

# Temple University Percussion Ensemble

Phillip O'Banion, director

Monday, October 16 · 7:30 PM  
Temple Performing Arts Center  
1837 N. Broad St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19122



# Program

Trio Per Uno  
Movement I

Nebojsa Zivkovic

High School Students of William Wozniak:  
Joseph Fiore, Ian Kohn, Ian Sun

Omphalo Centric Lecture

Nigel Westlake

Palindrome \*

Stanley Leonard

Drumming  
Part I  
Part II  
Part III  
Part IV

Steve Reich

*\*world premiere, written for the Temple University Percussion Ensemble*

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The use of photographic, audio, and video recording is not permitted.

Please turn off all electronic devices.

Thirty-first performance of the 2023-2024 season.

# Temple University Percussion Ensemble

José Soto  
Tristan Bouyer  
Livi Keenan  
Jacob Treat  
Emma Cullum  
Elijah Nice  
Adam Rudisill  
Josh Arnone  
Connor McMahon  
Andrew Stern  
Alex Snelling  
Griffin Harrison  
Jaewon Lee  
YoungGwang Hwang  
Yeonju You

## **Additional Personnel**

Anee Reiser, piccolo  
Carynn O'Banion, soprano  
Maren Montalbano, alto  
Ian Schiela, live mix and sound

*Special thanks to William Wozniak and Christopher Deviney*

## Program Notes

### Palindrome

Stanley Leonard

*Palindrome* is music written for eleven percussionists. The number eleven is a palindrome, a sequence that reads the same backward and forward. This number was part of the inspiration for the title. Joseph Haydn wrote a musical palindrome in his Symphony No. 47. The third movement, titled *Minuetto al roverso*, begins with a statement that is a musical palindrome. The music sounds exactly the same when performed in reverse. Mozart included one in his *Table Music for Two Violins*. *Palindrome* is music searching for a palindromic idea.

The music begins with a toll of eleven notes played on chimes and ends with the same sequence of notes, played on a different pitch, by the entire ensemble. After the initial eleven note statement there is a slow musical dialogue using forward and reverse tone rows leading into the beginning of a rhythmic section. A meditative pause occurs, then proceeds to a dancing finale.

*Palindrome* is significant for me as it is the completion of a series of works for large percussion ensemble. I have never written music for eleven percussionists. This new piece means that my catalog of percussion ensemble works now includes pieces written for four to fourteen players. The opportunity to write this music is also significant because it allowed me to write a piece for percussion that will be premiered in the city of my birth, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Thanks to Phillip O'Banion, Director of the Temple University Percussion Ensemble, for providing this opportunity.

- *Notes by the composer.*

For one year, between the fall of 1970 and the fall of 1971, I worked on what turned out to be the longest piece I have ever composed. *Drumming* lasts from 55 to 75 minutes (depending on the number of repeats played) and is divided into four parts that are performed without pause. The first part is for four pairs of tuned bongo drums, stand-mounted and played with sticks; the second, for three marimbas played by nine players together with two women's voices; the third, for three glockenspiels played by four players together with whistling and piccolo; and the fourth section is for all these instruments and voices combined.

In the context of my own music, *Drumming* is the final expansion and refinement of the phasing process, as well as the first use of four new techniques: (1) the process of gradually substituting beats for rests (or rests for beats); (2) the gradual changing of timbre while rhythm and pitch remain constant; (3) the simultaneous combination of instruments of different timbre; and (4) the use of the human voice to become part of the musical ensemble by imitating the exact sound of the instruments.

*Drumming* begins with two drummers building up the basic rhythmic pattern of the entire piece from a single drum beat, played in a cycle of 12 beats with rests on all the other beats. Gradually additional drumbeats are substituted for the rests, one at a time, until the pattern is completed. The reduction process is simply the reverse where rests are gradually substituted for the beats, one at a time, until only a single beat remains.

