

THE MIDWEST COMPOSERS SYMPOSIUM

The Midwest Composers Symposium is a consortium made up of the composition departments of four American Midwest Universities: The University of Cincinnati, Indiana University and the Universities of Iowa and Michigan. The purpose is to allow students to have contact with other composers at nearby institutions, and to foster connections and self-identity.

The Symposium began in 1948 by Anthony Donato of Northwestern University, and included the composition departments from the Universities of Michigan, Illinois and Iowa. For a few years during the 1960s, the symposium concerts ceased due to a change in academic calendars, but resumed in the early 1970s when most schools adopted the quarter system. Oberlin College joined at this point, and a few years later, Indiana University. Northwestern dropped out in 1992, as did Illinois and Oberlin in 2007. The University of Cincinnati joined in 2008.

COMPOSITION FACULTY

The University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music

Michael Fiday*, Mara Helmuth, Joel Hoffman,
Douglas Knehans and Miguel Roig-Francoli
Carrie Magin, *student assistant*

Indiana University School of Music

David Dzubay, Don Freund, John Gibson, Jeffrey Hass, Claude Baker, PQ Phan,
Aaron Travers* and Sven-David Sandstrom (visiting)

The University of Iowa School of Music

Lawrence Fritts*, David Gompper* and Bert Van Herck
Will Huff, Jason Palamara, Brian Penkrot and Justin Comer, *student committee*

The University of Michigan School of Music

Evan Chambers, Michael Daugherty*, Kristy Kuster,
Erik Santos, Paul Schoenfield and Bright Sheng
Patrick Harlin, *student assistant*

**-attending conference*

THE UNIVERSITY
OF IOWA

Center for New Music *hosts*

David Gompper, *director*

Midwest Composers Symposium 2012

*A consortium of composers from the
Universities of Cincinnati, Indiana, Iowa & Michigan*

Concert I

7:30 p.m. Friday, 2 November
Iowa Memorial Union, Ballroom

Concert II

10:30 a.m. Saturday, 3 November
University Capitol Center Recital Hall

Presentations

1:30 p.m.
UCC Break Room

Concert III

3:30 p.m.
UCC Recital Hall

Concert IV

7:30 p.m.
Riverside Recital Hall

Midwest Composers Symposium *Concert 4*

Sat., 3 Nov. 2012, 19.30 RIVERSIDE RECITAL HALL

PROGRAM

- Welcoming** (2012) Carrie MAGIN (CCM)
Kate Tombaugh, *mezzo-soprano* (b. 1981)
Hyanghyun Lee, *piano*
- Tchotchkes for violin and piano** (2012) Ezra DONNER (IU)
1. Opening Credits (b. 1986)
2. Dance
3. Night Music
4. Low Down
Eric Auerbach, *violin*
Ezra Donner, *piano*
- All The Rage** (2012) Corey CUNNINGHAM (UM)
Corey Cunningham, *electric guitar* (b. 1986)
- Eastern Feast** *duet for violin and viola* (2012) Nima HAMIDI (UI)
Lucy Lewis, *violin* (b. 1984)
Manuel Tábora, *viola*
- Piano Quintet** (2012) Steven M. WEIMER (CCM)
Movement I — “Thorn” (b. 1984)
Jiyong Atkinson & Hye Jung Yoon, *violins*
Yang Fan, *viola*
Randy Nashleanas, *violoncello*
Steven M. Weimer, *piano*
- Mysterious Dance** (2012) Hangrui ZHANG (CCM)
Tyler Eschendal, *timpani* (b. 1989)
Randy Nashleanas, *violoncello*
- Gesture No. 1** (2012) Corey SMITH (UM)
Nadine Dyskant Miller, *flute* (b. 1992)
Clay Gonzalez, *trombone*
Samn Johnson, *guitar*
Zac Lavendar, *violoncello*
Corey Smith, *piano*

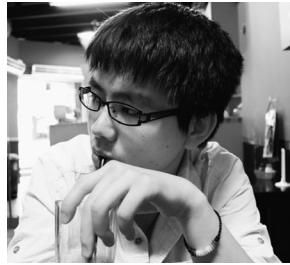
SVP, for the consideration of our performers and guests, take a moment to turn off your cell phone.

semble, Del Sol Quartet, ADORNO Ensemble, Chamber Mix, Volti, Thornton Contemporary Music Ensemble, Indiana University New Music Ensemble, and pianist Jenny Lin, among many others. He has received awards from the Finale National Competition Contest, PSO's Audience of the Future competition, Southern Indiana Wind Ensemble Composers Competition, Lake George Music Festival, ASCAP, SCI, NFM, Volti's Choral Arts Laboratory and the Thornton School of Music. He has also participated in June in Buffalo, Aspen, and ACO Underwood New Music Readings. His work is published by Peermusic Classical and recordings are available on his website, www.musicsscore.com.

