

The D'Angelo Department of Music
at
Mercyhurst University

Presents

Senior Recital

Featuring

Michael Bell, percussion

Walker Recital Hall

Saturday, April 12, 2025
7 p.m.



MERCYHURST
UNIVERSITY

D'ANGELO DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

PROGRAM

The Scotty
Loosen Up

Charles Wilcoxon
(1894-1978)

Yellow After the Rain

Mitchell Peters
(1935-2017)

Adventures For One

I. Slowly and somewhat freely
II. Fast and rhythmic
III. Very slow—Slow—Fast—Slow
IV. Always driving

Robert Stern
(1934-2018)

Intermission

Six Unaccompanied Solos for Snare Drum

No. 1: *Allegro con spirito*
No. 3: *Adagio*
No. 2: *Allegro*

Michael Colgrass
(1932-2019)

Etude in B Major, Op. 6, No. 9

Clair Omar Musser
(1901-1998)

Sonata for Timpani

I. Mysteriously
II. Jazz-like
III. Fast

John Beck
(b. 1933)

The use of recording devices is strictly prohibited. Please turn off and
stow all electronic devices. Thank you.

NOTES

Charles Wilcoxon was a drum teacher, who began teaching his very first students when he was 12. He performed with different minstrel groups as well as movie type orchestras around the age of 14. Hailing from Cleveland, Ohio, some of the works that Charles wrote were *The All-American Drummer*, *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos*, *Wrist and Finger Control*, and the *Drummer on Parade*. One of Charles' close friends, William J. Schinstine, wrote a piece just for him called *Charlie's Horse* in 1968. He is also well known as a member of the Percussive Arts Society (PAS), to which he was inducted in 1981. Charles also wrote a few mallet percussion solos and etudes for vibraphone and marimba. All of Wilcoxon's percussion books were written in his own handwriting for his students so that they could see everything properly, after which all were professionally engraved. He had created his own music store in the 1930's. One of his most famous quotes was, "Don't copy, be original." This quote stuck with him for the rest of his life. In addition to everything that Charles did, he then toured with the vaudeville show "Spring Maid." He had become one of the greatest percussionists of all time. Charles wrote over 150 solos for the All-American drummer in just six weeks. Mr. Wilcoxon passed away in 1978.

The *Scotty* snare drum solo is a rudimentary piece played with lots of doublings in both the right and left hands. The half note rolls are to be played with open strokes, making it sound like sixteen thirty-second notes are being heard from the audience's perspective. It also features sixteenth-note triplets being played in both hands. They also include doublings with the triplets as well. This piece is to be played as a technical warmup for the advanced snare drummer.

The *Loosen Up* solo features lots of rudimental warmups that enhance the proper snare drummer to become better. There are multiple thirty-second notes being performed in this passage and it involves paradiddles in the right and left hands. These rudiments are to be played at a very proper tempo in order to set up the musicians themselves for successful procedures with performance. The tempo marking is 72bpm to the quarter note. Wilcoxon also incorporates flams and dragadiddles.

Mitchell Thomas Peters was born on August 17, 1935, in Red Wing, Minnesota. He taught at the California State University Los Angeles and served as the principal percussionist in the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

He wrote many pieces and method books for the various members of the percussion family. He died October 28, 2017.

Other than *Yellow After the Rain*, he composed other pieces such as *Sonata Allegro* for marimba and piano, *Sea Refractions and Galactica* for four and two mallet marimba solo, respectively. Many of these pieces were meant to develop students' skills with mallet instrument technical development, while exhibiting interesting melodic and rhythmic content.

This piece may suggest the blossoming of flowers after a rainstorm. The first few measures begin forte, then go back down softer until the main theme begins. The beginning of this piece uses chords built on the interval of a perfect fourth but becomes more chromatic later. Once the main theme starts it is marked *piano*, but the melody is in the right hand and is played out a little more than the left-hand chords. The melody then shifts to the left hand with right hand accompaniment. As the piece progresses, the tension is building to a section that displays the usage of four mallet independent movement. Open fifth voicings are utilized in the shape of a whole tone scale. The piece then goes up a minor third from Db to E and proceeds upwards to the Ab where the dynamic is *fortissimo*. After that, the restatement of the main theme happens, this time at *pianissimo*. This section is then followed by a final *fortissimo* chordal section utilizing the first theme.

