

CU ★ PRESENTS

2023-24 Season



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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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SoundWorks

Featuring the Líríos Quartet and Renova New Music Ensemble

7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 21, 2024

Grusin Music Hall

Program

Dúlamán

JC Maynard

Text: Irish Gaelic traditional, unknown

e(ver)

Alan Mackwell

“from a personal inscription on the inside cover of a used book”

Anyone

Holly McMahon

Text by Holly McMahon

Gray Eyes

Blake Clawson

Text by Sara Teasdale

Renova New Music Ensemble

Blake Clawson, conductor

Foss

JC Maynard

- I. Skógafoss - The Guardian
- II. Skútafoss - The Hidden Valley
- III. Hengifoss - The Dawn Ascent
- IV. Dettifoss - The Upheaval
- V. Mígandifoss - The Sea Cliff
- VI. Dynjandi - The Western Watcher

Lírios Quartet

Always something moves

Abby Kellems

- I. the stages were the yodellers
- II. the antiquity of a living flower
- III. moths like oiled paper and moths like burnt paper
- IV. precipice after precipice glowing to rose and fading again

Lírios Quartet

— Intermission —

Out Of The Octopus Tank

Josie Arnett

Shelby Roberts, harp

Josie Arnett, electronics

Falling

Luka Vezmar

- I. Snow
- II. Breeze
- III. Rain
- IV. Leaves

Shelby Roberts, harp

Emily West, harp

Miniatures

Holly McMahon

- I. Toast in the Air
- II. Fish
- III. Attempts to Skip Rocks
- IV. Something Not Broken
- V. Chalk on the Wall
- VI. Something Suspended
- VII. Something Close By
- VIII. Gnomes on the Ceiling

Ethan Stahl, piano

It Takes Two

Josie Arnett and Luka Vezmar

Josie Arnett and Luka Vezmar, cajon, piano, accordion, tambourine

Program notes

Dúlamán

JC Maynard

Text: Irish Gaelic traditional, unknown

Dúlamán na binne buí, dúlamán gaelach

Dúlamán na farráige, b'fhearr a bhí in Éirinn

A 'nion mhín ó, sin anall na fir shúirí

A mháithairín mhín ó, cuir na roithléan go dtí mé

Tá ceann buí óir are an dúlamán gaelach

Tá dhá chluais mhaol are an dúlamán maorach

Bróga breaca dubha are an dúlamán gaelach

Tá bearéad agus triús are an dúlamán maorach

“Góide a thug na tíre thú?” arsa an dúlamán gaelach

“Ag súirí le do nion,” arsa an dúlamán maorach

“Rachaimid chun Niúir leis an dúlamán gaelach”

“Ceannóimid bróga daora” are an dúlamán maorach

Ó chuir mé scéala chuici, go gceannóinn cíor dí

‘Sé’n scéal a chuir sí chugam, go raibh a ceann cíortha

“Cha bhfaigheann tú mo ‘nion?” arsa an dúlamán gaelach

“Bheul, fuadóidh mé liom í,” arsa an dúlamán maorach

Translation

Seaweed from the yellow cliff, Irish seaweed

Seaweed from the ocean, the best in all of Ireland

Oh gentle daughter, here come the wooing men

Oh gentle mother, put the wheels in motion for me

There is a yellow gold head on the Irish seaweed

There are two blunt ears on the stately seaweed

The Irish seaweed has speckled black shoes

The stately seaweed has a beret and trousers

“What are you doing here?” says the Irish seaweed
“At courting with your daughter,” says the stately seaweed
“I would go to Niúir with the Irish seaweed”
“I would buy expensive shoes,” said the Irish seaweed

I spent time telling her the story that I would buy a comb for her
The story she told back to me, that she is well-groomed
“Oh where are you taking my daughter?” says the Irish seaweed
“Well, I’d take her with me,” says the stately seaweed

Gray Eyes

Blake Clawson

Text by Sara Teasdale

It was April when you came
The first time to me,
And my first look in your eyes
Was like my first look at the sea.

We have been together
Four Aprils now
Watching for the green
On the swaying willow bough;

Yet whenever I turn
To your gray eyes over me,
It is as though I looked
For the first time at the sea.

