



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Student Composer Concert #4

Tuesday, March 19th, 2024, at 7:30 pm | Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park

PROGRAM

In F (2024)

Fish Yu, *horn and lights*

Fish Yu

Thank You and Good Night (2024)

James Lowrie, *guitar*

James Lowrie

Prelude 1: Copoeira (2023)

Alejandro De Leon Meija, *piano*

Daniel Wang Gomes

Sonata for Oboe and Piano (2023)

Zoe Yang, *oboe*, Kyle Meng, *piano*

Kyle Meng

tOy | bOx -- mut il at e d (2023)

Veronica Zupanic, *violin*, Hiran Moradi, *cello*, Joseph Park, *piano*

Hiran Moradi

Intermission

The Myth of Medea (2023)

Audrey Morris, *harp*

Emma Clark

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

The Lost Mistress (2023)

Jordan Abramson

Dasha Tereshchenko, *mezzo soprano*, Constantin Moeller, *flute*, Sarah Darragh, *clarinet*,
Christopher Fan, *horn*, Sachi Kanashiro, *violin*, Hayley Chan, *cello*,
Jordan Abramson, *conductor*

Butterflies (2018)

Duncan Hall

Kannan Bloor, *soprano saxophone* Charlotte Chau, *alto saxophone*, Chantelle Tom-Ying, *tenor saxophone*, Yungfei Xie, *baritone saxophone*, Josh Gibson, *narrator*

In this eye-black night (2023)

Chiara Urban

Aemilia Moser, *soprano*, Duncan Hall, *conductor*, Tina Jia, *flute*, Charlene Chin, *harp*, Mobin Naeini, *viola*, Maren Helyar, *cello*, Thomas Carli, *percussion*, Thomas Li, *percussion*

WALTER HALL

Peter Olsen, *sound technologist*

PROGRAM NOTES

James Lowrie, Thank You and Good Night

I'm interested in how many different sonic spaces can coexist in electroacoustic music. In this piece I have found sounds, online sounds, computer sounds, MIDI sounds, soda sounds, daily routine sounds, sounds recorded in and around the music faculty, granulation sounds derived from my guitar, sounds that came out of the Moog One when I attempted to figure out how it works, sounds-like-classical-guitar-repertoire-pastiche sounds, just intonation sounds, extended technique sounds, a sample from "Thank You" by Dido... This piece draws inspiration from night moods. I did most of the composing and sound arranging on late nights in our Electronic Music Studio. One note on the tuning - the 3rd string has been tuned to be the 7th partial of the 6th string. This slightly detuned minor 7th sound dominates this piece. Detuning the 6th string down a whole 5th also gives it a wobbly, mellow vibe I really like.

James Lowrie writes music at the intersection of pop, classical, and experimental music traditions. It sort of sounds like psychedelic/modernist easy-listening. Freesound, Current Resonance, The FAWN Chamber Creative, The Berrow Duo, and Soundstreams have all performed his works in concert. In 2020, his "Chainsmoking;Index" for Solo Piano premiered to "great acclaim" (James Lowrie) at ArrayMusic. Last year, he participated in the Bozzini Quartet's Composers Kitchen residency and had a very nice time. He runs a comedy/sound art thing called "Radio Haha" on the first Tuesday of every month at the Tranzac.

Fish Yu, In F (2024)

In F is an improvised piece composed for solo horn and real-time interactive lights. This music aims to experiment with different horn timbres, using special brass techniques.

Tsz Long (Fish) Yu, a Toronto-based composer originally from Hong Kong, Yu holds a Bachelor of Music in Composition & Electronic Music from The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Yu finished his Master of Music degree at the University of Toronto with a full scholarship under The Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme, specializing in Music Technology & Digital Media. Presently, he is undertaking his Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Toronto, majoring in Music Composition under the mentorship of Gary Kulesha and Christos Hatzis. Yu's compositions premiered and broadcasted globally, including notable platforms like Radio Television Hong Kong Radio 4, Washington State University Electroacoustic Mini Festival, Hong Kong Contemporary Music Festival and Lithuanian National Radio, etc. Collaborating with esteemed artists such as Wind Kamerata, Nova Ensemble, New Morse Codess Duo, Reiko Manabe, etc. Yu's works exhibit a rich tapestry of musical exploration. Notably, 'Please Don't Open' for Trombone and Electronics earned recognition at the 67th International Rostrum of Composers in 2021 and was Recommended in the Composers Under 30 category. Winning the Hong Kong Composers' Guild's Music New Generation 2020 and being commissioned for Music New Generation 2022, Yu's accolades extend to 'Torrent' for Flute and Electronics, which secured the third prize at The Young Composers Competition of Isidora Žebeljan International Festival 2021 and selected to the ICMC 2023. Yu's artistic breadth extends to collaborations with Toronto-based percussion group KÖNG Duo, presenting 'Frolic' for Mallet Station, Marimba, Electronics, Cantonese speech and Video, captivating audiences across North America.

