Mary Flagler Cary Hall is located at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music, 450 W 37th St, New York, NY 10018

Ticket purchases: timespans.org
Individual tickets: $20 / $10 (student and senior discount)
Festival pass: $70

Presented by
The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust
earle-brown.org

A Contemporary Music Festival August 12–29, 2021
Presented by The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust
The DiMenna Center for Classical Music, 450 W 37th Street, New York, NY
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Introduction

Welcome to TIME:SPANS 2021, a contemporary music festival presented by The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust (EBMF). EBMF actively fosters the composition and performance of contemporary music, with a primary focus on works composed since 2000. This season, we are especially thankful, after more than a year of COVID-19-related restrictions on live music performances in New York City, to be able to offer an extraordinary roster of new work performed by stellar musicians.

This year the festival opens with new compositions by Miya Masaoka, Bora Yoon, Nina C. Young, and Pamela Z for the EMPAC Wave Field Synthesis Array. This 3D sound system is one of the few systems in the world that allow for a true three-dimensional experience of sound in space. We are proud to collaborate on this project with EMPAC (the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), whose personnel will transport the massive loudspeaker array to the concert hall and whose tech crew will run sixteen shows, each of which will comprise an extraordinary hour-long sonic experience in the presence of an audience of only twenty-five listeners. For more information about the EMPAC Wave Field Synthesis Array, please see page 8 for a short essay by Johannes Goebel, EMPAC’s Director.

We are also pleased to present thirteen world and six New York City premieres this season, as well as three works commissioned by EBMF: one new work from Nina C. Young as part of the EMPAC installation; the live version of Taylor Brook’s *Virtutes Occultae* for six microtonal keyboards; and Sarah Hennies’s thirty-minute *Clock Dies*. In addition to Talea Ensemble, JACK Quartet, and Yarn/Wire, who have become the equivalent of ensembles-in-residence in past seasons, we welcome six of New York’s finest keyboard players (performing *Virtutes Occultae*); Alarm Will Sound (with a full evening of work by Tyshawn Sorey); the composer collective Wet Ink; Spektral Quartet; the Bugallo-Williams Piano Duo; soloists Tony Arnold, Claire Chase, Miranda Cuckson; Stephen Gosling; Gilles Vonsattel; and cellist/performer Seth Parker Woods, who brings us a spectacular multimedia solo program.

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we invite you to enjoy TIME:SPANS 2021, with the hope that our festival program will further enrich and renew New York’s vibrant culture of contemporary music and its performance.

Marybeth Sollins
Trustee
The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust

Thomas Fichter
Executive Director
The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust
Artistic Director
TIME:SPANS 2021
The EMPAC Wave Field Array in Performance.

Photo: Eileen Baumgartner
EMPAC WAVE FIELD SYNTHESIS
August 12–15, 2021, at 11.00 am; 2:30 pm; 5:30 pm; 7:30 pm
August 16, 2021, at 11.00 am
Curated by Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti

The Loudspeaker Instrument Playing EMPAC Wave Field Synthesis: A long box with over 240 small loudspeakers is positioned along the wall. The box serves simultaneously as stage and as instrument for the pieces created for this event. The composers worked with this instrument exploring its potential for their music. This instrument creates sounds quite differently than other loudspeaker systems. It has an unwieldy name: The EMPAC High-Resolution Modular Loudspeaker Array for Wave Field Synthesis.

Everyone has experienced the following situation: You are listening to music over a stereo system with a left and a right loudspeaker. There is an area where you hear the full panorama of the music, from left through the center to the right, as if there were a stage. When you move your chair to the very left or very right, most of the music comes from that speaker closest to you. The same in a lecture hall where a human speaker is amplified with left and right loudspeakers on both sides of the stage. If the podium with the speaker is to the left onstage and you sit way to the right in the audience, you will hear her voice coming out of the right loudspeaker—and not from where she stands. Or you sit in the furthest left seat of a row in a movie theater with surround sound. For you, the surround sound effects will come mostly from the left.

The listening experience is quite different when you are in a concert hall with a small ensemble playing acoustic instruments. Independent of where you sit, you hear the clarinet seated on the right, the singer in the center, and the oboe to the left—always from where they are onstage. You move around in the hall and the sound of the instruments always comes to you from where the players sit. And if a player sits towards the back of stage left, you hear them playing from back there.

Wave Field Synthesis is a specific technology that allows us to create such a sound stage. You hear the sounds coming from their specific location, where the composer or sound engineer placed them, independent of where you are in the room. The system creates a physically correct wave field for each sound. And if a sound moves from left to right, anyone in the auditorium will hear that movement. How the sounds are spatialized, are placed in space, can be experienced independent of whether you are more to the right, in the center, or more to the left. Wave Field Synthesis creates this ‘natural’ way of localizing sound, allowing for a greater transparency of the sound stage. A composer can work with sound in space very precisely and can be assured that everyone can hear it as intended. Certainly, such a system does not make a piece of music better or worse.

The theory and technical implementation for Wave Field Synthesis was developed in the late 1980s. Quite a few loudspeaker systems have been developed to take advantage of this theory. The quality of such systems depends on the diameter of the loudspeakers. The smaller the speakers, the better and sharper the sound localization; the larger the diameter, the fuzzier and more out of focus the spatial perception for our human ears. We developed this system at EMPAC at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for highly flexible artistic use, which allows placement of modules anywhere in a space, also overhead or in a circle. For this event, we use a straight line of speakers. The system requires quite a bit of computing power to calculate the wave field of each sound—since the creation of each sound involves many, many loudspeakers at the same time. It is not one loudspeaker for one sound—but all are engaged for each individual sound.

Listening to the music does not require an understanding of the system.

Johannes Goebel

For technical background, visit: empac.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/research-documents/WFS_EMPAC_highResolutionModuleLoudspeaker_2021.pdf
**EMPAC WAVE FIELD SYNTHESIS**

Thursday, August 12 to Sunday, August 15, at 11:00 am, 2:30 pm, 5:30 pm, 7:30 pm

Monday, August 16, at 11:00 am

Audience limited to 25, reservations required, see timespans.org

Mary Flagler Cary Hall

DiMenna Center for Classical Music

Co-presented by TIME:SPANS and The Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

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**Miya Masaoka**

*Seeking a Sense of Somethingness*  
*(Out of Nothingness)* (2021) •

Commissioned by EMPAC

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**Bora Yoon**

*SPKR SPRKL* (2021) •

Commissioned by EMPAC

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**Nina C. Young**

*Phosphorescent Devotion* (2021) •

Commissioned by The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust

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**Pamela Z**

*SONANT TOPOGRAPHY* (2021) •

Commissioned by EMPAC

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* World premiere

**Concert duration 70 minutes**

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**Program Notes**

**Miya Masaoka**

*Seeking a Sense of Somethingness*  
*(Out of Nothingness)* (2021)

We know nothing, we are familiar with nothingness, but what about something? Can you feel something, are you seeking something?

