

Temple University Percussion Ensemble

Phillip O'Banion, director

Monday, November 4, 2024 · 7:30 PM
Temple Performing Arts Center
1837 N. Broad St.
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Program

Refuge Baljinder Sekhon

Connor McMahon, Emma Cullum, Jacob Treat, Nick Demkowicz,
Ian Kohn, Joshua Arnone, Shawn Pierce

'Dance Groove Drifting' from *Book of Grooves* Alejandro Vinao

Elijah Nice and Tristan Bouyer, marimba

Water Lilies (2021) Bob Becker

Rei Lim, Mason McDonald, Jaewon Lee, Griffin Harrison
Emilyrose Ristine, piano

Evanescence (2020) Austin Keck

Jaewon Lee, Yeonju You, Livi Keenan, Tristan Bouyer

| Intermission |

Sculpture in Wood Rudiger Pawassar

Tzu-Fan Huang, Jacob Treat, Jose Soto, Nick Demkowicz

Postludes (for vibraphone) Elliot Cole

Movement VI
Movement VIII

Ethan Marshall, Ian Kohn, Shawn Pierce, Cyan Schiele

Mallet Quartet (2009) Steve Reich

Adam Rudisill, Livi Keenan, Elijah Nice, Tristan Bouyer

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

Please turn off all electronic devices.

Fifty-fifth performance of the 2024-2025 season.

Program Notes

Refuge

Baljinder Sekhon

Refuge n. – any place person, action, or thing that offers or appears to offer protection, help, or relief.

Scored for seven percussionists, *Refuge* is a musical escape that employs a variety of pitched and non-pitched instruments. Each percussionist plays a pitched bell, a keyboard instrument, and a variety of skins and accessories. The seven bells create a seven-note pitch series that informs the harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic material throughout the work. With an option of entering the performance space while carrying and playing the bell instruments, the percussionists hang their bells one at a time as they begin performing at their respective setups. This is a process-oriented work in three sections, with the most discernible processes taking place during the introduction. With one bell each, the percussionists collectively perform a seven-note motive, with a modular rotation of pitch orderings, until the pattern returns to the original ordering. At that time, one pitch is left out and a similar pattern takes place again. This continues until only one pitched bell remains (A^b). The pitch orderings that result from the patterns during the introduction generate all of the harmonic and melodic material used for the main three sections of the piece.

Throughout history, composers have created musical situations that express an ideal world or scenario that could serve as an escape from the rigors and complications of reality. Through discourse, music is often referred to as a magical art with the power to temporarily transport a listener. In an effort to confront and organize a chaotic view of life, my recent output is focused on creating works that mimic, or are modeled after, the imperfections of life. *Refuge* is a work that attempts to address both of these interests and concepts in a single piece. This piece is an organization of a disorderly environment of noise and resonate sounds, with the aim of placing them on a spectrum that makes sense of an otherwise littered environment. Rather than escaping life, as a composer or listener, by creating a fictional musical experience, my goals here are to make sense of life through composing. Through thoughtful organization, I am seeking refuge in the very conditions that cause distress.

The 'groove' or 'feel' of a piece is understood to consist of a pattern or sequence that repeats periodically in such a way as to create in the listener the desire to move, or dance, or to foot-tap following the repeated rhythm. A groove is therefore a rhythm 'locked' into a pattern of repetition. To 'unlock' a groove would mean -to some extent- to threaten its very existence. This is precisely what happens in this piece. The grooves are presented at first in their simple 'locked' form, so that the listener may swing unequivocally with the initial grooves. But gradually these grooves are 'unlocked', that is to say, they are subjected to transformations that change the point at which they repeat. In this way the shape of each groove is changed.

This involves a risk because the listener may stop feeling the 'desire to move' with the groove. If this were to happen, one could say that the groove has been 'killed'. My idea in *Book of Grooves* was to explore changes that would transform each groove without 'killing' it. It is a risky compositional strategy: new grooves must be created or 'cloned' from the original ones without disturbing the delicate balance that makes the music 'groove'.

