

Student Recital

Jacob Morgan, *percussion*

Saturday, November 4, 2023

1:00 PM

Kirmser Hall (McCain 204), Kansas State University

PROGRAM

An Index of Possibility (2013)..... Robert Honstein (b. 1980)

- I. Repose
- II. Flicker
- III. Flow
- IV. Repose 2
- V. Burst
- VI. Repose 3

Jacob Morgan, *percussion*

Nathan Smith, Christopher Wells, *percussion*

An Economy of Means (2015)..... Robert Honstein (b. 1980)

- I. Filigree
- II. Chorale
- III. Fast Notes, Long Tones
- IV. Cross-Fit
- V. Broken Chords
- VI. Bow Lines

Jacob Morgan, *vibraphone*

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

School of Music,
Theatre, and Dance

Program Notes

About the Composer

Celebrated for his “waves of colorful sounds” (New York Times) and “smart, appealing works” (The New Yorker), Robert Honstein (b. 1980) is a New York-based composer of orchestral, chamber, vocal, and film music. Ensembles and performers of Robert’s music include the Albany Symphony, Dayton Philharmonic, Orchestre Symphonique du Mulhouse, Eighth Blackbird, Ensemble Dal Niente, Mivos Quartet, Del Sol Quartet, Argus Quartet, TIGUE, New Morse Code, Colin Currie, Theo Bleckmann, Doug Perkins, Michael Burritt, Karl Larson, Ashley Bathgate, among others. Interdisciplinary collaborators include photographer Chris McCaw, projection designer Hannash Wasileski, graphic designer Laura Grey, director Daniel Fish and his music has also been choreographed by numerous dance companies including the National Ballet of Canada, Alberta Ballet, and Cincinnati Ballet. His music has been released by New Focus Records, Soundspells Productions, Cedille Records, and New Amsterdam Records. NPR included his piece Conduit II. Pulse from Eighth Blackbird’s ‘Hand Eye’ as one of their top 100 songs of 2016. His debut film score, *The Real Charlie Chaplin*, was nominated for a News & Documentary Emmy in Outstanding Music Composition.

Robert is a founding member of the New York-based composer collective Sleeping Giant. With a commitment to building community around the music of our time, Robert has co-founded Fast Forward Austin and Times Two in Boston. As an educator Robert has taught composition seminars around the country and is Program Director of Concert Composition and Composition Faculty at NYU, Steinhardt.

An Index of Possibility

An Index of Possibility explores the secret world of sound in everyday objects. Using found sounds, homemade constructions, and cheap toys, *Index* unlocks a sonic palette exploding with color and variety. Cast in six movements, the music traverses a symphonic expanse, fluidly moving between ambient textures, visceral unisons and muscular virtuosity. A wistful lullaby tune, *Repose*, begins the piece. A kind of *idée fixe*, *Repose* will return two times, framing the three larger movements – *Flicker*, *Flow* and *Burst*. In *Flicker* piercing hits punctuate a tremulous layer of pulsating metal and wood. *Flow* begins with a mesmerizing rhythmic ostinato, gradually moving towards a strange and unexpected place as a new melody emerges on the tuned pipes. Long bell-tones signal a change of direction and then a second *Repose* appears only to be violently interrupted by the clangorous opening hits of *Burst*. Erupting into a wild torrent of rhythms traversing the full range of the setup, *Burst* is the work’s focal point. After barreling through *Burst* the final *Repose* brings the music to a hushed conclusion. While virtually the same as the opening, this last *Repose* feels somehow transformed, touched by the long journey of *An Index of Possibility*.

-Notes by composer

An Economy of Means

An Economy of Means is a kind of companion piece to my trio *An Index of Possibility*. In *Index* I used a wide range of materials—glass, metal, wood, ceramic, drums, toys, found objects—to create a large form that moved between distinctive worlds within a broad sonic palette. With *An Economy of Means* I’ve done the opposite, deliberately using one instrument, the vibraphone, and forcing myself to make the most out of limited resources. With a few simple preparations—tin foil, a manilla folder—and judicious usage of the vibraphone’s natural properties, I tried to build something vast and varied, as broad and ambitious as the trio but in a narrower, more focused context. Set in six movements, the nearly thirty-minute piece doesn’t have a specific narrative. Even so, I think there is always a sense of motion, of drifting from space to space, with little dramas unfolding along the way.

-Notes by composer

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