

CU ★ PRESENTS

2022-23 Season



College of Music

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

AT THE PERFORMANCE

- Please refrain from using electronic devices during the performance. Feel free to view this program on your device at any time prior to the performance, during intermission or after the performance ends.
- Photography and video recordings of any type are strictly prohibited during the performance.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere. CU Boulder is a smoke-free campus.

CU ★ PRESENTS is the home of performing arts at the University of Colorado Boulder.



The mission of the **University of Colorado Boulder College of Music** is to inspire artistry and discovery, together.



The College of Music acknowledges that the university sits upon land within the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples. Further, we acknowledge that 48 contemporary tribal nations are historically tied to Colorado lands.

Pendulum New Music

Tales and Soundscapes

Egemen Kesikli, artistic director

Annika Socolofsky, faculty coach

7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022

Grusin Music Hall

Program

La Flor Más Linda (7:00)

Gilda Lyons

CU Wind Symphony

Donald McKinney, conductor

Nocturne (5:00)

Kaija Saariaho

Victor Avila Luvsangenden, violin

Rhapsody No. 2 (5:00)

Jessie Montgomery

Victor Avila Luvsangenden, violin

Soundscapes from Somewhere Else (5:00)

Keenan Powell

Keenan Powell, piano and SuperCollider

Trio in B Major (9:00)

Blake Clawson

Greg Abrell, violin

Sophie Stubbs, cello

Angelique Scully, piano

— Intermission —

Listening to trees listening to trees (8:00)

Abby Kellems

Boulder Altitude Directive

Laws of Truancy and the Important Microcosm (8:00)

Jessie Lausé

Boulder Altitude Directive

Pentatonic Étude (7:00)

Esa-Pekka Salonen

Allyson Stibbards, violin

WHITE Heat death EP

-□ tracks 2 { Life flashes -□ } + 3 { grave of ashes -□ } (9:00)

NEON Red chasms (∃U#)

A Tale Told by Two Clarinets (7:00)

Holly McMahon

Carson Conley and Kevin Halsey, clarinets

Program notes

Text that is bold and underlined is a hyperlink and can be clicked or tapped for more information.

La Flor Más Linda (7:00)

Gilda Lyons

In September 2018, as protesters from Nicaragua’s Carazo region prepared to march against the increasingly dictatorial Ortega government, my Tios (my aunt and uncle) wrote us with pictures of blockades and descriptions of the armed forces that awaited protesters. A world away, I responded by recording and posting a verse of Carlos Mejía Godoy’s *Nicaragua, Nicaragüita*, a song that has become as clear a symbol of the resistance as the blue and white Nicaraguan flag. It was a cry into the abyss, but, to my surprise, it actually landed with dear ones and their friends in Nicaragua who wrote that they felt our family standing with them. From this urgent sense of reaching across distance through music grew *la flor más linda*, written for Glen Adsit, Edward Cumming and the Foot in the Door Ensemble. With arms outstretched through sound, sonic images I associate with Nicaragua are slammed together: the Basílica bells that toll freely during the Festival of San Sebastián; the pito and chischiles of the dance of the Toro Huaco, for which stand in flute and maracas; the firecrackers that announce celebration; scalar gestures that conjure the strong wind that blows through Diriamba, my mother’s home town; fragments from de la Cruz Mena’s Los Amores de Abraham, a tune my grandfather and his brothers played in their ensemble Marimba Diriangén; and a single gesture from Godoy’s *Nicaragua, Nicaragüita*. Despite an impulse to center on vibrant imagery, celebratory sound mutates into the sinister, and song becomes lament. *Estamos con la gente de Nicaragua, siempre. Viva Nicaragua libre.*

—Program note by Gilda Lyons

Nocturne (5:00)

Kaija Saariaho

Nocturne was written in early 1994 and dedicated to the memory of Polish composer Witold Lutoslawski. The piece is an exploration of early ideas for Kaija Saariaho's violin concerto, *Graal Théâtre*, which was premiered in London at the 1995 BBC Promenade Concerts by Gidon Kremer. The first performance of *Nocturne* was by John Storgårds on Feb. 16, 1994 in Helsinki.

Rhapsody No. 2 (5:00)

Jessie Montgomery

Rhapsody No. 2 is the second of a set of six intended solo violin works, each of which will be dedicated to a different contemporary violinist, and inspired by an historical composer. This virtuosic piece was commissioned by and written for composer and violinist Michi Wiancko on the album *Planetary Candidate* and is inspired in part by Béla Bartók.

