

CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Margaret Kampmeier, Artistic Director and Chair

TACTUS

Solos, Duos, and More!

PROGRAM

FREDERIC RZEWSKI
(b. 1938) *To His Coy Mistress* (1988)
Nicole Brancato, speaking/singing pianist

LAURA BIBBS *Absence* (2020) (World premiere)
Laura Bibbs, trumpet

JEFFREY MUMFORD
(b. 1955) *Variazioni elegiaci* (1997)
Jordan Bartow, cello

GEORGE ROCHBERG
(1918–2005) *Ukiyo-e (Pictures of the Floating World)* (1973)
Alyson Kanne, harp

GABRIEL GARCIA/
JOEY GUIDRY III *The fresh dirt around me* (2020) (World premiere)
[Warning: subject of text is suicide]
Gabriel Garcia, baritone
Joey Guidry III, bassoon

KAIJA SAARIAHO
(b. 1952) *Petals* (1988)
[Warning: bright flashing lights]
Jordan Bartow, cello

REIKO FÜTING
(b. 1970)

light, asleep (2002/rev. 2010)

Teagan Faran, violin
Nicole Brancato, piano

MAURICIO KAGEL
(1931–2008)

Selections from *Der Turm zu Babel* (2002)

Venite igitur descendamus...

Now Yabweh said: Come, let us go down..

Yavé dijo: Veo que todos forman...

Gabriel Garcia, baritone

JOANTOWER
(b. 1938)

Wings (1981)

Emmalie Tello, clarinet

NICOLE BRANCATO/
TEAGAN FARAN/
JOEY GUIDRY III

“Equinox” from *Autumnal Angst* (2020)

Nicole Brancato, piano

Teagan Faran, violin

Joey Guidry III, bassoon

HAN GEUL LEE

Night Terror Solipsis for prepared piano and live electronics (2020) (World premiere)

[Warning: bright flashing lights]

Han Geul Lee, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

To His Coy Mistress

Frederic Rzewski

Andrew Marvell's Cavalier poem "To His Coy Mistress" is the heart of this "speaking/singing pianist" composition. The flowing melody of the opening gives way to turbulence, followed by an open improvisation and a return to the opening's tune.

–Nicole Brancato

TEXT

To His Coy Mistress

By Andrew Marvell (1621–1678)

Had we but world enough and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down, and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.

Thy beauty shall no more be found;
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long-preserved virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust;
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapped power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Absence

Laura Bibbs

Absence was written to honor my late brother, Michael Derek Bibbs Jr. This piece is reflective of the current state of my emotions, as I've never experienced death so close and so abruptly. It is a memorial, a requiem and a first attempt at honoring him through my music. My brother was loud, energetic, hard-working, funny, the best person to cheer you up or make you forget about a rough day. I would like to give a disclaimer that this work talks about death and may be uncomfortable for some listeners.

–Laura Bibbs

Variazioni elegiaci

Jeffrey Mumford

Jeffrey Mumford is Composer-in-Residence at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He joined the Oberlin faculty as Assistant Professor of Composition in 2000, after a year as artist-in-residence at Bowling Green University's College of Musical Arts.

Prior to this, he had been an Instructor at the Washington D.C. Conservatory of Music. Mr. Mumford earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Irvine, California in 1977 and his Master of Arts degree in Composition from the University of California, San Diego in 1981. His range of work includes pieces for vocals, strings, and orchestra, as well as chamber and choral groups. Jeffery Mumford's works are often "inspired by cloud imagery," and his titles commonly make references to light and allude to the impressions or moods behind the creative impulse. Mumford has received an award for outstanding artistic achievement in music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He has also received a Ucross Residency Prize from the Herb Alpert Foundation, an ASCAP Aaron Copland Scholarship, and seven Meet the Composer grants. Mr. Mumford has also received commissions from the McKim Fund in the Library of Congress, the Nancy Ruyle Dodge Charitable Trust, and the National Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Mumford is a board member of the League of Composers and of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

