GRADUATE COMPOSERS SINFONIETTA

Wednesday, November 8, 2023
Kilbourn Hall
7:30 PM
Each piece on tonight’s program will be performed twice.

**as it were** (2023)  
Connor Simpson  
(b. 2000)  
Serena Reuten, conductor

**The DTs** (2023)  
Austin White  
(b. 1996)  
Floris Van der Veken, conductor

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**THE EASTMAN GRADUATE COMPOSERS SINFONIETTA BOARD**

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Ciara McGuire, violin
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Kenny Ford, bassoon
Zirui Zhao, horn
Norman Carswell, trumpet
Xin Chen, trombone
Josh Budziak, tuba
Catharine Baek, piano
Andrew Lauler, percussion
Cass Lo, percussion
Sunshine Quan, harp

节目说明

as it were (2023)  Connor Simpson

as it were 探索了一种节奏与旋律组合的语言。作品以一个Canon形式存在，即一个单一的旋律线被重复并以不同的方式呈现。在这部作品中，Canon被巧妙地制作成具有不同节奏对的对位。每一对的节奏系列在每个对应中都用不同的节奏系列，而不重复。这导致了一种不断发展的对位背景，其中每个声音之间的关系一直在变化。该作品的旋律材料逐渐在每小节中更接近，慢慢地揭示了线性之间的相似性。

The DTs (2023)  Austin White

作为作曲家，我经常为节目说明的无效性而烦恼，它们在传达对听者有意义的东西方面往往无效。我想指出的是，所有在这里发现的和声都是由调音和呼号通过FM合成来扩展的。对我来说，这暗示了一个以密度的概念。
communication/connection in composing this work. I also realized that the title of the piece, *The DTs*, is not only an acronym for dial tones but also a medical condition known as delirium tremens.

Allow me to try and produce something useful from this arduous and oftentimes superfluous procedure of writing program notes by making an educational public service announcement in its place. Delirium tremens are a set of severe withdrawal symptoms, often accompanying the cessation of alcohol consumption. These symptoms include violent shaking, confusion, high blood pressure, fever, and hallucinations, to name a few. Delirium tremens is not just associated with alcohol withdrawal, but any form of GABA receptor-influencing substances, such as benzodiazepines. There is a significant caveat with delirium tremens—it can be fatal to the user. Interestingly, in the contrasting case of highly addicting substances like opioids, withdrawals will often make the person feel like they are dying, but those symptoms are (usually) not lethal.

So, imagine yourself with nothing left, addicted to alcohol, not only fearing the agony of delirium tremens but the potentially fatal result of such withdrawals in a country with an abysmal healthcare system. What options do you have other than praying to whichever god(s) you do or do not believe in that someone buys you a beer, so you don’t die? There are treatment options available to those without the financial means to receive the costly expenses of medically supervised tapering processes. However, these services pale in comparison to the options one could have with the right kind of financial and social support. To boot, even in medically supervised circumstances, many of those suffering from delirium tremens still die.

When people “discuss” the current state of the U.S. healthcare system and the treatment of substance abuse as a medical rather than criminal epidemic, they are talking about matters of life or death to the disenfranchised. Getting sober is not as easy as ceasing substance use, but rather an all-encompassing process of social and medical intervention. In the words of Johann Hari, “When you view the war on drugs in this light, trying to eliminate the drugs—the addictive chemicals—will never end addiction completely because it avoids a deeper problem in society—a lack of connection. There is an alternative. You can build a system that is designed to help drug addicts reconnect with the world—and so leave behind their addictions.”
If you, the reader, feel that my acrid tone regarding the current state of affairs of this piece’s subject matter is over-encumbering, your correspondent humbly suggests an alternative take:

*The DTs are an abbreviation for dog treats.*

— Austin White

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### MEET THE COMPOSERS

**Connor Simpson** is a composer based in Rochester, New York. His work has been featured in numerous international music festivals such as the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, Longy’s Divergent Studio, the Charlotte New Music Festival, and soundSCAPE New Music Festival. He has written works for acclaimed performers including Mivos Quartet, Hypercube, and Loadbang. Connor received the Creative Achievement Award, the Valley Family Fund, and the Student Engagement Network Grant, honoring and facilitating his academic and professional accomplishments.

Recently, Connor completed his B.M. in Music Composition with Dr. Baljinder Sekhon and Dr. Sarah Genevieve Burghart Rice at Penn State University. At Penn State, he received numerous academic awards and recognitions, including the Creative Achievement Award, the Burt L. Fenner Scholarship in Music Composition, the W & L Leight Memorial Fund, and the Francis G. Wood Memorial Scholarship. Connor is currently pursuing his M.A. at the Eastman School of Music.

**Austin Jordan White** is a composer and multi-instrumentalist artist from Tampa, currently based in Rochester. Much of his work is inspired by concepts of intersectionality, mathematics, neurodiversity, and social justice. He believes in community building with diverse representation through and for promotion of new music ensembles and living composers. As such, Austin has served as the previous president of the student organization Living Music at his alma mater Pennsylvania State University and is currently the Outreach Coordinator of Ossia New Music. His work has been premiered nationally and internationally, including at SoundSCAPE (Bobbio, Italy), ICEBERG institute (Vienna, Austria), Charlotte New Music Festival (Charlotte, North Carolina), and
MEET THE COMPOSERS

Longy’s Divergent Studio (Boston, Massachusetts). He is currently studying for his MA in Music Composition with Dr. Robert Morris and Dr. Mikel Kuehn at Eastman School of Music.