If the piece is successful the listener should be able to follow the process of 'unlocking' or changing of the original grooves into new ones, and experience this as a voyage of transformation. But unlike what happens with grooves in popular music, in *Book of Grooves* the voyager never returns to the port of departure. The process is not cyclical but developmental. And yet, while the music material is permanently transforming into something new, I wanted to make sure that the listener would never cease to 'swing' with a groove.

This much I wanted to achieve. AV. April 2011

Water Lilies (2021)

Bob Becker

Water Lilies was composed in 2012. The title refers to the sublime series of paintings created by the French impressionist Claude Monet – in particular the set of eight panels displayed in two consecutive oval rooms at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris. The piece is score for piano, glockenspiel, vibraphone, marimba and timpani.

Evanescence, for percussion quartet, was composed for the trio 3D percussion. The piece follows a narrative arc that is evanescent in nature, both in its form and musical motifs. The idea of music slowly disappearing and dissipating into nothing has always fascinated me, and it is the main inspiration for this piece. Another inspiration of mine is the idea that music evokes physical imagery, whether that be an abstract or something tangible. The ideas I present are developed only to be quickly faded out of the texture before moving on to the next idea. All of these motifs presented stem from a single idea that is manipulated and morphed into something new, almost unrecognizable from its original form. As you listen to the piece, my goal is that the audience is taken on an experience that is linear in form, but memorable for the emotion and feeling it evokes rather than the thematic or motivic material. In the end, there is a return of the opening but only to fade quickly into oblivion and be forgotten forever. My hope is that this music and quality of being fleeting or vanishing quickly is evocative and creates an image in the listener's head, whether it be the beauty of nature, or something more ethereal and other worldly.

Sculpture in Wood**Rüdiger Pawassar**

Percussionist and composer Rüdiger Pawassar was born in Lübeck, Germany. He has performed with the Staatsorchester in Kassel, Germany, since 1990. *Sculpture in wood* features a marimba quartet performing a variety of jazz harmonies, rhythms, and melodies. The piece also contains classical undertones; for example, it is written in the traditional A-B-C-A form. During the composition of *Sculpture in wood*, Pawassar made many cuts, drafts, and edits, which reminded him of an artist sculpting wooden objects. The work had its world première in Freiburg, Germany, and was later recorded by the Marimba Art Ensemble of Basel, Switzerland.

Postludes (for vibraphone)**Elliot Cole**

Postludes is a book of eight pieces for a familiar instrument played in a new way. Four players, with eight double-bass bows, play interlocking lines on a single vibraphone. The interplay of bows and hands tapping, muting and touching harmonics, weaves an intimate and intricate counterpoint that is as beautiful to watch as it is to hear: fragile, tender and haunting.

Mallet Quartet is scored for two vibraphones and two five octave marimbas. I had never written for five octave marimbas extending down to cello C. On the one hand I was delighted to have the possibility of a low bass and on the other hand apprehensive since just slightly too hard a mallet that low can produce noise instead of pitch. Eventually, after a bit of experimentation, this was well worked out.

The piece is in three movements, fast, slow, fast. In the two outer fast movements the marimbas set the harmonic background which remains rather static compared to recent pieces of mine like *Double Sextet* (2007). The marimbas interlock in canon, also a procedure I have used in many other works. The vibes present the melodic material first solo and then in canon. However, in the central slow movement the texture changes into a thinner more transparent one with very spare use of notes, particularly in the marimbas. I was originally concerned this movement might just be “too thin,” but I think it ends up being the most striking, and certainly the least expected, of the piece.

Mallet Quartet is about 15 minutes in duration. It was co-commissioned by the Amadinda Quartet in Budapest, on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary, Nexus in Toronto, So Percussion in New York, Synergy Percussion in Australia, and Soundstreams in Canada. The World Premiere was given by the Amadinda Quartet in Bela Bartók National Concert Hall on December 6, 2009. The American Premiere was given by So Percussion at Stanford University Lively Arts in California on January 9, 2010.

