Doctoral Chamber Recital
Micheal Barnes, percussion

April 1, 2023
Saturday
Rock Hall Auditorium
5:30 PM

Program

Nagoya Marimbas (1994)
Phillip O’Banion, marimba
Steve Reich (b. 1936)

Mandala (2012)
Phillip O’Banion, marimba
Robert Paterson (b. 1970)

Xuan Yao, violin
Wendy Bickford, clarinet
Kevin Puts (b. 1972)

Trapped (2020)*
Wendy Bickford, clarinet
Anthony Bithell, bass clarinet
Phillip O’Banion, marimba
Micheal Barnes (b. 1994)

Electrician’s Handbook (2021)*
No. 1 – Volt
No. 2 – Relay Station
No. 3 – Atohm
Hisao Han Yang, piano
Julien Monick (b. 1994)

Into the Air (2010)
YeonJu You, marimba
Ivan Trevino (b. 1983)

*World premiere

Micheal Barnes is a student of Phillip O’Banion. Two hundred seventy-third performance of the 2022-2023 season.
Program Notes

All notes provided by the composers.

Nagoya Marimbas (1994)  
Steve Reich (b. 1936)

Nagoya Marimbas (1994) is somewhat similar to my pieces from the 1960s and ’70s in that there are repeating patterns played on both marimbas, one or more beats out of phase, creating a series of two-part unison canons. However, these patterns are more melodically developed, change frequently and each is usually repeated no more than three times, similar to my more recent work. The piece is also considerably more difficult to play than my earlier ones and requires two virtuosic performers.

Mandala (2012)  
Robert Paterson (b. 1970)

The idea for Mandala originated from touring the beautiful art collection at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York City. Knowing that I would be presenting a marimba album release concert with Makoto Nakura at the Rubin, we toured the collection, looking for ideas for a marimba duo we would perform together. We settled on an image of a mandala, and in particular the Hevajra Mandala. Hevajra is a deity, and one of the main yidams (enlightened beings) in Tantric, or Vajrayana Buddhism, and mandala is a Sanskrit word meaning ”circle.”

In the Buddhist and Hindu religious traditions, sacred art often takes a mandala form. In modern times, mandala has become a generic term for any chart, plan or geometric pattern that represents the cosmos, metaphysically or symbolically. Mandalas are microcosms of the universe from a human perspective. They are also often used as aids to meditation and trance induction. My musical interpretation takes this into consideration. I attempt to impart a sense of peace, happiness and oneness through the use of slow-moving harmonies and copious fifths. The primal interval of a fifth can be found in every culture worldwide. I use them as a unifying force; they not only feel good to play on the marimba, but also sound amazing. Marimbas are tuned to the octave and the fifth, so when you play fifths, you are literally hitting the sweet spot. Although Mandala may be performed once through, listeners can loop it if it is professionally recorded, thus creating a musical form that is potentially infinite. Mandala can also be looped continuously as part of an art installation.

It is interesting that various aspects of the marimba are mandala-like: the circular shape of the resonators, the meditative, earthy quality of the sound of the wooden marimba bars, and even the oneness you feel as a performer while playing the instrument. The sound of a marimba envelops you as you play it, a sensation that is most easily grasped while standing right over it.

Mandala was commissioned by the ISGM New Music Commissioning Fund for Makoto Nakura.
Kevin Puts (b. 1972)

Composed in the summer of 2001, _And Legions Will Rise_ is about the power in all of us to transcend during times of tragedy and personal crisis. While I was writing it, I kept imagining one of those war scenes in blockbuster films, with masses of troops made ready before a great battle. I think we have forces like this inside of us, ready to do battle when we are at our lowest moments. The piece was written at the request of Makoto Nakura and commissioned by the Kobe Shinbun. It was premiered in October 2001 at Matsukata Hall, Kobe, Japan by Mr. Nakura, Yayoi Toda (violin), and Todd Palmer (clarinet).
Trapped (2020)  Micheal Barnes (b. 1994)

Composed in the summer of 2020, Trapped was commissioned by Ricardo A. Coelho de Souza. This piece was a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, political turmoil, civil unrest, and state actions during the summer of 2020. At the time, I had zero job prospects, zero artistic engagements, and was completely isolated from everything (except my wife). In this piece, I sought to depict the tension, stagnation, frustration, and uncertainty I felt during these months. Program notes take time to write, so if you have read this far, thanks! To show my appreciation for you reading these notes, the first person to approach me after the recital with this note will be rewarded with an age-appropriate drink from Maxi’s on me. The form of the piece slowly progresses and keeps recapitulating over itself, making no progress. Throughout there is a pedal Eb in the marimba that cannot break free, despite multiple attempts. Eventually, the three-note motive first stated by the vibraphone is transformed by the clarinets and breaks free. A message of H-O-P-E is spelled out rhythmically via Morse code before promptly being drawn back again into the marimba’s pedal Eb. By the end, the piece seems to be stuck as it was in the beginning but is reharmonized, questioning the idea of being trapped.

Trapped was a Finalist in the 2021 American Prize for Instrumental Composition – Instrumental Chamber Music.


This piece for vibraphone and piano was commissioned by Micheal Barnes in 2021. My first creative reaction to these two instruments was of how sharp and clear both can be. I immediately gravitated towards the idea of signals bouncing off of each other. This idea continues to resurface throughout the work and was a guiding principle to how I wanted to see it play out.

A guide to all things electrical. Fully updated for the latest electrical codes and standards. Detailed photos, diagrams, charts, tables, and calculations are included throughout. This practical, on-the-job resource is a must-have tool for every professional electrician. P.S., mind the switch and don’t get shocked.

Into the Air (2010)  Ivan Trevino (b. 1983)

Into The Air is a marimba duet dedicated to Michael Burritt, professor of percussion at The Eastman School of Music. The piece attempts to capture Burritt’s energy and enthusiasm, and showcases my interest in rock and groove-based music.