—Jordan Bartow

Ukiyo-e (Pictures of the Floating World)

George Rochberg

Composed in 1973, George Rochberg's *Ukiyo-e*, which translates to "pictures of the floating world," was inspired by the genre of Japanese art by the same name: screen paintings and woodblock prints depicting the epicurean, or sensual, pleasures of cosmopolitan life. *Ukiyo* originally described the Buddhist ethos and appreciation of the transitory nature of life; during Japan's Edo period (1603–1867), however, "the floating world" came to mean the "entertainment districts" found in Japan's rapidly growing cities—havens in which men could pursue pleasure and savor the fleeting joys of life during the sociopolitical strife of the Tokugawa shogunate.

Created for mass consumption, the *ukiyo-e* typically portrayed extravagantly dressed courtesans and kabuki actors, among other popular features of the entertainment districts. According to Rochberg, the appeal of *ukiyo-e* "lies in its power to image the world not as static, fixed forms of 'reality,' but as floating pictures of radiant qualities which range from states of forlornness and emptiness to quiet or ecstatic joy." Certainly this range of emotions can be felt in Rochberg's piece, through the composer's deployment of contrasting timbres, extended techniques, and pitch sets.

—Alyson Kanne

Petals

Kaija Saariaho

Kaija Saariaho describes *Petals* for solo cello as having been "written abruptly in a few days, but evidently after a long unconscious preparation":

The material stems directly from *Nymphéa* for string quartet and electronics. The name of the piece is derived from this relationship. The opposite elements here are fragile coloristic passages which give birth to more energetic events with clear rhythmic and melodic character. These more sharply focused figures pass through different transformations, and finally merge back to less dynamic but not the less intensive filiguration. In bringing together these very opposite modes of expressions I aimed to force the interpreter to stretch his sensibility.

To realize the electronics in this piece, I used custom effects in Ableton Live with parameters originally specified in the score. I built the electronics to follow me, rather than having to rely on a second person to run them. The visuals you are seeing were also built by me using the program Max/MSP. The visuals have been built to react to the music, as well as to my own improvisations in real time.

—Jordan Bartow

light, asleep
Reiko Fütting

light, asleep [*licht, schlafend*], for violin and piano (2002/rev. 2010) by Reiko Fütting, was commissioned by Tyler Neist. The composition was originally based on the song *Du mein einzig Licht* by Heinrich Albert and Simon Dach, from 1648. By the time Fütting finished revising the work, in 2010, the source material was reflected only in the title and general atmosphere of the composition.

–*Nicole Brancato and Teagan Faran*

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*

Night Terror Solipsis
Han Geul Lee

Stage 1: Slow eye movement, and reduced muscle activity

Stage 2: Slower brain, with occasional bursts of rapid sleep spindles

Stage 3: Delta waves appear, interspersed with smaller, faster waves

Stage 4: The brain produces delta waves exclusively. No eye movement or muscle activity

Stage 5: Rapid, irregular, and shallow breathing, eyes jerk rapidly in various directions, limb muscles paralyzed, heart rate increases, blood pressure rises; bizarre and illogical tales —

Invisible, boundless fences;

All you have – All there is

Rampant

Leash, Rein, Tame, Subdue, Control.

–*Han Geul Lee*

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

Margaret Kampmeier

Artistic Director and Chair

Katharine Dryden

Managing Director of Instrumental Ensembles

Jon Clancy

CPP Instrumental Ensembles Associate

Faculty

David Adamcyk, Contemporary Survey

Susan Jolles, Harp

Todd Reynolds, Electronics

Robert Black, Bass

Margaret Kampmeier, Piano

Brandon Ridenour, Trumpet

David Cossin, Percussion

David Krakauer, Clarinet

Lucy Shelton, Voice

Anthony de Mare, Piano

Curtis Macomber, Violin

Fred Sherry, Cello

Monica Ellis, Bassoon

Tara Helen O'Connor, Flute

James Austin Smith, Oboe

John Ferrari, Percussion

Christopher Oldfather, Piano

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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