Daniel Wong Gomes, Prelude 1: Copoeira (2023)

This piece is inspired by the Brazilian folk dance of Capoeira, a dance which doubles as a martial art form. Capoeira is a unique style of dance as it was used by slaves as a means to practice martial arts while also concealing their training behind the farce of a dance. Capoeira is

carefully designed to give unarmed fighters a chance against their armed masters by keeping low to the ground and remaining in constant motion. This ever present dynamic of oppressor vs the oppressed makes capoeira an embodiment of a struggle for freedom and a fight for survival. This piano prelude is about a fight for survival, and it is a combination of the classical idiom with capoeira music. The prelude takes inspiration from capoeira chants and the rhythmic interplay and syncopation of the berimbau. (a Brazilian adaptation of the musical bow found in Africa) The berimbau often seamlessly modulates from a swung duplet to a triplet and the piece expands this concept to the next level by using metric modulations to surprise the listener. This rhythmic foundation is melded with an idiom adjacent to Béla Bartók's folk inspired compositions and the virtuosic stylings of piano preludes.

Daniel Wang Gomes is a second-year undergraduate composition student, currently studying at the University of Toronto. Daniel was born in São Paulo, Brazil and moved to Canada in 2010. Though Daniel has been making music since 2017, he began his formal studies in 2022 with lessons from Eugene Astapov. Daniel now studies with Christos Hatzis at the Faculty of Music since his entry to the program in 2023. His eclectic compositions cover a range of styles, from contemporary art to jazz, pop, electronic and video game music.

Kyle Meng, Sonata for Oboe and Piano (2023)

"Sonata for Oboe and Piano" quotes John Pond Ordway's American tune "Dream of Home and Mother," which was later adapted with lyrics by the Chinese artist Shutong Li in 1915 and became widely beloved across all age groups in China throughout the 20th century, known as "Farewell." When composing this piece, I drew inspiration from Charles Ives' four violin sonatas. The style of this composition incorporates dissonance as its primary harmonic language, while aiming to ensure that the audience can still discern the exquisite melody.

Kyle Meng is a Toronto-based composer and pianist, born and raised in Chengdu, China. He is particularly influenced by neoclassical and Chinese folk music and has composed various types of works including chamber music, film soundtracks, art songs, and piano solos. In addition, he is skilled in music production and began arranging accompaniments for Chinese Christian hymns in 2018, composed film soundtracks for artists at Sheridan College in 2024. As a pianist, Kyle was introduced to the public performance of both contemporary and classical music in Canada. In May 2019, he performed Ligeti's "Musica ricercata" twice at Canadian Music Centre and Heron Baptist Church in regard to the "Prehistoric Ligeti Concert," an event planned and hosted by Classical Context. Currently, Kyle is in his third year of comprehensive study and composition minor program in the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto, studying composition with Yuhan Zhou.

Hirad Moradi, tOy | bOx -- mut il at e d (2023)

'tOy | bOx -- mut il at e d' aims to depict a deep loss of innocence and childhood. The "toy box", as represented by fragmented and sporadic worlds of sound in the opening depicts the scattered imagination of a child as they pull out various toys. These worlds carry contrasting sentiments of excitement, playfulness, nostalgia, or even longing. Over the length of piece, ideas and attached feelings begin to get forgotten, as time melts away. Once reaching a point of mutilation, the toy box is brutalized and broken beyond recognition. Soft prayers are recited out in the distance while the out-of-time ticks of a broken clock continue on.

Hirad Moradi is an Iranian-Canadian composer, conductor, and multi-instrumentalist. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in composition at the University of Toronto, under the tutelage of Norbert Palej. Hirad recently participated as a composer fellow at the Atlantic Music Festival where he also performed as a percussionist with legendary violinist Midori Gotō and the

AMF Orchestra. Recently, he premiered his original orchestra piece 'Kosmos' with the AMF Orchestra, and his 'Piano Trio No. 1', with the AMF Contemporary Ensemble in August 2023. Hiram's musical background takes inspiration from genres he's surrounded himself with throughout his life, such as classical, modern jazz, metal, folk, blues, rock, and electronic. Hiram's original music aims to bridge the worlds of Middle Eastern and modern Western classical music in a way that questions the properties of music itself, through the explorations of time, acoustics, and electronics. He has also worked as a multimedia composer for several films, namely, Transfusion which was recently nominated at the Saskatchewan Independent Film Awards. Currently, Hiram is the executive director and conductor of the Toronto-based new music chamber orchestra - Blank Canvas. In addition to this ambitious project, Hiram continues to perform as an active pianist for the University of Toronto's Contemporary Music Ensemble.

