

UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA

MCINTIRE DEPARTMENT of

music

presents

A Distinguished Major Recital

Jack Engel

percussion

Saturday, February 24, 2024

8:00 pm

Old Cabell Hall

University of Virginia

*This recital is supported by the
Charles S. Roberts Scholarship Fund.*

Established in 2004 by the generosity of Mr. Alan Y. Roberts ('64)
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Distinguished Major Program in music.

Recital Program

Jack Engel, *percussion*

Wind in the Bamboo Grove

Keiko Abe
(b. 1937)

White Knuckle Stroll

Casey Cangelosi
(b. 1982)

Concerto for Marimba and Strings

I. Tempo souple

II. Rythmique, energique

Emmanuel Séjourné
(b. 1961)

Karen Dalton, *piano*

~ **Intermission** ~

SyNc

Gene Koshinski
(b. 1980)

Mourning Dove Sonnet

Christopher Deane
(1957-2021)

Four Movements for Marimba

I. Improvisation

II. Perpetual

III. Ethereal

IV. Mécanique

Michael Burritt
(b. 1962)

About the Performers



Percussionist **Jack Engel** is graduating from the University of Virginia in May 2024 with degrees in Biochemistry and Music with a Performance Concentration, studying under Dr. I-Jen Fang. Since coming to the university, Jack has performed with UVA's Percussion Ensemble, University Singers, and the Charlottesville Symphony. Beginning his percussion career in third grade (2010), Jack started on drum set and slowly moved his way into all percussion instruments, finding his true love in keyboard instruments. Growing up in Salt Lake City, Utah from 2010 to 2020 before moving to Charlottesville to attend UVA, Jack participated in

several ensembles and orchestral groups, including jazz band, percussion ensemble, philharmonic orchestra, concert band, and drum line. In addition, Jack competed in Utah's Percussive Arts Society Competition for four years, leaving with multiple first place finishes in the state.

At UVA, Jack teaches drum lessons to K-12 students in the Charlottesville community, as well as facilitates music lessons for Charlottesville youth through the Music Resource Center. He is the Senior Resident of Gibbons First Year Dorm, manages Education and Youth volunteer programming at Madison House, and conducts RNA research for UVA's Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics. Upon graduation from UVA in May 2024, Jack will be working as a Research Technician while applying to MD/PhD programs across the country, with hopes of fulfilling his lifelong dream of becoming a physician-scientist.

Today, Jack presents his Distinguished Major recital with the theme of *extended technique*. In this recital, Jack will be showcasing the breadth of all percussion instruments, focusing on orthodox and unorthodox techniques, including the use of different four-mallet grips on marimba, string bows on a vibraphone, and even marbles and finger pianos on a snare drum.



Karen Dalton has been active in the Charlottesville music community since 1995. In addition to serving as Music Director for various churches, she has accompanied the Virginia Consort, the Oratorio Society, Heritage Theater, and the UVA Drama Department.

Karen presently is an accompanist for the University Singers and also serves as Administrative Assistant for the UVA choral program. She also manages the

Virginia Consort & Festival Chorus.

Karen received her Bachelor of Arts at Samford University (piano), Birmingham, AL, and her Masters of Church Music at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (organ), Louisville, KY. While in Louisville, Karen was Company Manager of Kentucky Opera.

Program Notes

Part of a collection titled “Works for Marimba Volume 1.,” *Wind in the Bamboo Grove* was composed by Japanese composer Keiko Abe in 1984 and premiered in 1986. Abe composed *Wind in the Bamboo Grove* to encompass the sensation she felt when she walked through a bamboo forest. This piece highlights Abe’s desire to combine Western and Japanese musical traditions. Half of the piece is rhythmically and melodically strict – representative of Western music; the other half is slower, contains brief pauses, and is more improvisational – representative of Japanese music.

The introduction of *Wind in the Bamboo Grove* contains low pedal notes with rolled responses in the higher register of the marimba. This introduction is followed by an ABA form, with the A sections characterized by a 4:3 note cyclic ostinato, played softly while melodic notes bring light through the repetition. A more dissonant sonority is slowly introduced in the B section before rhythmic density weakens to purely eighth note-dominated writing. The B section ends with the performer playing the same ostinato from before, but at a higher register and with a shafting technique in the right hand. In this technique, the shaft of the mallet is used to play the instrument rather than the yarn head. This technique creates a drier sound, almost as if you were hitting a bamboo shoot with a stick.

