



CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

TACTUS

Erin Rogers and **Matt Ward** (BM '98),
Co-Artistic and Administrative Advisors

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 | 7:30 PM
ALAN M. AND JOAN TAUB ADES PERFORMANCE SPACE

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 | 7:30 PM
ALAN M. AND JOAN TAUB ADES PERFORMANCE SPACE

CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

TACTUS

Erin Rogers and **Matt Ward** (BM '98), Co-Artistic and Administrative Advisors

EVE BEGLARIAN
(b. 1958)

Early in the Morning (2010)

Piper Weldon, voice
Ethan Burke, B-flat clarinet
Ariana Varvaro, English horn
Lauren Galarraga, Trombone
Tiffany Leard, keyboard synthesizer
Grace Goss, percussion

GEORGE LEWIS
(b. 1952)

Arcades (2017)

Sarah Pedlar, flute
Mariana Clavijo Ledesma, bass clarinet
Amber Dai, French horn
Joe DeAngelo, violin
Leo Martinez, bass
Zheng Liu, piano
Mihail Babus, vibraphone

CLAUDE VIVIER
(1948–1983)

Pulau Dewata (1977)

Sarah Pedlar, flute
Ethan Burke and **Mariana Clavijo Ledesma**, clarinets
Ariana Varvaro, oboe
Lauren Galarraga, trombone
Amber Dai, French horn
Joe DeAngelo, violin
Leo Martinez, bass
Tiffany Leard and **Zheng Liu**, piano
Mihail Babus and **Grace Goss**, percussion

Intermission

WALTER THOMPSON
(b. 1952)

Soundpainting (2024)
(25'-30')

Todd Reynolds⁺, Soundpainter

Piper Weldon, voice

Jenna Hammelman*, Musical Theater

Sarah Pedlar, flute

Ethan Burke and Mariana Clavijo Ledesma, clarinet

Ariana Varvaro, oboe

Lawson Gardner*, saxophone

Caylie Davis*, trumpet

Lauren Galarraga, trombone

Ben Sherman*, trombone

Amber Dai, French horn

Joe DeAngelo, violin

Leo Martinez, bass

Tiffany Leard and Zheng Liu, piano

Mihail Babus and Grace Goss, percussion

* Guest Performer

+ CPP Faculty

PROGRAM NOTES

Early in the Morning

Eve Beglarian (b. 1958)

I remember having once walked all night with a caravan and then slept on the edge of the desert. A distracted man who had accompanied us on that journey raised a shout, ran towards the desert and took not a moment's rest. When it was daylight, I asked him what state of his that was. He replied: 'I saw bulbuls commencing to lament on the trees, the partridges on the mountains, the frogs in the water and the beasts in the desert so I bethought myself that it would not be becoming for me to sleep in carelessness while they all were praising God.'

*Yesterday at dawn a bird lamented,
Depriving me of sense, patience, strength and consciousness.
One of my intimate friends who
Had perhaps heard my distressed voice
Said: 'I could not believe that thou
Wouldst be so dazed by a bird's cry.'
I replied: 'It is not becoming to humanity
That I should be silent when birds chant praises.'*

—Sa'di: *Gulistan* II:26

Early in the Morning was inspired by a text in the *Gulistan* (*Rose Garden*) by the 13th century Persian poet and mystic Sa'di, which is said to be one of the most widely read books ever produced. Saadi was beloved by Emerson and Thoreau, and a quotation from his poetry adorns the entrance to the Hall of Nations in New York, but his work is currently virtually unknown in the United States.

While traveling down the Mississippi River in 2009, I was awakened in Iowa one night by an incredible din of frogs and insects. I recorded the racket, and its percussion creates the rhythmic material for the piece. About a year later, I happened upon a work chant from the Mississippi Delta called *Early in the Morning*, which was recorded in the 1947 by Alan Lomax for the Library of Congress. An adaptation of that work song became the basis for this piece.

—Eve Beglarian

*Well, it's early in the morn-
 in the morning, baby
 When I rise, Lordy mama
 Well, it's early every morning a-baby
 When I rise well-a well-a
 It's early in the morning, baby
 When I rise, Lordy baby
 You have-, it's I have misery, Berta,
 Wa, in my right side
 Well-a, in a my right side, Lordy baby-
 R-in-a my right side, Lordy, sugar.
 Well, it's I have a misery, Berta,
 R-in-a my right side, well-a.*

(Chorus)

*Well-a, it's-a, Lordy, Ro-Lordy-Berta,
 Well, it's Lord (you keep a-talkin'), babe,
 Well, it's Lord, Ro-Lordy-Rosie,
 Well, it's, o Lord, Gal, well-a. Well-a,
 whosenever told it, That he told a-
 he told a dirty lie, babe.
 Well-a, whosenever told it, that he told a-
 he told a dirty lie, well-a.
 Well-a, whosenever told it, that he told a-
 he told a dirty lie, babe.
 Well the eagle on the dollar-quarter,
 He gonna rise and fly, well-a.
 He gonna rise and fly, sugar.
 He gonna rise and fly, well-a.
 Well the eagle on the dollar-quarter,
 He gonna rise and fly, well-a.*

(Chorus)

*Well-rocks 'n gravel make -a
 Make a solid road
 Well-a takes a-rock n gravel make a
 To make a solid road, well-a
 It takes a good lookin woman to make-a
 To make a good lookin whore
 Well-a It takes a good lookin woman,
 Lord, Baby
 To make a good lookin whore, Lord sugar
 It takes a good lookin woman to make-a
 To make a good lookin whore, well-a*

(Chorus)

