

KILBOURN CONCERT SERIES

THIRD COAST PERCUSSION

Masterclass

Friday, December 1, 2023

EEW 415

9:00 AM



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

PROGRAM

The Hero from *Archetypes* (2021)

Clarice Assad

(b. 1978)

arr. Third Coast Percussion

Lexi Kunz, Lucy Chugh, Aiden Hughes, Ben Landon

Handmade Proverbs (1987)

Tōru Takemitsu

(1930-1996)

arr. Robin Engelman

Lexi Kunz, Lucy Chugh, Izaiah Gonzales,
Aiden Hughes, and Ben Landon

Little One (2023)

J. Matthew Curlee

(b. 1976)

Brandon Berlanga, Ben Blaesing, Anders Wong,
Sean McWilliams, Remy Thomas, and Michael Smith

PROGRAM NOTES

The Hero from *Archetypes* (2021)

Clarice Assad

Grammy Award Winning Percussion Quartet Third Coast Percussion has worked together with the legendary father and daughter team Sérgio and Clarice Assad to develop the Archetypes project, which premiered in early 2020.

The twelve movements of this suite are each inspired by a universal character concept that appears in stories and myths across cultures, such as the jester, the ruler, the creator, or the hero. Each of the performers chose certain archetypes that sparked their imaginations, with Clarice and Sérgio each composing four of the movements, and each member of Third Coast Percussion composing one. The vast color palette available to a percussion quartet, combined with Clarice's versatile musicianship as a multi-instrumentalist and vocalist (including work with electronic processing of her voice), and Sérgio's unparalleled mastery of the guitar, allowed opportunities to paint vivid pictures inspired by each of these archetypes.

The Hero, one of the movements from the *Archetypes* suite is arranged by Third Coast Percussion Member Robert Dillon.

— *Third Coast Percussion* (ed. Sean McWilliams)

PROGRAM NOTES

Handmade Proverbs (2021)

Tōru Takemitsu

Handmade Proverbs - four pop songs - for six male voices - is a work commissioned by and dedicated to the King's singers who premiered it in Tokyo in January of 1987. It was based on the following four proverbs taken from the poem of the same title by Shuzo Takiguchi.

— *Tōru Takemitsu*

Your Eyes

Your eyes, your hands, your breasts...

You are twins in yourself

Three bonzes

Three bonzes, three years facing with a wall and living on air.

Three beggars ask them for their leftovers.

Cinderella's misfortune

Listen to a little girl singing in the ant lion's pit:

The echo distorts some phrases - Cinderella's misfortune.

A farewell gift

A farewell gift, a drop of dew fallen in the palm of your hand:

The hour is a second.

PROGRAM NOTES

Little One (2023)

J. Matthew Curlee

After the kind of personal cataclysm that splits time in two, questions of inevitability can consume us; when we were small and carefree, did this already loom on the horizon? Could we have configured things in some way that would have bypassed this threshold, or was there no choice but to walk across it? The etiologies of disaster can be tiny, almost trivial – a brief electrical misfire, or the aberrant division of a cell – but the implications existential. That incongruity is both terrifying and beautiful, holding within it the paradox of simultaneous fragility and tenacity that is at the core of life.

A meditation on this paradox, *Little One* is based on the cyclic number 142857. Multiplying by a whole number less than the count of its digits (1-5) gives a product that is a permutation of the original digits: $x_2=285714$, $x_3=428571$, $x_4=571428$, and so forth, which are encoded in both pitch and time dimensions of the piece. The pattern is interrupted – somewhat shockingly - when multiplying by the number of digits in the original number: $142857 \times 6 = 999999$.

This structure (which does repeat beyond 6, but requires some mathematical reduction to see) reminds me of how we ruminate on unknowable things - on the path that led us to the present moment, for instance, and the threads of both inevitability and tenuous chance that echo through it. We may endlessly rearrange the components but always come up with the same circumscribed results, most of which are permutations of one another (and a few unthinkably scary). But these limits can sometimes be superseded by transformations that extend into a previously unconsidered dimension. In the empty space after a catastrophe, a sliver of light may leak through from an unseen intersecting plane, and a new degree of freedom is found.

For Anu, for Mari and Elba, and for Betty Robinson

—J. Matthew Curlee

MEET THE ARTISTS

Third Coast Percussion (TCP) is a GRAMMY® Award-winning Chicago-based percussion quartet and GRAMMY®-nominated composer collective, and is the first percussion ensemble to ever win the revered music award. For nearly 20 years, the ensemble has created exciting and unexpected performances that constantly redefine the classical music experience and “push percussion in new directions, blurring musical boundaries and beguiling new listeners” (NPR), with a brilliantly varied sonic palette.



The ensemble has been praised for the “rare power” (*Washington Post*) of more than 30 recordings and “an inspirational sense of fun and curiosity” (*Minnesota Star-Tribune*). Bringing their uniquely compelling programs worldwide, Third Coast Percussion maintains a busy tour schedule, with past performances in 40 of the 50 states and Washington, D.C., plus international tour dates across four continents. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2005, the ensemble is embarking on the most ambitious collaborative projects of their career, with some of the world’s leading musicians, choreographers, and composers from around the world.