Exploring Opacity and Transparency with Wave Field Synthesis, this is a situational composition based on the inimitable sounds of bassoonist Clifton Joey Guidry III mixed with field, water, and outer-space recordings along with analog synthesizers. This piece is dedicated to the late David Wessel, who first introduced me to vicissitudes of Wave Field Synthesis years ago.

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**Bora Yoon**

*SPKR SPRKL* (2021)

*SPKR SPRKL* is a work-in-progress excerpt that explores the paradoxical tension between inner resonant body space and outer acoustic/architectural space. Using the Wave Field Synthesis Array to explore the scalar extremities of sound, *SPKR SPRKL* journeys through jagged rhythmic sequences akin to synapses of neurons firing and fireworks, and the visceral texture and whisper of strings, voices, and objects, to explore how these sound scales may be able to form layered simultaneous realities.
different ‘melodic’ sequences. The positioning of the materials drifts across the array and morphs, mixing to create a more complex experience. Cached between the regions of synthetic tones are snippets of acoustic memories—instruments, voices, field recordings—frozen in invisible space. You can stop to listen, or simply let them pass by as a whisper of something that you may recognize.

Pamela Z  
SONANT TOPOGRAPHY (2021)

In SONANT TOPOGRAPHY, a torrent of phrases, words, consonants, and phonemes spill into the room, scattering, stacking one upon the other, tumbling down, finding their way to remote pockets and corners, assembling, disassembling, reassembling, and distributing themselves, evenly and unevenly, throughout the space. Listeners will be bathed in a chorus of syllables and surrounded by chaotic and ordered structures built out of sounds from mouths. Ears will be filled with shifting constructions that morph in and out of the grammatical and sensible, as they expand and contract, come together, and fall apart.

Nina C. Young  
Phosphorescent Devotion (2021)

In a 2006 paper published by MIT Press, Barry Blesser defines aural architecture as “that aspect of real and virtual space that produces an emotional, behavioral, and visceral response in inhabitants. A space can produce feelings of intimacy, anxiety, isolation, connectedness, warmth, as well as a mystical sense of spirituality. Such responses parallel those of visual architecture, except that the space is experienced by listening rather than seeing.”

Wave Field Synthesis offers a unique opportunity to create aural architectures using audio holograms that you can explore, physically, without relying on the ‘sweet’ spot of many spatial audio systems. You can immerse yourself in an ephemeral, morphing, virtual architecture with the agency to sculpt your own experience and personal ritual.

My new work is loosely inspired by the light and color combinations of James Turrell. In this new exploratory sonic composition, I send out ‘regions’ of synthesized tones. The visitor moves through the space, creating their own temporal envelopes as they travel through the EMPAC Wave Field Array, detail Photo: Eileen Baumgartner
**Taylor Brook**  

*Virtutes Occulta (2016–20)*  
microtonal music for six keyboards  
Live version commissioned by The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust

Performers:  
Laura Barger  
Julia Den Boer  
Thomas Feng  
Isabella O’Connell  
Cory Smythe  
Ning Yu

**PROGRAM NOTES**

- World premiere  
Concert duration 90 minutes

**Taylor Brook**  

*Virtutes Occulta (2016–20)*

*Virtutes Occulta* is a set of eighteen pieces for six retuned pianos. Each of the six pianos is tuned uniquely. The tuning of the pianos extends Harry Partch’s concept of over-tonality, with each piano representing a different tonality. The rationale for these tunings was to create a high degree of sensory consonance within each piano and a high degree of sensory dissonance between each piano, while still sharing a common fundamental of E-flat. In writing this music I mixed traditional composition methods of structuring the music with various harmonies and progressions along with freely intuitive writing, collage techniques, and algorithmic composition.

*Virtutes Occulta* was created principally as a recording, second as a multichannel audio installation, and third as a concert piece. The music was realized entirely electronically, using physical modeling in Pianoteq, commercial software that synthesizes the sound of acoustic instruments with a high degree of realism and allows for the alteration of many properties of the piano model, including the tuning of individual strings, the overtone properties of the strings, the softness of the hammers, and the placement and types of microphones recording in the virtual space.
Taylor Brook. MIDI realization of Cloud Fantasia, from Virtutes Occultae © 2021 Taylor Brook
**JACK Quartet**
Christopher Otto, violin
Austin Wulliman, violin
John Pickford Richards, viola
Jay Campbell, cello

Passage was written for the JACK Quartet. Subject, dedicated to the members of the JACK Quartet, was made possible by the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program with generous funding provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Chamber Music America Endowment Fund. Ascension, dedicated to Mario Davidovsky, was commissioned by the State University of New York, Purchase, with generous support from the Marx Family Foundation. Testify, dedicated to Lewis Nielson, was supported by New Music USA, made possible by annual support and/or endowment gifts from the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, Helen F. Whitaker Funds, Aaron Copland Fund for Music, and the New York State Council for the Arts.

**Amy Williams**

*Urquintett* (2020) •
for soprano and string quartet
with Tony Arnold, soprano

Commissioned by the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation for Tony Arnold and the JACK Quartet.

**Jason Eckardt**

*Passage* (2020) •
for string quartet and optional lighting

I. Subject
II. Ascension
III. Testify

**Wednesday, August 18, 2021, 7:30 pm**
Mary Flagler Cary Hall
DiMenna Center for Classical Music

*Urquintett* (2020) •
for soprano and string quartet
with Tony Arnold, soprano

Commissioned by the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation for Tony Arnold and the JACK Quartet.

*Passage* (2020) •
for string quartet and optional lighting

I. Subject
II. Ascension
III. Testify

*World premiere*

Concert duration approximately 70 minutes
Amy Williams

Urquintett (2020)

Urquintett is inspired by Ursonate, Kurt Schwitters’s pioneering work of sound poetry, completed in 1932. The source material is transformed in continuously varying ways, including the strings ‘playing’ the text and the singer deconstructing the text into even smaller sonic fragments. Although the quintet is also in four movements, it does not conform to the sonata form. There is not one definitive performance version of Ursonate—in fact, the variety of the presentations that it can take speaks to its strength as a true masterpiece. I hope that my Urquintett is both a tribute to the work and a piece that demonstrates that these specific words (i.e., sounds) can be fertile ground for new art.
Part I  Subject

Beginning in the 1950s, the CIA became interested in psychological research on the effects of sensory deprivation on humans. The research, suggesting rapid regression in those tested, provided a framework for sections of the KUBARK manual, the first in a series of United States-government documents providing detainee-interrogation techniques that involved radically altering a detainee’s sense of time and environment. Among the techniques, some developed independently by interrogators, were the manipulation of light and sound. In order to weaken the resolve of a subject and prolong ‘capture shock’, complete sensory deprivation followed by blasts of light, noise, or very loud music, proved effective—so much so that variations and combinations of these techniques were widely used by the United States as well as its allies and enemies, in Vietnam, Latin America, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East. Though the idea of sound as a weapon is at least as old as the Biblical account of Joshua’s siege of Jericho, it was only recently deemed “inhuman and degrading” for the purposes of interrogation by the European Court of Human Rights in the 1978 case, Ireland v. the United Kingdom.

