

CU ★ PRESENTS

2020-21 Season
Digital program



College of Music
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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The future, faster ★

Performance program

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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.



As we gather, we honor and acknowledge that the University of Colorado's four campuses are on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute, Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, Lakota, Pueblo and Shoshone Nations. Further, we acknowledge the 48 contemporary tribal nations historically tied to the lands that comprise what is now called Colorado.

Acknowledging that we live in the homelands of Indigenous peoples recognizes the original stewards of these lands and their legacies. With this land acknowledgment, we celebrate the many contributions of Native peoples to the fields of medicine, mathematics, government and military service, arts, literature, engineering and more. We also recognize the sophisticated and intricate knowledge systems Indigenous peoples have developed in relationship to their lands.

We recognize and affirm the ties these nations have to their traditional homelands and the many Indigenous people who thrive in this place, alive and strong. We also acknowledge the painful history of ill treatment and forced removal that has had a profoundly negative impact on Native nations.

We respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land. We honor them and thank the Indigenous ancestors of this place. The University of Colorado pledges to provide educational opportunities for Native students, faculty and staff and advance our mission to understand the history and contemporary lives of Native peoples.



CU Opera alumna Claire Mccahan and instructor Jeremy Reger demonstrate proper COVID-19 protocols during rehearsals and coaching, 2020.

The **future, faster**

By Sabine Kortals Stein

Spring semester is fully underway as we continue our commitment to being a COVID-aware college and campus.

According to John Davis, who was appointed the College of Music's new dean as of the first of the year, "While these are uncertain times and the future seems equally uncertain, COVID-19 has pushed us to leverage technologies in impactful ways that will surely outlast this pandemic—through distance learning, collaboration and performing, we've risen to the challenge.

“We’re not only expanding the reach and range of what’s possible as artists and performers, we’re also adding to our students’ skill sets, and paving the way toward greater diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in everything we do.

“Put another way, COVID-19 has accelerated our momentum to leverage various technologies in ways that elevate College of Music offerings. Despite a challenging environment, the college’s continued level of excellence—and evolving, newly emerging academic activities and performance platforms—make me incredibly proud.”

In a recent Q&A, Dean Davis shared his own musical journey, including these excerpts:

When did you first consider music as a career for yourself?

By the time I was in high school. My bachelor’s degree is in music education, from Metropolitan State University here in Colorado. At the University of Denver, I earned a Master of Arts degree in performance. Beginning in my 20s, I played with classical, jazz and commercial groups, and performed with or for some amazing musicians.

After performing for a few years, you joined the military. Why?

I didn't like school in my 20s, and I thought I didn't want to be a teacher. I decided to join the Army at what would be viewed as the lowest level of expertise needed, the infantry. I spent two years in the army during my initial enlistment, 12 months of which was spent in South Korea. When Desert Storm—The Gulf War—began in 1991, my reserve unit was activated and we were sent overseas to Germany for four months. Toward the end of my time in Korea—during the monsoon season, when the infantry would have to fill sandbags with mud and rebuild walls and bridges when the rain would wash them out—I realized that, unlike many of my fellow soldiers, I didn't have to do this for a living. And I realized that the difference between me and most of them was education.

What was your next move?

I got fired up and committed from that day forward to education—opening people's eyes to what's out there for them. Knowing that I wanted to teach at a university level, the shortest path to get there was for me to return to trumpet and jazz and receive a doctoral degree.

You left full-time teaching in 2011 to be an administrator. Why?

I love doing what I can to support the success of others. As an administrator, you're able to see a "bigger picture" and have the opportunity to make an impact that benefits so many others. The challenge is great, but the satisfaction of helping our students and faculty succeed is enormously rewarding.

What excites you about leading the College of Music?

The college has been fortunate to have great leadership over many years. Supporters of the college are among the most passionate and caring people I have known. And the students, faculty and staff are truly outstanding. At the same time, all of us realize there is even more we can accomplish toward the betterment of society through music.