The cadenza continues this shafting technique to create a quiet, mysterious ambience that Abe felt when she visited the bamboo forest. Traditional technique using the mallet heads, rather than shafts, is interspersed throughout the cadenza, however. Following the cadenza, a repetition of the A section is brought back, but at a faster tempo and with an extended melody. *Wind in the Bamboo Grove* is the only work in Engel’s recital that uses Burton grip, a type of cross grip that is traditionally used on the vibraphone.

Written in 2010 by Casey Cangelosi, *White Knuckle Stroll* is an exceptionally fast two-mallet solo that pushes boundaries of any marimba performer. Cangelosi is the Director of Percussion Studies at James Madison University in Harrisonburg.

The name comes from the white knuckles that many marimbaists get as they perform, because of how demanding the piece is. The difficulty of *White Knuckle Stroll* roots from its odd techniques, extremely fast tempo, and lack of conceptuality for the performer. Technically, Cangelosi demands one mallet rolls using a mallet shaft. From a tempo perspective, there is nothing like this piece in marimba literature – it is simply marked as “presto,” meaning “at a very fast tempo,” but that does not truly capture the speed of this piece. The six-page sheet music is flooded with solely sixteenth and 32nd notes, making the already fast tempo seem almost impossible. Lastly, Cangelosi’s composition lacks normality that

performers and audiences are so used to with traditional Western music. Lacking a consistent time signature, this piece has no true “center” for anyone to rely on. Instead, Cangelosi writes unique accented notes that the performer is expected to play to allow the audience to hear some type of beat. Without accents and dynamic flow, *White Knuckle Stroll* truly sounds like an amalgamation of notes thrown on a page... and it’s up to the marimbaist to turn it into music.

In 2014, Casey Cangelosi was commissioned by the University of Missouri to write an ensemble version of this piece. It includes the marimba solo backed by four percussionists playing instruments like bongos, vibraphone, cymbals, and more.

Born in 1961 in Limoges, France, Emmanuel Séjourné began his percussion training at the Strasbourg Conservatory at age 15. In 1984, he became a professor of mallet percussion at the same conservatory and is now the head of the percussion department. Séjourné’s marimba concertos are known around the world, but he is also known for his unique style that combines classical European music with jazz, rock, and world music.

Concerto for Marimba and Strings was commissioned in 2005 by Bogdan Băcanu, an Austrian marimba soloist and professor at Bruckner University. The original version only contained two movements, which deviates from typical concerto compositions that contain three. Séjourné wrote a new first movement in 2015, called *Avec Force*, to be played before the original two – this movement gives a luscious, but intense style similar to Rachmaninov. Today, Engel is playing the original two-movement work, accompanied by Karen Dalton on piano.

Tempo souple, meaning “flexible speed,” is a slow and expressive opening movement by Séjourné. This movement begins with a beautiful introduction from the piano, and contains lush melodies that pull from Romantic styles for harmonies and phrasing.

Rythmique énergique is a more technically challenging movement, with a faster tempo and styles pulling from rock, jazz, and Spanish flamenco music. Highlighting fast jazz/rock runs that trade with the piano in the beginning, this movement moves into an 11/8 section with a 3:3:2:3 beat structure seen in traditional flamenco. Rythmique énergique moves back to its jazz/rock roots near the end of the concerto, providing an energetic push that concludes with an exaggerated finish.

With an instrumentation of a snare drum played with hands (rather than drumsticks), kalimba (also known as a finger piano, a Western adaptation of the mbira), a wire brush, plastic chopsticks, marbles, and a wine glass, Gene Koshinski’s *SyNc* is the epitome of *extended technique* in percussion. Koshinski wrote the piece in 2018 after being commissioned by a consortium of 42 total percussionists, led by Tracy Wiggins. Known

for his “extraordinary versatility” as a percussion performer and composer, Koshinski has played with NFL Films and even the Minnesota Ballet. He is currently the Professor of Percussion at the University of Delaware.