Foss

JC Maynard

Foss is a six movement string quartet that draws influence from nordic folk music and contemporary string techniques. Inspired by six different waterfalls in Iceland that the composer hiked and photographed in the summer of 2022, these miniature pieces portray the unique character of these sub-

arctic wonders. Taking a “tour” of this volcanic island’s nature, the quartet begins on the southern coast with Skógafoss, coming from the Icelandic words skóga (forest) and foss (waterfall). Moving east past the glacial fields of Svínafellsjökull, it arrives at the hidden, barren valley down which the waters of Skútafoss bubble in quiet solitude. Through the fogbanks of the meandering eastern coast and past the roaming sheep of its mountains comes Hengifoss, a towering waterfall tumbling over a cliff of basalt columns under the golden light of midnight dawn. As the glacial melt of the highlands runs north, past sulfuric tundra springs, the powerful Dettifoss carves a deep canyon into the rocky landscape. On the northernmost tip of Iceland, past the picturesque town of Akureyri, birds soar on the updrafts of sea cliffs. The peaceful Mígandifoss cascades into the north sea—a rush accompanied by the calls of migrating arctic terns. Finally, it arrives at the Icelandic westfjords, where village farmers of the middle ages would dance to the thundering sound of the magnificent sentinel, Dynjandi.

Always something moves

Abby Kellems

Each movement of *Always something moves* is based on a phrase from Nan Shepherd’s memoir *The Living Mountain*. Shepherd was a hillwalker who spent her life wandering the Cairngorm Mountains in Scotland. The title of the piece is taken from Shepherd’s observation that in nature, there’s no such thing as true silence; “always something moves.”

the stags were the yodelers imitates the bellowing of Scottish red deer.

the antiquity of a living flower marvels at the delicate persistence of arctic flowers that survive brutal weather conditions year after year.

moths like oiled paper and moths like burnt paper explores the strange and beautiful ways that moths flutter through moonlight.

precipice after precipice glowing to rose and fading again depicts the gradual illumination of mountain peaks during a sunrise.

Falling

Luka Vezmar

Falling for Harp Duet is a piece about the four seasons, but portrayed through some different means. The four movements:

- I. Snow
- II. Breeze
- III. Rain
- IV. Leaves

all portray different natural aspects of the four seasons. Falling Snow is about the bright sight of the world wrapped in a white blanket, undisturbed and peaceful. Falling Breeze is about the Spring wind, and the swirling of the pollen in the air, but it can get quite tumultuous at times. Falling Rain mimics the calming pitter patter of the droplets hitting the ground. However, following the pitter patter comes a thunderstorm. And last but not least, Falling Leaves portrays the feeling of Autumn. The red and yellow hues bouncing off of the buildings, the crunches of leaves beneath ones feet, and the winding down of a long year well spent.

Personnel

Text that is bold and underlined is a hyperlink; click or tap for more information.

CU Boulder Soundworks

Egemen Kesikli, director

Annika Socolofsky, faculty coach

Nicholas Felder, outreach coordinator

Rain Michael, stage manager

Abby Kellems, Gracie Fagan

and Josie Arnett, social media

Lírios Quartet

Benjamin Goldstein, violin

Maggie Brady, violin

Yuri Santos, viola

Chas Barnard, cello

Josie Arnett

Josie Arnett is a composer, pianist, singer and overall instrument enthusiast. She grew up playing a variety of instruments including piano, upright and electric bass, ukulele, banjo, cello, guitar and any other instrument she could get her hands on. Arnett started piano lessons at four years old and grew up playing the music of Bruce Hornsby, Billy Joel, The Beatles and countless pop and rock songs. As a composer, she has been inspired by film music, minimalism, jazz and rock. She is currently based in Boulder and is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in composition at the University of Colorado Boulder. She has written for a variety of ensembles, and has performed as a pianist and a singer. Several of her pieces have been performed at CU Boulder SoundWorks. Arnett's music often centers around the emotional gesture of the music in order to encourage the audience to connect with the music on an emotional level, and she often incorporates ideas of psychology, visual art, film and nature into her music.

Blake Clawson

Blake Clawson is a composer, conductor, pianist and vocalist based in Boulder. 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 composer, pianist and occasional tuba player based in Boulder. Her work explores the images and intricacies of the natural world, and she focuses on creating musical experiences that facilitate a deeper relationship between listeners, performers and the environment. 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 from the UO School of Music and Dance, and graduated *summa cum laude*. Kellems was also selected for the University of Oregon's Humanities Undergraduate Research Fellowship. She completed a research project 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 has had works premiered by the Delgani String Quartet, ~Nois and the Boulder Altitude Directive, and served as the Composer-in-Residence and associate conductor of the Riverside Chamber Symphony from 2021-2022.