Emma Clark, The Myth of Medea (2023)

The Myth of Medea depicts the Greek tragedy of Medea. It opens cautiously with the titular enchantress aiding Argonaut leader Jason to obtain the healing Golden Fleece that he desires - we hear the cautious playfulness in the quickly-moving compound texture that ensues as the pair are forced to flee Colchis. Medea and Jason are soon married, characterized in the harp with fast, sweeping triplets. After stealing the fleece, Medea cannot return home to her family, and begins a new life in the foreign land of Corinth - the melody in harmonics and the sustained left hand texture depict the awe and the fear of the start of her new life. The story turns to tragedy when Jason abandons Medea and their two children, casting her off to marry another woman. Suddenly, the piece grows fast and dissonant - blocked polychords dissolve into frenzied rolled chords. Her rage spirals into the dissonant climactic section of flurrying arpeggios - in a blind rage, Medea turns to revenge in murdering her own children and Jason's new wife. There is a pensive pause in the music before a return to the opening, but with a new seriousness. Medea is left with the gravity of her actions, and Jason is left alone, both scorned by rage and betrayal. The piece ends quietly and solemnly, without resolution.

Emma Clark was born and raised in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and currently studies Composition at the University of Toronto under the tutelage of Larysa Kuzmenko. Her music explores the intersection of many styles, across post-tonal music and modernism, jazz, folk, and impressionism. Her music has been performed in the SNATS Canadian Art Song Showcase, as well as in Student Composer Concerts at the University of Toronto. She has also composed music for plays at the Hart House Theatre Festival and Floyd Theatre Festival. Emma uses her work as a composer to explore the relationship between music and storytelling, using polystylism as a tool to invoke themes from her life, particularly relating to the Ukrainian-Canadian diaspora, as well as her prairie heritage. In addition to composing, Emma plays collaborative piano for musical theatre in Toronto, and enjoys arranging popular music for the award-winning competitive acapella group Surround Sound.

Ethan Larose, The Lives of Goblins (2023)

This piece is a picture book into the fantastical lives of a community of goblins. The first movement (parting words) expresses an elder goblin, giving off his life advice and wisdom onto his children. The second movement is titled the hunt, and orchestrates a wild hunting session that the goblins must perform for food. I wrote it to be high paced and exciting. Finally the third movement of this piece shows off the sweet, yet pathetic love confession of a male goblin to a female goblin, who, unfortunately, shows no interest whatsoever in the advances of the little goblin. Please sit back, relax, and enjoy Lives of the Goblins.

Ethan Larose makes music for people who like to listen. He is a multi-talented composer and sound designer from Nova Scotia. His website is ethanlarose.com. Ever since childhood he has

loved music. Combining his passion for video games and film with music, Ethan strives to be an inspired composer that makes music which touches the heart, breaks the mold, and leaves an impression. Graduating from high school with a 100 in Music and an entrance scholarship in hand, Ethan began his Undergraduate degree at University of Toronto studying with composers such as Paul Lessard, Eliot Britton and Christos Hatzis. Always popping up in game jams and collaborating with animators, Ethan likes to work collaboratively in many artistic endeavors. Also, a passionate fan of Japanese culture, Ethan speaks Japanese and has lived in Tokyo for 3 months. Ethan has two pieces planned to premiere at the Tokyo University culture festival in May of 2024.

Jordan Abramson, *The Lost Mistress* (2023)

“The Lost Mistress” is set to a poem of the same name by Robert Browning, but despite the title of the text, the narrator’s perspective is somewhat ambiguous. I therefore decided to compose a work from the perspective of the titular mistress, a woman who’s affair has recently ended, and who is enormously conflicted by her feelings of the relationship and its end. The text jumps in mood from moment to moment, reflected in the more episodic first half of the piece which intersperses brief musical moments with sudden reflective silences. A central theme of the text is the narrator’s cognitive dissonance, on the one hand very much still in love and in denial that the relationship has ended, and on the other, coming to terms with the harsh reality. This inner dialogue is depicted musically by the singer in conflict with the rest of the ensemble. The instruments, in fact, often act as the singer’s own conscience, the voice in the back of her head calling her back to reality in her moments of denial. The piece opens with a declamatory dotted rhythm motif, almost reminiscent of a funeral march, paired with the text, “it’s over, then”. As the piece progresses through moments of harsh dissonances to others of lush romantic melodies, the “it’s over” motif, played in the ensemble, always lurks in the background, constantly attempting to call the singer back to reality.