Part II  Ascension

Following traumatic experiences, it is not unusual for survivors to experience frightening flashbacks and dreams; an urge to avoid places, events, or objects that might remind them of the trauma; uncontrollable anxiety, nervousness, and emotional volatility; gaps in memory; and distorted feelings of guilt, blame, and one’s place in the world. Despite these debilitating afflictions, a remarkable number of survivors significantly decrease or eliminate their symptoms with proper treatment.

Part III  Testify

Both publicly and privately, many survivors seek justice and raise awareness through word and action. Not motivated only by retribution, they offer first-person evidence as well as pathways to empathy and reconciliation. Whether addressing the United Nations Human Rights Council, the International Criminal Court in The Hague, or the United States Congress, survivors’ testimony is too often met with inaction. Institutional apathy, lack of international cooperation, and limited or absent public outrage allow the cycle to continue. Nevertheless, the conviction and courage of these survivors are powerful inspirations for all of us to confront and combat oppression, subjugation, and injustice.
Eduardo Aguilar
HYPER (2021) •

inti figgis-vizueta
mayu (the great river) (2021) •

Brittany J. Green
Lead Me Home (2021) •
Commissioned by JACK Quartet for the 2020 JACK Studio Artists
Rencontres (2021)

Olivia Shortt
the body remembers (2021) •

JACK Quartet
Christopher Otto, violin
Austin Wulliman, violin
John Pickford Richards, viola
Jay Campbell, cello

• World premiere
Concert duration 90 minutes

Eduardo Aguilar
HYPER (2021)

hyper-{(prefix): excess; over; beyond; above}

HYPER is a movement design that produces sound energy. I try to form a continuous object where the sound material evolves through the design of the physical forces that produce it. The result is a fusion of sound and movement; forces that move in a fast and excited way. Thus, although the configuration seeks the sound, it (the configuration) exceeds it (the sound and its perception).

In the HYPER score I propose a new model for movement writing. This writing mode allows the representation of the spatio-temporal reality at the necessary resolution (adjustable) to accurately write and read the movement that evolves sound. HYPER explores an idea of coherence in time-space; of unfolding in ‘space-sound’; of take-off in ‘sound-air’; of friction in ‘air-nothing’; of overflow in ‘nothing-all(one)’.

The movement of the quartet pushes towards the over-concentration of a single energetic entity (a sort of perpetual circuit where all the energy tries to concentrate inside), looking for a hyper-approach to movement, looking for the finest occupation of space-time . . . until breaking it, until losing it, until exceeding it . . . until contacting its nothingness.

HYPER is a continuous gesture of energy. It is driven by a tangible force but manifests itself as ethereal—like the light of a nonexistent object. It unfolds radiantly in the environment, but subjected to the limits of the space-time continuum, as the green ray
inti figgis-vizueta

mayu (the great river) (2021)

mayu (the great river) is inspired by indigenous Andean cosmology and iconography through the lens of queerness, diaspora, and separation. The score works as an ecosystem for connecting living constellations, musical materials, and the individual/collective experience of time. The piece is a reflection on the multiple temporalities experienced and harnessed by displaced, erased, and structurally excluded peoples. These layers of time, the material and immaterial, are sources of joy | resilience | survival, and perhaps, future.

Brittany J. Green

Lead Me Home (2021)

Lead Me Home is a reflective piece that draws material from Thomas Dorsey’s hymn, “Precious Lord, Take My Hand.” Written for strings and electronics, the piece features a shimmering texture that gradually unfolds as ethereal electronic harmonies weave in and out of moving cluster pads in the strings. A love letter to those who have lost so much and so many during the COVID-19 pandemic, Lead Me Home evokes the despair and hope of the hymn.
Brittany J. Green

Rencontres (2021)

Rencontres for string quartet was composed for the JACK Quartet as a part of the inaugural 2019 JACK Studio Artists initiative. It explores the brevity, tension, and euphoria of chance encounters. The piece juxtaposes whispered text, *rencontrer l’amour est doux au toucher* [to encounter love is sweet to the touch], expressive ornamental gestures, and lush, resonate textures with disjunct rhythms, dissonant harmonies, and aggressive and noisy textures. These contrasting elements often find themselves giving into and growing out of each other, representing a constant state of uncertainty.

Olivia Shortt

The body remembers (2021)

The body remembers was written for the JACK Quartet as a part of the inaugural JACK Studio Artists initiative and is a work for string quartet created as an artistic offering to the thousands of missing and murdered indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit People of Turtle Island (North America) who have disappeared, as well as the indigenous people and allies who are volunteering time and are taking action to work together to support each other, their communities, and the search for information regarding the mass genocide and disappearances. The title of this work is inspired by Billy-Ray Belcourt’s essay, “The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open,” as well as the 2019 film of the same name (also inspired by Belcourt’s essay).

The body remembers when the world broke open is a provocation of mine to think the time-frame of colonial worldlings through the language of haunting and speculation. Which is to say that we are not done mourning the “world-shattering” magnitude of settler invasion and its attendant crime scenes of all sorts and that this kind of loss yields effects that reverberate into the near future by way of the body’s ‘critical receptivity’; that is, the ease with which we can be undone and displaced by others.

From Billy-Ray Belcourt, “The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open”

The U.S Department of Justice found that American Indian [indigenous] women face murder rates that are more than ten times the national average.

From the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women

The National Crime Information Center reports that, in 2016, there were 5,712 reports of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls, though the US Department of Justice’s federal missing persons database, NamUs, only logged 116 cases.

From the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report
Alex Mincek
So Many Ways (2021)

There are so many ways to listen—so many ways to make sense of sound from moment to moment. We may continually shift our attention from one parameter to another—from duration to pitch, from texture to timbre, and so on—perhaps focusing on one aspect while completely missing another. . . . Likewise, there are so many ways to articulate musical ideas—so many choices to make regarding how to perhaps ‘best’ express and represent myriad thoughts, feelings, and physical phenomena.

In So Many Ways I’ve tried to arrange multiple ways of perceiving logical, meaning-bearing narratives for each individual musical parameter: timbre, pitch, duration, amplitude, envelope, and texture. For example, the harmonic language in the piece has been arranged so that it might be equally understood or felt as arising from either a purely intervallic set of rules, or a completely tonal framework, or from an entirely acoustic point of view. Of course, these individual logics, attached to individual parameters, become highly convoluted since they often unfold simultaneously at different rates of progress. For this reason, the musical materials have been reduced to a rather bleak collection of utterances.

But, dear listener, perhaps you don’t make sense of any of it after all. Perhaps you simply hear a succession of isolated sounds passing by aimlessly with no discernable raison d’être? That’s ok. That’s just one of the ways.
**Mariel Roberts**  
*or we don’t need light* (2021)

Light, both practically and metaphorically, defines our sense of space and environment. It serves to illuminate, obscure, direct, or diffuse our attention. It also physically impacts our corporeal experience, bridging the gap between interiority and exteriority of perception. Or we don’t need light translating the ever-changing continuum between light and darkness into a purely sonic context.