*Boys, the peckerwood a-peckin' on the-
 On the schoolhouse door, sugar.
 Well, the peckerwood a-peckin' on the-
 R-on the schoolhouse door, Well-a.
 Well, the peckerwood a-peckin' on the-
 On the schoolhouse door, sugar.
 Well he pecks so hard, Lordy, baby,
 Until his pecker got sore, well-a,
 Until his pecker got sore, Lordy, baby,
 Until his pecker got sore, Lord, sugar.
 Well he pecks so hard, Lord, mama,
 Until his pecker got sure, well-a.*

(Chorus)

*Well, hain't been to Georgia, boys,
 but, Well, it's I been told, sugar.
 Well, hain't been to Georgia, Georgia.
 But, it's I been told, well-a.
 Well, haint been to Georgia, Georgia.
 But, it's I been told, Lord, mama.*

—Work Song, Parchman Farm, 1947

Arcades

George Lewis (b. 1952)

Arcades is a flexible-instrumentation work that may be realized by any combination of instruments covering the appropriate pitch ranges. The title is a gloss on Walter Benjamin's unfinished "Arcades Project" (Passagenwerk), a cultural analysis of the Parisian covered pedestrian passages, the predecessor of the modern shopping mall.

A performance of *Arcades* is essentially a group improvisation in which the players deploy the written materials provided to construct a series of virtual arcades that overlap in unpredictable ways. The work may be performed by as few as four players, but really, the more, the merrier; I think the piece might well achieve critical mass with around sixteen performers, and I can even imagine a *Gottschalk*-like "monster concert" realization, with hundreds of players.

In English and French, musical phrases are routinely referred to as "passages," and indeed, as the musicians navigate through the written passages that make up the sonic arcades, the overall effect should be that of several different kinds of musical behaviors heard in juxtaposition, but with a certain common direction. The players feel their way through the piece from beginning to end, establishing and re-establishing consensus—an emergent sonic sociality, or perhaps a protean assemblage.

"There is no such thing as a common world," Bruno Latour has said. "The common world is to be composed." Rather, in the case of *Arcades*, and indeed in just about every case, that common world is actually improvised.

CoMA commission 2018.

—George Lewis

Pulau Dewata

Claude Vivier (1948–1983)

A stay in Bali in 1976, marked a turning point in Claude Vivier's career. Most of the subsequent works were to show the influence of the atmosphere of this Pacific island, whose inhabitants call it the "Island of the Gods," or "Pulau Dewata". This is the title given by Vivier to a work specially dedicated to the people of Bali. The composer describes it as follows: "This piece is a succession of nine melodies of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 sounds. These modes may be directly reminiscent of Bali, but what I wanted to write was a piece imbued with the spirit of Bali: its dances, its rhythms and, above all, an explosion of life, simple and candid. The ending is the traditional signature of many Balinese pieces, a loving homage to this marvelous people from whom I learned so much."

The score of *Pulau Dewata* is dedicated to the McGill Percussion Ensemble. It does not specify instrumentation, permitting any combination of instruments that suits the scoring.

—*Notes from Radio Canada International Anthology of Canadian Music CD Set.*

Soundpainting with Tactus

Walter Thompson (b. 1952)

The Art of Live Composition

Tonight's 35-minute Soundpainting performance showcases the universal multidisciplinary live composing sign language created by Walter Thompson in Woodstock, New York in 1974. Using over 1,800 hand and body gestures, the Soundpainter sculpts music in real time, creating compositions through both predictable and unpredictable responses from performers—what Thompson calls “composing with the known and unknown.”

Todd Reynolds discovered Soundpainting in 1991 at New York's legendary Knitting Factory, drawn by the promise of earning \$20 and learning something new and mysterious. After Walter Thompson taught him the basics during rehearsal, Reynolds performed his first date with the band that evening, playing violin. What captivated him was Soundpainting's holistic nature—its ability to circumvent improvisation fears while enabling musicians of different styles to create unified community music.

At Thompson's inaugural Think Tank held at Walter's family house in Woodstock during the late 1990s, Reynolds became the first person granted permission to use the language as a conductor and composer. This pivotal moment transformed Soundpainting from Thompson's personal tool into the freely shared global language practiced today across all continents.

Tonight, Tactus—combining students from classical, jazz, and musical theater backgrounds—embodies Soundpainting's inclusive philosophy. You'll witness composition happening live, demonstrating how gesture, creativity, and community converge to create something entirely new, unrepeatable, and utterly alive.

- *Todd Reynolds*

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.

Administration

Erin Rogers, Co-Artistic & Administrative Advisor

Matt Ward, Co-Artistic & Administrative Advisor

Faculty

Ashkan Behzadi,
contemporary history survey

Gregg August, bass

David Cossin, percussion

Anthony de Mare, piano

Monica Ellis, bassoon

Oren Fader, guitar

John Ferrari, percussion

Susan Jolles, harp

Margaret Kampmeier, piano

David Krakauer, clarinet

William Lang, trombone

Curtis Macomber, violin

Kevin Newton, horn

Tara Helen O'Connor, flute

John Pickford-Richards, viola

Todd Reynolds, electronics

Brandon Ridenour, trumpet

Erin Rogers, saxophone

Lucy Shelton, voice

Fred Sherry, cello

Keve Wilson, oboe

Tactus Ensemble

Piper Weldon
State College, Pennsylvania

Sarah Pedlar

Decorah, Iowa

Ethan Burke

Flagler Beach, Florida

Ariana Varvaro

Lake Worth, Florida

Mariana Clavijo Ledesma

Popayán, Colombia

Lauren Galarraga

Virginia Beach, Virginia

Amber Dai
Beijing, China

Joe DeAngelo
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Zheng Liu
Nanchang, China

Tiffany Leard
Las Vegas, Nevada

Mihail Babus
Munster, Indiana

Grace Goss
New York, New York