A direct connection with the audience is at the core of all of Third Coast Percussion’s work, whether the musicians are speaking from the stage about a new piece of music, inviting the audience to play along in a concert or educational performance, or uniting fans around the world via one of their free mobile apps. The four members of Third Coast are also accomplished teachers, and make active participation by all students the cornerstone of all their educational offerings, including thoughtfully curated K-12 workshops and family programming.

The quartet’s curiosity and eclectic taste have led to a series of unlikely collaborations that have produced exciting new art. Their omnivorous musical appetite, paired with approachable and flexible working methods, remove collaborative boundaries across cultures and disciplines. The ensemble has worked with engineers at the University of Notre Dame, architects at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, dancers at Hubbard

MEET THE ARTISTS

Street Dance Chicago, and musicians from traditions ranging from the mbira music of Zimbabwe's Shona people, to indie rockers and footwork producers, to some of the world's leading concert musicians. Third Coast Percussion served as ensemble-in-residence at the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center from 2013-2018, and currently serves as ensemble-in-residence at Denison University.

A commission for a new work from composer Augusta Read Thomas in 2012 led to the realization that commissioning new musical works can be – and should be – as collaborative as any other artistic partnership. Through extensive workshopping and close contact with composers, Third Coast Percussion has commissioned and premiered new works by Philip Glass, Missy Mazzoli, Jlin, Danny Elfman, Clarice Assad, Gemma Peacocke, Flutronic, Tyondai Braxton, Augusta Read Thomas, Devonté Hynes, Georg Friedrich Haas, Donnacha Dennehy, Glenn Kotche, Christopher Cerrone, and David T. Little, plus many of today's leading up-and-coming composers through their Currents Creative Partnership program. TCP's commissioned works have become part of the ensemble's core repertoire and seen hundreds of performances around the world. In 2023, Jlin's *Perspective*, commissioned by TCP, was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

Third Coast Percussion's recordings include 17 feature albums, and appearances on 14 additional releases. Besides putting its stamp on iconic percussion works by John Cage and Steve Reich, the quartet has created first recordings of commissioned works by Philip Glass, Augusta Read Thomas, Devonté Hynes, Gavin Bryars, Danny Elfman, Donnacha Dennehy, David T. Little, Ted Hearne, and more – in addition to recordings of original Third Coast compositions. In 2017 the ensemble won the GRAMMY® Award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance for their recording of Steve Reich's works for percussion. Third Coast has since received four additional GRAMMY® nominations as performers, and in 2021 they received their first GRAMMY® nomination as composers.

Third Coast Percussion has always maintained strong ties to the vibrant artistic community in their hometown of Chicago. They have collaborated with Chicago institutions including Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, the Uniting Voices Chicago choir, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Chicago

MEET THE ARTISTS

Humanities Festival, and the Adler Planetarium. TCP performed at the grand opening of Maggie Daley Children's Park; conducted residencies at the University of Chicago and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago; created multi-year collaborative projects with Chicago-based composers Jessie Montgomery, Clarice and Sérgio Assad, Augusta Read Thomas, Glenn Kotche, and chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird; and has taught tens of thousands of students through partnerships with Uniting Voices Chicago, The People's Music School, the Chicago Park District, Rush Hour Concerts, Urban Gateways, Changing Worlds, and others.

The four members of Third Coast Percussion (Sean Connors, Robert Dillon, Peter Martin, and David Skidmore) met while studying percussion music at Northwestern University with Michael Burritt and James Ross, and formed the ensemble in 2005. Settling in Chicago, the four friends have carefully and thoughtfully built a thriving nonprofit organization – including full-time staff, office/studio space, and a board of directors – to support their vision and facilitate their efforts to bring new works to life. Members of Third Coast also hold degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Rutgers University, the New England Conservatory, and the Yale School of Music.

Stay up-to-date and go behind-the-scenes by following Third Coast on Instagram (@ThirdCoastPercussion), YouTube (@thirdcoastpercussion), TikTok (@thirdcoastpercussion), Twitter (@ThirdCoastPerc), Facebook (@Third Coast Percussion) and LinkedIn (linkedin.com/company/third-coast-percussion)

*Third Coast Percussion is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the "Great Hill People" and "Keepers of the Western Door" of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.

UPCOMING EASTMAN SERIES CONCERTS

Tickets for all series concerts can be purchased at EastmanTheatre.org

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

Alexander Kobrin, piano

Hatch Recital Hall

Friday, December 1, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Over the course of eight concerts, Professor Kobrin will present all 32 of Beethoven's piano sonatas throughout the 2023-24 academic year. Kobrin will perform on a Shigeru Kawai piano, generously on loan to Eastman for this concert series.

EASTMAN SPECIAL SERIES PRESENTS

Christian Lindberg, trombone & Roland Pöntinen, piano

Kilbourn Hall

Monday, January 22, 2024 at 7:30 PM

UPCOMING STUDENT ENSEMBLE CONCERTS

All student performances are free unless otherwise noted.

Mbira Ensemble

Ray Wright Room

Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 2:30 PM

Eastman Jazz Ensemble with Dafnis Prieto

Kilbourn Hall

Monday, December 4, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Eastman Wind Ensemble

Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre

Monday, December 4, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Music of Kabalevsky, Ravel, John Williams, Shostakovich, and Karel Husa

Holiday Sing

Lowry Hall at Eastman School of Music

Friday, December 8, 2023 at 12:00 PM



For the most up to date information on Eastman concerts and events, scan this code to visit our online calendar.



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