**Sam Pluta**  
*Systems of Interaction I* (2021)

For the past twenty years, I have been creating computer systems and compositional systems where users/machines/players interact to create musical dialog. This work, the first in an ongoing series, explicitly explores agent-based interactions between instrumentalists, scores, and software to produce a constantly unfolding tapestry of sonic relationships.

**Ben LaMar Gay**  
*Known Better. Still Lit* (2021)

*Known Better. Still Lit* is a new work that explores memories within a city’s grid system as well as in the absence of. The material is based on Chicago’s relationship between sound, grids, flow, and the abrupt openness of the Great Lake. *Known Better. Still Lit* is made of tone cycles that are reshaped through collective memory and used as suggested routes to both escape and reposition oneself inside the grid.
Saturday, August 21, 2021, at 7:30 pm
Mary Flagler Cary Hall
DiMenna Center for Classical Music

Microludes for György Kurtág a selection (2015-17) •

Marcos Balter
Hang (2017) •

Amy Williams
In the Shadows (2017) •

Carola Bauckholt
When They Go Low We Go High (2017) •

Caspar Johannes Walter
Spiel mit dem Unendlichen (2016) •

Philippe Manoury
G for K (2016) •

Amy Williams
Piano Portraits (2019-20) •
Ursula, Nils, Liz, Hibbard, Olga, Allen

Erik Oña
Jodeln (1999) •

Amy Williams
Piano Portraits (2019-20) •
Helena, Frieda, Yvar, Lukas

Amy Williams
Switch (2014) •
Commissioned by the Sinquefield Charitable Foundation for the New Muse Piano Duo

Bugallo-Williams Piano Duo
Helena Bugallo
Amy Williams

• New York City premiere
Concert duration approximately one hour
Amy Williams

Microludes for György Kurtág, a selection (2015–17)

Tonight’s program celebrates musical friendship. Many of György Kurtág’s nearly 100 pieces for piano four-hands and two pianos reflect his thoughts and recollections of the music of other musicians. For the Bugallo-Williams Piano Duo’s Microludes for György Kurtág project, ten esteemed international composers contributed new pieces (of which five are presented here) in the spirit of Kurtág’s work. The series pays homage to the master of miniatures and celebrates his pianistic legacy. A significant contribution to the repertoire, it marks the debut of all the composers in the genre of one piano, four-hands.

Amy Williams

Piano Portraits (2019–20)

Each of the ten Piano Portraits is a personal reflection of a pianist who has influenced my musical development—grandparents, teachers and professional colleagues. There are allusions to specific works (The Rite of Spring in Liz, Salt Peanuts in Hibbard, Erik Oña’s Jodeln in Helena) and more elusive stylistic references (Brahms in Olga, Bach in Lukas, stride piano in Allen). I was also inspired by these pianists’ very particular approaches to the instrument (Nils playing Feldman, Ursula playing Nancarrow, Frieda demonstrating scales, Yvar multitasking). The Portraits are dedicated to the memory of Argentine composer and conductor Erik Oña. A dear friend and colleague since 1993—and Helena’s husband—Erik was one of the most original and inspiring musicians I will ever know. He died in September 2019 of pancreatic cancer.

Erik Oña

Jodeln (1999)

Erik Oña’s extraordinary work, Jodeln, was foundational to the formation of the Duo, when we were all in graduate school together in Buffalo in the late 1990s. The sonic concept of the piece (all harmonics), with low notes that are stopped by the other player to create a yodelling effect preceded considerations of performance practicability. The challenges of notation and coordination were developed in close collaboration over several years. The result is a stunningly beautiful exploration of the world of overtones with their subtle nuances of color, pitch, and reverberation.

Formally, it evolves as a cyclical spiral, branching off at particular point in order to highlight a detail and return more or less inconspicuously to the main cycle. Jodeln, is part of a trilogy completed by Andere Stimmen (for prepared piano, six hands) and Lokaler Widerstand (for piano duet and string orchestra). The three works are conceptually related, but their sound is markedly different.
The term ‘switch’ has multiple meanings that are relevant to this short four-hand work: a device for making and breaking the connection in an electric circuit; a sudden change; a shift in direction or focus; a thin, flexible rod or twig; to exchange or swap; to jerk or swish abruptly. It can also be onomatopoetic. The pairing of two players at one piano is central to the construction of the piece. One shadows the other, or interrupts with dissimilar music, or coexists with a contrasting but complementary texture, or cooperates in search of common ground (which is only reached at the end of the piece). The inside and the outside of the piano interconnect, as do normal and prepared notes. The physical position of the players is also flexible, as there is no ‘normal’ register for the top and bottom parts. All this illustrates some of the challenges and certainly the joy of playing four-hands.
Monday, August 23, 2012, at 7:30 pm
Mary Flagler Cary Hall
DiMenna Center for Classical Music

Catherine Lamb
*parallaxis forma* (2016)
for voice and ensemble
with Tony Arnold, soprano

Sarah Hennies
*Clock Dies* (2021) •
Commissioned by The Earle Brown Music Foundation Charitable Trust

Oscar Bettison
*La Arqueologia del Neón* (2021) •
Commissioned by the Talea Ensemble with funds provided by the Fromm Music Commissioning Award OB 2021

Talea Ensemble
James Baker, conductor
Barry J. Crawford, flute
Gleb Kanasevich, clarinet
Marianne Gythfeldt, clarinet
Zach Herchen, saxophone
Oren Fader, electric guitar
Stephen Gosling, piano
Alex Lipowski, percussion
Matthew Gold, percussion
Karen Kim, violin
Hannah Levinson, viola
Chris Gross, cello
David Adamcyk, sound engineer
Caitlin Cawley, stage manager

* World premiere
Concert duration approximately 75 minutes
Catherine Lamb
*parallaxis forma* (2016)

Parallax, from *parallaxis* (Latin, to alter)
the apparent displacement / difference in position
of a nearby object against a background
as perceived from two viewing locations
or
the angle subtended at a celestial body, especially a
star,
by the radius of the earth's orbit

Sarah Hennies
*Clock Dies* (2021)

Nearly all activity on earth relies on circadian rhythm.
For humans, our existence is governed by a biochemical
circadian clock, a mechanism in the brain synchronized
almost exactly with the 24-hour day that allows our
neural pathways to adjust to changes in our environment.
However, this seemingly universal process can malfunc-
tion, where a disruption of the circadian clock sets off a
chain reaction of biological and behavioral abnormalities.
*Clock Dies* considers the musical ensemble as an ecosys-
tem of interconnected internal processes that become
irregular, exaggerated, and fractured due to the disrup-
tion of regular oscillations.

