

Upcoming Events

October 2017

University Choruses & Treble Chamber Choir Fri., Oct. 27 @ 8 pm, Concert Hall*

Faculty Wind Quintet Mon., Oct. 30 @ 8 pm, Recital Hall*

JMU Jazz Combos Tues., Oct. 31 @ 7 pm, Artful Dodger

November 2017

JMU Wind Symphony Wed., Nov. 1 @ 8 pm, Concert Hall*

JMU Chamber Orchestra Thurs., Nov. 2 @ 8 pm, Recital Hall*

Collegium Musicum Fri., Nov. 3 @ 7 pm, Muhlenberg Lutheran Church*

*These concerts provide student credit for MUS 195.

For tickets and further information, visit www.jmuforbescenter.com or call the Forbes Center Box Office at (540) 568-7000. For more on the School of Music, go to www.jmu.edu/music or call (540) 568-6714.

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FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents the

37th Contemporary Music Festival
in celebration of Canada's
Sesquicentennial

Guest Artists

Kelly-Marie Murphy, *composer*

Alexandra Smither, *soprano* • Trevor Chartrand, *piano*

L+M Duo

Elizabeth Raum, *composer*

Concert III • The Lonely Road

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

8 pm

Concert Hall



There will be a 10-minute intermission.

Program

The Lonely Road (2010)* Kelly-Marie Murphy

Edward Gant, *cello* | Paulo Steinberg, *piano*

from Sing Me at Midnight (1993)* John Greer

How do I love thee?

Maundy Thursday

Song of Songs

Kevin McMillan, *baritone* | Gabriel Dobner, *piano*

Reef (2017) Jason Haney

L+M Duo

Laurel Black, *marimba* | Marianne Parker, *piano*

Let Hands Speak (2003)* Kelly-Marie Murphy

Wendy Wang, *piano*

- INTERMISSION -

Invocation of Aeolius (2008)* Benton Roark

JMU Flute Choir

Bridget Brown, Lydia Carroll, Julia Fabian, Jordan Frazier, Liza Inaba,

Lexi Johnson, Chase Ketron, Geneva Knight, Emily Martinez,

Davina Miaw, Sara Zhu, *flutes*

Beth Chandler, *director*

Dust into Dust (1991) John Luther Adams

Adam Dipersio, Caleb Pickering, Paige Durr, Kaipō Lan, *snare drums*

...and justice for all? (2016) Richard Auldon Clark

Chris Carrillo, *trumpet* | Diane Phoenix-Neal, *viola*

Sam Suggs, *bass*

from And Einstein Said (2016)* Trent Worthington

I. There are only two ways to live your life

Ave Maris Stella (2017)* Donald Macdonald

Miserere (2014)* Kelly-Marie Murphy

Selene's Boat (2017)* Donald Macdonald

The Madison Singers

Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy, *director*

*indicates Canadian work

About the Festival

Special Thanks

Contemporary Music Festival Committee

Casey Cangelosi, Gabriel Dobner, Eric Guinivan, Jason Haney, Dorothy Maddison, John Peterson, Diane Phoenix-Neal, Lori Piitz, Sam Suggs

School of Music Faculty, Staff and Students

Jeff Bush, *Director of the School of Music*

George Sparks, *Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts*

Regan Byrne, *Executive Director of the Forbes Center for the Performing Arts*

Shawn Tucker, Bradley Monahan, Tom Carr, *Forbes Center Production and*

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JMU Center for Global Engagement

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The first JMU Contemporary Music Festival was held in 1981, initiated by then-director of the School of Music Joe Estock and faculty composer John Hilliard. In

the years since, the festival has hosted many of the most prominent composers and performers of new music in the world today. Recent guest artists include:

