

M Manhattan
School of Music

MSM PHILHARMONIA
Thesis Compositions
by MSM Composers

Michael Adelson, Conductor

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2023 | 7:30 PM
NEIDORFF-KARPATI HALL

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PROGRAM

Luis McDougal

Hedonistic Re(s)(v)olution (2023)

Zitian An

Aluminum (2022)

Jose Juan Marzal Fernandez, Conductor

Joohyun Parc

This Is an Orchestra Piece (2023)

Wesley Thompson

Piano Concerto No. 1, *The Severed Thread* (2023)
(Poem by Wesley Thompson)

I. Echo

II. Revelation

Elliot Roman, piano

Intermission

Joshua Núñez

♩ FIGURES ♩ RITUAL ♩ LOVE ♩ OBLIVION (2023)
I. *ORCHESTRA*

Pablo Marcelo Ramirez

I ACT! To Poli(s) a Ti(t)le (music about an orchestra) (2023)
I ACT! Pulir un azulejo (música sobre una orquesta) (2023)
Nicholas Bell, Conductor

Jose Eduardo Muñoz

Murales (2022–23)

TEXT

Wesley Thompson

Piano Concerto No. 1, *The Severed Thread*

The Severed Thread

Echo of distant chapel bells.

Premonition, omen; the voices warn.

Though blinded was he by noxious smog

Belched from deep within gritty reality.

Blood in the water, a corrupting ache.

Ignorance in solitude, a pariah standing

Silhouetted against monstrous fate.

Revelation from spreading malaise.

Cursed erudition, rage; the downtrodden rises.

His fist clenched against an uncaring world

Seeking to grind all aspirations to dust.

Sick gaze of the charmed, the leper recoils.

Darkened streets, nurturing womb for a terror

Urged on by the cloistered monophonic choir.

Respite in the incessant cacophony.

Brief clarity, conception; the sin takes shape.

Gripped by unbridled fury as he deceived

Himself into believing mercy awaited.

Euphoric rush, voices howl with hunger.

Bodies contort and drop, viscous crimson

Coating the ignored exacting vengeance.

Silence with renewed isolation.

Cold walls, captive; the deathly specter looms.

Uncaring world has passed judgement on him

Forcing the sin's weight onto gaunt shoulders.

Plague ascendant, the gallows erected.

Lament from the doomed, never the chance

To live a life blessed with choice.

Terminus at the end of the line.
Illusion, duality; both paths conjoined.
A spectral hand reaches him through the veil
Clenching a blessing in its pale fist.
Hidden option, a first and final taste.
The sweetness of freedom, severs the thread.

–Wesley Thompson

PROGRAM NOTES

Luis McDougal

Hedonistic Re(s)(v)olution

Hedonistic Re(s)(v)olution is the result of many ideas that run through my head about the state of the world, the environment, the structures of society, our collective and individual behavior along with our nature and whatever that entails. It is undeniable that we are in the beginning of a climate catastrophe of unimaginable consequences to life on earth. Humanity is completely or largely responsible for the outcome, and our complexity causes us to react in intricate ways. Confronting such a reality will understandably lead us to act in ways in which we cope with the threat to our survival. I imagine a buildup to a climax that stems from our hopelessly searching for comfort through immediate sensual and perhaps spiritual pleasures. These efforts, however outlandish and beautiful, are futile if we don't take the necessary measures to prioritize life and its sustainability over profit, self-preservation, and arrogance.

As long as there is life, there is the ability to change. Ideas can be influenced, and new ideas can form. In short, this piece is the result of my thinking about the end of the world and how we contend with our mortality as individuals and as a species.

Zitian An

Aluminum

Aluminum is soft and flexible and is the most abundant and most recyclable metal on earth. The piece delves into and transforms the atomic structure and the light spectrum of aluminum and reflects on the process of recycling: from waste to its new form, and its interaction with the lives on earth.

Wesley Thompson

Piano Concerto No. 1, The Severed Thread

This piece is planned to be a five-movement programmatic piano concerto, of which two movements are currently completed. It follows the narrative of the titular poem and portrays the dark and twisted journey of an unnamed individual, represented by the solo piano, as they march inexorably to their own destruction. The poem and piece are loosely modeled on Elizabeth Kubler Ross's five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, with each stanza/movement corresponding to a different stage.

Joshua Núñez

‡ FIGURES ‡ RITUAL ‡ LOVE ‡ OBLIVION

Ever since the day I heard Mahler's Fifth Symphony, movement 1, on the downbeat of the key change to B-flat minor, *Plötzlich schneller. Leidenschaftlich*. Wild., I knew that the only life that I could live was the life of a composer.