Oscar Bettison
*La Arqueología del Neón* (2021)

La Arqueología del Neón (The Archeology of Neon) was
written for Talea Ensemble. Unlike a lot of my works that
are somewhat more conceptually based, this piece is more
abstract. That having been said, the things that seemed to
attach themselves to the piece as I was working on it, are
things that I do tend to return to. These were the ideas of
light, particularly artificial light (I have an obsession with
artificiality) and the noisy, buzzy distortion associated
with old neon tubes, together with the idea of uncovering,
or unearthing of ideas, of music heard through, or under,
other music. These ideas manifest themselves in different
ways in the piece: as far as distortion is concerned, almost
all of the ensemble have preparations in place that distort
their natural sound, and the idea of uncovering is most
obviously found in composed ‘holes’ in the fabric of the
piece when the normally fast activity suddenly stops, and
microtonal drones give way to a different sort of music.
I think of La Arqueología del Neón as a sort of frenetic
chamber concerto. The ensemble is divided into smaller
groupings, with the strings often acting as one unit
against the rest of the ensemble. There are occasional
accompanied solos that emerge in the course of the
piece, as well as an underlying progression of pulses that
occasionally rises to the surface.
Andrew McIntosh
Little Jimmy (2020) ·
1. Positive/Negative 1
2. Little Jimmy at the end of winter
3. Positive/Negative 2
4. Heart
5. Positive/Negative 3
6. Little Jimmy, Half an Hour Later, or, there is a place within you that has never been wounded

Wolfgang Heiniger
Neumond (2019) ·

Zosha Di Castri
Tachitipo (2016)
Commissioned with support from the Canada Council for the Arts

Yarn/Wire
Laura Barger, piano
Russell Greenberg, percussion
Sae Hashimoto, percussion
Julia Den Boer, piano

* World premiere
Concert duration approximately one hour

Little Jimmy uses field recordings taken on April 23, 2020 in the San Gabriel Mountains, at or near the Little Jimmy backpackers’ camp on Mt. Islip, in the Angeles National Forest. At the time the forest was under several feet of snow, just beginning to melt and emerge from winter conditions. I wasn’t intending to write a piece about wildfire or climate change, but I had already been planning to use those recordings in this piece in late August of 2020 when the Bobcat Fire burned the trees captured in the recordings. The recordings appear in the second and sixth movements.

A note also on the titles of the three Positive/Negative movements: over the past several years I have become quite fond of the gridded and enameled tile pieces of visual artist Jennifer Bartlett. These three small movements owe some of their creative inspiration to her work, and the titles are in reference to early pieces of hers. Lastly, the subtitle of the sixth movement, there is a place within you that has never been wounded, comes from an interview with Irish poet John O’Donahue.
Wolfgang Heiniger

_Neumond_ (2018)

*Neumond* (New Moon) is a nostalgic piece, a goth piece, however one that appeals to a modernism that never existed. A reminder of the music of early horror films, a dark and poetic pagan ritual (in black-and-white, of course). You’ll hear two electronic organs in microtonal tuning and two drums singing a song of wistfulness during the new moon. Or something like that.

The horror is only fake, but the yearning might be real and present.

Zosha Di Castri

_Tachitipo_ (2016)

This piece is a reflection on writing and the machines we use to execute our ideas. Nietzsche wrote, “Our tools are also working on our thoughts,” something I often think about when composing. Here, I return to a more antiquated technology, the typewriter, to build a syntax of sounds. The title, *Tachitipo*, comes from an 1823 typewriter model, also known as the *tachigrafo*, invented by the Italian Pietro Conti di Clavegna. The typewriter epitomizes nineteenth- and early twentieth-century attitudes towards writing: efficiency becomes paramount as typing begins to approach the rapid-fire speed of thought, in all of its desperate fury. It also affixes sound to the imprinting of symbols on the page, not unlike modern technologies for music notation.

The term ‘typewriter’ referred both to the machine, the occupation, and the person (usually a woman) who used it. Although taking up typing may have been an emancipatory act, it is interesting that, though given the tools for writing, women at this time rarely held the power behind the signs they were producing. Authorship was still at a degree of remove. This was a dictation job good girls did before getting married—a special, temporary status—not unlike the piano lessons previous generations undertook to attract suitors. Here, I reclaim the object as author, transcriber, and pianist.
The initial impetus spurring the composition came from a comic evolutionary diagram attached to an article by Kate Lunau in *Maclean’s* Magazine, entitled “The downside of human evolution.” It showed the classic progression from an ape on all fours, through early bipedal ancestors, to the anatomically modern standing human—and in direct mirror image, the eventual crouching back down of the body over the exact tools and technologies which have separated us from other species. This image of the body regressing from an erect posture to a figure hunched over work shaped the dramatic progression of the piece and its resulting sounds. I believe we create art in the hopes of transcending the everyday, to connect with others, to reach towards moments of opening, clarity, or understanding, and yet the tools we’ve invented to facilitate this pursuit can result in the consequence of isolating us even further, curling the body back in onto itself.

The resulting music in *Tachitipo* ranges from very free abstract, quasi-improvisatory textures to rigorously controlled musical structures, with the musicians emerging out of and disappearing into fields of nuanced noise. *Tachitipo* is dedicated to the hard-working and truly inspiring musicians of Yarn/Wire.

A cembalo scrivano, an 1846 model typewriter invented by Giuseppe Ravizza, a follower of Pietro Conti, the inventor of the tachigrafo or tachitipo. The name cembalo scrivano refers to the typewriter’s piano-like keys and keyboard.
George E. Lewis
Not Alone (2014–15)

Fredrick Gifford
Difficult Grace (2019)

Monty Adkins
Winter Tendrils (2014/15)
Commissioned by the Swedish Arts Council for Seth Parker Woods

Nathalie Joachim
The Race: 1915 (2019)

Ryan Carter
Default Mode Network (2019)

Freida Abtan
My Heart Is a River (2020)
Commissioned by the Seattle Symphony, 2020

Pierre Alexandre Tremblay
asinglewordisnotenough 3 [invariant] (2015)

Seth Parker Woods, cello
Pierre Alexandre Tremblay, electronics

Concert duration approximately 90 minutes
Monty Adkins

*Winter Tendrils* (2014/2020)

The work is inspired by an image of freshly fallen snow on the fragile, bare branches of a tree. The image was subsequently processed and overlaid on itself several times. The composition follows a similar model. In the first part, the solo cello presents the main musical line. In the second part, the ‘tendrils’ from this line are superimposed. These lines are transposed and fragmented. As a result, five canonic lines (tendrils) spin off from the initial line and are heard simultaneously. The canons are strict, but not heard in their entirety. This creates a rich harmonic web akin to the final processed image. The second section of the work draws on materials from the first, creating further tendrils from the harmonic, timbral, and melodic implications of the opening movement.