The sections are joined together by the new instruments doubling the exact pattern of the instruments already playing. At the end of the drum section (Part 1), three drummers are joined by three marimba players who enter softly playing the same pattern; the drummers gradually fade out so that the same rhythm and pitches are maintained with a gradual change of timbre. At the end of the marimba section (Part 2), three marimbas played in their highest range are doubled by three glockenspiels in their lowest range so that again, rhythm and pitch are maintained while timbre changes. In the last section of *Drumming*, all instruments and voices are combined simultaneously (for the first time in my music) and the overall sound becomes considerably richer.

The voices in *Drumming* do not sing words, but precisely imitate the sound of the instruments. The women's voices sing patterns resulting from the combination of two or more marimbas playing identical repeating pattern, one of more quarter notes out of phase with each other. By exactly imitating the sound of the instruments, and by gradually fading the patterns in and out, the singers cause them to slowly rise to the surface of the music and then fade back into it, allowing the listener to hear these patterns sounding in the instruments themselves. For the marimbas, the female voice was needed; for the glockenspiels, the high range of the instrument necessitated whistling, and in its extremely high range, the piccolo.

The sections, then, are not set off from each other by changes of key, the traditional means of gaining extended length in Western music. *Drumming* demonstrates the possibility of maintaining the same key for quite a while if there are instead considerable rhythmic developments together with occasional, but complete, changes of timbre to supply variety.

I am often asked what influence my visit to Africa in summer of 1970 had on *Drumming*. The answer is encouragement, confirmation, and learning from another musical culture. It encouraged my natural inclination towards and training in percussion. I started studying snare drum at the age of 14. And, it confirmed my intuition that acoustic instruments could be used to produce music that was genuinely richer in sound than that produced with electronic instruments.

My learning about African drumming began when, as a college student, I heard recordings. Then, in 1963, I read some of A.M. Jones's *Studies in African Music* where he, with Desmond Tay, a Ghanaian master drummer, made the first accurate scores of several Ghanaian traditional pieces by tapping metal pencils on metal plates on Jones's drum pattern recorder. These scores showed that the music was made of short repeating patterns, generally of two, three, four, six, or 12 beats, played simultaneously but so that their downbeats did not coincide. This struck me as a radically different way of organizing music not found in the West, and also reminded me of the many rhythmic ambiguities inherent in subdivisions of 12. Still later, I took a few lessons with Alfred Ladzepko, another Ewe master drummer, who was working with Nicholas England at Columbia University.

Then, in 1970 the last piece I wrote and performed before my trip to Ghana was *Phase Patterns*, for four electric organs. It was built entirely out of the snare drum hand alternation rudiment, paradiddle: LRLRLRR. During rehearsal one of the musicians in my ensemble joked, “You’re drumming on the keyboard, how about drumming on the drums?” and it struck me as a very sound comment.

Finally, in the summer of 1970, I traveled to Ghana to study drumming firsthand. While there I took daily lessons from Ghanaian master drummers, particularly from the Ewe tribe, recorded them, transcribed the patterns and their relationships into Western notation and eventually they were published.

When I returned home, the effect of my visit turned out to be confirmation of gradually shifting phase relations between identical repeating patterns that I had used in *Piano Phase* and *Violin Phase* in 1967, but now with strong encouragement to develop these ideas further by returning to my own background in percussion. Additionally, I had learned that complex rhythmic counterpoint had a long history in Africa and, as I learned soon after, in Indonesia when I studied Balinese gamelan with Balinese teachers at the American Society for Eastern Arts In Berkeley in 1974.

As mentioned earlier, in the context of my own music, *Drumming* is the final expansion and refinement of the phasing process, a process discovered with tape loops that does not appear elsewhere in non-Western or Western music. *Drumming* also has only one basic rhythmic pattern throughout. This pattern undergoes changes of phase position, pitch, and timbre, but all the performers play this pattern, or some part of it, throughout the entire piece.



- Notes by the composer.



