



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Student Composers' Concert

Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 7:30 pm | Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park

PROGRAM

Perspectives Balance

Duncan Hall

Mvmt I: "Ascension 625"

Spiral Staircases In Dreams

Stephen Morris

Silent

Parisa Sabet

Proto-Sequence

Luke Blackmore

PERFORMERS:

Elyssa Arde: Vibraphone

Kelsey Choi: Vibraphone

Christian Le: Guitar

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.

PROGRAM NOTES

Duncan Hall: *Perspectives Balance*, Mvmt I: "Ascension 625"

A grid of 5x5 chords creates a list of 25 potential two-chord harmonic progressions. A human input of relative tension/release values is assigned to each progression - these are the tension/release weightings. Superimpose that list against itself in a 25x25 grid, each cell delivers a two voice, two chord harmonic progression with each weighting combining to create 625 individually weighted progressions - a few of which were hand selected and placed in juxtaposition. An interwoven fabric is created - but of whose world is it: man or machine?

Stephen Morris: *Spiral Staircases In Dreams*

Spiral Staircases In Dreams is a musical expression of walking down a spiral staircase in an ethereal dream world, where other fields of thought can interject and the path can twist and turn in unexpected ways. The long-term plan of the piece descends in register and gradually changes timbre to portray the descent down the stairs into the unknown. The piece was written for Salvatore Contrino and dedicated to Qi Fei. It received an honorable mention in the ECHI Tocammi International Competition (Italy).

Parisa Sabet: *Silent*

Silent is a multimedia project commissioned by the Charsu Quartet for clarinet, cello, voice, piano, audio playback, dance, and visuals. Initially inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, the project centers on the poem Wind-Up Doll by female Iranian poet Forugh Farrokhzad (1934-1967), a controversial modernist and iconoclast.

While the world premier of the project is planned for 2023, it felt right to share its audio component with the University of Toronto's composition community as the poem resonates with the recent protests in Iran in several different layers.

Recorded at UTEMS by Teiya Kasahara and Jonathan Russel Macarthur, narration; Anoush Tabai, clarinet; Asal Iranmehr, piano; Dobrochna Zubek, cello.

Luke Blackmore: *Proto-Sequence I*

Proto-Sequence I is the prototypical version of a larger work for drum set and electronics. In this piece, I manipulate recorded samples as if they were a MIDI instrument through the use of step-sequencers. Recorded audio is spliced, reversed, inverted, and otherwise manipulated electronically. The result is a drum part which glitches and trips over itself, playing impossibly complex rhythmic minutia, which in the final version will be approximated on the live drum set. I wanted this prototype version to exist, however, because I think these technological imperfections add a quirk and character to the electronics part, which can't be replicated in live playing.

BIOGRAPHIES

Duncan Hall is a Canadian composer of concert music, film music, and works for a variety of ensembles. Originally from Calgary and now operating out of Toronto, Duncan's background is heavily influenced by the marching arts and wind ensemble repertoire. He has played in ensembles such as the Calgary Stampede Showband, the Alberta Honour Band, the Blue Knights Drum and Bugle Corps, and the Toronto Chamber Symphony to name a few. At his former institution, he has had tailor-made works premiered by the Mount Allison University Flute Studio. Duncan also found joy through participating in numerous community operations – from the Garnet & Gold musical theatre pit ensemble to programming and co-hosting a student-created radio show, "Off the Cuff." Presently, at the University of Toronto, Duncan Hall seeks out connections through his peers and courses to develop and foster professional engagements. He has collaborated with a large number of Sheridan College animators, providing scores for their animated capstone projects (which are screened for a variety of scouts from major industry players in film and animation). He has participated in the Indie Film Music Competition 3 times since its inception during the 2020 pandemic lockdowns. Most recently, Duncan Hall is proud to be selected as one of two finalists for the Toronto Chamber Symphony Call for Scores; his original piece will be premiered in March of 2023. Outside of the academic setting, Duncan spends most of his time preparing and rehearsing for Drum Corps International, the major league of the marching arts. He has spent two years of tenure with the Blue Knights DBC, coveting a leadership position in the latter. The 2023 summer season will be his last. Today, his inspirations draw from his experiences with the marching arts, his passion for the sciences, and his very eclectic taste in music. Compositions of his have a distinctly fusal flavor; combining his love of jazz, funk, classical, film, and other genres, he creates something that is identifiably his.

