

Devon Autry Student Recital

Saturday, May 3, 2025

4:30 PM

Kirmser Hall (McCain 204), Kansas State University

PROGRAM

Spero (2019)..... Michael Burritt (b. 1962)

Mark McKinley, *marimba*
Jacob Morgan, Ryan Woodruff, *vibraphone*
August Siefkes, *piano*

Etude No. 1 for Marimba (1980)..... Paul Smadbeck (b. 1955)

Raga No. 1 (1968)..... William Cahn (b. 1946)

Colours (2012)..... Leonard Waltersdorfer (b. 1993)

Two And Single Body (2013)..... Casey Cangelosi (b. 1982)

Mark McKinley, *percussion*

Valsa da Amizade (2020)..... Ney Rosauero (b. 1952)

Hannah Sullivan, *voice*
Sebastian Ybarra, *guitar*

BRIEF INTERMISSION

Xavi (2019)

Bad Kids to the Back (2019)

Alma (2007)..... Michael League (b. 1984)

Rawlan Cave, *bass*
Lily Crist, *synthesizer*
Chris Gutierrez, *baritone saxophone*
Kendan Powers, *trumpet*
Mason Ringer, *alto saxophone*
Jordan Somers, *tenor saxophone*
Aidan Torkelson, *trombone*
Jasper Vallad, *percussion*
Chase Wassom, *guitar*
Sebastian Ybarra, *guitar*

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

School of Music,
Theatre, and Dance

Program Notes

Spero

Spero is inspired by *Mudra* (a tenor drum solo written by Bob Becker). This piece incorporates some rudimentary aspects and some groove based aspects that provide contrast between sections in the piece. The piece starts out very ominous, but as it progresses we get more and more out of the darkness and into hope! *Spero* is the latin word for hope as Micheal Burritt writes "I kept reflecting on the need for hope. It also struck me that when I do think of hope I think of all the young people in percussion that are pushing percussion much further." I like to think that my colleagues and I represent that "hope" that Burritt is talking about.

Having performed on four continents and more than forty states, Michael Burritt is one of his generation's leading percussionists. He is in frequent demand, performing concert tours and master classes throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, Australia and Canada. Burritt is currently at one of the most prestigious percussion and band programs in the country, Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. His teachers are Gordon Stout, John Beck, and Herbert Flower.

Etude No. 1 for Marimba

Etude No. 1 for Marimba has a lot packed inside of it for it only being a total run time of 90 seconds. There are many moments where you have to change characters on the spot that add a challenging aspect to the overall piece. *Etude No. 1 for Marimba* features quirky melodic lines with fun underlying rhythmic grooves. It has challenging interval rotations and bright tempos as well as a chorale section that stretches the boundaries even further for this piece.

A native of New York City, Paul Smadbeck studied percussion informally before receiving his Bachelor's and Master's in percussion performance at Ithaca College. Smadbeck became a nationally touring classical marimbist and soon began composing. As stated in his biography on Mostly Marimba, "his collection of etudes and other works quickly became performance favorites and have earned a permanent place in the percussion repertoire worldwide."

Raga No. 1

This work was written by William Cahn in 1968 during his time at the Eastman School of Music. As the title suggests, this piece is heavily influenced by Northern Indian classical music, more specifically, tabla drumming. The piece imitates this by having the player use rapid finger motions on the timpani and play glissandos on the lowest drum, reminiscent of the lowest pitched tabla (baya). The piece also has a warm up section of the raga, called Alap, from the initial section of a raga performance. It is a slow, free-flowing, and improvised exposition of the raga, where the musician gradually introduces the notes (swaras) and moods of the raga without rhythm or time constraints. Alap helps in tuning the listener's mind to the raga's nuances and is often used to prepare for the faster, rhythmic sections of the raga, such as the Jor and Jhala.

Raga No. 1 stands as a testament to Cahn's innovative fusion of Eastern musical concepts with Western percussion techniques, offering performers a piece that is both technically challenging and rich in cultural expression.

Colours

Colours is a beautiful vibraphone solo that incorporates the motor from the vibraphone, giving the piece texture and movement. Something very interesting about this piece is that the melody is featured in the left hand, traveling the length of the board, which is often not the case in keyboard repertoire. This piece has many swells in dynamic and movement that requires the player to understand the heights and depths of the dynamic range. Personally, I connect every piece that I play to an event that has shaped my life, and every time I play this piece I am reminded of people that I have lost in the last few years. I hope they are still listening to me make music for them.

Leonhard Waltersdorfer was born in Vienna where he started playing percussion at the age of 5. He studied at Musik und Kunst Privatuniversität der Stadt Wien and Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Graz. Leonhard is an up-and-coming composer that has created works for solo and ensemble percussion. Leonhard is also deeply invested in the jazz tradition, where he has transcribed multiple Gary Burton solos, featuring piano. As a performer, he has been a member of the Stage Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera since his temporary contract at Oper Graz ended in 2018.