SyNc has two meanings in one – the first related to the synchronization of several musical ideas and instruments, the second being “sync” sounding like “cinco,” the Spanish word meaning “five.” The number five proves to be important in *SyNc*, especially in the middle of the piece. To quote Koshinski himself, this piece “syncs the wonderful timbral possibilities of the snare drum with sounds that come to life when interacting with it.”

The piece begins with the sole sound of a marble circling the rim of a snare drum, where abruptly the performer enters with nothing but their hands, creating different timbres on the head (with snares disengaged) and even displaying double strokes with different fingers. The main producer of melody in *SyNc*, the kalimba, soon enters with single-, double-, and triple-note patterns – backed by the complex rhythm and timbre of the snare drum. Playing into the role of *five* in this piece, the middle section is crowded with differing 5-note kalimba patterns, interrupted with a circling marble around the snare’s rim. After repeating the kalimba introduction once more, *SyNc* concludes with a “spirited and lively” section played on the kalimba with plastic chopsticks, leaving an everlasting buzz of the snares under the drum. Descending to what feels like nothingness, the “afterthought” of the piece is a free melody played on the kalimba while a marble spins inside a wine glass.

Known for their coo-ing calls that many associate with feelings of sadness, the Mourning Dove is a graceful dove that is common across the United States. Taking inspiration from the Mourning Dove, Christopher Deane wrote *Mourning Dove Sonnet* in 1983, performing it first at the 1983 North Carolina Percussive Arts Society chapter Day of Percussion. It is written in ABA form, and requires both bows and different mallets to perform. Three main extended techniques are used: bowing, pitch-bending, and harmonic activation.

Using bows on a vibraphone is not an uncommon technique, but still provides a different sonority to the instrument – one that is gentler compared to the strong attack of a mallet. Any type of string bow can be used, but here Engel is using synthetic bows made with polymer filament rather than horsehair. Pitch-bending is a rarity for percussion instruments, but the vibraphone still has a method to do so. It is used in *Mourning Dove Sonnet* to emulate the bird’s coo. Harmonics are sound waves that have integer frequencies above the fundamental tone. When a key is struck on the vibraphone, the fundamental tone is heard, but the first harmonic is two octaves above this tone. To activate a harmonic, the performer must touch a fingertip on the bar while bowing or striking the key on the edge.

Although *Mourning Dove Sonnet* uses a plethora of extended technique, the combination of them creates a beautiful sound. Christopher Deane was a mentor and teacher for Engel's percussion professor I-Jen Fang at the University of North Texas; he passed away on October 9, 2021. Engel is playing *Mourning Dove Sonnet* as a tribute to Deane and all he did for Fang before, during, and after her time at the University of North Texas.

Michael Burritt wrote *Four Movements for Marimba* in 1987 (revised in 1988), introducing extended technique and technical challenges while highlighting styles from eastern and western marimba repertoire.

I: Improvisation

Utilizing two octatonic scales centered on A and C, Burritt's first movement introduces the tonality and thematic material of the entire four-movement suite. Thematically, *Improvisation* is intense but also light. It is characterized by a six-note ostinato in the right hand that is decorated contrapuntally by the left hand, playing decreasingly smaller intervals. The movement ends with a rolling section that truly emphasizes free movement felt throughout. Although it is hard to create a true improvisational feel in any form of composed music, Burritt did it here.

II: Perpetual

Possibly the most demanding of the four movements, *Perpetual* possesses an extremely fast tempo and differential accent patterns. *Perpetual's* backbone is characterized by a variety of repeated four-note groupings before the accelerated, octave-heavy outro. These repeated four-note groupings are perpetual in nature – creating a dissonant and droning listening experience. To bring variety and offset these groupings, Burritt intercalates accented notes that create a melody within the perpetuity.

III: Ethereal

Ethereal introduces a tranquil feeling to the middle of the four-movement suite. This is the first (and only) movement that relies almost exclusively on sustained rolling sound in diminished and major tonal centers. Almost like the “calm before the storm,” *Ethereal* provides peacefulness before a chaotic fourth movement.