Jordan is a Toronto based composer who is in his fourth year of a Bachelor of Music program at the University of Toronto with a major in composition. He currently studies composition with Gary Kulesha and has previously studied with other renowned composers, Kevin Lau and Larysa Kuzmenko. In the summer of 2022, Jordan was accepted into the EAMA summer music institute in Paris for the submission of his String Quartet no. 1: “To Fly Through Dark Clouds,” and more recently, was accepted into the Vienna Summer Music Festival where he studied composition this last July. He has had several world premieres including his composition, “Rondo for Chamber Orchestra: ‘Russian,” at the Schola Cantorum in Paris, and his, “Sonata for Cello and Piano,” by the PHACE ensemble at the Palais Ehrbar in Vienna. He has also worked with the internationally renowned soloist Irvin Arditti who premiered his “Ideé Fixe” for solo violin at the Sal Brahms in Vienna. Jordan has been awarded the Ben McPeck Scholarship, the France-Canada Cultural Exchange Experience France Award, the Glenn Gould Memorial Scholarship, and he is a two time recipient of the Arthur Plettner Scholarship.

Duncan Hall, *Butterflies* (2018)

Program notes are almost always written by the composer to give further insight into the nature, story, or history of the piece. The Composer of this piece has specifically asked that no program notes be included because it would conflict with the composer's intent. The Composer would like to further elaborate that extensive preparation has been put into this piece and that all decisions were completely intentional - no element of this composition has been left up to chance. Enjoy!

Under the tutelage of Roger Bergs and in his final year of undergraduate studies: Duncan Hall is a Canadian composer of classical music, media, and works for a variety of ensembles. His craft

has been described as intense, conceptual, engaging, and cerebral. Duncan's inspirations draw from his experiences with the marching arts, his passion for the sciences, and his eclectic taste in music. Compositions of his have a distinctly fusal flavour. Combining his love of jazz, classical, funk, and film among many other genres he creates something that is identifiably his. He has worked on over 10 animated short films in partnership with Sheridan College, plus a number of professional endeavours that grew from there. Duncan is currently expanding into the world of Video Games, attending game jams and writing music for games such as Reminiscence. He has made bespoke pieces for performances at Mount Allison University, the SNATS Art Song Showcase, Cara Nicol's Harp Recital, the St. Micheal's College Troubadours, and the University of Toronto Guitar Ensemble. In their 2023 season, Duncan won the Toronto Chamber Symphony call for scores. Currently, Duncan Hall is most proud of his recent selection to be a Visual Technician at the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps from Rosemont, IL. You can learn more about Duncan, get in contact, or even become part of the next project at www.duncanhall.ca

Chiara Urban, In this eye-black night (2023)

Recently, I've been drawn to composing a narrative set in oceanic scenery. Inspired by revisiting Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Mermaid," I collaborated with Jessica Spurrell who developed the beautiful text became the foundation of our composition. Throughout the piece I wanted to portray a dynamic relationship between the vocal line, narrating the story's progression, and the ensemble, representing the ocean's ever-changing intensity. In the opening section, the music flows gently, echoing the tranquility of the sea, while maintaining a balance between the influential vocal line and the responsive ensemble. However, as the narrative unfolds, the ocean's role intensifies, and eventually overshadowing and dominating the vocal line. Mirroring Andersen's tale, the music reaches its climax as the little mermaid transforms into seafoam, her physical essence dissolving into the vast expanse of the ocean as the tides wash over her, accompanied by the fading melody.

Chiara Urban is a singer and composer from Toronto. When it comes to the latter, she cultivated her path through collaborations with ensembles such as the Concreamus Chamber Singers, Elmer Iseler Singers, and U of T's Opera Division, culminating in multiple performances of her work. Under the tutelage of Dr. Abigail Richardson-Schulte, she is currently finishing her Bachelor of Music in composition. On the stage, Chiara is a student of Dr. Darryl Edwards. Her ventures include performances as Papagena in a 2023 production from Opera by Request, a performer with Concreamus Chamber Singers during their collaboration with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra for the FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE Orchestra World Tour 2022, and as a singer in the National Ballet of Canada's The Nutcracker. Beyond classical borders, Chiara is actively performing with her self-titled pop-rock band, the Chiara Urban Band. Her pop music, garnering a dedicated following, has led her to headline legendary Toronto venues such as the Horseshoe Tavern, Lula Lounge, and Sneaky Dee's.