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2024-25



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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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CU Boulder is a **SMOKE-FREE CAMPUS**.

The University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado's flagship university, honors and recognizes the many contributions of Indigenous peoples in our state. CU Boulder acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute and many other Native American nations. Their forced removal from these territories has caused devastating and lasting impacts. While the University of Colorado Boulder can never undo or rectify the devastation wrought on Indigenous peoples, we commit to improving and enhancing engagement with Indigenous peoples and issues locally and globally.

SoundWorks

Featuring ~Nois Saxophone Quartet and the
Renova New Music Ensemble

7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2024

Grusin Music Hall

PROGRAM

The Onyx

JC Maynard

~Nois Saxophone Quartet

The Trip to Fort Morgan

Keenan Powell

~Nois Saxophone Quartet

Sad Academic Chairs

Luka Vezmar

- I. The Lean
- II. Hopelessly Waiting
- III. Solitary Confinement
- IV. Down But Still Dancing

~Nois Saxophone Quartet

Alleluia

JC Maynard

Renova New Music Ensemble

JC Maynard, conductor

Leah Tracy, soloist

Arise O Lord

Brian Lambert

Renova New Music Ensemble

Blake Clawson, conductor

Addie McCurdy, soloist

Trench Carol

Aric Vyhmeister

Renova New Music Ensemble

Aric Vyhmeister, piano

Blake Clawson, conductor

Intermission

Genzennial

Gracie Fagan

Mallory Wood, flute

Joel Ferst, alto saxophone

Jordan Grantonic, violin

Kate Fornshell, cello

Kevin Yetter, drums

Egemen Kesikli, conductor

.fractals

Gracie Fagan

Joel Ferst, alto saxophone

Wesley Shores, trombone

Jordan Grantonic, violin

Peyton Magalhaes, cello

Kevin Yetter, percussion

Alex Yang, percussion

Autopilot

Josie Arnett

Josie Arnett, piano

Greg Barth, alto saxophone

Danny Kaminski, bass

Sara Jamieson, drums

PROGRAM NOTES

The Onyx

JC Maynard

The Onyx by JC Maynard portrays the smokey scene of an exclusive club for high rollers, mob bosses and forbidden lovers. Inspired by a book Maynard is currently writing, this piece conveys the sleazy, immoral atmosphere of this particular den of crime. From a slow, sultry ballad for the mysterious woman in the corner smoking a cigar, to the raucous din of the casino floor, *The Onyx* is a whirlwind of irreverent jazz, film noir tropes, and unabashed noise.

The Trip to Fort Morgan

Keenan Powell

I have probably made the trip from Greeley to my Grandma's house in Fort Morgan hundreds of times over my life. As a result, I have quite a vivid mental map of the car trip: the JBS feed lot, the great rolling hills, the dairy, Long Bridge Road (with quite the onion shed!) and the slowest highway on planet Earth. This piece is dedicated to my Grandma and all the loving memories we have and will continue to share.

Sad Academic Chairs

Luka Vezmar

Sad Academic Chairs is based off a Tumblr page called "Sad Chairs of Academia" where anyone and everyone can post photos of chairs at their university that look incredibly sad. I chose four of those chairs that inspired me to write the four movements. Each movement is based on a different photo of said chairs, and embodies the emotion that chair is giving off.

Alleluia

JC Maynard

Alleluia by JC Maynard is an a cappella work for eight part chorus. This is the most advanced choral piece Maynard has written, with many interweaving melodic lines, temporal and metric changes, and tonal shifts. The text: *Alleluia pro mundo qui lucet in gloria*, translates to “Alleluia for the world that shines in glory,” a declamation of praise to the beauty and complexity of the world and our human race. The text, however, is of secondary importance to the sonorous wash of voices ebbing in and out of homophony, creating hauntingly gorgeous chords that tug on the heart.

Trench Carol

Aric Vyhmeister

Trench Carol is a setting of a poem by Rebecca Brothers, a friend with a gift for words, depicting the events of the famous truce between German and British soldiers on Christmas Eve of 1914 amidst the hostilities of World War I. The poem captures the warmth and humanity shared between sworn enemies during a moment that briefly transcended the relentless violence. The music is intended to evoke a sense of bitter reminiscence, of bleak hopelessness that is slowly warmed over as the soldiers cautiously approach each other and disarm, figuratively and literally, ending on a note of universality as the soldiers finally return home.

Trench Carol

Poem by Rebecca Brothers

The gath'ring gloom, the smell of guns,
Another night on no man's front.
No candle lit, no friendly hearth,
No table spread with meat and peace.
Only the cold, the smoke, the groans,
A whispered prayer to stars no one could see.