## About the Ensemble

The **TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE** aims to inspire, express, and enrich both its audience and its members through quality chamber music experiences. The group performs literature in a variety of styles and encourages the composition of new works for the percussion medium. Student members hail from all music degree tracks in the college: performance, education and jazz education, theory, technology, and therapy. The ensemble is directed by Phillip O'Banion, Associate Professor and Artistic Director of Percussion Studies.

The Temple University Percussion Ensemble has worked with composers such as Jennifer Higdon, John Mackey, Augusta Read Thomas, Michael Daugherty, Russell Hartenberger, Michael Colgrass, Bob Becker, Adam Silverman, Gordon Stout, Stanley Leonard, Michael Burritt, Ivan Trevino, Daniel Levitan, and the NEXUS and MOBIUS Percussion Quartets. The ensemble has been featured on the Philadelphia Orchestra's chamber music series at the Kimmel Center performing Steve Reich's *Drumming* among other works. In 2016 the ensemble gave the Philadelphia premiere of Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians*.

The group collaborates frequently with other artistic disciplines within Temple's Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts. Upcoming collaborations include a newly choreographed performance of Igor Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, as well as art installations and graphic scores. Select members of this ensemble were featured in a new recording of George Antheil's *Ballet Mecanique* and Bernstein's *Halil* as part of another one of Prof. O'Banion's creative ventures – the Philadelphia Piano + Percussion Project.

The TU Percussion Ensemble has been involved in the commission and premiere of a number of new works for the genre, including Alejandro Vaino's sextet *Water*, Marc Mellits *Gravity*, Adam Silverman's *Sparklefrog*, a new choreography of *Mass* by John Mackey, *Volcanic Eruption* by Rolando Morales-Matos, Russell Hartenberger's *Cadence*, *Four Faces* by Gordon Stout, and *Stargazer* by adjunct professor Tony Miceli. Alumni of this ensemble work professionally as world-class performers, teaching artists, therapists, administrators and executives, and creative thinkers within the arts economy both nationally and globally.

## About the Director

**PHILLIP O'BANION** is Associate Professor and Director of Percussion Studies and ensembles at Temple University. O'Banion performs with the Philadelphia Orchestra and other symphonic orchestras, new music groups, and theater productions regularly. He is a percussionist with Orchestra 2001 and Network for New Music. O'Banion has appeared as performer and conductor in programs presented by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and is a frequent guest with the Philadelphia Orchestra Percussion Group (POPG).

O'Banion has been involved in the commission or premiere of over sixty-five new works in the solo and chamber music genres to date. He has appeared internationally in Europe, Canada, South America, and across the United States. As a soloist he has performed and/or recorded notable percussion concerti by Joseph Schwantner, Jennifer Higdon, Michael Daugherty, Adam Silverman, Daniel Spalding, and others.

O'Banion can be heard on multiple recordings with the Philadelphia Orchestra on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the 2022 GRAMMY-winning "Florence Price: Symphonie Nos. 1 & 3," as well as on the Bridge, Gasparo, Zomba, Naxos, and BCM+D record labels. His solo album for percussion and electronics, *Digital Divide*, and his recording of Adam Silverman's marimba concerto *Carbon Paper and Nitrogen Ink* received critical acclaim from peers.

As director and conductor of the Philadelphia Percussion + Piano Project, O'Banion leads exciting chamber music projects from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, collaborating with talented colleagues from the greater Philadelphia area. The group's recent releases include *Radiant Outbursts: (In)Human Progress* in 2020 and *No Strings Attached: Percussion Music by Marc Mellits* in 2021. Both discs feature world premiere recordings by living composers, as well as celebrated 20<sup>th</sup> century classics such as Leonard Bernstein's *Halil* and George Antheil's *Ballet Mécanique*.