Fredrick Gifford

*Difficult Grace* (2019)

As Seth Parker Woods and I brainstormed a project that would simultaneously feature his voice and cello, I asked if he would be willing to share several authors and works that were important for him. In reading through these, I was struck by Dudley Randall’s poem, ‘Primitives’—and *Difficult Grace* began. I wanted to create a musical process, a kind of sonic network of relations that would set Randall’s original poem in dialogue with itself in musical time, both verbally and sonically. In *Difficult Grace*, I hoped to create a work where aspects of Randall’s poem (rhythms, durations, phonetic timbre, syntax, and meaning) would generate each musical gesture (even the title is a line from the poem); and Seth’s voice and cello would be the instrument. All of the sounds in the live electronics layers are untransformed recordings of his performance.
Nathalie Joachim

*The Race: 1915* is inspired by the colorful vibrancy and nostalgic realism of visual artist Jacob Lawrence’s *Migration Series*, which depicts images of African Americans as they embarked on one of the most expansive migratory movements in history. The work, for solo cello and electronics, combines blues-inspired melodies (including a quote from “Praise God We Are Not Weary,” by Tom Brown and Tom Lemonier) with the angst and uncertainty of transient movement, against a colorfully active and vibrant electronic palette. It addresses at once the uprooting and resilience of black people in America.

The work calls for the performer to recite text sourced from *The Chicago Defender*, one of the most important and historic black newspapers. Weekly issues of *The Chicago Defender* played an essential role in promoting The Great Migration, and all of the text is taken from issues published in 1915—the year marking the beginning of the movement which would span nearly six decades. By citing the atrocities faced by African Americans in the oppressive and violent Jim Crow South, and providing resources for those seeking freedom, millions were compelled to embark on incredibly challenging journeys, leading to the development of the northern and western city-centers of the United States. The publication adopted the term ‘the Race’, which was used in lieu of the terms ‘negro’ or ‘black’—a significant and powerful statement of self.

Text fragments selected from issues of *The Chicago Defender*, published in 1915

Nine human beings hanged within 24 hours

... and today, a lynching party is pursuing a tenth member of the race.

Look at it: see these men hanging from a limb of a tree

Then look at the other race farmers who were made to come and look at them. Race woman slain like cattle on public street

... she begged for help, but not a hand was turned.

The race that has slaved for the country, felled the trees,

built its railroads, labored day and night

was not given opportunity

No person identified with this intelligent and progressing race should allow this. Any effort to deprive us of our rights should be referred to the authorities because such is against the Constitution of these United States.
reacting to external stimuli—that we engage that part of the brain’s basic infrastructure devoted to building up a sense of our stable autobiographical past. This is the ‘default mode network’. So, without solitude, we can’t construct a stable sense of self.*

So this is a piece about making music together, but also about the quiet time we all need for music—and anything that really matters—to be possible.

Freida Abtan
*My Heart Is a River* (2020)

*My Heart Is a River* (composed in memory of Raphael Abtan) is a piece for video, live cello, and pre-processed accompaniment. Narratively, the piece traces the borders between dreams and identity. A cello player performs, and stories emerge from his instrument. In these dreams, he shares a picnic with a friend, and they plan an adventure. They sail through rough waters using the cello as a boat. At their destination, they mirror movement against an invisible barrier. The music in the piece uses spectral processing to transform the sounds of a cello into physical materials such as water and skipping rocks. The live cellist, Seth Parker Woods, plays with a click track for tight synchronization with the pre-recorded electronic accompaniment.
Traduttore, traditore, says the Italian proverb. Traduire, c’est avoir l’honnêteté de s’en tenir à une imperfection allusive, nuances the translator Pierre Leyris. This series of pieces looks at the impossibility of translating, firstly, the text, and then the context. The multiple nuances of words and images, flatten, lost, unseizable. Moreover, it is also a reflection on the inexpressible, where music and silence allow some states /sentiment/experience to be expressed with more power/precision/nuances. Therefore, this suite of pieces should be taken as different expressions of a single impression, whose sense is multiplied by their common/composed/remembered past. Explain/comment/multiply the music by music, or as Harold Bloom says so elegantly, “the meaning of a poem can only be another poem.” This third piece/iteration/instance is the first with a live/acoustic instrument/source. Whereas the original electronic explores the gestural/embodiment limits of fixed media, here the cello reaches for a world of articulated transients/noises/textures/splices. Ideas are expanded/shrunk/distorted at the limit of recognition, to allow/free their essence from their broken shell.
As I began writing this piece, I kept being drawn into a tune that has haunted me for some time. Billy Strayhorn’s “Lotus Blossom,” with its poignant falling lines and close, sighing intervals, is a special shade of bittersweet. In this perfectly melancholy tune, a melodic sequence blooms into an expanded lament, only to rise hopefully and pleadingly during its bridge and then resolve resignedly downwards again. And its accompanying harmony, filled with suspended longing and tinged with regret, holds the secret to why Duke Ellington called it “just about my favorite, possibly” of his close collaborator’s output. The mood and sinuous profile of “Lotus Blossom,” at one point titled “All Roads Lead Back to You,” became the starting point of All Roads. I envisaged it with more and more layers, complicating and implicating the harmony, and with ever more momentary suspensions and resolutions. As the piece grew to its final form, the reimagined tune became the through-line of the entire work, returning in distant transformations and detours in between and throughout the pairs of four main movements. And the imagery and metaphor of roads and paths diverging, circling, flowing, and expanding, and finally rejoining, gave shape to the journey of the piece. In the Introduction (“First Detour”), the piano’s sustained notes guide through traces of the strained melody, with outer voices both harmonizing and atomizing, and strings producing a hazy, suspended sheen. The full quintet begins in earnest (“Forking Paths”) when the strings take over at what would be the bridge, pushing against the piano’s...
responses, with ever more urgent, repeated swells. In the following Interlude (“Second Detour”), the lyrical strings become the current against which the piano’s active ornamentation once again resists. This flows into a new movement, “Circuitous Routes (Winding Passacaglias),” which cycles through several expanding chord sequences, around which torrents of rapid piano activity begin to accumulate. It ends with steely vertical sonorities that vaporize into ever-higher reaches. In its aftermath, a lyrical episode for piano alone traces the curves and outlines of the initial melody, its shadowy profile still intact, but morphed into something entirely different. All instruments are again united in the third movement (“Estuary”), the resonances of the piano providing the anchor from which the strings issue streams of quiet, buzzing intensity. A final interlude recalls the even more distant opening, now three times removed, before the full ensemble launches into the final movement (“Convergence”), which is also the longest and most expansive. Extroverted in rhythm and groove, it occasionally recalls the quiet, sighing music of earlier, only to revert to its propulsive engine and bring the piece to its charged conclusion.

*Elective Memory (2015)*

When I was approached by Jenny Koh to write a piece in conversation with Beethoven’s Sonata Op. 96 in early 2013, I was just starting to embark on several projects with the specific goal of responding to Beethoven. The orchestral work *Lyra* (2013–14) was inspired by the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice throughout the history of western music and its possible connection to Beethoven’s Fourth Piano Concerto in particular, and the piano quintet *Bagatelles* (2014) took fragments of the Coriolan Overture and Fifth Symphony as points of departure. Thus the appeal was especially timely and prescient, though the shadow and influence of Beethoven has been a constant theme throughout my life as a composer and pianist. The composers in the Bridge to Beethoven project have each responded in very different ways to the calling, weaving biographical strands into reimagined histories and recontextualizing individual movements with interludes.