About the Ensemble

The **TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE** aims to inspire and enrich its audience and its members through quality chamber music experiences. The group's performances feature both 'established' and modern literature for percussion in a variety of styles, while simultaneously encouraging the composition of brand new works for the medium. Ensemble members hail from all music degree tracks in the college: performance (classical and jazz), education and jazz education, theory, technology, and therapy. The ensemble is directed by Phillip O'Banion, Associate Professor and Artistic Director of Percussion Studies.

Temple's 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*, with a live video recording from the Temple Performing Arts Center that has amassed over a million digital views. In November of 2023, the group won first place in the Percussive Arts Society's collegiate chamber music competition at PASIC in Indianapolis.

Frequent collaborations with other artistic disciplines within Temple's Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts have included choreographed performances of Stravinsky, Mackey, and Rouse, various sculpted and video art installations, and coached readings of new works by a diverse group of student and alumni composers. Members of this ensemble were featured in a recording of George Antheil's iconoclastic *Ballet Mécanique* and Bernstein's *Halil* as part of another one of Prof. O'Banion's creative ventures – the Philadelphia Piano + Percussion Project. Ensemble members and faculty also championed and recorded the work of American composer Marc Mellits on an album titled '*No Strings Attached*.'

The Ensemble has been involved in the commission and premiere of a number of new works for the genre, including Alejandro Vinao'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, *Stargazer* by Tony Miceli, Maurice Wright's *Sextet*, Emma O'Halloran's *Little Magics*, with new commissions in progress.

Alumni of the ensemble work professionally as world-class performers, teaching artists, therapists, administrators, executives, and creative thinkers within the arts economy 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 20th and 21st 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 20th 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

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

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

Temple University 2024-2025 Upcoming Events

Tuesday, November 5 at 2:00 PM

Jazz Ensemble Recital
Art of Bread Café

Tuesday, November 5 at 7:30 PM

Early Music Ensemble
Rock Hall Auditorium

Wednesday, November 6 at 4:30 PM

Jazz Master Class: Marshall Gilkes, trombone
TPAC Lobby

Wednesday, November 6 at 7:30 PM

Jazz on Broad: Marshall Gilkes, trombone
TPAC Lobby

Thursday, November 7 at 12:30 PM (time updated)

Crip/Mad Archive Dances by Petra Kupperts
Conwell Dance Theater

Thursday, November 7 at 4:30 PM

Rite of Swing Jazz Café: Jonny King Quartet
TPAC Lobby

Friday, November 8 at 2:00 PM

Jazz Ensemble Recital
Art of Bread Café

Friday, November 8 at 5:30 PM

Student Recital: Joseph Gould, tuba
Rock Hall Auditorium

Friday, November 8 at 7:30 PM

Sunday, November 10 at 3:00 PM

Tuesday, November 12 at 7:30 PM

Temple Opera Theater
MASSENET *Cendrillon*
Tomlinson Theater

Saturday, November 9 at 4:00 PM

Student Recital: Zacharia Aarsalane, jazz voice

Klein Recital Hall

Sunday, November 10 at 7:30 PM

Master's Recital: Natalie Haynes, horn

Rock Hall Auditorium

Monday, November 11 at 12:30 PM

Jazz Ensemble Recital

Art of Bread Café

Monday, November 11 at 2:00 PM

Jazz Ensemble Recital

Art of Bread Café

Monday, November 11 at 5:30 PM

Master's Recital: Shuhei Nomura, collaborative piano

Rock Hall Auditorium

Tuesday, November 12 at 12:00 PM

CPCA International AIR Forum

Micaela Baranello, "Wagner's Past, Germany's Future: Staging History at the Bayreuth Festival"

TPAC Chapel

Tuesday, November 12 at 2:00 PM

Jazz Ensemble Recital

Art of Bread Café

Tuesday, November 12 at 7:30 PM

Cybersounds

TPAC

Tuesday, November 12 at 7:30 PM

Temple Opera Theater: Cendrillon

Tomlinson

Wednesday, November 13 at 12:30 PM

Jazz Ensemble Recital

Art of Bread Café

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

For further information or to confirm events, please call 215.204.7661

or visit www.boyer.temple.edu.