<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Composer(s)</th>
<th>Performers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paradigm from “Perspective” (1939)</td>
<td>Jlin (b. 1987)</td>
<td>Fletcher Leonard, Izaiah Gonzales, Lucy Chugh &amp; Ben Landon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulse (1939)</td>
<td>Henry Cowell (1897-1965)</td>
<td>Ben Landon, Lexi Kunz, Izaiah Gonzales, Aiden Hughes, Lucy Chugh &amp; Kaiwen Luo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERMISSION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle Sketch (2022)</td>
<td>Ethan Hall (b. 2000)</td>
<td>Daniel Davis, Cassandra Lo, Ruyi Yuan, Aiden Hughes, Lucy Chugh &amp; Lexi Kunz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROGRAM

Music for Pieces of Wood (1973)                                           Steve Reich
(b. 1936)

Daniel Davis, Fletcher Leonard, Cassandra Lo,
Seth Tupy & Ruyi Yuan

Duality from “Perspective” (2022)                                            Jlin
(b. 1987)

Seth Tupy, Ruyi Yuan, Aiden Hughes & Lexi Kunz

Ogoun Badagris (1976)                                                      Christopher Rouse
(1949-2019)

Ben Landon, Lexi Kunz, Izaiah Gonzalez,
Aiden Hughes & Lucy Chugh
PERSONNEL

Michael Burritt, director
Emma Gierszal, Justin Lamb, Kana Funuyama, Sammy DeAngelis, & Anders Wong, coaches

CHAMBER PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Ben Blaesing
Daniel Davis
Kana Funayama
Fletcher Leonard
Cassandra Lo
Kaiwen Luo
Remy Thomas
Seth Tupy
Irene Yang
Ruyi Yuan
**Perspective** (2022)  
Jlin

Jlin’s seven-movement work *Perspective* was written for Third Coast Percussion through a highly collaborative process. Jlin visited TCP at their studio in Chicago multiple times to discuss their musical inspirations and new possibilities, and to explore and sample instruments from TCP’s vast collection of percussion sounds. She then created the first version of each of the work’s seven movements in FL Studio (a Digital Audio Workstation) using these samples and other sounds from her own library.

The members of Third Coast Percussion then set about determining how to realize these pieces in live performance. Jlin provided the ensemble recordings of the full tracks as well as the stems (individual recorded parts) that make up the track. Diving into each of the tracks, the percussionists found a beautiful complexity—dozens and dozens of stems in each track, patterns that never seem to repeat when one would expect them to, and outrageous sounds that are hard to imagine recreating acoustically. Even typical percussion sounds like snare drum, hi-hat, or kick drum exist in multiple variations, subtle timbral shades in counterpoint or composite sounds. Jlin named her piece *Perspective* as a reference to this unique collaborative process; the same music, interpreted by two different artists and their different modes of expression. *Perspective* by Jlin was commissioned for Third Coast Percussion by the Boulanger Initiative, Carnegie Hall, the Lester & Hope Abelson Fund for the Performing Arts at the Chicago Community Foundation, the DEW Foundation, and Third Coast Percussion’s New Works Fund.

**Pulse** (1939)  
Henry Cowell

Dedicated to John Cage and his percussion group, Pulse is scored for six players. Each player has two sets of three like instruments. Player one has woodblocks and dragon’s mouths, player two has Chinese tom-toms and drums, three, rice bowls and cup gongs, four, cymbals and gongs, and five, pipe lengths and brake drums.

A sixth player moves back and forth between the others, assisting them by dampening instruments or playing on one of the sets of instruments. The piece is in 7/8 time throughout.

**Zavanna** (2007)  
Søren Monrad

Zavanna describes a journey through the percussion instruments’ multiple sound possibilities which takes the listener to the great African Savannah from early morning when the wildlife slowly awakens to a roaring wildfire which fuels their stampede. Then the merciful rain puts out the fire. The piece captures the struggle between beauty and cruelty.  

—Søren Monrad
Kyoto (2011)  
John Psathas

A departure from Psathas’ earlier aggressive, physically complex percussion works such as Drum Dances and Etude from One Study One Summary, Kyoto is stylistically similar to his marimba concerto Djinn. A constant rhythmic 16th note pulse sustains momentum through varying time signatures, with brief moments of silence giving way to shifts in harmonic content. Two contrasting ideas alternate throughout — the rhythmically driven melodic lines, and arpeggios heard in the vibraphone — before coming together at the climax of the work.

The title of the work refers to a 1976 improvisation by pianist Keith Jarrett which was recorded in Kyoto. This improvisation of Jarrett’s is, more than anything, the piece that woke the composer in me, and set me on this journey of creating my own music for others. —John Psathas

Circle Sketch (2022)

When I was in middle school, one of my favorite games was a PS3 game called PixelJunk Monsters. After playing for so many hours, the soundtrack became ingrained in my mind, and it still is all these years later. The Monsters soundtrack is minimalist in nature and seems to take inspiration from the music of Steve Reich. When I set out to write a piece for percussion ensemble, the first thing that I ended up playing was essentially one of the motifs from a Monsters track, so I just went with it. Circle Sketch is built around that motif, which is a three-beat ostinato that continues in some form throughout the entire piece. Most other elements of the piece are derived from this main theme. The first section explores the theme as a basis for melodic material, while the second section uses it primarily to generate harmonies. The piece culminates in a coda that presents the motif in its full form while all of the separate parts converge around it to form a cohesive whole.

The title of the piece is derived directly from the name of the track that inspired it: circle flight sketches by otograph. —Ethan Hall

Music for Pieces of Wood (1973)  
Steve Reich

Music for Pieces of Wood grows out of the same roots as Clapping Music: a desire to make music with the simplest possible instruments. The claves, or cylindrical pieces of hard wood, used here were selected for their particular pitches (A, B, C#, D#, and D# an octave above), and for their resonant timbre. This piece is one of the loudest I have ever composed,
but uses no amplification whatsoever. The rhythmic structure is based entirely on the process of rhythmic “buildups” or the substitution of beats for rests, and is in three sections of decreasing pattern length: 6/4, 4/4, 3/4.

—Steve Reich

**Ogoun Badagris (1976)  Christopher Rouse**

Ogoun Badagris derives its inspiration from Haitian drumming patterns. Ogoun Badagris is one of the most terrible and violent of all Voodoo loas or deities, and can be appeased only by human blood sacrifice. This work may thus be interpreted as a dance of appeasement. The work begins with an *Action de Grace*, followed by the Grouillere, a brutal dance which is nearly torturous, finishing with the *Danse Vaudau*, signaling demonic possession. The four conga drums, the metal plates, the sleighbells, and the shekere represent traditional instruments used in the ritual. In the same vein that Debussy used sounds of the gamelan ensemble to inspire the soundscapes of works like *Pagode* (1903), Rouse goes on his impression of the Folkways album of Haitian music recorded by Harold Courlander. The word “reler,” which the performers must shriek at the conclusion of the work, is the Voodoo equivalent of the Judaeo-Christian “amen.”

—Christopher Rouse/Brian Nozny
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Monday, November 28, 2022
  **Tuba Mirum**
  Kilbourn Hall, 7:30 pm
  Free Admission

Tuesday, November 29, 2022
  **Eastman Jazz Ensemble**
  Kilbourn Hall, 7:30 pm
  Free Admission

Wednesday, November 30, 2022
  **EASTMAN PIANO SERIES**
  Marc-André Hamelin
  Kilbourn Hall, 7:30 pm
  Tickets Available at EastmanTheatre.org

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