The title *Elective Memory* is somewhat of a cross between selective memory, either unconscious or by will, and elective affinity, a concept made famous by Goethe as a kind of pseudo-scientific theory of natural predilection and inclination in the realm of human relations, as guided by chemical reactions. An elective affinity between Goethe and Beethoven manifested itself in a mutual admiration for one another’s work, but also a mismatched series of meetings in July 1812 (the same month when Beethoven wrote his mysterious “immortal beloved” letters, and also the year of his Op. 96 sonata). The legendary encounters took place in Teplice, a spa town in the present-day Czech Republic, in which each rebuked the other on account of perceived social failings.

My piece begins with a hazily recalled fragment of Op. 96, the opening plaintive birdcall trill that becomes the basis of an ongoing dialogue between the violin and piano, transforming it into something lonely and with simple longing, a dialogue no longer between the instruments, but struggling within itself, in displaced phrases and registers across the violin. The ‘golden age’ referred to in the first movement could be that of
Beethoven’s mythological past (through the rose-tinted glasses of hindsight) or simply an idyllic, paradisal world that Beethoven’s pastoral language evokes. The second movement is all about dramatic contrasts and increasingly larger brushstrokes. Here, I turn to the elective memory of an earlier sonata for violin and piano, written when I was eighteen, a piece that I later consciously repressed but occasionally revisited, and which is itself about involuntary memory, inspired by the fictitious Vinteuil sonata of Proust’s À la recherche du temps perdu. The reawakening of that forbidden memory, recalled in fleeting moments throughout the movement, is interspersed with an equally passing gesture from the Beethoven, a simple up-down wavelike motion between the two instruments in absolute unity, before their bonds eventually become loosened. The naïve gesture soon transforms into a series of sweeping, impassioned movements, overlapping and traded between the instruments, before they are brought back together with rhythmic cohesion and propulsion. A final “Nocturne, Half-Remembered,” in contrast to the dawn music of the opening “Aubade,” returns us to the fragmented, drawn-out ‘bird’ theme of the opening, this time even more disassembled and refracted. While the violin assumes an increasingly lyrical role, departing from yet always alluding to the opening motif, the piano’s role turns more ‘accompanimental’, providing a floating and ever-expanding backdrop.

This is a piece about the selective affinities that Jenny and I share for this particular Beethoven sonata—it is our favorite amongst the cycle—and the elective memories I have chosen to guide my response to it.
**The Real Book of Fake Tunes (2015)**

The five movements of this work are, of course, no more ‘tunes’ in the traditional definition of the word than fake book lead sheets are substitutes for songs in all their multiple dimensions of performance history and interpretative open-endedness. The somewhat tongue-in-cheek title—with a reference to the infamous ‘Real Book’ that has served as a gateway anthology and/or gig enabler for so many aspiring jazz musicians since the 1970s—belie a formal architecture of five movements with distinctive characteristics, and with an instrumentation that has been around since the eighteenth century but has still not found a serious following. The different character traits between, and consistency within, each movement, as well as the relatively equal durations, give the feeling of a suite. Parallels could be drawn to different genre types: a floating, weightless introduction that turns capricious; a somewhat sorrowful ballad with interruptions; a semi-serious scherzo that swells and subsides in wave-like motions; a resonance study that turns into a free-flowing, improvisatory rhapsody. And in the finale, the closest one gets to a ‘tune’ in the familiar sense, is with repeated and expanding yet irregularly timed chord progressions that might remind some of John Coltrane’s “Countdown.” Throughout, the interplay between the flutes and quartet is one that is ever-shifting, with roles that alternate between soloist/accompaniment and fully integrated and equal. The dynamic personalities of Claire Chase and the members of the Spektral Quartet were never far from my thoughts when composing this piece, and I am grateful to them for giving me the chance to stretch in whatever ways suitable to the whimsical moment.
Saturday, August 28, 2021, at 7:30 pm
Mary Flagler Cary Hall
DiMenna Center for Classical Music

Ashley Fure
*Feed Forward* (2015)
Commissioned for Klangforum Wien on receipt of the Impuls International Composition Competition, 2015

Anthony Cheung
*A line can go anywhere* (2019) •
I Wound Wire
II Weightless/Suspended
III Woven Wire—Homage to Ruth Asawa
Commissioned by the Kölner Philharmonie for Ensemble Modern

Matthias Pintscher
*Bereshit* (2011-13)

Talea Ensemble
James Baker, conductor

Stephen Gosling, piano
Barry J. Crawford, flute
Laura Cocks, flute
Arthur Sato, oboe
Hsuan-Fong Chen, English horn
Marianne Gythfeldt, clarinet
Rane Moore, clarinet
Gleb Kanasevich, clarinet
Zach Herchen, saxophone
Adrian Morejon, bassoon
Nanci Belmont, contrabassoon
Katie Jordan, horn
Nicolee Kuester, horn
Sam Jones, trumpet
Theo van Dyck, trumpet
Kevin Fairbairn, trombone
Chris McIntyre, trombone
Alex Lipowski, percussion

Matthew Gold, percussion
Sae Hashimoto, percussion
Samuel Budish, percussion
Nuiko Wadden, harp
Lucie Vítková, accordion
Steven Beck, piano
Karen Kim, violin
Emilie-Anne Gendron, violin
Maya Bennardo, violin
Hannah Levinson, viola
Carrie Frey, viola
Chris Gross, cello
Mariel Roberts, cello
Greg Chudzik, double bass
David Adamczyk sound engineer
Caitlin Cawley, stage manager

• US premiere
Concert duration approximately 90 minutes
**Ashley Fure**  
*Feed Forward* (2015)

*Feed Forward* toys with the interplay of matter and form. It starts all cleanly cut: sharp edges, stark shifts, sound shoved into separate, self-contained units. Progressively, boundaries begin to break down. Things bleed through and blur. Acoustic material, once severed and sliced, stretches out and starts to morph into fused, fluid expanses that dissolve structural barriers.

**Anthony Cheung**  
*A line can go anywhere* (2019)

*A line can go anywhere* is a piano concerto in three movements, written with Ueli Wiget and my friends in Ensemble Modern very much in mind. They challenge you to be at your most inventive, since the commitment they bring is total and unequivocal. With Ueli, what I especially appreciate is his delineation of layer, precision, and boundless energy. I’d like to think those qualities translate into the piano writing.

There are multiple and contrasting ways of thinking about the role of the piano in this piece. As a heartbeat and engine, especially in the first and last movements, it can pull distant rotating objects into its orbit, while
they continue to obey their own laws of gravity. This is especially relevant in the first movement, “Wound Wire,” where multiple simultaneous motors are being activated at once and yet share enough rhythmic difference and harmonic coordination to function as a whole. The title of the movement alludes to the heavier, thicker strings on the piano—those in the lower register wound with copper wire—as well as the strong force of attacks that these strings withstand, and the inherent tension on and within piano strings that give the instrument its unique range of coloristic possibility.

