

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING AND CINEMATIC ARTS
Boyer College of Music and Dance

Temple University Percussion Ensemble
Phillip O'Banion, director

November 2, 2020
Presented Virtually

Monday
7:30 pm

Program

Perfectly Voiceless Devonté Hynes (b. 1985)

Lucas Conant, Caleb Breidenbaugh, Zach Strickland & Emilyrose Ristine, percussion

Second Construction John Cage (1912–1992)

Joel Evans, Alonzo Davis, Jeremy Zolner & Adam Rudisill, percussion

Marimba Quartet Daniel Levitan (b. 1957)
Movement I

Jake Strovel, Milo Paperman, Joel Cammarota & Paige Ritter, percussion

Zones Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962)

Adam Rudisill, Caleb Breidenbaugh, Griffin Harrison,
Alonzo Davis & Julia Baker, percussion

Program Notes

Perfectly Voiceless

Devonté Hynes

Devonté Hynes (b. 1985) is a British singer, songwriter, composer, producer, and author, now residing in New York City. He has released five studio albums under the name “Blood Orange,” and previously released two albums as “Lightspeed Champion.” He has produced for artists such as Solange Knowles, Sky Ferreira, and Carly Rae Jepsen, and has made his own solo appearances on the Pitchfork and Coachella Music Festivals. Hynes plays cello and piano, and recently performed some of Philip Glass’s etudes as part of an all-star lineup for Glass concerts at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. Hynes also has a background in dance and has worked with ballet dancer Maria Kochetkova and choreographer Emma Portner in his own music videos.

Hynes composed music for an entire evening-length program featuring Third Coast Percussion and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, with new choreography created by Emma Portner, Jon Boogz, and Lil Buck, which premiered in Chicago in September of 2018. To create this 75-minute opus, Hynes composed music with synthesized and sampled sounds, which he then sent to Third Coast Percussion. TCP experimented with instruments to create a live performance version of this music, which they then recorded and sent back to Hynes for feedback, then eventually choreographers to create the dance. *Perfectly Voiceless* was composed as a musical interlude between choreographed pieces in this larger program. TCP’s arrangement of this music is scored for three marimbas, two vibraphones, chorales, glockenspiel, almglocken, Chinese ‘Jing’ cymbal, woodblock, pitched metal pipes, and tamborim.

Program notes by Third Coast Percussion.

Second Construction

John Cage

Cage’s *Second Construction* is a rhythmic fugue– the subject is passed between the various players and instrumental colors. The piano is prepared with various implements (cardboard, bolts, etc.) to give it new colors. *Second Construction* is one of three works for percussion that Cage entitled *Constructions*. Together they form some of the most compelling early percussion literature of the twentieth century. The piece is scored for the following percussion instruments: sleigh bells (Indian Noah bells), glass wind chimes, Indian rattle, small maracas, snare drum, tom-toms, temple gongs (Japanese rin), small and large maracas, tam-tam, muted Thai gongs, water gong, thunder sheet, and prepared piano.

Program notes by Phillip O’Banion.

Marimba Quartet

Daniel Levitan

Daniel Levitan's *Marimba Quartet* was commissioned by the Manhattan Marimba Quartet in the 1980's. Over the last few decades, it has become one of the most frequently performed quartets for keyboard percussion in the literature. Levitan, a percussionist, piano tuner, and composer by trade, creates music with incredible rhythmic vitality and momentum. *Marimba Quartet* is no exception. In the first movement, Levitan establishes a slow, laid back groove in seven, and passed both melodic and harmonic ideas back and forth between the various members of the ensemble. The players must pay careful attention to both rhythmic placement, dynamic intensity, and note length, as he gives specific muffling instructions for various pitches to achieve the right colors and balance of the musical material. This movement can also be seen as a journey, much like a sonata-allegro movement with themes, development, recapitulation, and finally a transformative coda, with a lush chorale that highlight the resonant qualities of the marimba.

Program notes by Phillip O'Banion.

Zones

Jennifer Higdon

Zones is about the various reactions people have to war. More specifically, the Vietnam War. After being asked to write a piece for percussion quartet, I was thinking about some research in which I had been involved, dealing with this war and the reactions that soldiers in the field have when going into battle. Though the reactions were not all similar, they all were, understandably, some of the strongest feelings a human being can experience. I chose these reactions as an inspiration for this piece- especially since drums have historically played such an important role in war throughout time. The use of a 'digital track' is symbolic of the Vietnam conflict- it is representative of the modern technology that was very much a part of that war. *Zones* refers to war zones as well as those various reactions of the mind and emotion to war.

Program notes by the composer.

About the Director

PHILLIP O'BANION is Associate Professor and Director of Percussion Studies at Temple University in Philadelphia. O'Banion performs often with The Philadelphia Orchestra and other symphonic ensembles, new music groups, and theater productions. He is a regular percussionist for Orchestra 2001 and Network for New Music. O'Banion has appeared as both performer and conductor on programs presented by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and he is a frequent collaborative guest with POPG. The Philadelphia Orchestra Percussion Group. Professor O'Banion is the artistic director and conductor of the Temple University Percussion Ensemble, Boyer Percussion Group, and Philadelphia Percussion + Piano Project.

Over the last decade, O'Banion has been involved in the commission or premiere of over forty new works in the solo and chamber music genres. O'Banion has appeared internationally in Europe, Canada, South America, and across the United States. His solo album, *Digital Divide* for percussion and electronics, and his recording of Adam Silverman's marimba concerto *Carbon Paper and Nitrogen Ink* are available through BCM&D Records. His most recent recording, *Radiant Outbursts: (In)Human Progress* was released in August 2020 where he is heard as marimbist and conductor of the Philadelphia Percussion + Piano Project. The album's namesake is another commission from Adam Silverman, juxtaposed with Bernstein's *Halil* for solo flute and percussion and a fresh take on George Antheil's tour de force *Ballet Mècanique*.

Professor O'Banion currently chairs the Percussive Arts Society's symphonic committee and has been a regular contributor to the new music and literature review column for Percussive Notes. He has appeared at numerous PAS conventions, Days of Percussion, and international music festivals. O'Banion is an artist endorser for instruments and products made by Pearl/Adams, Sabian, Evans, Vic Firth, and Grover Pro Percussion.

About the Ensemble

The **TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE** seeks to provide a quality chamber music experience for its members. 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 degree tracks in the college- performance, 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 Jennifer Higdon, John Mackey, Augusta Read Thomas, Michael Daugherty, Russell Hartenberger, Michael Colgrass, Bob Becker, Adam Silverman, Gordon Stout, 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 TUPE gave the Philadelphia premiere of Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians*. The group collaborates frequently with other disciplines within Temple's Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts. Upcoming collaborations include a newly choreographed performance of Igor Stravinsky's *Les Noces* in the Fall of 2021.

Members of the group were featured in a new recording of George Antheil's *Ballet Mecanique* and Bernstein's *Halil* as part of the Philadelphia Piano + Percussion Project. Temple University has also been instrumental in commissioning and premiering a number of new works including Alejandro Vaino's sextet *Water*, Marc Mellits *Gravity*, Adam Silverman's *Sparklefrog*, a new choreography of *Mass* by John Mackey, *Volcanic Eruption* by adjunct faculty member Rolando Morales-Matos, Russell Hartenberger's *Cadence* and *Four Faces* by Gordon Stout. Alumni of the ensemble work professionally as performers and teaching artists nationally and internationally.