But then a light across the way,
A single voice, a tune they know.
Then yet more voices joining in,
A ragged patchwork of the song.
From trenches east, and trenches west,
A choir of men who'd sworn
To bring each other to their knees ---
"By Christmas Day, we'll all be home."

And now the dawn, and now a form
Arising from across the way.
Is this a trap? another trick?
And yet this man is like them all ---
Begrimed and weary, sore and cold,
A man with eyes too timeworn for his face.

A cake he's bearing, and a smile,
And so another man ascends.
Then more and more, with gifts to share,
For men they might have once called friends.
From trenches east, and trenches west,
A corps of men who'd sworn
To bring each other to their knees ---
"By Christmas Day, we'll all be home."

With three more Christmases, they find
That most are home, or lame, or blind.
The fight they thought would soon be o'er
Has carried on far past their power.
The peace they found that Christmas night
Now seems to be nowhere in sight.

One hundred Christmases ago,
The men remembered who they served.
No greater captain had they then
Than every brother in the world.
In trenches east, and trenches west,
A choir of men who'd sworn
To bring each other to their knees ---
It's Christmas Day, and now they're home.

Genzennial

Gracie Fagan

Genzennial presents a critical examination of the socio-cultural experiences of Generation Z and Millennials, focusing on their resilience and adaptability in the face of unprecedented global challenges. This work explores how these cohorts, often mischaracterized as “lazy sociopaths,” have developed unique coping mechanisms and activism strategies in response to pervasive societal adversity. It analyzes the juxtaposition between their commitment to social causes and their preservation of youthful exuberance, highlighting the complex interplay between civic engagement and personal well-being in an era marked by systemic obstacles and widespread tragedy.

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Gracie Fagan

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For the conscious appreciation of everyday moments.

PERSONNEL

Hyperlinks are bold and underlined; click or tap for more information.

Egemen Kesikli, artistic director

Annika Socolofsky, faculty coach

Nicholas Felder, community outreach coordinator

Gracie Fagan, social media coordinator

Keenan Powell, stage manager

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 a young age 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, where she is pursuing a bachelor's degree in music composition with a certificate in music theory at the University of Colorado Boulder. She has written for a variety of ensembles and has performed as a pianist and singer around the Boulder area, worked with local choirs and schools, and teaches private piano lessons. 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 frequently integrates elements of psychology, visual art, film, and nature into her music.

Gracie Fagan

Gracie Fagan (she/her/hers) is a multimedia artist hailing from Lincoln, Nebraska. She has written for acoustic, electroacoustic and data-driven mediums in conjunction with dance, theatre, visual projection and lighting. Her works hinge upon examining the difference between human perception and reality, and comment on social and political justice. As a stark feminist and lover of psychology, Fagan's work drives forward a climate of collaboration beyond the arts and rests between the intersectionality of identity with heavy pop culture influences.

Joshua Carter (JC) Maynard

Joshua Carter (JC) Maynard is a composer and conductor from Colorado Springs who specializes in bringing passion for choral and chamber music to a new generation of musicians. Currently studying composition at CU Boulder, Maynard never allows himself to be confined to one artistic box—instead, blending genres and disparate sources of inspiration in all his works. He was recently named ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award Semi-Finalist and Orpheus Chamber Singers Competition Second Place Finalist. In addition to composing for mediums like choir and orchestra to electronics and jazz combos, Maynard is the founder and president of the Renova New Music Ensemble—CU Boulder's premier contemporary choral group. Prioritizing collaboration and musician ownership in all his projects, Maynard has conducted and had pieces commissioned by groups such as the Colorado Vocal Arts Ensemble, the University of Wyoming Bel Canto Choir, the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, the CU Boulder Chamber Singers, Lírios String Quartet, the Denver Playground Ensemble, the Eklund Opera and more. Maynard also has experience as a producer and recording technician, an audio editor and mixing engineer, a private lesson instructor, a musical theater performer, and an ensemble administrator.

Keenan Powell

Keenan Powell has been composing music since he was in 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!

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 degrees in oboe performance and 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. In his free time, Vezmar loves watching films and building puzzles.

Aric Vyhmeister

Composer and pianist Aric Vyhmeister earned a Master of Music in collaborative piano at the University of Colorado Boulder under Margaret McDonald and Alexandra Nguyen. Vyhmeister is a frequent recitalist and chamber musician in the Denver area, served as music director with the Boulder Opera Company, performed with Art Song Colorado and the SoHap Ensemble, served on the faculty at Metropolitan State University Denver and has recently premiered original compositions with the Renova New Music Ensemble at CU Boulder, the Walla Walla University Brass Choir (Walla Walla, Washington), and the Maitland Symphony Orchestra (Orlando, Florida). He is also a regular guest artist at the Salt Creek Song Festival in Ashland, Nebraska. Vyhmeister is currently pursuing graduate studies in composition at CU Boulder where he studies under Carter Pann.

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