

Monday, November 1, 2021 | 7:30 PM
Gordon K. and Harriet Greenfield Hall

CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Margaret Kampmeier, Artistic Director and Chair

TACTUS

Solos and Duos

PROGRAM

DENNIS MATOS

Don't be fooled by the beginning Francis (A piece for 2 percussionists, live electronics, tape, garbage, and Francis Bacon) (World Premiere)

Dániel Matei and Jonathan Collazo, percussion

DAI FUJIKURA
(b. 1977)

Turtle Totem

Emmalie Tello, clarinet

CONSTANTINOS SØREN
DEMETRIOU
(b. 1998)

Intangibility

Alan Hložek, cello

JOHN CAGE
(1912–1992)

Aria

Gabriel Garcia, baritone

IANNIS XENAKIS
(1922–2001)

Charisma

Yu-Ting Cheng, clarinet

Alan Hložek, cello

Intermission

MISSY MAZZOLI
(b. 1980)

A Thousand Tongues for violin, piano, and electronics

Madeline Hocking, violin

Nacho Ojeda, piano

RADIA
(trans. Teagan Faran) *Blood Orange*
Teagan Faran, viola and electronics

EINOJUHANIRAUTAVAARA *Etydit (Études)*, Op. 42
(1928–2016) I. *Terstit* (Thirds)
Nicole Brancato, piano

ARVO PÄRT *Spiegel im Spiegel*
(b. 1935) Steph Dressler, alto flute
Nicole Brancato, piano

JOSÉ MARTINEZ *Pablo*
(1890–1939) Teagan Faran and Madeline Hocking, violin
(arr. Leonardo Suarez Paz)

Students in this performance are supported by the *Marga and Arthur King Scholarship*.

We are grateful to the generous donors who made these scholarships possible. For information on establishing a named scholarship at Manhattan School of Music, please contact Susan Madden, Vice President for Advancement, at 917-493-4115 or smadden@msmnyc.edu.

PROGRAM NOTES

Dennis Matos

Don't be fooled by the beginning Francis

My friendship with Cuban-Hungarian percussionist/composer Dennis Matos started in 2012 when we met at the Bartók Béla High School Conservatory in Budapest. Jon Collazo and I traveled to Amsterdam in 2016, where Dennis was studying at the time. During a passionate late night discussion about music, we asked Dennis to write a duo tailored to us. This piece is the result. Here is what the composer has to say about it:

This piece was composed in 2021 for two friends of mine, Dániel Matei and Jonathan Collazo. It was inspired by an interview with Irish-born British painter Francis Bacon, in which he describes a method of complete chaos giving birth to a somewhat organized piece of art. Composers describe their pieces to let people know what it is about, what is the concept behind their thought to compose... I say fuck that.... Enjoy.

–Dániel Matei

Dai Fujikura

Turtle Totem

Turtle Totem was composed by Dai Fujikura for performance in Nagara-Zaza, a Japanese garden in the ancient city of Otsu that includes a small pond crossed by a modest stone bridge. Fujikura has written that, in this garden, “it is believed that when one crosses the bridge, one enters the next world, the afterlife... There are turtles in the garden. Not actual turtles, but stones which symbolize the turtle. Some are on top of each other. I read that the turtles travel between these worlds, with little turtles riding on top of them, like totems.”

The clarinet explores these worlds in its tones and timbres, floating back and forth between the two. As the piece begins to close, doubled notes, as those stacked turtles, finally travel perhaps across the bridge for good, off into the distance.

–Emmalie Tello

Constantinos Søren Demetriou

Intangibility

Intangibility is a trait that accurately describes my attempted-performance history of this work. I initially worked with Søren, the composer, and was planning to perform the piece sometime in the fall of 2019. However, those in charge of finalizing the program for the specific concert didn't tell him I was programmed to perform, so, because I was not notified in advance, I ended up not performing on the concert. Then, I was scheduled to perform it on a concert in late March of 2020, when the virus appeared and shut it down. So, I have not been presented an opportunity to perform this "intangible" piece...until now. I hope you enjoy it!