IV: Mécanique

The fourth movement in Burritt's *Four Movements for Marimba* culminates the suite using ideas from each of the first three movements while introducing unique, ostinato ideas. Differential accent patterns are a crucial characteristic of *Four Movements*, and *Mécanique* is no exception – the beginning section accentuates a six-note pattern that returns during the coda, a *più mosso* section accents down the keyboard in the left hand while syncopating accents in the right, and several forceful sections utilize successive accents in the lower register of the instrument. A true extended technique masterpiece, *Four Movements for Marimba* brings unique storytelling through four distinct, yet interconnected movements.

Acknowledgements

There is no way I will ever be able to fully show my appreciation and gratitude towards those who have been with me throughout my journey – not only my musical journey, but life itself. Regardless, here we go.

I-Jen Fang – Where do I even start? I met you when I was in tenth grade on my short trip to Charlottesville with my mom and dad. You showed me around Old Cabell Hall, talked to me about the musical opportunities at UVA, and pushed me to consider coming to UVA for my undergraduate studies. Once I finally made my way here in Fall 2020, I had no intentions of majoring in music; all I wanted was to play in percussion ensemble if I had the time. First-year me only wanted to major in Biochemistry and go to medical school. In the end, you reignited in me my love for performance after I was deprived of it through the COVID pandemic. You pushed my musical limits every week and truly showed me everything I was capable of. Starting my musical journey in Utah with an incredible teacher by the name of Dan Chamberland, I didn't think it was possible to have another experience like I did with him – but you proved me wrong. I will never be able to know exactly what you saw in me, but looking back on my four years here, I know what I saw in you: a nurturing, loving professor who cared about *me* as a human. It was never *just* about music. You've seen my highest of highs, my lowest of lows, and are truly the best “UVA mom” I could ask for.

Dan Chamberland – you knew this was coming, right? You introduced me to the world of percussion at such a young age, and even showed me my true potential when I was close to quitting percussion altogether ten months in. I truly only wanted to be a rock drummer when I started training under you, but one random day at your house in Draper, Utah you asked me to try the marimba. Honestly, I played it to humor you, but I can tell you now *thank you*. I have found a love in the marimba that I never thought I would have: a passion to learn, a passion to play, a passion to tell a story through my playing without ever saying a single word. Looking back now, I'm happy you kept 10-year-old Jack on a practice pad for over a year before even putting me behind a drum kit. Don't get me wrong, *I hated you for it* – but I know you did it with the best intentions and look at us now! In all seriousness, Dan, you are one of the main reasons I'm here today. I cannot thank you enough for believing in me and teaching me about the vast world of percussion for ten years. Let's get together and play *Afro Blue*?

Fred Maus – Thank you for serving as my DMP Advisor this academic year and making time to help me with the creation of my program. Your vast knowledge and passion for music helped me more than you know. Thinking about my music lecture courses I took during my four years here, you taught some of my favorite classes ever: *Music, Consciousness, and Embodiment* might have been the best one.

Karen Dalton – It truly has been a pleasure to play with you this year. I had always heard amazing things about you, but never had the pleasure of meeting you until you agreed to play the piano accompaniment on my concerto. I was relieved when you agreed to take me on in your first instrumental accompaniment, and I hope you had a ton of fun with what will (hopefully) be the coolest instrument you'll ever accompany. I still remember when you said it would be your honor to play in my DMP recital. My concerto was not originally supposed to be on this program, but I'm so glad we added it!

My family – I know all of you are here today, whether it be in-person or on livestream. Thank you for coming to all my performances since I was in third grade, even though I was nowhere near talented. I'm hoping this performance is a nice treat after the cacophonous noise you heard the past fourteen years.

My girlfriend – Meg, thank you for showing me what it means to feel like myself day in and day out. I truly am a better person through knowing you! Thank you for supporting my musical journey, my medical school journey, and everything else in between. There is no one else I would rather do life with.

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Distinguished Major Program

The Distinguished Major Program allows outstanding music majors to work on large-scale projects during their last two semesters at the University. The project may consist of a thesis, a composition, or the performance of a full recital; a project that combines these components is also possible.

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