O'Banion has been involved with the Percussive Arts Society international conference for many years, as chair of the symphonic committee and as a contributor to the new music and literature review column for its publication *Percussive Notes*. He has appeared at numerous PAS conventions, regional 'Days of Percussion', and international music festivals. O'Banion serves as faculty member and percussion coordinator for the Sewanee Summer Music Festival in Tennessee. He proudly endorses musical instruments and percussion products made by Pearl/Adams, Sabian, Evans, Vic Firth, and Grover Pro Percussion.

## **Boyer College of Music and Dance**

The Boyer College of Music and Dance offers over 500 events open to the public each year. Students have the unique opportunity to interact with leading performers, composers, conductors, educators, choreographers and guest artists while experiencing a challenging and diverse academic curriculum. The Boyer faculty are recognized globally as leaders in their respective fields. Boyer alumni are ambassadors of artistic leadership and perform with major orchestras, opera and dance companies, teach at schools and colleges and work as professional music therapists, choreographers and composers. Boyer's recording label, BCM&D records, has produced more than thirty recordings, five of which have received Grammy nominations.

[boyer.temple.edu](http://boyer.temple.edu)

## **The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts**

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts consists of the Boyer College of Music and Dance, School of Theater, Film and Media Arts, the George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater and the Temple Performing Arts Center. The School of Theater, Film and Media Arts engages gifted students with nationally and internationally recognized faculty scholars and professionals. A hallmark of the School of Theater, Film and Media Arts is the Los Angeles Study Away program, housed at historic Raleigh Studios. The George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater engages visiting performers, guest artists, set designers, playwrights and other Broadway professionals. The Temple Performing Arts Center (TPAC), a historic landmark on campus, is home to a state-of-the-art 1,200 seat auditorium and 200 seat chapel. More than 500 concerts, classes, lectures and performances take place at TPAC each year.

[arts.temple.edu](http://arts.temple.edu)

## **Temple University**

Temple University's history begins in 1884, when a young working man asked Russell Conwell if he could tutor him at night. It wasn't long before he was teaching several dozen students—working people who could only attend class at night but had a strong desire to make something of themselves. Conwell recruited volunteer faculty to participate in the burgeoning night school, and in 1888 he received a charter of incorporation for "The Temple College." His founding vision for the school was to provide superior educational opportunities for academically talented and highly motivated students, regardless of their backgrounds or means. The fledgling college continued to grow, adding programs and students throughout the following decades. Today, Temple's more than 35,000 students continue to follow the university's official motto—*Perseverantia Vincit*, or "Perseverance Conquers"—with their supreme dedication to excellence in academics, research, athletics, the arts and more.

[temple.edu](http://temple.edu)

Temple University 2023-2024 Season  
Upcoming Events

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**Tuesday, October 17 at 12:00 PM**

CPCA Faculty Forum: Peter d'Agostino, professor of film and media arts  
World-Wide-Walks / climate, wars, temples  
TPAC Chapel

**Thursday, October 19 at 4:30 PM**

Rite of Swing Jazz Café: Danny Jonokuchi Big Band  
TPAC Lobby

**Thursday, October 19 at 7:30 PM**

Guest Artist Recital: Patricio Cosentino, tuba  
Rock Hall Auditorium

**Friday, October 20 at 1:00 PM**

Music Studies Colloquium Series: David Middleton  
Presser 142

**Friday, October 20 at 7:30 PM**

Doctoral Chamber Recital: Sarah Lee, piano  
Rock Hall Auditorium

**Saturday, October 21 at 2:40 PM**

Temple Music Prep: CGYM Master Class: Marcy Rosen, cello  
TUCC Room 222

**Sunday, October 22 at 3:00 PM**

Temple University Concert Choir  
Temple Performing Arts Center

**Monday, October 23 at 4:00 PM**

Student Recital: Zi Wang, violin  
Rock Hall Auditorium

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All events are free unless otherwise noted. Programs are subject to change without notice.

For further information or to confirm events, please call 215.204.7609

or visit [www.boyer.temple.edu](http://www.boyer.temple.edu).