Trio in B Major (9:00)

Blake Clawson

Trio in B Major is a piece for piano trio—violin, cello, and piano—written in 2018. The string writing draws on folk influences, blending them into a modern chamber setting. Numerous metric patterns are featured throughout, each presenting developments of the melodic material that begins the work. The themes layer upon one another in the final section, bringing the piece to a unified and thrilling close.

Listening to trees listening to trees (8:00)

Abby Kellems

Listening to trees listening to trees explores what we hear when we listen to trees, as well as what trees “hear” when they listen to each other. Beneath the sounds of leaves rustling, trunks creaking and wind rushing through the forest canopy, trees are in communion with each other, sharing nutrients and information through underground fungi networks and pheromones. In

this piece, a familiar soundscape is intertwined with one that's just below the surface, bursting with life and a community all its own. This music was informed and inspired by the books *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer and *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben.

Laws of Truancy and the Important Microcosm (8:00)

Jessie Lausé

As Kourtney Kardashian once said on a televised trip to Bora Bora, “Kim, there’s people that are dying,” but alas, Kim had lost a pair of earrings that were worth more than any house I’ve ever lived in, and family vacations can be stressful. On any given day, in any given century, in any institution there exists a hierarchy of values and events. Believing one kind of music-making is better than another, or that one career is more valuable than another, or that what’s happening to me is more important than what’s happening to you can be a powerful catalyst for human behavior, positive or negative. Despite our varying backgrounds, we’re often forced and entitled to exist in the same space. This piece is a series of improvisatory episodes exploring this trichotomy between priority, privilege, and presence.

Pentatonic Étude (7:00)

Esa-Pekka Salonen

I wrote a short solo viola piece, *Pentatonic Étude*, in 2008 (revised in 2014) at the request of a musician who suggested I compose an étude based on some well-known passage from the repertoire, a common practice in the past. I was intrigued by the idea: how to imagine a piece of music that circles around an *objet trouvé*, less as a process of variation, more as unveiling an object that was always there, but hidden. I decided to use mostly traditional viola techniques, but push them to the extreme, keeping in mind the Oxford Dictionary of English definition of the word étude: a short musical composition, typically for one instrument, designed as an exercise to improve the technique or demonstrate the skill of the player.

I chose the famous black-key pentatonic passage from the first movement of Bartók’s Viola Concerto. Despite its obvious ear-worm qualities it is challenging

technically, so I decided to write a piece that travels from the “negative” of the matrix of five black keys, i.e. from the five white keys C,D,F,G,A to the black keys D-flat, E-flat, G-flat, A-flat and B-flat through gradual transformation of the chord. In fact this journey takes place twice in the piece: white—black—white—black. At the end of the *Étude*, after a long arpeggio passage, the beautiful Bartók phrase is revealed in its original form.

—*Program note by Esa-Pekka Salonen*

WHITE Heat death EP

-□ tracks 2 { Life flashes -□ } + 3 { grave of ashes -□ } (9:00)

NEON Red chasms (ΞUÆ)

This portion of the EP reflects on the aftermath of the White Heat Armageddon of 2072 from the perspective of Earth’s remaining inhabitants. { Life flashes -□ } processes the initial memories of the event as they slowly resolve to quietly despairing normalcy » { grave of ashes -□ } takes us to Earth’s inevitable conclusion post-armageddon where the activity of life lets out one last spark before succumbing to probable extinction for seeming eternity. the first track of the EP › to be featured on a concert yet to be determined › offers an abstract but no less graphic portrayal of the explosion as it occurred. -□

[Listen to the full EP at this link.](#)

A Tale Told by Two Clarinets (7:00)

Holly McMahon

I wrote this piece to explore how expressive and humorous a clarinet duet could be. It tells a tale of two friends at a party, which they eventually get kicked out of. I would describe the way I intended for it to sound as fun and light hearted.

Personnel

Text that is bold and underlined is a hyperlink and can be clicked or tapped for more information.