She is pursuing a Master of Music in music composition at the University of Colorado Boulder, where she teaches aural skills and studies with Annika Socolofsky and Michael Theodore. She is a founding member of the Plein Air Sound Collective, an ecosystem of composers, performers, producers and other artists with the common goal of exploring the relationship between sound

and environment. The collective's inaugural project, *Weathering Steel*, was recorded at the Tank Center for Sonic Arts in May 2023 and will be released later this year.

Current projects include a string quartet for the Lírios Quartet, an electroacoustic wind quintet for the Juniper Winds and an art song for the Fauré Centennial Festival.

Alan Mackwell

Described as “an original composer with new ideas and a command of complex symphonic writing” (BroadStreet Journal), New Zealander-American Alan Mackwell (b. 1998) is a BMI award-winning young composer and banjo-player based in Boulder, Colorado. In his work, Mackwell seeks to explore a unique blend of atmospheres inspired by his experiences in the Permian Basin, northern New Mexico and Appalachian North Carolina using a highly resonant and bluegrass-influenced musical language, as well as the utilization of original field recordings and interactive/generative digital interfaces. He earned his BM at the Boston Conservatory, where he studied with John Murphree, Eun Young Lee, Curtis Hughes, and Marti Epstein, and earned his MA at Tufts University where he studied with John McDonald and Kareem Roustom.

Mackwell is currently pursuing his DMA at the University of Colorado Boulder where he teaches an Intro to Music Technology course. Mackwell's music has been played on three different continents, and several U.S. states. His compositions have been played by high-achieving groups such as The Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, The Boston Conservatory Contemporary Music Ensemble, Hub New Music and the Corvus Ensemble. He was the grand prize winner of the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra's Inaugural Young Composers' Competition in addition to being a two-time finalist for the Todd Corporation Young Composers' Awards hosted by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

Joshua Carter Maynard

Joshua Carter Maynard is a composer from Colorado Springs and is currently studying a Bachelor of Music in composition at the University of Colorado Boulder. Maynard's choral compositions and arrangements have been performed by elite chamber, a capella, and jazz ensembles at multiple choral festivals and CHSAA competitions. His twelve-part Latin piece *Lux Aeterna* was performed by the AAHS Chamber Singers at the Colorado Music Educators Association conference in January 2020. The choir was accepted into the conference after their CHSAA-Superior-rated performance of Maynard's *Green Mountain* at the Westside Honor Festival in November 2018. Additionally, Maynard's orchestral piece *Winterdove* was performed by the Denver Playground Ensemble at the University of Denver's Gates Hall in June 2020 and again at CU Boulder's September 2021 Pendulum New Music Concert.

Maynard and his pieces have been awarded five Superior CHSAA ratings. Maynard directed music for multiple productions and sang in Honor and All-State level ensembles on the following stages: Carnegie Hall, the United States Polaris Center, the Pikes Peak Center, the Ent Center for the Performing Arts, the Colorado Bellco Theatre, David Filsinger Hall, the Kennedy Space Center and Broadmoor Hall. In February 2020, he sang in the Colorado All-State Choir at the Buell Theatre. Maynard is also the founder of the Kadet Chorale, the first honor choir at the Air Academy.

Maynard is also a decorated Eagle Scout and published author of two fantasy novels. As an International Thespian Honor Society member, he has performed lead roles in *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Les Miserables*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Mamma Mia*.

Holly McMahon

Throughout her life, Holly McMahon has worked with and connected countless musicians across several genres including film, theater, dance and contemporary music performance. She continues to explore the use of new instrumentations and stylistic choices through her studies of music composition, music technology, and piano performance at The University of Colorado, Boulder. She is most celebrated for her works for solo piano, which typically feature carefully sculpted, running lines and evocative yet comfortable rhythmic textures.

Luka Vezmar

Luka Vezmar is a composer, oboist, accordionist and all around music lover. Since he was 9 months old, he has gone to many concerts with his family and friends which always inspires him to write more music. He grew up playing the piano and various other instruments throughout schooling like the trumpet, saxophone and oboe. He decided to continue with the oboe and is pursuing a BM in oboe performance as well as in composition. While Vezmar's music encompasses many different fields, he specializes in classical music, with the hopes of getting accordion into the main stream classical music world. Vezmar always has a very distinct character in his music, which to him makes the music seem alive. He hopes that the audience can connect with his music and hopefully leave feeling just a little better than when they came in.

Upcoming Events

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