

PROGRAM NOTES

Sketrig is a percussion solo written for vibraphone, snare drum, and kick drum with live electronics. The piece draws upon popular music and contemporary percussion inspirations for an expansive sound environment created by electronics blending with the acoustic sound of the instruments. To promote accessibility, the piece utilizes relatively inexpensive technology with two contact microphones that are used in multiple ways. The microphones are taped to the heads of the snare and bass drums to “listen” to the instruments, allowing the instruments to trigger different electronic components throughout the work. The microphones also record certain moments in the piece and later play back processed sound of the acoustic instruments. Utilizing only the two contact microphones, and no additional pedals or microphones, streamlines the required electronic setup and hopefully removes some common technological barriers. A number of the electronic layers have randomized elements (panning, volume, how often they play, etc.) to help them feel more organic and to make it so the piece is never the exact same from one run-through to the next. In addition to the audio that is recorded live during the piece, several of the sound samples that are utilized are manipulations of various shuttle and space recordings released by NASA. The title is just a mashup of the two words in the working title I was employing while writing the piece (“trigger sketches”); however, *Sketrig* also sounds like the name of some type of satellite (i.e. “Sputnik”) and so I suppose this piece is more space themed than I planned.

The Spiral on Your Back

This piece is at the same time many pieces. It is about the idea of re-signifying an object by changing its context. With this in mind, one could say this piece consists of two components: a fixed part – the one that is notated – created by the composer, and a flexible part – five loops – created by the performer. The type of loop the performer creates, will completely re-signify the perception of the music I wrote; thus, he has the power to create a new interaction between the parts, creating a new piece every time it is performed.

The whole idea came up to me after my first travel to Europe. When we travel we usually have a point of departure and a point of arrival but there are always many possible paths to reach our final destination. One could take path A, B, or C and still arrive to the same place. Path A could be a rocky mountain, B a flat valley, and C a highway. In this piece the destination is set but the performer gets to choose the path to take. – José Martínez

Mirror of Heaven is an experiment in media interaction and timbral blending between vibraphone and electronics. The electronic sound begins minimally as live effects which augment the vibraphone. Slowly they gain their independence, blossoming out of the vibraphone as a phantom partner. In this moment, the instruments' relationship switches: the electronics become the foreground aural material, while the vibraphone acts as harmonic support. In the end, the vibraphonist returns as the aural focus while the electronics' chordal chimes comment on and cadence the final moment. Written in 2021, *Mirror of Heaven* is a nod to Arvo Pärt. The minimal and harmonious style creates a restful space within which listeners can find a moment of meditation and rest, away from the tumult of current events. – Carolyn Borcharding

Hysteresis was inspired by James Tenney's alluring *Critical Band*. *Hysteresis* starts off with a similar idea. Using a sine wave detuned a few hertz – less than about 20 Hz difference – from the vibraphone pitch creates a rhythmic beating. Slowly changing the pitch of this sine wave by 8 Hz or so makes the rhythmic beating either slow down or speed up (depending on if the detuning is getting sharper or flatter). This beating sound comes from the sound waves canceling each other out at certain times while other times reinforcing each other. – Jeremy Muller

rasp for percussion and electronics was written for and dedicated to percussionist Alex Wier. Alex and I met while studying at the University of Arizona and it was this connection to the desert that informed many musical choices in the piece. *rasp* explores dry and abrasive textures produced from the percussion instruments and interactive electronics. The work is scored for maracas, three flowerpots, two woodblocks, brake drum, floor tom, and bass drum and formally proceeds through the instruments in that order. In addition to our mutual time spent in the desert, while I was composing this work, I was also reading Frank Herbert's *Dune* and subsequent books in the series. These images as well as my own memories of the harshness of the desert provided the backdrop for *rasp*. – Robert McClure

Where Light Escapes You is a work influenced by those remote places where true darkness and silence exist. All at once tranquil and urgent, these environments offer up a deep knowledge of the space around us, hidden within the absences. – Jordan Munson