Two And Single Body

Two And Single Body is a multi-percussion duet originally commissioned for the percussion duo, "Maraca 2". The name "*Two And Single Body*" comes from utilizing identical setups consisting of a tom, snare, bongos, splash cymbal, and bass drum; as well as how players need to be interlocked even when with contrasting rhythms. The piece always returns to the original statement and gives a sense of home, however, right when you feel at home it drastically changes. There are many times that we play unison rhythms but there also many times when we play against each other, filling in each other's gaps. This gives even more to the title because, if there were two people in one body, there would be times where they disagree and there would be times when they are in the same page. The grooves in this piece are almost psychedelic in feeling, with a constant odd-meter back beat to drive the piece forward!

Casey Cangelosi is known for his difficult, yet fun compositions that break the barriers of traditional percussion repertoire. For example, in this piece, there is a section where players must use two sticks in one hand, a slightly more rare occurrence in multi-percussion pieces. *Two And Single Body* exemplifies Cangelosi's highly distinctive composition style, blending challenging music with audience engagement.

Valsa da Amizade

Valsa da Amizade is a trio for vibraphone, guitar, and vocals. This piece was written about the friendship that Ney Rosauro has with the two other musicians who performed this tune, as they even performed it during the pandemic to continue making music! As Ney Rosauro writes, "Friends are like stars in the sky, and even when they are obscured by clouds, we know they are still there. This 'Friendship Waltz' is inspired by this and celebrates how good it is to have friends to hug and tell stories to. A gift, a virtual hug during this pandemic for all the friends we are unable to hug shoulder to shoulder at this time." I am grateful to say that the people I perform this work with are ones I will be appreciate of for a long time, and I'm so happy to share the love of making music with them.

Ney Rosauro is a wonderful composer, performer, and teacher who is a native of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He is Professor Emeritus of the University of Miami, FL, and was inducted to the Percussive Arts Society "Hall of Fame" in 2023. With his unique style of writing, which combines charming melodies with catchy rhythms, Rosauro utilizes the rich elements of Brazilian folklore to create stylized compositions, full of life and fantasy and enchanting audiences all over the world. Ney is a very well known solo performer and has performed with orchestras in over 45 countries.

Xavi, Bad Kids to the Back, & Alma

Xavi begins with a hypnotic bassline, laying a strong foundation for the entire band to build upon. Layered textures are gradually introduced, with the horns adding bold, syncopated lines, and the keyboards providing rich harmonic colors. The rhythm section, with its intricate interplay between the drums, bass, and percussion, remains the heartbeat of the track, ensuring that even as the melodies and harmonies evolve, the groove never wavers. The driving rhythm section of this piece is a significant departure from traditional Western 4/4 time signatures. Many of the syncopated and polyrhythmic grooves in the track are inspired by the complex rhythms found in Moroccan and North African music. In particular, gnawa music, a traditional form of music from Morocco, is known for its repetitive and hypnotic rhythms, which create a trance-like effect. The strong, pulsing beats and intricate layering of rhythms in *Xavi* mirror the repetitive, mesmerizing qualities of gnawa, even if the melody and harmony take on a more fusion-driven, jazz form.

Bad Kids to the Back opens with a tight, infectious bass and drum groove that immediately sets the tone for the groove-heavy tune. This bassline drives much of the song's momentum, with League's impeccable sense of rhythm anchoring the piece. The composition features a distinct funky vibe, influenced by the rhythmic precision of genres like funk, soul, and R&B, while maintaining a fluid, jazz-inspired sense of harmonic movement. The horn section plays a key role in delivering the track's energy, but its bassline and drum interaction act as the song's heartbeat.

Alma is a very Brazilian inspired piece that incorporates funk syncopation. This starts with a flowing guitar melody that sets up the groove, and then enters with light drumset and a percussion solo. The percussion solo builds until we finally drop into a full samba based groove. Towards the end of the piece there are hits that you might not expect in this context but that totally fit this vibe.

Michael League is the founder and band leader for "Snarky Puppy", winning multiple Grammys for his compositions for the group. Michael attended the University of North Texas' jazz studies program for 4 years, then moved to nearby Dallas for another 3 years, where he worked with some of the most influential figures in modern gospel, R&B, and soul music, being mentored by legendary keyboardist Bernard Wright (who also worked with Miles Davis and Chaka Khan). He then moved to Brooklyn, New York, in 2009, where he spent 9 years, before he relocated to his current home of Catalonia, Spain.

Snarky Puppy is a band that represents the convergence of both black and white American music culture with various accents from around the world. Japan, Argentina, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Puerto Rico all have representation in the group's membership. But more than the cultural diversity of the individual players, the defining characteristic of Snarky Puppy's music is the joy of performing together in the perpetual push to grow creatively.