's goals in her poetry is to depict a vivid image. It describes a man emerging from the sea in search of stability on the shore. The text alternates between moments of strain and stability. These shifts are illustrated by changes in the harmonic language. The melodies are derived from how I read the text, which creates an expressive synthesis between the poetry and the melody. The piano part often foreshadows, or echoes, melodic lines allowing space to ponder the image described by the vocalist. At other points, the piano creates a surreal atmosphere through dissonant ostinati. The struggle to reach the shore is resolved in the closing moments of the piece. Both the man, and the harmonic language finally achieve stability.

From out the dragging vastness of the sea,  
Wave-fettered, bound in sinuous seaweed strands,  
He toils toward the rounding beach, and stands  
One moment, white and dripping, silently,  
Cut like a cameo in lazuli,  
Then falls, betrayed by shifting shells, and lands  
Prone in the jeering water, and his hands

Clutch for support where no support can be.  
So up, and down, and forward, inch by inch,  
He gains upon the shore, where poppies glow  
And sandflies dance their little lives away.  
The sucking waves retard, and tighter clinch  
The weeds about him, but the land-winds blow,  
And in the sky there blooms the sun of May.

Amy Lowell (1874-1925)

### **Felicity Constance Mazur-Park – Lover’s Traffic**

*Lover’s Traffic*, a short but virtuosic piece for violin and piano, incorporates elements of folk, classical, and jazz. It likens the erratic emotions associated with a love of life to the ever-present traffic in a major city. It consists of two contrasting episodes. The first episode utilizes the open strings of the violin to create a folk-like drone. This paired with a playful dorian melody gives the movement a mischievous atmosphere. At first, the second episode is jazzier and more relaxed. However, it eventually reprises the first and builds to a climax. This tension is eventually resolved with a single pizzicato note.

### **Justino Eustacio Pérez – Two Pieces for String Ensemble: Funhouse Emprise and Rituals of the Two Headed Reptilians**

*Funhouse Emprise* and *Rituals of the Two Headed Reptilians* are both written with the intention of introducing new music to young string players. The first incorporates a familiar nursery rhyme into a whirlwind of wild harmonies, making it as much fun to play as it is to listen to. *Rituals of the Two headed Reptilian* attempts to capture a festival of an imaginary humanoid reptilian race off in a distant galaxy. Originally, I envisioned a day like the Mexican holiday “Día De Los Muertos” which honors the dead, but transformed my ideas to include mourning, a sacrifice, preparations for festivities, and an evening of wild dancing.