–Alan Hložek

John Cage

Aria

After my first reading of John Cage's *Aria*, I was left with more questions than answers. *Aria* is constructed of twenty pages of hand-drawn lines in various shades, representing ten singing styles of the performer's choice, punctuated by miscellaneous percussion noises. Syllables and fragmented phrases in Armenian, Russian, Italian, French, and English constitute the text. There is not a meter marking, dynamic indication, stave, or notehead in sight. Cage writes in his performance notes, "all aspects... which are not notated may be freely determined by the singer." By endowing the performer with such a degree of freedom, Cage composed an eternally evolving work which is rebirthed by every singer who accepts its challenge. The result is a revolutionary work of vitality that deftly captures the profound uniqueness and simultaneous universality of the human voice.

–Gabriel Garcia

Iannis Xenakis

Charisma

Charisma, for clarinet and cello, is an homage to French composer Jean-Pierre Guézec, who died of a heart attack at age thirty-seven. *Charisma* was premiered at the Royan Festival on April 6, 1971.

–Yu-Ting Cheng

Missy Mazzoli

A Thousand Tongues

A Thousand Tongues (2011) was commissioned by cellist and vocalist Jody Redhage. The piece is a short, powerful setting of the following poem by American poet Stephen Crane (1871–1900):

Yes, I have a thousand tongues,
And nine and ninety-nine lie.
Though I strive to use the one,
It will make no melody at my will,
But is dead in my mouth.

In this version for violin, piano, and electronics, the text is featured in a recorded voice part embedded in the electronics, but there is also a version with live voice, as well as versions in which the violin is replaced by viola or cello. Some particularly striking components of the piece are how seamlessly the piano part often blends with the electronics, as if they were one instrument, and the constantly shifting timbres in the string part—the performer uses ponticello and overpressure to varying degrees throughout the composition, and this brings out high, shimmering overtones, or adds a grittier and more brutal edge to the sound.

–Madeline Hocking

Radia

Blood Orange

Created by Canadian artist Ryan Davis, better known by his moniker Radia, *Blood Orange* references the brilliant color that is simultaneously bright and dark. Radia's music is inspired from classical, folk, and hip hop and pushes the viola into a contemporary spotlight. Juxtaposing the acoustic instrument with live electronics, the player must be interacting constantly with past and future versions of themselves while on stage. I transcribed and adapted today's version of *Blood Orange* for this performance.

–Teagan Faran

Einojuhani Rautavaara

Etydit (Études), Op. 42, no. 1

Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara composed the six etudes of Op. 42 in 1969. Each etude is a unique exploration of dissonance and resonance in the piano, with a single interval as their vehicle. The first etude is neo-romantic in style and is aptly titled *Terssit*, with the interval of the third as the fundamental building block of the entire piece.

–Nicole Brancato

Arvo Pärt

Spiegel im Spiegel

Translated as “mirror(s) in the mirror,” *Spiegel im Spiegel* was written by Arvo Pärt in 1978 in Estonia. The tintinnabular style of the composition focuses on simplicity and the harmonious coexistence of two diatonic voices. Pärt says the following of this style:

Tintinnabulation is an area I sometimes wander into when I am searching for answers—in my life, my music, my work. In my dark hours, I have the certain feeling that everything outside this one thing has no meaning. The complex and many-faceted only confuses me, and I must search for unity. What is it, this one thing, and how do I find my way to it? Traces of this perfect thing appear in many guises—and everything that is unimportant falls away. Tintinnabulation is like this. . . . The three notes of a triad are like bells. And that is why I call it tintinnabulation.

–Steph Dressler

José Martinez

Pablo

Born in the villas of Argentina, tango grew up with a violin in its hand. The genre demands not only melodic playing from the instrument, but a bass role and percussive responsibilities as well. This particular arrangement, by Leonardo Suarez Paz for himself and his father, celebrates those duties between two competing virtuosos. Tango's roots in the milonga dance form can be heard in the driving syncopations and chromatic connections of each phrase. This arrangement and others are critical to the preservation of the music, as the original composer, José Martinez, could neither read nor write music notation. As a result, his themes have a smooth, conversational flow that guides the listener through his energetic themes. Composed during tango's early forays on to the concert stage; inspired by Golden Age violinists; and arranged for the contemporary player, *Pablo* is a tango joy that connects the ages.

–Teagan Faran

ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

The Contemporary Performance Program (CPP) is a two-year graduate degree program at the Manhattan School of Music. The students of CPP form the core of Tactus, MSM's premier contemporary ensemble. As members of Tactus, CPP students perform works of the 20th and 21st centuries, work closely with living composers, and present works by MSM faculty and students.

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Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its 985 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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Land Acknowledgment

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