

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

Temple Composers Orchestra
Sepehr Pirasteh & Dr. Evan Kassof, music directors
Hannah Selin, executive director
Dr. Adam Vidiksis, advisor

April 10, 2021
Presented Virtually

Saturday
7:30 pm

Program

The City Below Us (2021)	Oladipo George
Memories for the Future (2021)	John Kairis
Tyra Suite (2019) I. The Dragon's Cave	Morgan Kelly Moss
Faust: A Prologue in Heaven (2021)	Benjamin Price
Cosmos 5 (2021)	Evan Kassof
IN (2021)	Alexander Glass

Temple Composers Orchestra

Sepehr Pirasteh & Dr. Evan Kassof, music directors

Hannah Selin, executive director

Dr. Adam Vidiksis, advisor

Jiyuan Yang, violin

Jingwei Zhang, violin

Priscille Michel, viola

Jordan Brooks, cello

William Valencia, double bass

Ashley Oros, flute

Amanda Rearden, oboe

Wendy Bickford, clarinet

Rick Barrantes, bassoon

Danielle O'Hare, horn

Anthony Casella, trumpet

Jeffrey Dever, trombone

Lucas Conant, percussion

Emilyrose Ristine, percussion

Katie Ventura, harp

Maria Dell'Orefice, piano

Program Notes

The City Below Us

Oladipo George

The City Below Us is a short, fast-paced piece based on a simple repeating melody line. The piece emits a mysterious and sultry tone in the beginning, then rises in momentum to a tone with busy, rhythmic drive.

Memories for the Future

John Kairis

Memories for the Future is about how we choose to tell our story. The past is a fuzzy muddled pool, and memory an incredibly fallible device. We can choose to look back in bitterness or longing, or instead reflect with gratitude, and use our memory to serve us in the present. This piece is about the warm embrace of positive thinking. We know that our lives have been well spent simply because we have lived them, and we will all continue to live them well.

Tyra Suite

Morgan Kelly Moss

Moss's *Tyra Suite* is inspired by ideas deeply rooted in her past. As a child, Moss was always very creative. Along with the constant music in her head were fantastical stories about dragons, mythical kingdoms, and other adventures, many of which ideas Moss wrote down in a short novel. While maybe Moss's short novel was not as articulate as she would have liked, the stories and the characters have stayed vivid in her head. Recently, Moss stumbled upon this short novel which was written in several notebooks and decided that the story should take on a new life through music. *Tyra Suite* (named after the story's main character) is a multi-movement work. Movement one, *The Dragon's Cave*, follows Tyra's journey in the dead of a starry night into a dragon's cave. The dragon's growl, stomps, and fiery breath can be heard in the music. Near the end of the piece a sense of belonging is felt when Tyra realizes that she can communicate with the dragon and has always been connected to them. This is the explanation for her always feeling like an outlier in medieval society. Whether you choose to listen for the moving textures of the music or the narrative that it paints, *The Dragon's Cave* will surely take you on a musical adventure! (Narrative inspired by Suzan Fletcher's novel [Dragon's Milk](#))

Faust: A Prologue in Heaven

Benjamin Price

This programmatic work is based off a segment of Goethe's *Faust*. As an anthropologist admits his biases when observing cultures that he is not directly a part of, I as a composer must admit that in using religious themes, I am not at all religious. Though, perhaps that is fitting in this particular instance, as Goethe was not traditionally religious in any dogmatic sense.

Cosmos 5

Evan Kassof

Cosmos 5 (Water Music) was written in March 2021 in a week at the gracious invitation of Sepehr Pirasteh and Hannah Selin. Because of this quick turn-around, I found myself leaning on techniques

I have previously developed in other works such as *Cosmos 1*, *Colony*, *Greenland*, *Ganymede 5*, *Excerpts from the Sea*, and most recently the solo cello work *Cosmos 4*. The piece uses various tools I have designed and implemented previously to map physical phenomenon into musical forms and harmonies. In particular, this work is a response to seeing (for the first time- thanks, growing up in Florida!) the seemingly magical situation where water melts under an icicle and flows out in quick droplets. This led me to different ways of thinking about what makes water mean what it does to us. Its density is why we can swim in it and float above it, its physical properties as a solid are why life can exist at even sub-zero temperatures, the way light refracts off its molecules is why the sky is blue and the just-cresting-over-the-horizon moon is fantastically orange.

This piece does not sound like “water” in the traditional sense a la Smetana, Ravel, or even Handel. Instead, I took the peak spectral frequencies of water in its three normal states (meaning I took the frequency of light a water molecule filters as its molecular bonds create an electromagnetic prism) and transposed the spectra down 42-octaves into an audible range, thus creating harmonies. The spectra of the transition lines (along the Rydberg Series, meaning when water heats up and potentially changes physical states) are used to create transitional harmonies. Together, these harmonies are accumulated and deconstructed throughout the piece. The form is roughly in three parts, where in the first part the gaseous phase’s spectra dominate as the orchestra accumulates density. The second section drip-drops through liquid harmonies until it freezes over, melts again, and reheats. Finally, the orchestra vaporizes and clouds of gaseous harmony float away over glistening streams of harmonics in the cello and bass.

