

MSM PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Kyle Ritenauer (BM '11, MM '15), Director

Sunday, November 21, 2021 | 7:30 PM
Neidorff-Karpati Hall

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PROGRAM

JOHN CAGE and LOU HARRISON
(1912–1992) / (1917–2003) *Double Music*
**Christian Santos, Evan Silberstein,
Liam McDonald, and Hwanee Pak, percussion**

NICOLAS FARMER
(b. 1998) *Places I'm Not Supposed To Be* (World Premiere)
**Liam McDonald, Hwanee Pak, Will Chinn,
Evan Silberstein, Jerry Grace, Dániel Matei,
and Christian Santos, percussion**
Nacho Ojeda, celeste
Kyle Ritenauer, Conductor

FRANCO DONATONI
(1927–2000) *Darkness*
**Gabe Costache, Tarun Bellur, Will Richards,
Will Chinn, Dániel Matei,
and Christian Santos, percussion**
Kyle Ritenauer, Conductor

Intermission

ANDY AKIHO
(b. 1979) *Pillar IV*
**Tarun Bellur, Leo Simon, Will Richards
and Zach Masri, percussion**

CHARLES WUORINEN
(1938–2020) *Ringing Changes*
Gabe Costache and Will Richards, vibraphone
Leo Simon, Tarun Bellur, drums
Zach Masri, almglocken
Will Chinn, anvils
Jerry Grace, cymbals
Liam McDonald, tam-tams
Jon Collazo, string drum/chimes
Hwanee Pak, timpani
Nacho Ojeda and Daniel Hart, piano
Kyle Ritenauer, Conductor

Students in this performance are supported by the *Paul Price Percussion Endowed Scholarship*, the *Sabian/Robert Zildjian Memorial Scholarship*, the *Rahm/Berkman Scholarship*, the *Viola B. Marcus Memorial Scholarship*, the *Jim Petercsak Annual Scholarship*, and the *Avedis Zildjian Percussion 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@msmny.edu.

PROGRAM NOTES

John Cage and Lou Harrison

Double Music

This work was composed in collaboration with Lou Harrison, each composer working independently from the other: Cage composed parts 1 and 3 (soprano and tenor), Harrison parts 2 and 4 (alto and bass). Dynamics are scarcely indicated, but the instrumentation is specific (although substitutions are allowed). Both composers basically agreed to compose 200 measures each. Cage's parts have a rhythmic structure of 14 x 14 measures (plus a coda of 4 measures), using the number series 4, 3, 2, 5. The instruments employed are bells, brake drums, sistra, gongs, tam-tams, and thunder sheet. Lacking dynamic progression, *Double Music* is just a continuous, festive whole.

Nicolas Farmer

Places I'm Not Supposed To Be

Places I'm Not Supposed To Be pays homage to the late-night speleological experiences my friends and I shared in the arts building at my undergraduate school, wandering around forbidden spaces when nobody was around to object. My title represents the extent of the acknowledgment I care to make of the risks of our pastime, from expulsion to asbestos exposure.

Percussion instruments can fluently depict humming machines; hot, stuffy air in a cramped crawlspace; mysterious doors; deep open pits; and other delights that lurk in the basement of a university building. I did my best to produce aural recreations of certain places, with the help of some unusual sounds like circuit breakers, but I also wanted to explore the emotional connotations and personal memories that the crevices of the building conjure in me.

I have arranged these five vignettes in a journey from the top of the building to the infernal bottom. "Roof" depicts overlooking the campus from up high with my friends and the night sky meeting an opaque, glowing skylight. We move down a level into the "Attic with Belfry," where the musty, muffled atmosphere of an ancient academic building's upper space contrasts with the loud bell tower perched on top chiming noon. The sense of confinement and fleeting noises of electro-pneumatic organ action appear in "Inside

the Organ," but we quickly move much lower into the noisy, steaming "Mechanical Room" full of clacking relays, electrical humming, and stray jets of steam. The excitement wanes as we reach the journey's end in the "Steam Tunnel," hot like the devil, with harrowing noises and carcinogens everywhere.

Franco Donatoni

Darkness

Darkness was written for six percussionists and was completed in Strasbourg on September 18, 1984 during Donatoni's late period of compositional output. *Darkness*, like many of his later works, is characterized by driven rhythms, quick-cut changes in texture, and compulsive development of constrained melodic material. In this case, the piece develops from purely metallic pitched instruments (vibraphone, crotales, glockenspiel), to wood instruments (marimba, woodblocks, xylophone), to pitched gongs and toms, and finally ends with all six percussionists on tam-tams.

Andy Akiho

Pillar IV

Pillar IV is a movement from Andy Akiho's most recent composition *Seven Pillars*, which was commissioned by Sandbox Percussion. Andy is a member of the first graduating class of Manhattan School of Music's Contemporary Performance Program and is now one of the most in demand composers in the music world.