The second movement, “Weightless/Suspended,” is a counterbalance, and yet related to the opening. Here, the focus is primarily on the role of the soloist, with multiple layers contained within the instrument, partitioned between several competing lyrical lines and supportive yet wholly disjunct outside layers. Throughout the piece, but especially in this movement, the sostenuto pedal provides a crucial role in balancing all the temporalities and personalities of the independent layers. The electronic keyboard also expands its role of playing shadow microtonal lines, incorporating a Rhodes piano sound-tuned in just intonation to provide a dreamy, ethereal haze. And by the end of the movement, pure sine tones have taken over, with the soloist pushing up against their alien yet immovable frequencies. “Woven Wire—Homage to Ruth Asawa” opens with gradually changing patterns and loops, constantly shifting the focus of outer vs. inner melody and shapes within objects. Here I was inspired by the Japanese American sculptor Ruth Asawa (1926–2013), who was known especially in my hometown of San

Ruth Asawa, Untitled (Six-lobed Continuous Form with One Suspended and Two Tied Spheres) detail, ca. 1958. Photo: Anthony Cheung
Francisco, where she spent her entire professional career. Her works from the 1950s and ’60s use a technique of woven wire to create objects that might resemble baskets but more likely abstracted geometric shapes, often with symmetries and shapes-within-shapes that are multidimensional and especially rich when observed from multiple angles. Suspended from the ceiling in weightless space with a play of shadows on the walls, these works are so beautiful yet ultimately contradictory, with materials that are flexible and fragile yet dense and hard, and shapes that are buoyant but also made of edges. In other words, just like the piano itself, with its steel and copper wires enclosed in a box. The connective thread of the movement—its incessant motion, looped patterns, and lines-within-lines—ultimately derives from this aesthetic, which Asawa summed up perfectly: “I realized that if I was going to make these forms, which interlock and interweave, it can only be done with a line because a line can go anywhere.”

Matthias Pintscher
Bereshit (2011-13)

Bereshit, Hebrew for ‘in beginning’, is a reflection on the act of creation, a beginning, a turning point, the process of perception, and our development of awareness.

. . . As if you woke up in the pitch darkness of night in a strange room and only realized after a few seconds where you were. In this state you attempt to make out the shapes of the space. It is a beginning from absolute darkness and shapelessness. Quite cautiously and gradually particles free themselves, then condense and fit together in shapes.

Bereshit emerges from an initial sound as if from an absolute nothing, from a sound that subsides into percussive noises, from which elements then disentangle themselves and condense. It is a very organic piece. The material is treated quasi-chronologically; it develops slowly. The composition emerges from the idea of freeing an entire compendium of sounds, gestures, rhythms, and orchestrations from an original state of sound. There is a central note, an F, which opens the piece and stretches through the piece like a horizon.
Tyshawn Sorey
For George Lewis (2019)
Commissioned by Alarm Will Sound

Alarm Will Sound
Alan Pierson, conductor
Erin Lesser, alto flute and flute
Chrisita Robinson, English horn
Bill Kalinkos, clarinet
Beth Stimpert, clarinet
Michael Harley, bassoon
Laura Weiner, French horn
Tim Leopold, flugelhorn
Michael Clayville, bass trombone
Matt Smallcomb, vibraphone
Christopher Thompson, vibraphone
John Orfe, piano
Chris Otto, violin
Philip Payton, violin
Dana Kelley, viola
Stefan Freund, cello
Miles Brown, bass

Concert duration approximately one hour

Tyshawn Sorey
For George Lewis (2019)

For over a decade George Lewis has been, and continues to be, a mentor of mine whose groundbreaking work and ideas in spontaneous and predetermined composition truly resonate with my own creative practice. Such is the case between some of my compositions written up to the present day and Lewis’s composition for chamber orchestra, titled The Will to Adorn. The Will to Adorn is what I consider to be one of the finest masterpieces in the music of our time (or any time), largely due in part to its unconventional use of instruments, density, and the continuous shifting of various ensemble behaviors and structural languages. In his program notes, Lewis has noted that adornment—in which a given decoration is decorated—is represented in his work as a compositional attitude that “valorizes instability, and even breakdown.” While For George Lewis draws inspiration from The Will to Adorn, both compositions sound completely different from one another; while Lewis’s work maintains a high degree of activity, For George Lewis contains a great deal of density and instrumental activity that is juxtaposed with accumulating gestures, layering processes, and painstaking attention given to time while remaining still and static in its character. A given performance of this fully notated score requires much concentration and involves precision, repetition, digression, and expressive timing realized by instrumentalists and by sub-groups situated within the ensemble. For George Lewis is an immersive listening experience that will prove rewarding upon its conclusion; something beautiful unexpectedly emerges out of the density and harmonic buildup and breakdown maintained during the composition’s preceding sections.
For information on the composers featured in TIME:SPANS 2021, please see the following websites.

- Freida Abtan freidaabtan.com
- Monty Adkins monty-adkins.com
- Eduardo Aguilar eduardoaguillar.bandcamp.com
- Oscar Bettison oscarbettison.com
- Taylor Brook taylorbrook.info
- Ryan Carter ryan carter.org
- Anthony Cheung acheungmusic.com
- Zosha Di Castri zoshadica stri.com
- Jason Eckardt jason eckardt.com
- inti figgis-vizueta inticomposes.com
- Ashley Fure ashleyfure.com
- Ben Lamar Gay 3arts.org/artist/ben-lamar-gay/
- Fredrick Gifford fredrickgifford.com
- Brittany J Green brittanyjgreen.com
- Wolfgang Heiniger wolfgangheiniger.de
- Sarah Hennies sarah-hennies.com
- Nathalie Joachim nathaliejoachim.com
- Catherine Lamb sacredrealism.org/artists/catherine-lamb/
- George E. Lewis music.columbia.edu/bios/george-e-lewis
- Miya Masaoka miyamasmodels.com
- Andrew McIntosh septimal comma.com
- Alex Mincek music.northwestern.edu/faculty/profile/alex-mincek
- Erik Oña erik-ona.com
- Matthias Pintscher matthiaspintscher.com
- Mariel Roberts marielroberts.com
- Olivia Shortt olivia-shortt.com
- Tyshawn Sorey tyshawnsorey.com
- Pierre Alexandre Tremblay piet realexandre tremblay.com
- Amy Williams amywilliamsmusic.com
- Bora Yoon borayoon.com
- Nina C. Young ninacyoung.com
- Pamela Z pamelaz.com
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Director of Production, Sound Engineer

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Lighting Designers

Program Book:
Editorial: Marybeth Sollins
Design: Russell Hassell

Venue
Mary Flagler Cary Hall is located at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music, 450 W 37th St, New York, NY 10018
Ticket purchases: timespans.org
Individual tickets: $20/ $10 (student and senior discount)
Festival Pass: $70
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