Augusta Read Thomas

Stephen Hartke

The Virginia Sinfonietta

Roger Reynolds

JACK Quartet

American Modern Ensemble

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies

Alarm Will Sound

Steven Stucky

Steve Reich

New Millennium Ensemble

George Tsontakis

Samuel Adler

George Crumb

Donald Erb

Adolphus Hailstork

John Harbison

Karel Husa

Libby Larsen

David Maslanka

Thea Musgrave

The New Music Consort

Joseph Schwantner

Joan Tower

Chinary Ung

Chen Yi

Guest Artist Biographies

Kelly-Marie Murphy: With music described as “breathtaking” (Kitchener-Waterloo Record), “imaginative and expressive” (The National Post), “a pulse-pounding barrage on the senses” (The Globe and Mail), and “Bartok on steroids” (Birmingham News), Kelly-Marie Murphy’s voice is well known on the Canadian music scene. She has created a number of memorable works for some of Canada’s leading performers and ensembles, including the Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver Symphony Orchestras, The Gryphon Trio, James Campbell, Shauna Rolston, the Cecilia and Afiara String Quartets, and Judy Loman. In addition to many academic scholarships awarded in Canada and England, Dr. Murphy has also won prizes for her music, dating back to 1992. Her career was launched when she won first prize and the People's Choice Award at the CBC Young Composer's Competition in 1994 (string quartet category). Since then, Dr. Murphy’s music has been performed around the world by outstanding soloists and ensembles, and has had radio broadcasts in over 22 countries. Her music has been interpreted by renowned conductors such as Sir Andrew Davis, David Brophy, Bramwell Tovey, and Mario Bernardi, and has been heard in iconic concert halls, such as Carnegie Hall in New York and The Mozarteum in Salzburg. Kelly-Marie Murphy was born on a NATO base in Sardegna, Italy, and grew up on Canadian Armed Forces bases all across Canada. She began her studies in composition at the University of Calgary with William Jordan and Allan Bell, and later received a Ph.D. in composition from the University of Leeds, England, where she studied with Philip Wilby. After living and working for many years in the Washington D.C. area where she was designated “an alien of extraordinary ability” by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service, she is now based in Ottawa.

L+M Duo is a marimba and piano duo featuring Laurel Black (marimba) and Marianne Parker (piano). Their mission is to commission, perform, and interpret contemporary classical music, and re-imagine yesterday’s most compelling works. The duo’s inaugural season featured an appearance at the New Music Gathering at Bowling Green State University, a world premiere performance at Chicago’s foremost new music venue, Constellation, as well as a university tour in East Tennessee. The duo was also featured in Fourth Presbyterian Church’s popular Noonday Concert Series in downtown Chicago. To date, they have premiered four new works, including an exclusive arrangement of Jacob TV’s “The Body of your Dreams.”

L+M Duo is the Ensemble-in-Residence at University of Illinois-Chicago for the 2017-18 season. Highlights of their upcoming season include a pioneering collaboration with composer Steven Snowden and world-renowned architecture firm, Perkins+Will, in addition to a commission with JMU composer Jason Haney.

Marianne and Laurel each maintain active performance careers in Chicago and Harrisonburg, VA, respectively. Laurel endorses instruments by Majestic and sticks/mallets by Innovative Percussion.

Program Notes

The Lonely Road (2010): I was asked to write a piece inspired by a work in the National Gallery collection in Ottawa. I chose *Lonely Road*†, a painting by FH Varley. Varley was a founding member of the Group of Seven and served as a war artist on the Canadian battlefields of France from 1918-20. The painting is watercolour over black chalk, and is very stark. I wanted to take this visual starkness and the musical starkness of the Bach solo cello suites, and create a story of solitude, desolation and existentialism. (note by the composer)

Sing Me at Midnight: The British poet Wilfred Owen (pictured below as an Officer Cadet, July, 1916) was born in 1893. After briefly working as a lay assistant in the Evangelical parish of Dunsden and as a teacher, with the increasing demand for young soldiers in World War I, joined the Artists’ Rifles. Within half a year he was deployed as a commissioned officer in the Manchester Regiment. He was killed in military service near Ors, France at the height of his creative powers, seven days before the signing of the Armistice that ended the war. He is best remembered for his large and profoundly eloquent and compassionate body of poetry directly inspired by his experience in the trenches, but throughout his life he wrote many other lyric or love poems of a much more intimate nature. Many were in sonnet form inspired by Shakespeare and Owen’s beloved Keats. It is in these works that he expressed his most personal thoughts bravely and candidly and they are the inspiration for *Sing Me at Midnight*.

The five poems chosen form a loose narrative and are linked musically with recurring motifs and textures. The well-known hymn tune *St. Anne*, associated annually with Remembrance Day in Canada (Nov. 11), makes a comforting appearance the walking bass line of the chorale that concludes *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. If desired and available, three singers (SMT) or a small chorus can quietly sing or intone this hymn from the wings, the sides of the stage or even front of the audience according to the page that follows this song in the score. (note by the composer)

(continued on next page)

Patrons are reminded to turn off all pagers, cell phones, personal computers, and any other electronic devices.

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Program Notes (cont'd)

Reef was commissioned by L+M Duo, consisting of Laurel Black (marimba) and Marianne Parker (piano), in 2017 and completed the same year. At times, it explores some of the ways each instrument in this pairing can provide atmosphere while the other occupies the foreground, while other sections place the instruments on a more equal footing. The piece is a musical response to the diverse, wondrous, and threatened coral reef ecosystems of our oceans. They are colorful places, sometimes serene, sometimes active, and today often in distress or in danger of imminent collapse. These various states are reflected upon through different tempi and textures, with the quiet, desolate coda a reminder of the fate awaiting these magnificent places if we do not take action soon to save them. (note by the composer)

Let Hands Speak was commissioned for the Fourth Honens International Piano Competition as the imposed piece to be played by all 21 quarterfinalists. As a work that is meant to showcase the individual talents of pianists who have an extremely high level of skill and virtuosity, it is necessarily challenging both musically and technically. Each performer has to navigate the powerful, rhythmic gestures, the fast scalar passages, the lyrical moments, and must also be able to successfully tame the outermost registers of the piano. There is a section of the piece that prevails upon the creative abilities of each performer as well. A left-hand ostinato has been given, over which the right-hand must improvise a stylistically suitable passage.

