

CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Margaret Kampmeier, Artistic Director and Chair

TACTUS

Solos, Duos, and More!

PROGRAM

DAVID LANG
(b. 1957)

Thorn (2008)
Stephanie Dressler, flute

RICHARD RODNEY
BENNETT
(1936–2012)

After Syrinx II (1984)
Makana Medeiros, marimba

MORTON SUBOTNICK
(b. 1933)

Axolotl from *The Double Life of Amphibians, Part I* (1980)
Jordan Bartow, cello

JONAS SCHOEN-PHILBERT
(b. 1969)

Piece for solo basstrombone (2020) (World premiere)
Maxine Troglauer, bass trombone

NICOLE BRANCATO/
TEAGAN FARAN/
JOEY GUIDRY III

Autumnal Angst: Solstice (2020) (World premiere)
Nicole Brancato, piano
Teagan Faran, violin
Joey Guidry III, bassoon

CATHERINE PHANG
(b. 1991)

Emile (2020) (World premiere)
Han Geul Lee, piano

JOAN TOWER (b. 1938)	<i>Clocks</i> (1985) Jonathan Collazo , marimba
NICOLE BRANCATO	Four Quartets (2020) (World premiere) <i>2063</i>
JOEY GUIDRY III	<i>When your vibrator dies at the peak</i>
MAKANA MEDEIROS	<i>Little Hōkū</i>
TEAGAN FARAN	<i>Painted Rock</i> Nicole Brancato , piano Teagan Faran , violin Joey Guidry III , bassoon Makana Medeiros , percussion

PROGRAM NOTES

Thorn

David Lang

Thorn was premiered at the Gropiusbau in Berlin, Germany on June 8, 1993. Lang says the following about the piece: “My first idea for *Thorn* was to embed a single spike somewhere in the middle of a long, slow, quiet melody. I thought that the listener would then spend the first part of the piece in fear and the second part in shock, and this would change the ways that the tune would be perceived. The problem with this was that the spike turned out to be the most interesting part of the piece, and, ultimately, I couldn’t resist the temptation to add many, many more of them.”

–Stephanie Dressler

Axolotl

Morton Subotnick

Axolotl (for cello and electronic ghost score) was commissioned by Joel Krosnick and first performed by him at the Library of Congress on February 13, 1981. It is the first of two works in Part I of a series entitled *The Double Life of Amphibians* (Part I, Amphibians; Part II, Beasts; Part III, Angels). The other work in Part I is called *Ascent Into Air*.

The axolotl is a Mexican salamander; it is transparent and delicate with two filigree winglike appendages extending from either side that float above the creature. These are its lungs for its future ascent onto land, but the axolotl never goes through the final stage of its potential development—it never reaches air, and remains forever in water.

–Jordan Bartow

Piece for solo basstrombone

Jonas Schoen-Philbert

Piece for solo basstrombone, by German saxophonist and composer Jonas Schoen-Philbert, strictly follows specific series of pitches that reoccur throughout the piece in different variations. Other main ingredients include multiphonics, slaptones, and clicks with a piece of metal on the trombone body. There are three sections in different rhythmic gestures (freely, floating, steady pulse) that are meant to represent a rather dark, sad and then later a groovy yet somehow breathless tension.

This piece does not only challenge the performer with its virtuosic technical passages, covering the whole range of the bass trombone, but also with creating an arc of suspense over the whole length of the performance. It is the second piece the composer has written for me as a performer and this performance is the world premiere of our close collaboration on it.

–Maxine Troglauer

Autumnal Angst

Nicole Brancato/Teagan Faran/Joey Guidry III

When you make things go right, even as it all goes wrong.

–Nicole Brancato, Teagan Faran, Joey Guidry III

Emile

Catherine Phang

This piece was initially composed in 2018 and reworked in 2020. “Emile” is a nickname for the largest extant bronze bell (12.3 feet high and 7.4 feet in diameter), officially called the Divine Bell of King Seongdeok. “Emile” in Korean is also an ancient term for “Mommy” dating to the United Shilla Kingdom (57 BC to 935 AD). The name came from the legend woven around the bell.

–Catherine Phang

Clocks

Joan Tower

Joan Tower, born in 1938 in New Rochelle, New York, has consistently been a driving force behind modern orchestral music both in the States and abroad. Her life has presented her with a fascinating array of influences, all of which she has filtered down to her signature sound and attitude.

Clocks is layered with her observations and various perceptions of time moving, as well as her influences throughout history, which span from Bach and Vivaldi to flamenco guitar and rebellious rock music. To Joan, thank you for trusting me with this adaptation of your music. It has been an honor to play your music with and for you.

–Jonathan Collazo

Four Quartets

Nicole Brancato, Joey Guidry III, Makana Medeiros, Teagan Faran

2063

A quartet for the hopeful future, this music looks expectantly yet apprehensively towards the promise of a brighter, cosmic tomorrow. Prosperity, suffering, advancement, or decline? The four performers coexist in controlled chaos, communicating and diverging in structured improvisations yet converging in moments of clarity.

–Nicole Brancato

When your vibrator dies at the peak

We’ve all been there but hopefully none of us have been there twice.

–Joey Guidry III

Little Hōkū

“Hōkū” in Hawaiian is translated as “star.” Little stars from the human perspective can be perceived as insignificant. Inspired by modal jazz improvisation, this piece attempts to capture how visceral an experience it is imagining how vast and beautiful stars are. The piano and vibraphone play quick, flourishing rhythms while the violin and bassoon play long, majestic lines on top of the rhythmic counterparts. This sonically represents my imagination of those “Little Stars.” This piece also has a special double meaning, as Hōkū is the name of my dog.

–*Makana Medeiros*

Painted Rock

Who knew you could miss Michigan this much? Is this the rock from campus or is this the Upper Peninsula getaway or is it a fairy garden or...? It is what you make it.

–*Teagan Faran*

ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

The Contemporary Performance Program at Manhattan School of Music is dedicated to giving advanced student performers the opportunity to study with expert faculty and to work directly with living composers. The CPP concert series presents knowledgeable performances of 20th- and 21st-century masterpieces by the student ensemble Tactus. Past concerts have featured both classic 20th-century repertoire and more recent works played with the composers in attendance. The group presents music by MSM faculty composers and works with the Composition department to read and perform student compositions.

Administration

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Artistic Director and Chair

Katharine Dryden
Managing Director of Instrumental Ensembles

Jon Clancy
CPP Instrumental Ensembles Associate

Faculty

David Adamcyk, Contemporary
Survey

Robert Black, Bass

David Cossin, Percussion

Anthony de Mare, Piano

Monica Ellis, Bassoon

John Ferrari, Percussion

Susan Jolles, Harp

Margaret Kampmeier, Piano

David Krakauer, Clarinet

Curtis Macomber, Violin

Tara Helen O’Connor, Flute

Christopher Oldfather, Piano

Todd Reynolds, Electronics

Brandon Ridenour, Trumpet

Lucy Shelton, Voice

Fred Sherry, Cello

James Austin Smith, Oboe

Dave Taylor, Bass trombone

ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its more than 960 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from more than 50 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege program continues to offer superior music instruction to 475 young musicians between the ages of 5 and 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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