Pablo Marcelo Ramírez

1 ACT! To Poli(sh) a Ti(t)le

This work reflects many of my musical and nonmusical beliefs and ideas. The music revolves around my identity and represents a ritual of sustained tension, an action that pushes beyond the limits, and a new beginning. "Pulir un azulejo" ("To polish a tile")—making a mirror—is used in my title. I realized my exploration was gravitating around some of the ideas I encountered in Shunryu Suzuki's book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. This piece represents what composition and music are for me; it is about the nature of experiencing something for the first time. I don't really know how distant the orchestra in my mind is from the physical orchestra, however this piece is dedicated to that which is beyond; to my parents, family, and friends who have been the most important supporting figures in my life; to my teacher Reiko, who has been an exceptional source of knowledge, meaning, and purpose; to the incredible teachers, friends, and colleagues from whom I have learned so much; and to MSM (its personnel and staff), a place of which I feel incredibly proud and thankful to be part of.

This piece, about an orchestra that lives in my mind, is also my response to the corrupt, erratic, and cynical Colombian system of justice.

Jose Eduardo Muñoz

Murales

Like a chain with a triple helix, this piece continuously evolves in time with three main ideas—ideas inspired by different paintings by Jackson Pollock, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Leonardo Nierman.

Three "murals of sound" with very distinct identities, constantly pitted against each other, consumed by each other, and restored by each other. Finding a sense of unity in the middle of chaos.

MSM PHILHARMONIA

Michael Adelson, Conductor

VIOLIN 1

Amelia Bailey,
concertmaster
Round Hill, Virginia

Yihan Zhu
Shanghai, China

Yunjung Ko
Seoul, South Korea

Yoojin Lee
Guri, South Korea

Tara Pagano-Toub
New York, New York

May Yu
Alberta, Canada

Chrystelle Catalano
Padova, Italy

Liyan Zhou
Jingzhou, China

Gayeon Lee
Hannover, Germany

Hanlon Mcgarity
New York, New York

VIOLIN 2

Joo Eun Lee, principal
Towson, Maryland

Thu-An Duong
Norderstedt, Germany

Adryan Rojas
Delaware, Ohio

Marta Encarnacion
Castellon, Spain

Luxi Wang
Guangyuan, China

Vivian Kao
Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Cheng-Cian Li
Hsinchu City, Taiwan

Erin Han
Irvine, California

VIOLA

Oryann Tsaig,
principal
Kadima, Canada

Hannah Thill
Geneva, Illinois

Owne Xayboury
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Maria Paparoni
Brooklyn, New York

Yuchen Tu
Chongqing, China

CELLO

Jessamyn Fry,
principal
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Mei-Chi Wang
Taichung City, Taiwan

Audrey Jellett
Kerrville, Texas

Yu-Sheng Tu
Kaohsiung City, Taiwan

Paul Maxwell
Chagrin Falls, Ohio

Chan Hee Kim
Busan, South Korea

Weigen Jiang
Qingdao, China

Brandon Jo
Englewood Falls, New Jersey

DOUBLE BASS

Lauren Seery, principal
Bethpage, New York

Aiden Johnson
Dacula, Georgia

Royal Mitchell
New Orleans, Louisiana

Riley Schultz
Bayville, New York

FLUTE

Lorien Britt
Fate, Texas

Zofia Los Leznicka
Interlochen, Michigan

OBOE

Aaron
Haettenschwiller
Baltimore, Maryland

Rebecca Nelsen
Manorville, New York

CLARINET

Elina Georgiou
Limassol, Cyprus

Thomas Shermulis
Tinley Park, Illinois

BASSOON

Chaoyang Jing
Boston, Massachusetts

Michael Quigley
Ontario, Canada

HORN**Ben Hommowun***St. Charles, Illinois***Pei-Yu Lo***Changhua City, Taiwan***Keegan McCardell***Ellicott City, Maryland***Cameron Pollard***High Point, South Carolina***TRUMPET****Allison Jenkins***New York, New York***Steven Haxel***Dallas, Texas***Themba Pieterse***Albany, New York***TROMBONE****Leor Arbel***Katy, Texas***Harry Ning***Changsha, China***Benjamin****McLaughlin***West Milford, New Jersey***TUBA****Fumiya Miyata***Tsurumi, Japan***TIMPANI****Liam McDonald***Saford, New York***PERCUSSION****Hwaneek Pak***Columbia, Maryland***Owen Bloomfield***Clifton Grove, Australia***Josh Conklin***Basking Ridge, New Jersey***HARP****Isabel Cardenes***Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania***Esther Chung***New York, New York***KEYBOARD****Yuejiamin Ying***Jersey City, New Jersey***SAXOPHONE****Guy Dellecave***Lake Grove, New York***Jaehyuk Lee***Gyeonggi, South Korea***David Baker***Livermore, California***Zachary Kern***Cypress, California***GUITAR****Tiancheng Ping***Finan, China***Eduardo Munoz***Mexico City, Mexico***Luis McDougal***McAllen, Texas*