*Enjoy Jessie Bauters' **complete interview with Dean Davis here.***

CU Bands

CU Symphonic Band

Matthew Dockendorf, conductor
Branden Steinmetz, guest conductor
Derek Stoughton, guest conductor

CU Wind Symphony

Donald McKinney, conductor
Melinda Mason, guest conductor
Zach Cheever, guest conductor

7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 15, 2021

CU SYMPHONIC BAND

Fanfare from *La péri*

Paul Dukas (1865-1935)

Branden Steinmetz, guest conductor

Embers in the Black

Kevin Poelking (b. 1988)

Tracks From Mammoth Cave

Hiroaki Kataoka (b. 1983)

Derek Stoughton, guest conductor

Summer Scenes

Stacey Berk (b. 1970)

- I. June: Carousel at the Fair
- II. July: Sailboats on a Blue Lake
- III. August: Evening Thunderstorm

Kyrie (for Machaut and Pärt)

David Biedenbender (b. 1984)

arr. Tyler Austin

Dances with Winds

Shelley Hanson (b. 1951)

- I. Gaida (Bagpipe)
- II. The Irish Star
- III. Serbian Dance

CU WIND SYMPHONY

Invictus

Anthony Barfield (b. 1983)

Tower Music

Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000)

1. Prelude
2. Fugue
3. Aria
4. Antiphony
5. Two Hymns
6. Postlude

Sacred Women Jeff

Scott (b. 1967)

- I. Isis
- II. Iemanja
- III. Mawu

Point Blank

Paul Dooley (b. 1983)

Seascapes, Op. 53

Ruth Gipps (1921-1999)

Melinda Mason, guest conductor

Bull's Eye

Viet Cuong (b. 1990)

Zach Cheever, guest conductor

Code Switch Mixtape

Derrick Spiva Jr. (b. 1982)

Conor Abbott Brown (b. 1988)

I. Through All That, Beauty

II. How can this be?

III. Perpetual Grit

IV. The Garden of Merging Paths

Program notes

Fanfare from *La péri*

Paul Dukas (1865-1935)

In Persian mythology, a peri is a magical creature like a fairy, who serves the God of Light. Paul Dukas, the composer of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, chose the topic for his last major work, a ballet called *La péri* that he subtitled *poème dansé*, or “danced poem.” The scenario tells of a prince in search of the Flower of Immortality, which is guarded by the peri. When he finds her, he becomes obsessed by desire for her as well as for the flower, and thus is fated to perish.

Sadly, *La péri* was the last work Dukas published, although he lived for more than 20 years beyond its premiere. The ballet has been revived occasionally, but has never become a repertory staple.

The brilliant brass fanfare that precedes it, however, has become almost as familiar as Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*. Ironically, Dukas added it as an afterthought. He later stated that he sought to bring the exoticism of the tale to life through an orchestra he called "a kind of translucent, dazzling enamel." Both the glittering trumpet and horn calls and the rich harmonies of the fanfare's middle section amply fulfill his goal. Even separated from the ballet score, the fanfare lavishly delivers the promise of all good fairy tales: "once upon a time, in a land far away ..." —*Program note courtesy of Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra*

Embers from the Black

Kevin Poelking (b. 1988)

While selecting music for my graduate wind conducting recital, my goal was to create a program that utilized a number of members from our ensemble. As I began the process, I found it

challenging to involve the saxophones, low clarinets and percussion. From what I discovered, chamber wind repertoire tends to overlook these instruments, so I wanted to write a piece of music that would explore the combination of these colors in a small ensemble setting.

Much of this piece remained unorchestrated for many years before I was able to find the instrumentation that suited the music appropriately. The beginning section was originally composed for orchestra with English horn playing the haunting opening melody. The driving middle section was intended for a full concert band, but I quickly abandoned the idea, as the piece seemed to call for a smaller, more agile group. It was not until the spring of 2018, when selecting repertoire for my recital, that I decided on the current instrumentation.

Embers in the Black depicts an eerie, dark and desperate atmosphere based on the following text:

“This place is familiar, but never safe. Surely, one more trip will do no harm. Yet as the blanket of

night covers the land, two eyes emerge like embers from the black.” —*Program note courtesy of the composer*

Tracks from Mammoth Cave

Hiroaki Kataoka (b. 1983)

Mammoth Cave, the world’s longest cave in America. Even if there are no words, messages from natural heritage can reach our hearts. Can you hear that voice? Imagine the scene of the Mammoth Cave and feel free to talk with the music of the eight people. I hope you hear a nice track! —*Program note courtesy of the composer (translated from Japanese through Google Translate)*

Summer Scenes

Stacey Berk (b. 1970)

Summer Scenes was commissioned in 2003, by the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America, Steven Grimo, commander. The piece depicts three scenes, based on the three months of the Summer season.

