

Oregon
Composers
Forum

Recording of UO concerts and events without prior permission is prohibited.

Performances sponsored by the UO School of Music and Dance are sometimes video recorded and photographed for a variety of uses, including both live simulcast and digital archive on the UO website, or for publicity and publications. Images of audience members may be included in these recordings and photos. By attending this event, audience members imply approval for the use of their image by the UO and the School of Music and Dance.



PROGRAM

Now is the Time

MUSIC Jared Knight

PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS

Jared Knight, piano/electronics

PROGRAM NOTES

April 4, 2018 marks 50 years since the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. — 50 years during which our country has worked hard to recover from the societal ills which Dr. King strove so diligently to eradicate. However, there is still plenty of work to be done. One can see evidence of this by turning on CNN and watching reports of young black men being murdered in the streets by corrupt police officers; tuning in on the radio and hearing Alex Jones' anti-Latino and anti-Muslim rhetoric; or scrolling through one's Facebook feed and reading personal accounts of gay friends and family being denied housing because of their sexual orientation. Several racial, ethnic, religious, and social minority groups still face intense prejudice, discrimination, and violence.

Using snippets from Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech, angsty piano improvisation, and glitchy electronic processing, *Now is the Time* (2018) aims to help illuminate the lingering problems which Dr. King describes and to remind the listener of some of Dr. King's admonitions about how to proceed with fixing these problems. While I understand that my one small voice will most assuredly have the net effect of shouting into a void, eventually with enough shouting voices filling that void, American political leaders will hopefully muster the will and courage to make healthy, lasting changes.

How the Tables Have Turned

I. Un(pack)ing the Change

MUSIC Sarah Jordan**PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS**

Darren Fuji, euphonium
Thomas Janssen, euphonium
Isaac Smith, tuba
Kalin Mack, tuba

PROGRAM NOTES

How the Tables Have Turned is a Tuba Quartet that was inspired by an inner reflection of where I started as a composer to the level I am today. One of the things I have mostly attributed to this change is the music theory knowledge I have gained through my courses of study. Each of the five movements in this work are inspired by a particular theoretical technique that I have found transformative in my growth as a musician. Along with this, each movement's title pays respect to the instructor who was most influential when learning the concept.

I. Un(pack)ing the Change

This movement is influenced by my course of study from 16th C. to 18th C. Counterpoint.

Two songs

I. Twilight
II. Spring

MUSIC Sofiane Merkouche**LYRICS** Matthew Galvin + Sofiane Merkouche**PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS**

Josephine Petersen, soprano
JP Lempke, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

"Twilight" and "Spring" are part of a song cycle in progress, which is a set of impressions of scenes in nature at various times of the day and the year. The text of "Twilight" was written by my late friend Matthew Galvin, and the song is dedicated to his memory. Both songs were premiered by Isabella Ivy at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

TEXT**Twilight** by Matthew Galvin (1990-2011)

Twilight struck amongst the dancing leaves,
Hues of crimson and azure combine,
Making only darkness.
Dance, little leaves, dance
To the shining bravado
Of dying light.

Spring by Sofiane Merkouche (b. 1989)

The leaves that flutter in the wind
Are like the wings of a butterfly
That spring to Life,
When the flower buds return,
And the wind wafts away
That long winter of darkness.

Thank You, Tall Tales**MUSIC + LYRICS** Michael Autry**PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS**

fixed media

PROGRAM NOTES

In this piece, the recited text takes precedence subjugating the other musical elements to its descriptions through a kind of word painting. At times the sounds reflect the text explicitly, but mostly provide an atmosphere reflective of the text. Sounds featured consist of synthesizers built from scratch in Kyma and samples of pop song excerpts sung by the composer. Additive, subtractive, and granular synthesis are all present as well as a liberal use of reverb, panning, and dynamic envelopes to create shape, structure, and to reflect the text.

“Thank You, Tall Tales” contrasts two poems inspired by states of being and mind. The piece opens with “Thank You” a prayer of thanksgiving to the Creator for the beautiful gift of life itself. The very breath and body that keeps us, allowing us to feel the multitude of emotions and sensual pleasures whether good or bad. This is followed by “Tall Tales” a peek into the human potential for arrogance and pride that many creatives can fall subject to and must balance with a greater sense of humility. The text is an exposition on this state, but ends with a curious self-awareness providing the possibility of returning to the humility of the opening prayer. As artists we should be thankful to these tall tales for their insights, but understand the importance of self-reflection, self-control, and self-awareness in our creative processes.

TEXT

Thank you
 For this breath I breathe
 These feet that still carry me
 This heart beats along stepping stones to forever ago

Humbled Hills**MUSIC** Michael Fleming**LYRICS** Khalil Gibran**PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS**

Bethany Battafarano and Naomi Castro, sopranos
 Jessica Rossi and Kelly Hefty, altos
 Carson Lott and Luis Rivera, tenors
 Zari Crier and Dylan Buntten, basses
 Jared Fischer, conductor

PROGRAM NOTES

Humbled Hills is my first piece for vocal octet, and had a very illuminating experience exploring harmonic color through the setting of an excerpt of Khalil Gibran’s evocative poem, Song of the Rain, especially after living in rainy Eugene for over a year. The process of bringing this piece to life with these incredible musicians has also been very enjoyable and humbling, and I will continue writing for ensembles of this kind.