MEET THE CONDUCTORS

**Serena Reuten** is a German-Canadian conductor currently serving as assistant of the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra and the Eastman Philharmonia. Recently, she was named the inaugural recipient of the 2023 Bernhard Gueller Conducting Fellowship with Symphony Nova Scotia. She has conducted the Winnipeg Symphony during their 2023 RBC Emerging Conductors Showcase and the National Arts Center Orchestra in their “Play it Forward” mentorship program with Alexander Shelley. In 2024, she will make her debut with the Winnipeg Symphony during their annual Winnipeg New Music Festival. She currently holds the Evan Whallon Fellowship at the Eastman School of Music, where she is pursuing a Masters in Orchestral Conducting under Neil Varon. She has also been invited to perform as a guest conductor with OSSIA, the Eastman Chamber Orchestra, and the Eastman Graduate Composers Sinfonietta. During her undergraduate studies in Ottawa, Serena conducted performances with the Parkdale Orchestra and covered rehearsals for conductors of various ensembles including the Ewashko Singers and the Ottawa Pops Orchestra. Over the past few summers she has also attended several international conducting masterclasses, studying under such conductors as Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Cristian Măcelaru, Octavio Más-Arocas, and Kensho Watanabe.

**Floris Van der Veken** (*1998) is a Belgian saxophonist and performance artist currently residing in Rochester, NY. Commended by Augusta Read Thomas for “his deep musicality and a kaleidoscope of characters and moods,” his performances are characterized by a strong emphasis on contemporary repertoire and interdisciplinary collaboration. In line with his focus on the contemporary and experimental repertoire, Floris often works together with composers to highlight new works. In doing so, he premiered *Of Being is a Bird* for alto saxophone and ensemble by Augusta Read Thomas, and the concerto *Empty Mind I* for soprano saxophone and live electronics by Wim Henderickx. As the ’23–’24 vice president for the
MEET THE CONDUCTORS

OSSIA New Music organization, Floris commits to bringing more new music and participatory performances to the Rochester area. As an artist committed to interdisciplinary performances, Floris wrote and directed his own music and dance theatre *MOIRA–Ode to a Life of Failure* under the coaching of Muziektheater Transparant.

Besides performing, Floris is an active researcher and improviser. His research contributes to his performance, and vice versa, to solidify a substantiated practice in every aspect of the art. Research during his doctoral degrees includes works by Boulez and Stockhausen and their use of extramusical elements, providing theoretical background for interdisciplinary collaborations. His improvisation duo with Tucker Johnson incorporates some of these findings in their concerts and recordings.

At the moment, he pursues a PhD in Music Theory and is finishing the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with Dr. Chien-Kwan Lin, both at the Eastman School of Music. He received his master’s degree as well as a postgraduate specialization degree in performance, both with highest distinction, at the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp, Belgium, studying under Hans de Jong. During an exchange year, he studied under Rodrigo Vila at the Conservatori Superior de Música de les Illes Balears in Mallorca, Spain. Floris also obtained a master’s degree in Music Education at the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp. He has experience teaching children and adults of all ages, both on the pre-collegiate and collegiate level, and considers it a crucial part of musicianship.

At the Eastman School of Music, Floris was awarded the 2022-2023 Graduate Teaching Assistant Prize for his work with secondary saxophone students. He also coached chamber music and taught a contemporary technique class for saxophonists. Floris will continue as a Teaching Assistant for theory courses in the coming years. Furthermore, he is the 2020 Laureate of the Oranjebeurs for music, awarded by the Consulate of the Netherlands, and was awarded a grant for his studies in the US by the organization Inspiratum. As a conductor, Floris appeared as the assistant conductor of l’Orquesta del Conservatori Superior de les Illes Balears in 2018. More recently, he led the Graduate Composer’s Sinfonietta, ensembles for OSSIA New Music, and the Graduate Conducting Orchestra. Floris participated in many masterclasses with renowned
saxophonists such as Timothy McAllister, Arno Bornkamp, Ryo Noda, Lars Mlekusch, Vincent David, Joonatan Rautiola, Jérôme Laran, and Nicholas Prost.

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the “Great Hill People” and “Keepers of the Western Door” of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.
KILBOURN CONCERT SERIES

Vijay Iyer Trio feat. Linda May Han Oh, bass and Jeremy Dutton, drums
Kilbourn Hall
Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Described by The New York Times as a “social conscience, multimedia collaborator, system builder, rhapsodist, historical thinker and multicultural gateway,” Vijay Iyer has carved out a unique path as an influential, prolific, shape-shifting presence in twenty-first-century music. A composer and pianist active across multiple musical communities, Iyer has created a consistently innovative, emotionally resonant body of work over the last twenty-five years, earning him a place as one of the leading music-makers of his generation.

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

Collaborative Piano Faculty
Kilbourn Hall
Saturday, November 11, 2023 at 2:30 PM

UPCOMING STUDENT ENSEMBLE CONCERTS

All student performances are free unless otherwise noted.

Horn Choir
Kilbourn Hall
Friday, November 10, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Eastman Jazz Workshop Ensemble
Kilbourn Hall
Monday, November 13, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Eastman Wind Ensemble
Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre
Monday, November 13, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Music of Jennifer Higdon, Sally Lamb McCune, and Oliver Messiaen
For the most up to date information on Eastman concerts and events, scan this code to visit our online calendar.