Movement 1 *June: Carousel at the Fair* conjures images of county fairs as the summer begins.

Movement 2 *July: Sailboats on a Blue Lake* creates a beautiful and peaceful day, relaxing over the water.

Movement 3 *August: Evening Thunderstorm* utilizes clever compositional techniques, which recreate the ideas of thunder, lightning and raindrops.

Kyrie (for Machaut and Pärt)

David Biedenbender (b. 1984)

Refraction was commissioned by the Akropolis Reed Quintet. *Refraction* is split into three distinct movements, each inspired by different musical sources that have been bent and distorted by time, space, and my imagination, much like light is bent as it enters a medium of different density. The first movement comes from a short, ridiculous, and awesome YouTube video called “Death Metal Chicken,” which features a chicken screaming over a death metal band (of course!). The second movement is called *Kyrie* and is dedicated to Guillaume de Machaut and Arvo Pärt. —*Program note courtesy of the composer*

Dances With Winds

Dances with Winds is based on folk tunes from three very different European regions.

Movement 1, *Gaida*, is named after the Macedonian bagpipe, which is less strident than the Celtic bagpipe. The two famous bagpipe tunes that are used show that a gaida can sound either very plaintive or very joyful.

Movement 2, *The Irish Star*, uses the well-known Irish folk tune “Star of the County Down.” Most often played in march tempo, this tune also can be performed as a waltz. Both versions are used here.

Movement 3, *Serbian Dance*, is a very fast folk dance called a “kolo.” This particular tune is often referred to as “Ciganski Urnebes.” Urnebes is a very popular type of Serbian salad, and Ciganski means “Gypsy,” so this wild dance is a “Gypsy Salad.”
—*Program note courtesy of publisher*

Invictus

Invictus, meaning “unconquered”, is a short work about New York City in its current circumstances. It’s about dealing with the heightened sense of uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests. In conversations with New Yorkers about their personal feelings about these issues, I’ve learned that people feel a sense of anxiety and yet a sense of community and hopefulness that change for the better is on the horizon. New York is resilient, courageous and adaptable. *Invictus* is meant to show that, despite these troublesome times, we are in fact unconquerable. Commissioned by Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. —*Program note courtesy of the composer*

Tower Music

Tower Music is a solemn, ceremonial suite that was commissioned by the Coonamessett Music Festival, a small, two-weekend professional concert series that took place in Cape Cod. The work was premiered by the New York Woodwind and Brass Ensembles on September 9, 1955. Also on the program were other “Tower Music” works by Pezel,

Purcell and Gabrieli. *Tower Music* is cast in six short movements: 1. *Prelude*; 2. *Fugue*; 3. *Aria*; 4. *Antiphonal*; 5. *Two Hymns*; 6. *Postlude*. —*Note by Edward Cole*

Sacred Women

Born in 1967 in Queens, New York, Jeff Scott developed an appreciation for music at an early age from his mother who sang frequently in their home. He began playing French horn at age fourteen, receiving a scholarship from an anonymous donor to go to the Brooklyn College Preparatory Division. His first teacher, Carolyn Clark, gave the young musician free lessons during his high school years, providing him an opportunity to study music when resources were scarce. He received his bachelor's degree from Manhattan School of Music, studying with David Jolley, then got a master's degree from SUNY at Stony Brook, studying with William Purvis.