Adventures For One is a percussion solo written by Robert Stern. It was written for multi-percussion which includes vibraphone, four timpani, two bongos, two timbales, and suspended cymbal. The overall effect of this piece is very much like having a mysterious dream. The first section incorporates a large bouquet of free simultaneous sounds that are mystical and magical, played between the vibraphone and timpani. The second section has a more energetic approach: it starts out with bongos and timbales playing many variations of rhythms with very intricate stickings. This section sounds more like a march. The third section is the shortest and starts with loud dynamic bursts of sound. The tempo incorporates rubato, with a few fermatas that interrupt the frequently-changing tempos. The tempo at the beginning of the third section is the same tempo as section two. The eighth note gives the pulse in sections two and three. The final section of this piece is the only one that incorporates one time signature throughout (2/4). The repetitions resemble an upbeat sort of march with the bongos and timbales acting like the talking drums of Africa. The hardest parts in this section are the longer subdivisions and polyrhythms. The largest challenge is being able

to negotiate playing over the large span of the setup at a very low dynamic level. This piece includes various changing rhythms in all of the different sections. The listener will find many mixed meters 2/4, 9/8, 4/4, 5/4, and 3/2. Most of the time signature changes are in sections 1, 2, and 3.

The piece was written and dedicated to Joel Thome. It was premiered in Rochester, NY 1961. His studies began at Eastman School of Music. Stern was born in Paterson, NJ, Feb. 1, 1934. He received both bachelor's degrees from Eastman School of Music and the University of Rochester. Mr. Stern was also in the Third Army Band as a music arranger. He returned to Eastman to receive his Ph. D. in composition. Some teachers that he studied with were L. Mennini, Kent Kennan, Wayne Barlow, Lukas Foss, and Howard Hanson.

Michael Colgrass was a very popular jazz musician born on April 22, 1932, in Brookfield, Illinois. The first start of his career began in Chicago (1944- 1949). Michael graduated from the University of Illinois in 1954 with a degree in performance and composition. He played with the Seventh Army Symphony in Stuttgart, Germany serving as a timpanist for two years. Colgrass was a percussionist who moved around quite a lot to multiple wide-ranging performance venues such as the New York Philharmonic, American Ballet Theater, Dizzy Gillespie, the Modern Jazz Quartet, the original West Side Story orchestra on Broadway, the Columbia Recording Orchestras "Stravinsky Conducts Stravinsky" series, and many other ballets, opera, and jazz ensembles. He was a grand prize winner of the 1978 Pulitzer Prize for the Music in Deja vu. In 1982, Mr. Colgrass received an Emmy Award for a PBS documentary known as "Soundings: The Music of Michael Colgrass." He received commissions from the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony twice. Some other orchestras he has performed with are those from Minnesota, Detroit, San Francisco, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Washington, and Toronto. Part of his studies included training with the well-renowned Darius Milhaud at the Aspen Festival, as well as Lukas Foss at Tanglewood. While Colgrass became an author, he wrote a narrative/exercise book that outlined his techniques for performance and creativity.

Solo #1 of the six unaccompanied solos for the snare drum include 3a model sticks. The starting tempo is quarter note pulse equals 168 bpm. The mood of the excerpt is meant to be fast but with high spirit. What is very unique about this type of solo is that the rhythmic notations straddle

a line, with the notes above the line being played with the right hand, and the notes below the line being played with the left hand. The overall purpose of this is to help train your hands to move at different parts of the drum as well as make faster transitions into new dynamic adjustments. This is to help the average drum set player to achieve better hand eye coordination while adjusting the sound volumes. The bottom lines represent the left hand while the top lines are the notes in the right hand.

Solo #3 is marked tempo at half note equals 72 bpm. It is meant to be a very slow excerpt with the inclusion of brushes and timpani sticks. The meter starts as a half note pulse in 2/2. Halfway through, the meter changes to 3/2 or also marked as 6/4. The performer flips on the snare while brushes start to take shape, and then the performer flips off the snare when the timpani stick in the left hand joins in with the right-hand brush.