TEXT

Song of the Rain by Khalil Gibran

I am dotted silver threads dropped from heaven
 By the gods. Nature then takes me, to adorn
 Her fields and valleys.

I am beautiful pearls, plucked from the
 Crown of Ishtar by the daughter of Dawn
 To embellish the gardens.

When I cry the hills laugh;
 When I humble myself the flowers rejoice;
 When I bow, all things are elated.

I am the sigh of the sea;
 So with love—
 Sighs from the deep sea of affection;
 Tears from the endless heaven of memories.

The Lone Woodsman**MUSIC** Sarah Jordan**PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS**

Darlene Mueller, clarinet

PROGRAM NOTES

The Lone Woodsman is a solo work that is structured and centralized around thematic elements depicting a man who lives alone in a mountainous homestead. Please relax and enjoy as the clarinet tells the story of a hermit who joyfully lives out his days in his small cabin in the woods. Can you identify his different actions and impressions throughout his day?

- Waking up
- Boiling water
- Making coffee
- Starting the work outside
- Splitting wood
- Water break
- Crash! In the bushes.... what's that rustling?
- It is just a chipmunk
- The river
- Casting the fishing line
- Contemplating the past / The birds / The river
- The stars appear
- It is time for bed

Miniatures for Flute

- i. gust
- ii. deluge
- iii. undercurrent
- iv. debris

PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS

Sarah Jordan, flute

I still feel the hurt I sowed
 Why must it grow?
 The cyclic season of my reasoning mind running wide
 God! I feel everything at once and nothing comes but this hate for
 the end of it
 I just want to know
 If it could be a way
 To see
 But for me
 I'm just here
 Standing still
 Singing
 My heart always ringing
 This body alive for the final time
 But not in a rush
 I walk steady now
 The end is not the goal
 It's the journey
 All the sights and sounds
 The trees high and the dirt low
 Like a bird I can soar above it all
 But I must drop to my knees
 Peck at the earth just to eat
 Balanced between sky and soil this soul hurts
 But isn't that the point of it?
 To feel?
 Something, anything, it's all real
 Just-feel

Tall Tales

Where are you now sun?
 My disposition is settled in.
 Hot humid wind I'm Texas again.
 Raining heavy for once and then just like that you turn to drizzly
 drop just to stop

Oregon bipolar, now you're ramping up some more but where's
 your storm?
 I've already explicated my form.
 I fill in for thunder when I scream the songs of my younger years
 ago
 I now know the feeling of
 Flashing, crackling, back breaking,
 The sky splits as I rip a fire gold hot white forked tongued spit.
 And all mixed up in the brightest black night
 My shining lighthouse pollutes nature's beauty
 As I shout my insides from atop rock cliffs,
 Passing ships drop their sails and a hubris feeling slips
 Into old wood cracks from the salt spray sweat of ocean wave slaps.
 I'm fuckin' finally back.
 Bigger than all Gods and any Satan's darkest sin.
 I stand up taller than the trees that opened my eyes to the heavens
 within.
 And look out
 Over randomness beautification
 Was it creation?
 But now I take it and throw it back as my word and sound
 All these things that I've found
 High above
 And deepest
 Low blow
 To the plexus
 Sends a burn wish for air, and an eye gape stare.
 But no!
 From here I land the punches
 With solar wind tails trailing their trajectory.
 And the earthquake rubble left from the deafening shake
 Of which to construct a better fate.
 I'll build a staircase to my level if you have the legs to climb
 It's a damn long way to reach mine.
 I need more heat.
 Your wet cold is dragging these feet

In drab stagnant pools
 I feel like such an old fool up here all alone.
 Thinking I'm good.
 But the rhymes are getting stale
 And I sense impending failure.
 If each time I grow taller
 How hard the crash to follow?

Dreaming in Purgatory

MUSIC Justin Graff

PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS

fixed media

Sunlight Etude

MUSIC Daniel DeLay

PERFORMERS + INSTRUMENTS

Daniel DeLay, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

What I originally began writing as an etude for intermediate pianists to practice 2 against 3 polyrhythm took a life of its own to become a lyrical meditation on warm summer sunlight. Sunlight Etude was written during the bright, sunny days of summer 2018 at my parent's home in Ames, Iowa. While decidedly a pandiatonic piano piece, Sunlight Etude is markedly influenced by my experience with Balinese gamelan music. This is evident in both the pitch material of the piece and its repetitive, cyclical structures. Balinese gamelan music, I have found, contains a certain luminosity and warmth. It seemed to me only natural to incorporate these musical influences into a piece about gentle sunlight.