Scott performed on Broadway, was a member of the Alvin Ailey and Dance Theater of Harlem orchestras, and played numerous times under the direction of Wynton Marsalis with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. He can be heard on movie

soundtracks and commercial recordings and has toured with artists such as Barbra Streisand and Luther Vandross. He is, however, perhaps most well-known as the French hornist for the internationally-acclaimed wind quintet, Imani Winds. Scott was a faculty member at Montclair State University in New Jersey from 2002 to 2020 and is currently the horn professor at Oberlin College Conservatory. *Sacred Women* was commissioned by Utah State University and premiered in 2012. Scott was first inspired to write the piece in 2004 on a trip to Brazil after witnessing a festival for the goddess Iemanjá. Having been raised Catholic, to see such a beautiful display of devotion to another deity entirely foreign to him piqued his interest. Each movement begins with a summoning of the goddess being celebrated, moves to a middle section as a dance in honor of that goddess, and finally concludes with a return to quiet prayer.

The music of the first movement honors Isis, a major goddess in ancient Egyptian religion whose worship spread throughout the Greco-Roman world. Believed to help the dead enter the afterlife as she had helped Osiris, her maternal aid was also invoked

in healing spells to benefit ordinary people. She was usually portrayed in art as a human woman wearing a thronelike hieroglyph on her head. Her reputed magical power was greater than that of all other gods, and she was said to protect the kingdom from its enemies, govern the skies and the natural world, and have power over fate itself.

Titled *Iemanjá: Goddess of the Sea*, the second movement celebrates a deity worshiped in the cultural area known as Yorubaland, a territory covering present-day southwestern Nigeria and parts of Togo and Benin. For pregnant women and children Iemanjá represents protection, for hunters she provides rich prey, and to farmers abundant crops. Today, celebrations of Iemanjá are accompanied by gifts such as brightly colored flowers and crafted fruits or plates of food. During the festivities, followers offer flowers and gifts to the goddess at the sea's edge and send them out to her in the ocean. Everyone dresses in white, and night-long music and dancing continue after the offerings have been made.

The final movement pays homage to Mawu, a West African goddess of creation known as the first mother—the one who gave life to all creatures on

earth. She is depicted as quite old and sometimes riding on the back of an elephant. She was the first and ultimate fertility goddess, sometimes also known as the goddess of the moon and night sky, and twin sister to Liza, the god of the sun and day.

—*Note by Christine Lundahl*

Point Blank

Point Blank (2010) for large chamber ensemble, is inspired by the sounds, rhythms and virtuosity of New York City-based new music ensemble Alarm Will Sound. Featuring synthetic sound worlds and tightly interlocking percussion ideas, the percussion and strings whirl the ensemble through an array of electronically inspired orchestrations, while the winds and brass shriek for dear life. *Point Blank* is a central processing unit of floating point tremolos, discrete pizzicatos, multi-threading scales and random access modulations. —*Program note courtesy of the composer*

Seascapes, Op. 53

Ruth Gipps was one of the most fascinating women in the music world in England during the 20th century. She was a true pioneer as a composer and performer—she founded and conducted the Portia

Wind Ensemble, a chamber music group comprised entirely of women that provided an important outlet for composers throughout the past fifty years.

Seascapes is a lovely work for ten players (with Winther's optional double bass addition). —*Program note courtesy of publisher*

Bull's Eye

I've always been intrigued by Picasso's line drawings, where he captures the energy and personality of a subject—often an animal—with just a line or two. Picasso's *Bull* (1945) includes a simple line drawing of a bull in this fashion. However, this drawing is also preceded by a series of ten lithographs depicting his process of simplification and abstraction. The first lithograph is a fully-formed bull that, over its next two iterations, increases in opacity and detail. Then, over the next eight panels, layers are gradually peeled away to reveal just the essence of the bull. While *Bull's-Eye* is not an exact one-to-one depiction of these eleven drawings, the piece follows the same narrative: musical material is presented, made more complex, then distilled. The distillation process in the second half of the piece reveals the way the music preceding it is

orchestrated, almost as if you were to mute and unmute certain sections of the ensemble.

—*Program note courtesy of the composer*

Code Switch Mixtape

Derrick Spiva Jr. (b.1982)

Conor Abbott Brown (b. 1988)

Code Switch Mixtape is a collection of works that often engage with the musical language of two or more musical traditions within a single composition or collection of compositions.