Solo #2 consists of the starting tempo marked at quarter note equals 152 bpm with a starting time signature in 4/4. The hardest parts are the time signature changes going from quarter to eighth note pulse in mixed meter. Soon, the tempo changes from 152 to 184 bpm. The dynamics are very soft at this point and make it very challenging to play without hitting the drum as hard. Near the end, there are lots of intense snare techniques that act as if they were played on a drum set. These techniques include the on-rim hits marked as “M.” The shoulder of the left stick strikes the rim while the left palm holds down the butt of the stick in the center of the head, marked in the music as “LM.” For the marking “RL,” the right stick hits on top of the left stick while the left stick is on the drum and rim. The marking “1/2” indicates that the sticks plays halfway between the center and edge.

Clair Omar Musser was one of the most important influences on the development of the marimba in the twentieth century. He was a performer, teacher, and composer. Musser was also a conductor and promoter for marimba orchestras. Not only did he accomplish all of these, but he was an inventor and engineer of the Hughes aircraft. All facets of the marimba—design and construction, teaching, composing of etudes and solos, a four-mallet grip and even the popularity of the instrument itself—all came under his positive influence. Musser formed his own marimba company which still bears his name.

Etude in B Major, Op. 6, No. 9 consists of four-part chordal writing which then develops into independent mallet combinations. The time signature is 4/4 with a triplet feeling throughout. The tempo is quarter note equals 132 bpm. At measure 9, you will then hear descending melodic movement using chromatic/diatonic scale writing in both the left and right hand. This movement progresses through two separate octaves before the introduction of a new but related idea which then ascends through the same registers. The piece continues in a fast tempo with the volume dropping to *pianissimo* and then utilizing various crescendos and decrescendos with a slight pause right before an interruption of three *sforzando* chords. The main theme is then reintroduced, harmonically taking the listener through rapidly changing keys before ending the piece with a fiery codetta.

John Beck was a percussionist, timpanist, and marimba soloist. John was born on February 16, 1933. He played with the United States Marine band in 1955-1959. He was a worker for the Eastman School of Music faculty. Beck also went to school at Eastman earning a bachelor's degree in music in 1955, as well as earning his master's degree from Eastman in 1962. Beck was principal percussionist for the Rochester Philharmonic in the year 1959. John was an adjudicator at the International Percussion competition in Luxembourg as well as the Japan Music Educator Promotion in Tokyo, Japan. Some of the honors Beck has received were the Edwin Peck Curtis award for excellence in his undergraduate teaching in 2003 at Eastman. Beck was selected as State Chairman for percussion at New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) in 1970-1972. He was also named for president of the National Percussive Arts Society, 1987-1990.

The first movement of the Sonata for Timpani starts out very slowly and mysteriously. The pitches on the different drums are F-sharp, A, C, and E-flat—all these spelled out are called an F# fully diminished seventh chord. The tempo is quarter note = 58 bpm. The time signature is 4/4 throughout. The rolls require multiple drums to be played at the same time in which the sound lends itself to be mysterious. The “x” note heads represent the bottom bowls on the timpani to be played. The second movement of the Sonata incorporates a swing jazzy style. The tempo is quarter note equals 100 bpm. The time signature is 4/4 throughout. All the eighth notes are swung and involve different sticking patterns in both the right hand and left hand with strong accents occurring in the middle part of the piece. The second page of this excerpt involves the performer using their hands and fingers to play the notes. There are lots of

syncopated rhythms in the second half. The last section of the piece makes the performer adjust to playing with mallets again. The performer goes from tapping the left-hand finger to grabbing the right-hand mallet while maneuvering that particular transition. The third movement consists of a very fast upbeat tempo. The tempo is marked 138-152 bpm. There are sticking patterns that involve lots of paradiddle structures and advanced movement. Mixed meters are incorporated throughout the movement. The running sixteenth notes at the beginning represent a barbaric chase. The second page involves compound meter in triplet form and polyrhythms, and then crescendos back to the beginning's original sound and tempo. The last running sixteenth notes culminate with a glissando in the E of the biggest timpani going to a C. The last five quarter notes are sudden and cause the ending to be huge with the notes E, C, D, E, and low E, with the complex timpani muting gesture.

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