This program is supported in part by The Elizabeth M. Stanley Performing Arts Endowment.

I started to compose *Mysterious Dance* on September 15th, 2012, and the final version was completed on September 25th. This piece is based on a special mode I generated by myself. The reason why I call this piece “Mysterious Dance” is that I imagined a unique dance in my head as I composed it. But it’s NOT dance music. And that’s why I call it “Mysterious”.

Hangrui Zhang is currently an undergraduate student majoring in Composition at CCM. He studies with Mara Helmuth, and he is a freshman.

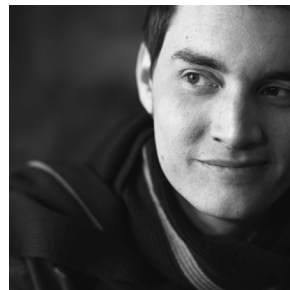


Gesture No. 1 is the first of a series of pieces exploring the beauty within a single musical gesture. This particular gesture focuses on the ecstatic drive and tremendous power of an accelerando. At the same time, however, it is a meditation on tonal stasis and is the purity of energy contained within rhythm. It is written as an open score: the performers realize the piece through a group rehearsal process and collective decision making.

Born in 1992 in Temperance, Michigan, composer **Corey Smith** is a junior studying music composition at the University of Michigan. He is currently studying with Evan Chambers. Previous instructors include Kristin Kuster and Bright Sheng. He plays the trumpet and the accordion. When not writing music, Corey works as a blogger for the campus arts organization, Arts@Michigan and as a DJ at the local radio station, WCBN. He also is a dancer, poet, and performance artist, activities which he sees as directly correlated with his musical output.

Town’s Gonna Talk— I had the privilege to live in downtown Chicago for the month of July, 2011. My stay there was filled with daily walks from my hotel in River North down into the Loop. In stark contrast to my years living in Los Angeles, where the majority of my trips between destinations was done by car (and accompanied by the stations I’d select on the car radio), traversing Chicago on foot attuned my ears to a different kind of music: the urgent call and response of car horns, the rumble of the El, the fragments of overheard cell phone conversations, the aleatoric combinations of buskers near and distant, as well as the underlying grooves (*shuk shuk shuk shuk*...) of panhandlers along Wabash Ave rhythmically shaking their coin-filled plastic cups like maracas. For me, this urban counterpoint represented something bigger than us all, like music being improvised daily by the city, herself.

Eric Lindsay’s music includes various approaches to concert music, interactive electronics, sound installation and film. Eric holds composition degrees from Indiana University and USC, as well as studies at King’s College in London. His work has been performed by the American Composer’s orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, eighth blackbird, New York New Music En-



Town’s Gonna Talk (2011)

Eric LINDSAY (IU)
(b. 1980)

Pei-San Chiu, *flute*
Ben Richmond, *bass clarinet*
Sophic Bird, *violin*
Maya Nojiri, *violoncello*
Ezra Donner, *piano*
James Cromer, *percussion*
Elliott Bark, *conductor*

Program Notes and Biographies

Welcoming is based on a text by poet Andrea Nicki and was premiered in Vancouver as part of Art Song Lab 2012 with mezzo-soprano Lynne McMurtry (SUNY College at Fredonia) and pianist Alison d’Amato (Eastman School of Music).

Text adapted from *Welcoming* by Andrea Nicki

I welcome myself to this city; as no one else will do it as well; they don’t know my sensibilities, my character dispositions, what I can withstand, tolerate, what I cannot.

I welcome myself with the sights of the majestic moose, and Alaskan mountains. I welcome myself with the earth’s beauty. I welcome myself with hopes and desires, a desire for joyfulness. I welcome myself with an expectation of love. I welcome myself with these words to surround me like a friend.

I welcome myself with the familiarity of foreign lands, of travel, of displacement. I welcome myself with the familiarity of adaptation to new people.

I welcome myself with familiar tears for friends and places far away. I welcome myself with the constant companion of loneliness. I welcome myself with my resilience, courage and strength: the lions and tigers of myself. I welcome myself with my light spirit, with my love of life: with the songbirds of myself. I welcome myself with my curiosity, my playfulness: with the cats of myself. I welcome myself with my affability, my sociability: with the dogs of myself.

I welcome myself with my memories: some are terrible.... I welcome myself with things I have survived.

As a composer and performer, **Carrie Magin** has had successful performances in the United States, Europe, and Canada. Her works have been selected for the Buffalo Philharmonic Young Composers Forum, Orchestra 60x60, Ottawa 60x60, Indianapolis Symphony Glick Young Composers Competi-



tion (finalist), Eastman Women in Music Festival, MusicX Festival, and Academie Musicale de Villecroze (France). Additional honors include commissions by the Akron Youth Symphony and Professor Kenyon Williams (Minnesota State University), a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship, and a Strategic Opportunity Stipend (New York Foundation for the Arts). Carrie Magin holds degrees from the University of Michigan and the University of Cincinnati.