The title of the piece comes from a photograph by the artist Josef Albers, entitled 'Let Hands Speak Summer 1930'. The image uses as its subject the mannequin, which was a favourite icon of the Dada movement. Although it was usually used to represent the mindless, soulless, bourgeois culture, Albers found the mannequins to have a beauty and grace that was not only human, but also lent itself well to the study of opposing characteristics such as hard and soft, straight and curved. And so too this piece is a study in opposites and the act of breathing life into the lifeless. (note by the composer)

Invocation of Aeolius was commissioned by Redshift Music Society, a group specializing in open score and stopwatch pieces. The piece unfolds at the timings specified in the score without conductor, so that players are only reading their stopwatch for cues. The work calls for the performers to be spaced around the hall to create effects that were described by the *Vancouver Observer* as “trippy.”

Dust into Dust: “Nothing essential happens in the absence of noise...in most cultures, the theme of noise lies at the origin of the religious idea.... Music, then, constitutes communication with this primordial, threatening noise—prayer.”

— Jacques Attali

...**and justice for all?** is the final line of our nation's Pledge of Allegiance. I have used it as a question rather than a pledge. My composition is a personal reaction to events of the last few years involving violence against minorities and the deplorable treatment of those in poverty in our wealthy nation. Musical inspiration from The Unanswered Question by Charles Ives is obvious. The Viola plays several cadenzas crying out for justice against a kind of “Greek Chorus” from ancient theatre comprised of Trumpet and Double Bass. The Jazz influence of the Greek chorus is in tribute to the greatest original contribution to American music by our African American brothers and sisters who have suffered injustice for far too long. (note by the composer)

Program Notes (cont'd)

And Einstein Said: Trent Worthington, Canadian composer, arranger, performer, conductor and educator, is an exciting force for innovative music making within commercial, classical, and choral genres. He has worked with, among others, Pro Coro Canada, the Edmonton Singing Christmas Tree, the PreTenors comedy opera troupe, and VOCE: The *a cappella* experience. And Einstein Said, based on quotes by Albert Einstein, demonstrates the wittiness of the scientist as well as the brilliance of the composer.

Ave Maris Stella: Don Macdonald has a varied musical background that includes experience as a performer, conductor, educator, and composer. Macdonald's composition credits include commissioned classical works, arrangements and compositions for CD recordings and scores for award winning film and television. Macdonald lives in Nelson, BC, and is currently a member of the faculty at the Selkirk College Contemporary Music and Technology Program, where he heads the composition department. His *Ave Maris Stella* is a gorgeous example of a contemporary Marian motet, filled with the sweetness of parallel 6th harmonic structures, and contrasting intervals of fifths and sixths in primary melodic passages, as well as a contrasting solo section. English translation, from the Latin:

Hail, star of the sea, Nurturing Mother of God, and ever-Virgin, happy gate of Heaven.

Receiving that "Ave" (hail) from the mouth of Gabriel, establish us in peace, transforming the name of "Eva" (Eve).

Miserere (Latin for "Have mercy" or "Have pity") is the first word in Latin of Psalm 51. My goal with Miserere was to explore the beauty of the voice, the richness of diatonic harmonies, and the simplicity of the text. It is a very direct plea for mercy for our transgressions, large and small, at a time in our history when we've done so much to warrant the request, yet very little to deserve a response. (note by the composer)

Selene's Boat explores the power of the sea-wayfarer goddess Selene and her power to harness the moon's influence over the tides. It uses a very contemporary a cappella texture, vocal glissandos, and fall-offs all based on the g minor pentatonic scale to create a lush and cinematic work with jazz influences. An accompaniment for HAPI or other tuned percussion adds to the atmospheric textures of this piece.

Mmm, yo wa... Mmm, yo wa... Du doot, du doot, du doot, du doot...

Selene: Lifting hopeful eyes to the darkening skies, I look for signs the moon is nigh.

Finding mountain paths, through the brown-skinned night, I leave the beach so soon, I might...

Reach for the moon. Harvest the moonlight. Gather the moonlight.

And I hold lunar nectar in my trembling hand. Shifting moonlight to pockets, I make my way to the strand.

Du doot, du doot, du doot, du doot...

Down the path once more, back onto the sand, to where my boat is trapped on land.

Summoning the bright soul of satellite; “Speak to the sea: Call in the tide!”

Guided by moon, guided by moon, lead by the moonlight.

And I empty my pockets onto the shore and the water folds in, where only sand was there before.

Mmm, yo wa... Mmm, yo wa yo wa yo wa yo wa yo wa yo wa yo wa