Charles Wuorinen

Ringling Changes

Wuorinen writes, "*Ringling Changes* was composed in 1969 and '70 for the excellent ensemble of student percussionists founded and directed by Raymond DesRoches. The work is in a single long movement, and is based on a continuous polyphonic skeleton which lies beneath the sonic surface of the work, and which generates the moment-to-moment continuity. Here the music is divided between pitched and non-pitched voices, and a basic four-voice polyphony is disposed with two voices given to the pitched instruments—mainly piano four-hands and vibraphones—and two ("noise" or relative pitch) given with various alternations and duplications to sets of

12 metal instruments, 12 drums, 6 cymbals, and 4 tam-tams. An occasional inflectional role is performed by a string drum, and at the end chimes and timpani appear.

Ringling Changes is in F-natural, and though the surface of the work is not so complex . . . the underlying polyphony is more so. Particularly, F-natural as the first element in the work's twelve-tone set, and the intervals of that set arc translated into time-lengths on scales ranging from the local to the overall, exert constant controlling influence. You hear F-natural at the beginning and at the end, in the traditional role of starting point and goal of return. You feel the work on the other hand to be circular because of this circumstance, on the other progressive, because of its twelve-tone ambience. But you cannot hear what is most important—that every level of the work represents my response to the shape suggested by the interval-succession of the set. In my language this is called “responding to nothing with something.” “Nothing,” because the intervals are, after all, “empty space”; “something,” because they are defined by musical objects—notes and noises—and though these latter are the acoustical realia of music, it is the nothingness between them that gives them meaning.”

Finally, from another of Wuorinen's program notes, “The foregoing, however, is meant only to provide an initial entry into the work. . . the listener, in his response to the music, must ultimately assume active responsibility for what it means to them. Once a work has left its maker, it follows its own life.”

ABOUT THE MSM PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

The Manhattan School of Music Percussion Ensemble was founded in 1957 by Paul Price. The ensemble is designed to help bridge the gap between school and professional life, with special emphasis on achieving advanced playing abilities, a high level of concentration, and artistic satisfaction. The group performs classic works of the percussion ensemble literature and also has a deep commitment to scores written solely for the ensemble. The MSM Percussion Ensemble is known for its careful attention to detail surrounding the performance of percussion literature of the time. The ensemble holds a critical place in the wide-ranging ideology of the Percussion Department. Percussion students are required to play in the ensemble each semester.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

New York City-based conductor Kyle Ritenauer is quickly becoming a rising presence in the classical music world. In his first official year on staff at the Manhattan School of Music, Kyle regularly conducts the school's premiere chamber ensemble Camerata Nova, leads the school's Winds, Brass, Percussion Orchestra Training Program, regularly leads orchestra rehearsals, and serves as the 5th Director of the MSM Percussion Ensemble in its 62 years of existence. Regularly engaged by The Juilliard School, Kyle has led performances and prepared orchestras for David Robertson, John Adams, Marin Alsop, and Jeffrey Milarsky. This Spring, Kyle will serve as Associate Conductor of the Des Moines Metro Opera's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Mr. Ritenauer has appeared as a guest conductor with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Symphony New Hampshire, the Norwalk Symphony, Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect, the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra, and Camerata Notturna. He has also worked with many orchestras in the role of assistant conductor, including the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and the Juilliard Orchestra. In the spring of 2019, while serving as the Juilliard Ballet Orchestra's Assistant Conductor, Mr. Ritenauer stepped in on a moment's notice to lead a performance in a production of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*.

As a passionate advocate for the advancement of new music, Kyle has premiered over 75 works, including Richard Danielpour's ballet Cassandra's Curse and Jon Batiste's American Symphony, and is the founder of the Uptown Philharmonic.

Kyle Ritenauer is a recent graduate of the Juilliard School's Bruno Walter Conducting Program under the tutelage of Maestro David Robertson where he was a proud recipient of the Charles Schiff Conducting Prize. Formerly, he was the first-ever graduate of Manhattan School of Music to be awarded a degree in Contemporary Conducting, studying with Jeffrey Milarsky. He owes much of his development as a musician to the Pierre Monteux School for Conductors, where he studied for nine summers and served in a leadership role for seven seasons. Mr. Ritenauer has also attended the Aspen Conducting Academy as a fellow. Kyle has studied extensively with Robert Spano, Kurt Masur, Leonard Slatkin, Tito Muñoz, and Michael Jinbo.

ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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.

Your gift helps a young artist reach for the stars!

To enable Manhattan School of Music to continue educating and inspiring generations of talented students and audiences alike, please consider making a charitable contribution today.

Contact the Advancement Office at 917-493-4434 or visit msmnyc.edu/support

Land Acknowledgment

We want to acknowledge that we gather as Manhattan School of Music on the traditional land of the Lenape and Wappinger past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well.