An original meaning of the word “tchotchke” is “a beautiful, useless thing”. Tchotchkes is a set of four short pieces for violin and piano, conceived as a set of contrasting miniatures, and showcasing a variety of techniques and textures. While the music often presents itself as serious and dour, a thread of wackiness and wit also runs through the piece, asserting itself more and more as the piece goes on and bursting forth in the final movement, “Low Down”. Tchotchkes was composed in July 2012 at Brevard Music Center.

Ezra Donner is an American composer, pianist, conductor, and educator. His music has been performed throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, and Turkey, and awards for compositions include First Prize in the 2012 Respighi Prize Competition, First Prize in the 2012 IMTA Opus Composition Festival, Runner-up in the 2012 ClefWorks Composition Competition, and Finalist in the 2010 Midwest Graduate Music Consortium. Ezra is a frequent performer of his own music, and his 2012 CD release *Steel Sky* features original works for solo piano composed between 2009 and 2011. Ezra is currently pursuing a Doctor of Music Degree in Composition at Indiana University, where he is a student of Claude Baker.



All The Rage is a reflection of my own influences and performing experiences as a guitarist. One of the things I enjoy most about playing the guitar is the multitude of musical styles that I am called on to play. It is truly an amazing experience to immerse oneself in such a variety of musical idioms. In attempting to synthesize and combine these disparate styles, I began thinking about the common elements that tied them together. In particular, I became interested in how popular music is used as a medium through which people express anger and discontentment with the world. “All The Rage” was premiered on August 1st, 2012, by guitarist Flavio Virzi at Santa Maria Gualtieri in Pavia, Italy.



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Corey Cunningham is a composer and performer based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is currently pursuing a master’s degree in music composition at the University of Michigan, where his primary teachers have been Michael Daugherty and Kristin Kuster. He holds a BM from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where he studied with Ethan Wickman and graduated magna cum laude. Corey’s music covers

a wide range of styles and genres, and includes both acoustic and electronic works. He was chosen to participate in the 2012 highSCORE Contemporary Music Festival in Pavia, Italy, where he studied with Christopher Theofanidis, Dmitri Tymoczko, Mario Garuti, and Amy Beth Kirsten. Additionally, he has participated in lessons and master classes with Sydney Hodkinson, Libby Larsen, and Piotr Szewczyk. Corey has also been selected as one of the featured composers at the 2012 Electronic Music Midwest Festival. In addition to composing, Corey is also an active performer, as both a saxophonist and guitarist. As a jazz saxophonist he has toured and recorded professionally, and was a member of Downbeat Magazine’s 2010 “Best Collegiate Jazz Ensemble” at UW-Eau Claire. As a guitarist, he has performed in a variety of styles, from folk to hip-hop.



Eastern Feast is a composition for violin and viola written during a 24-hour composition project in 2012 at the University of Iowa. In this piece I tried to use a combination of elements found in both western and eastern (Iranian) music. The composition makes use of unexpected accents within stable rhythmic patterns set against a free melodic part. Both rhythmic and lyrical elements represent my native and new life in this country.

Nima Hamidi (b. 1984) lived as a composer in Tehran until 2011. Before studying composition in Iran he studied the Setar, an Iranian traditional instrument, and the guitar. Because of having lived in Tabriz for most of his life, he has aural knowledge of Azerbaijan folk music. Currently he is enrolled in the PhD program in composition at the University of Iowa.

The first movement of my Piano Quintet explores the development of a few pitch cells. The central pitch cell is the basic trichord of A, B-flat, B-natural. This chromatic cell is the only collection to appear in multiple sections and serves as the central motive. This cell breaks away into a weeping violin solo before reaching a chordal high point. As an ensemble, this quintet presents an interesting challenge in balance because the piano can overwhelm the entire quartet of strings. I attempted to rectify this problem by using the piano as an ornamental and accompanimental instrument, allowing it to dominate a few brief moments before finally laying out a chord pattern for the final section.

Steven M. Weimer is a composer who hails from St. Charles, Illinois. He holds degrees from Bowling Green State University and Western Illinois University and has had performances throughout the midwest. His *Root Cycle* was selected as the winning composition by the Eta Omicron chapter in the 2012 Phi Mu Alpha Composition Contest. Recent works include a chamber piece for tubist Timothy Northcut, a recording with Sean Patayanikorn of the Anubis Quartet, and a piano work premiered through a grant from the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music. Currently, Steven is pursuing DMA studies at the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati.