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

Luis McDougal

Luis McDougal (b. 1997) is a revolutionary, radical, obsessive musician in the form of composer, guitarist, and teacher. One of the hallmarks of his music is his exploration of extremes in art and the state of affairs in society. When things are less defined and less fixed in a hierarchical structure, they become emancipated to an extent. As an artist, Luis aims to challenge his audience along with himself to consider the possibility that music along with society doesn't have to be what we've always thought it to be. Life is in a state of perpetual evolution, and the responsibility of an artist is to communicate, engage with, and challenge various realities as perceived through human experience. Only then can we envision a different, better world.

Zitian An

Zitian An studied art and technology at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he was exposed to different types of media and worked on interdisciplinary art. Currently mentored by Reiko Fütting and Lewis Nielson, he is interested in exploring the possibilities of sensations, communication, and interpretation among our consciousness, subconscious, and nature. He had several exhibitions in Chicago, including the holography-sound installations "Kalinowe Dwory" and "Swirling Leaves," olfactory-sound installation "Voiles" and "Initial tracks," and collaborations with the Windscape wind quintet for an audiovisual project.

Joohyun Parc

Joohyun Parc is a composer based in New York City. Parc's work addresses coexistence, separation, and the cancellation of sound, space, and time. She is currently studying composition at Manhattan School of Music under Reiko Fütting and Lewis Nielson.

Wesley Thompson

Wesley Thompson is a composer and pianist from the coastal town of Fairhope, Alabama. Born into a home filled with music, he grew up listening to pianist George Winston. After beginning piano lessons, he quickly took to arranging his favorite songs from video game soundtracks for piano and improvising over these arrangements. This early experimentation initiated a love for improvisation that continues to color his musical style to the present day. In addition to George Winston and video game soundtracks, Thompson's work as both composer and pianist pays homage to Bach and Chopin, to heavy metal bands like Animals as Leaders and Opeth, and to jazz artists such as Snarky Puppy. One of his chief musical goals is to blur the boundaries between the categorical tools called "genres." Above all else, Thompson seeks to connect with his audience by producing music that is gripping, emotional, and listenable.

Thompson's compositions have been featured at the Brevard Summer Music Festival and have been performed by artists as diverse as the Beo String Quartet, Transient Canvas, and Aaron Petit. He is currently a second-year Master's student at Manhattan School of Music, where he studies with Dr. Reiko Fütting.

Joshua Núñez

Joshua Núñez is a Mexican-American composer, producer, audio-engineer, and multi-instrumentalist, mentored by David Dubose, Nickitas Demos, Robert Scott Thompson, Dave Frackenhohl, Reiko Fütting, and Lewis Nielson.

Pablo Marcelo Ramírez

Pablo Marcelo Ramírez, born in 1992 in Bogotá, Colombia, is a composer, classical guitarist, and sound engineer. He studied guitar and music production at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia. Marcelo has collaborated on and composed music for a variety of audiovisual projects and films. In 2020, he worked as a sound engineer for the Colombia National Symphony Orchestra. He has also participated as a composer in collaborations with various ensembles, including the New Chamber Ballet (U.S.A.), BCO (Colombia), and VASTO (Colombia), among others. Awarded the ICETEX "Jovenes Talento" scholarship for his international studies, he is currently pursuing his Master's degree in composition with Dr. Reiko Fütting. Additionally, he has studied with Dr. Lewis Nielson and Dr. Susan Botti and received private lessons from Nils Vigeland in the U.S. and Gustavo Parra in Colombia.

Jose Eduardo Muñoz

Born in 1993 in Puebla, Mexico, Jose Eduardo Muñoz is a composer and guitarist currently based in New York. He received his Bachelor's degree in composition from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and is pursuing his Master's degree in composition at MSM under the guidance of Dr. Reiko Fueting and Dr. Lewis Nielson. He has produced numerous works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles, and orchestra with the instruction of accomplished composers such as Dr. Gabriela Ortiz, Dr. José Juan Hernandez, Leonardo Coral, Dr. Francisco Cortez, Dr. Peter Ruzicka (Germany), Francesco Filidei (Italy), and Yann Robin (France). He has participated as a composer and performer as well in various master classes in Mexico, Salzburg (Universität Mozarteum), Vienna (Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien), and New York.