IN

Alexander Glass

One of my earliest melodies, taken on a minimalist adventure.

About the Artists

OLADIPO GEORGE resides in the Pocono Mountains, PA and currently studies Composition at the Boyer College. His music explores the elements of a variety of genres, especially popular, electronic, and dance music, into the classical art music setting.

JOHN KAIRIS is a multi-instrumentalist composer and producer with a knack for cross-stylistic blending into lush, rhythmically-driven soundscapes. He incorporates skills from classical composition training, independent electronic music production, and rock, concert, and jazz bands into a cohesive whole. Kairis is currently a graduate student at the Boyer College, studying Composition with Maurice Wright, and has previously studied with Matthew Greenbaum, Jan Krzywicki, Emiliano Pardo-Tristan, and Rene Orth.

MORGAN KELLY MOSS has been playing piano and studying music since she was three and is currently a Composition and Piano Performance double major at the Boyer College. Recently, Moss's *The Brook* for flute, clarinet, piano, and voice was selected in a call for scores by the Allentown Symphony Orchestra. She also recently won the Chester County Community Band Composition Contest and, at 19, was the youngest person and first woman to win this competition. Moss studies composition with the highly respected composers Maurice Wright and Jan Krzywicki, and additionally studies piano under world-renowned pianist Sara Davis Buechner. She has worked with many other pianists, such as Charles Abramovic, Timur Mustakimov, Emiko Edwards, and Dennis Varley. She was most recently featured in a solo piano recital at the Tenri Cultural Institute in New York City. Moss is also very active in scoring music for film, having composed for 5 award-winning short films in her career so far at Temple University, the most recent nomination being for best music in a short film. She is also very proud to be a teacher of piano, composition, theory, and voice at the Music Studio of Patricia Keith in Boyertown, PA. Moss is very passionate about her music and would like to share this joy with as many people as she can, whether it is through listening, teaching, or collaborating. Moss plans to graduate from Temple University in 2022 and continue her studies as a composer and pianist at the graduate level.

BENJAMIN PRICE is a composer based in Philadelphia. Currently, he is completing his bachelor's degree in Composition at Boyer College, and intends to pursue school further after he completes his degree at Temple University.

EVAN KASSOF is an opera maker, composer, and conductor based in Philadelphia. His most recent opera (libretto by Aleksandar Hut Kono) *Ganymede 5* premiered in the 2019 Philly Fringe Festival. *Elevator*, a short chamber opera, premiered in March as the first episode of the 2019 Serial Opera Project. His operas *Colony* and *Greenland* were performed in London at the Royal Opera House, and *Greenland* was revived in 2018 in the Philadelphia Fringe in an ENAensemble production. He is the Music Director of ENAensemble and served from 2019-2020 as President of the Temple University graduate employee labor union TUGSA (AFT 6290). He earned his PhD in Composition from Temple University in December 2020 with a two-part dissertation titled "Ganymede 5 - the Opera and an Analysis of Kate Soper's Here be Sirens." With a background in physics, Evan's compositions often use science as source material, collaborating directly with

physicists on Heat Death and Turbulence, and using complex mathematical systems to generate temporal and harmonic structures. Since becoming involved in labor organizing, some of his music has taken a more political turn. *Cosmos 3, or, A Succession of Fascist Clowns* and the mock-tone poem *Collective Bargaining* each are based on his experiences in labor organizing. His recent orchestral works include the flute concerto *Blue*, written in collaboration with flutist Chelsea Meynig, and *Cosmos 5: Water Music*. As co-founder and Music Director of the contemporary music theater group ENAensemble, his recent conducting projects have included the 2019 Serial Opera Project (where ENA premiered six new chamber opera 'episodes'), a fully staged production of *Pierrot Lunaire*, and a serialized musical. As Music Director of the Temple Composers Orchestra, a sinfonietta which only premieres new works, he has developed and conducted the premiere of over a dozen new works. More information can be found at: www.evankassof.com and www.enaensemble.org.

ALEXANDER GLASS is a composer and pianist from Cherry Hill, NJ. He started composing at the age of seven and was encouraged to pursue composition by his piano teacher and mentor Michael Nikolidakis. Over the years, Alex has written for solo piano, solo guitar, small chamber groups, and jazz big band, performed in both classical and jazz ensembles, and accompanied numerous performances and musicals. He can also be seen playing keyboard in the Sonorants, a Bollywood/jazz fusion group based in South Jersey. Alex is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in Composition at the Boyer College, and has studied with Matthew Greenbaum, Cynthia Folio, Maurice Wright, and Emiliano Pardo-Tristan.