To learn more, get in contact, or commission a work, please feel free to visit www.DuncanHall.ca

Stephen Morris

Stephen Morris is a composer based in Toronto, whose music strives to create musical experiences which separate the listener's connection to the world through the expression of atmospheric and trance-inducing works. His music has been published in the SCI Journal of Music Scores and included in concerts, conferences, short films, theatre productions, and installations around the world. Stephen's music has been programmed in places such as Arizona State University, Carnegie Hall, Chateau De Fontainebleau, Trojhalí Karolina, New York University, and the University of North Carolina Greensboro. He has collaborated with ensembles and artists like the Prague Philharmonia, Imani Winds, Moscow Contemporary Ensemble, Hanzhi Wang, and the Lincoln Centre Theatre Directors Lab.

Stephen has participated in various music festivals as a composer such as Ostrava Days (Czech Republic), Écoles d'art américaines de Fontainebleau (France), reMusik (Russia), Imani Winds Chamber Festival (USA), Charlotte New Music Festival (USA), Music At The Close (USA), and SCI Regional Conference (USA).

Stephen is a graduate of Mannes School of Music where he earned his Master of Music in composition diploma. In his year of graduation, his work Nocturnal was performed by MACE , a school chamber orchestra under the direction of Lowell Liebermann. Stephen was also a part of the Glassbox Collective at Mannes, which consisted of fellow composers and performers. Stephen's string quartet After the Light was included in the Carnegie Hall Concert Music At The Close, which included members of the Glassbox Collective.

Stephen is currently a DMA candidate at the University of Toronto, studying with Gary Kulesha. He has recently served as the composer in residence for the percussion ensemble, which premiered his work Subterranean Dreams. Stephen is the recipient of the Fondation DRG award through the University for his performances abroad in France.

Stephen has previously studied with Reiko Fütting, and Huang Ruo. He has taken lessons and master classes with Tristan Murail, George Lewis, Christian Wolff, Bernhard Lang, Bright Sheng, Vladimir Tarnopolsky, Deqing Wen, Kotoka Suzuki, and Ana Sokolović.

Parisa Sabet

Award-winning composer Parisa Sabet writes music that is commissioned and performed internationally. Her distinctive musical language springs from her Iranian roots, Western education, and passion for socially engaged arts. Interweaving sounds both recognizable and new, her compositions evoke emotions, conjure images, and relate stories, often about pressing social issues. A Cup of Sin, for instance, scored for soprano and electric guitar quartet, examines violence against women. The Seville Orange Tree, for flute and piano, depicts a sacred site in Shiraz, Iran where a treasured tree would scent the breeze. In her video project, Blue Girl, she contributed as both a composer and sound artist. Blue Girl is a homage to women who self-immolate as a form of protest against domestic violence and forced marriage. Presented at the 2020 virtual Nuit Blanche festival, it was recognized by Now Toronto magazine as a "Stellar Highlight" of the year. Blue Girl was presented again at the 2022 Nuit Blanche as a three-channel video installation at Mel Lastman Square, Toronto.

Sabet earned the Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degrees in composition from the University of Toronto, where her honors included the Mirkopoulos and Miller/Khoshkish fellowships and the Tecumesh Sherman Rogers Graduating Award given to a musician on the cusp of making important contributions to the field. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Music Technology and Digital Media at University of Toronto.

Her debut album, A Cup of Sins, was released on August 26, 2022. For more information visit: ParisaSabet.com

Luke Blackmore

Luke Blackmore is a Canadian composer and saxophonist. Born in St. John's, Luke studied at Memorial University before moving to Toronto to study at the University of Toronto, where he currently resides.

His current artistic practice centers around works that explore acoustic and electronic spaces, and he is interested in exploring the connections and divisions between these two sonic environments. He is invested in creating music that is exciting for listeners and performers alike, synthesizing influence from a broad palette of musical genres and eras.

Luke has worked with performers such as Ryan Scott (percussion), Naomi McCarroll-Butler (Saxophone), Jing Xia (guzheng), Anna Graham (Bassoon), among others. He has written for numerous ensembles and festivals, such as the ONSOUND festival, the PhoENX ensemble, the Grenadier Quartet, the Newfoundland Music Festival, the Nova Collective, and the Canadian Music Centre's ACTIVATE program. He is a recipient of the SSHRC CGS-M research grant for his ongoing creative research into computer-controlled instruments and performer-computer interactivity, and most recently received a commission from Montréal-based guitarist Ben Diamond with support from ArtsNL. He is passionate about climate action, equitable city planning, and free gender expression; themes which often turn up in his work.