Egemen Kesikli, artistic director

Annika Socolofsky, faculty coach

Boulder Altitude Directive

Carter Pann, conductor

Grace Law, flute

Gleyton Pinto, clarinet

Laena Batchelder, violin

Nicole Chung, cello

Zerek Dodson, piano

Gavin Kitchen, percussion

CU Wind Symphony

Donald McKinney, conductor

Shelby Anderson, flute

Nova Rognerud, flute

Enrique Arellano, oboe

Zane Holland, oboe

Carson Conley, clarinet

Gracie Lime, clarinet

Randel Leung, bass clarinet

Sam Macken, bassoon

Victor Zhang, bassoon

Logan Banister, alto saxophone

Ethan Mead, baritone saxophone

Erick Miranda, soprano saxophone

Josh Vance, tenor saxophone

Stacey DeGarmo, horn

Derrick Rassinier, horn

Michael Brotherton, trumpet

Eric Brennan, bass trombone

Chen-Fang Hsu, piano

Jacob Kaminski, string bass

Connor LaPage, percussion

Jenn Kaphammer, percussion

Blake Clawson

Blake Clawson is a composer, pianist and vocalist based in Boulder, Colorado. Clawson's music spans many genres, but he specializes in contemporary classical and jazz. He has collaborated with both filmmakers and choreographers, and his award-winning pieces *Matara* and *Fantasy Arabesque* have received performances around the state of Washington, including a performance and award by Seattle-based Opus 7 Vocal Ensemble. In 2020, Clawson received a Bachelor of Arts in music composition from Whitworth University, where he studied with Brent Edstrom. Clawson is currently pursuing a master's degree in music composition at the University of Colorado Boulder, where he teaches aural skills and studies with Carter Pann.

Abby Kellems

Abby Kellems is a pianist and composer based in Boulder, Colorado. She completed her Bachelor of Music in music composition at the University of Oregon, where she studied with David Crumb and Robert Kyr. She received the Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar Awards in the areas of music theory and composition and placed first in the Peer Advisors' Composition Competition. Abby was also selected for the University of Oregon's Humanities Undergraduate Research Fellowship, and completed a paper titled "Six Contemporary American Women Composers: Creating Music as a Means of Environmental Activism," which won the Center For Environmental Futures/ Andrew W. Mellon Award. She served as the composer-in-residence and associate conductor of the Riverside Chamber Symphony from 2021-2022, and has had works featured at Arts Alive! and the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in music composition at the University of Colorado Boulder, where she teaches aural skills and studies with Annika Socolofsky.

Jessie Lausé

Jessie Lausé is a composer, performer and educator with a passion for creating diversified sensory engagement within their music. Lausé is originally from central Kentucky and holds a bachelor's degree in arts administration from Butler University in Indianapolis. Lausé is currently pursuing a master's

degree in music composition at the University of Colorado Boulder where they teach music technology and have studied with Annika Socolofsky and Michael Theodore. Most recently, Lausé's work has been featured at the 2022 Lake George Music Festival, the Eugene Difficult Music Ensemble's 2022 New Music Festival and in Musicworks Magazine as the second prize winner for their 2021 Electronic Music Composition Contest. When not composing, Lausé spends their free time playing board games and watching *RuPaul's Drag Race* with their cats, Gubaidulina and Mr. Bear.

Gilda Lyons

Gilda Lyons, (b. 1975), composer, vocalist and visual artist, combines elements of renaissance, neo-baroque, spectral, folk, agitprop music theater and extended vocalism to create works of uncompromising emotional honesty and melodic beauty. Lyons' music is published by Schott, E.C. Schirmer and Burning Sled. She received her Ph.D. in music composition from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and Bard College. Lyons made her professional debut as composer and vocalist with the American Symphony Chamber Orchestra in 1997, performing the world premiere of her orchestral song cycle *Feis*.

Holly McMahon

Holly McMahon is a first-year composition student from Denver, Colorado. This year, she is studying composition with Annika Socolofsky and performance piano with Andrew Cooperstock. She won third place in the 2021 National Federation of Music Clubs Junior Composer Contest in 2021 and participated in the National Federation of Music Clubs American Composers festival in 2018, 2019 and 2022 (performing on the piano). She has studied with Stephanie Cheng of the University of Denver, as well as jazz piano, classical piano and classical composition with various other private instructors. Her music is inspired largely by the repertoire she studies on the piano, as well as other music she listens to. She is excited to be a part of the CU Boulder College of Music.

Keenan Powell

Keenan Powell has been composing music since middle school. He started his journey through composition with several pieces for solo piano. After that, he wrote for string ensemble, mixed percussion and symphony orchestra. Along the way, he has discovered a love for electronics in music from live electronic processing to electronic synthesis. Powell has studied the piano for over a decade and has also studied the cello, violin, voice and guitar. He uses this knowledge to inform his compositional process. If he does not have performance experience on an instrument he wants to write for, he will seek out performers to learn the ins and outs of that instrument. This serves his continuing goal of ensuring his music is fun to perform!

CU ★ PRESENTS



Upcoming events at the College of Music

Event details are subject to change, but the CU Presents website will always be up to date. Click or tap each button to explore upcoming events.

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College of Music

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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