I. *Through All That, Beauty* references the struggle of marginalized groups in a society. Through a history of intense challenges, people are still able to maintain and create beauty. The piece begins with an open, spacious texture with rhythmic punctuations. These rhythms lead to a section with a long, syncopated melodic line that repeats and builds in harmonic texture. This section also includes an ostinato that draws from the bell pattern found in Bawa, a drum and dance piece originating from the Dagaaba people of Ghana. Towards the end of the piece, an open texture returns, punctuated with text spoken by musicians which reference significant moments in the history of social and political struggle in the United States. This movement was composed by Derrick Spiva Jr.

II. *How can this be?* This piece is a visceral response to the intertwining pandemics of racism and COVID-19. In terms of density over time, the piece roughly follows the curve of COVID-19 daily infections in the United States from March 2020 until the piece was completed in August of 2020. The spoken text in the piece consists of a fragment of a list of dates that documents failures of the United States justice system throughout history to address violence against Black people. At first the dates proceed backwards in time, but they curve back around to the present once again, highlighting the immediacy of this issue:

July 16, 2019: US Attorney General William Barr orders the Justice Department not to bring federal civil rights charges against the police officer who killed Eric Garner.

Jan. 21, 1970: A coroner's jury rules that the killing of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark was a "justifiable homicide." The tactical unit responsible for this killing was organized by the Chicago Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Illinois State Attorney's Office. Scholars now widely agree that this was an assassination.

June 21, 1921: According to the Oklahoma Historical Society, after the deaths of possibly as many as three hundred people in the Tulsa Race Massacre and the large-scale destruction of Black-owned homes and businesses, "An all-white grand jury blamed black Tulsans for the lawlessness. Despite overwhelming evidence, no whites were ever sent to prison for the murders and arson that occurred."

April 22, 1899: In Williamsburg County, South Carolina, the trial in the case of the murder of postmaster and teacher Frazier B. Baker and his infant daughter Julia Baker ends when an all-white jury declares a mistrial, despite overwhelming evidence regarding the identity of the perpetrators.

June 14, 1967: Florida State Attorney Paul Antinori announces that an officer was "justified" in killing unarmed 19-year-old Martin Chambers.

Nov. 22, 2019: In Colorado, Adams County District Attorney Dave Young decides that the case of the death of Elijah McClain, after an incident involving the use of force by Aurora police, will not be prosecuted as a homicide.

This movement was composed by Conor Abbott Brown.

III. *Perpetual Grit* references the perseverance of those who desire to create change. The piece attempts to convey the impulse and absolute will to survive and flourish in the face of extreme obstacles. *Perpetual Grit* shifts between repeated rhythmic cycles of four beats and 10 beats. This shifting is meant to represent new ideas that may feel strange at first, but then develop into a familiar foundation with time. This piece ends with musicians humming a melody written in five cycles of 10 beats. Although the melody is based on an asymmetrical number of beats, the humming represents this cycle being internalized and embodied by the musicians in a way that feels natural. This movement was composed by Derrick Spiva Jr.

IV. *The Garden of Merging Paths*

The title of this piece is a reference to the title of short story *El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan* (The Garden of Forking Paths) by Jorge Luis Borges, considered an early example of postmodernism in literature. I approach the “merging paths” as a multilayered metaphor; one of those layers is the idea that every human being on the planet is facing increasingly-interconnected existential challenges. Inspired by conversations with composer Derrick Spiva Jr., I set out when composing this piece to imagine a brighter future where those challenges are being met and overcome. The rhythmic backbone of the piece (beginning at measure 41) is a cyclical nine-beat pattern (2+2+2+1+2) set over a massive tempo arc (a long accelerando followed by a shorter ritardando.) This nine-beat rhythm is present in numerous musical cultures across Anatolia and the Balkans, associated diasporas, and related music scenes globally, including folk and/or classical traditions of Armenian, Kurdish, Romani, Turkish and other communities. In the classical usul rhythmic system, this rhythm is known as evfer. In folk traditions it may be referred to (depending on where you ask and who you are asking) as tamzara, romany 9, roman havasi or yet by other names. This movement was composed by Conor Abbott Brown.

CU Bands would like to thank and recognize our graduating students for their time, dedication, and contributions to the College of Music:

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A music student practices COVID-safe protocols in Professor Donald McKinney's Wind Symphony class, 2020.

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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March-May 2021

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