ABOUT THE CONDUCTORS

Michael Adelson

Conductor, composer, writer, and educator Michael Adelson made his first appearance with a major American orchestra in 1992, conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He has served on the conducting staff of the New York Philharmonic and has also conducted the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Philharmonia Orchestra in London, the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, the Helsinki Philharmonic, the Finnish and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestras, and many other ensembles in Europe and America. Equally at home in the opera house, Mr. Adelson has conducted Scandinavian productions of Puccini's *Turandot* and *La bobème*, Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor*, and at the Stockholm Folkopera, the world premiere production of Qu Xiao-Song's *Oedipus*.

Mr. Adelson is deeply committed to music of our time, having worked with composers such as Pierre Boulez, Bernard Rands, Harrison Birtwistle, Magnus Lindberg, and Donald Martino. In addition to having served as Principal Conductor of the Auros Group for New Music in Boston, he led world premieres at the Venice Biennale and the Ultima Contemporary Music Festival in Oslo, and has introduced new American works to Japan, England, Estonia, and the Nordic countries. Closer to home, he has been a frequent guest conductor for Speculum Musicae, the New York New Music Ensemble, the Locrian Chamber Players, the Cygnus Ensemble, Dinosaur Annex, and the Fromm Players at Harvard. His own works have been performed by the New York Philharmonic as well as by other ensembles and soloists worldwide.

Education plays an important part in Mr. Adelson's activities. He is a conductor-clinician for the New York Philharmonic, leads workshops in orchestral technique for young musicians, and teaches conducting worldwide. He has served on the faculties of the Mannes College of Music, the State University of New York at Purchase, and Connecticut College. A regular guest conductor at the Cleveland Institute of Music, he has also conducted at Harvard, Columbia, and Brandeis Universities. He served as Chief Conductor of the Ylioppilaskunnan Soittajat in Helsinki, conducted a workshop for composers at the Venice Biennale, taught chamber music at Helsinki University, and led opera, orchestral, and chamber music master classes at the Accademia di Musica in Sassari, Italy. Mr. Adelson has written and conducted young people's concerts with the New York, Helsinki, and

Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestras. He has also written and lectured widely on subjects as diverse as the links between mathematics and music, critical thinking, great historical cities as centers of culture, and 20th-century art history. He is currently writing a book for non-musicians on the art of conducting.

Nicholas Bell

Nicholas Bell, a conductor and trombonist from Kansas City, Missouri, is currently pursuing a Master's degree in orchestral conducting at Manhattan School of Music. Prior to attending MSM he held the positions of Artistic Director of Classical Revolution Kansas City and Associate Conductor of Symphony of Northwest Arkansas. Other prior positions include Conductor in Residence at the Taneycomo Festival Orchestra, Orchestra Director for Harmony Project KC, and Conductor at Black House New Music Collective.

Mr. Bell received his undergraduate degree in trombone performance from the University of Missouri Kansas City, with additional studies in orchestral conducting at the Peabody Conservatory. His primary conducting teachers are George Manahan and Marin Alsop.

Jose Juan Marzal Fernandez

Born in Puebla Mexico in 1996, Jose Juan Marzal Fernandez began his Artistic Diploma at Manhattan School of Music under the guidance of George Manahan in 2022, after graduating with honors in Choral Conducting from Kent Tritle's studio at MSM in 2021. In September 2022, Jose Juan became Assistant Conductor of both New Amsterdam Singers and Master Chorale in New York City.

After receiving an Artist Scholarship, Marzal did his Bachelor's degree in music in the Universidad de las Americas Puebla in Mexico, where he was part of the symphonic and chamber orchestras and the chamber choir. Jose Juan continued his conducting studies with Sergio Castro and Gisela Crespo, becoming the Assistant Conductor in 2018. In the same year, Jose Juan was selected to conduct in the final concert of the V Encuentro de Direccion Orquestal Udlap in Puebla, Mexico with the Philharmonic "5 de Mayo."

Jose Juan was the Artistic Conductor of the Saint Cecil Chamber Choir in Puebla from 2013 to 2018, becoming the youngest conductor in the 30 years of the ensemble.

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 1,000 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 Division is a highly competitive and professionally oriented Saturday music program, dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 5 to 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 giving.msmnyc.edu

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.

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