

Mark McKinley Student Recital

Thursday, October 30, 2025

6:30 PM

Kirmser Hall (McCain 204), Kansas State University

PROGRAM

Phylogenesis (2016) Russel Wharton (b. 1990)

Spiel (2013, rev. 2020) Andy Akiho (b. 1979)

Two Reflections (2004) Ney Rosauo (b. 1952)
II. Reflections on the New World

Dance of the Knights (1935, arr. 2005) Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)
arr. Eric Sammut (b. 1968)

Pigstep (2020, arr. 2025) Lena Raine (b. 1984)
arr. Mark McKinley (b. 2003)

Devon Autry, drum set
Javi Garza, vibraphone
Jessi Solorzano, percussion
Ryan Woodruff, marimba

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

School of Music,
Theatre, and Dance

Program Notes

Phylogenesis

Phylogenesis refers to the evolutionary development of an organism or species. In this multi-media piece for two snare drums and audio playback, Wharton develops musical ideas by slowly adding layers and complexity. The soloist starts by playing with a rasping stick on the rim of the higher snare drum and adds in the other hand with a regular stick on the lower drum. Rhythms slowly become denser and more interesting. About a third of the way through, the audio playback starts and features a groove sounding similar to what the material that was just presented. The soloist then adds layers on top of the audio track on the lower of the two snare drums. This process of adding complexity to each musical phrase continues throughout the piece until it finally breaks down and ends with a reprise of the first rhythmic motif.

Russell Wharton is a percussionist, composer, and arranger who currently resides in Nashville, TN and teaches at Middle Tennessee State University. He is well known for his multi-media compositions which combine solo percussion instruments with audio playback and synchronized visuals. He also works with top groups in the marching arts such as The Cavaliers Drum & Bugle Corps and Rhythm X.

Spiel

Spiel is a solo piece for glockenspiel found on Akiho's album *Four Pillars* commissioned by Sandbox Percussion. It was originally written for Terry Sweeney of Sandbox Percussion who has since performed this work over 35 times throughout the world. The piece calls for timbale sticks, thin wooden rods with no bead, to be used on the metal bars of the glockenspiel. This creates a very tinny sound but allows the performer to play consecutive notes much quicker than with a more formal acrylic or metal mallet. Akiho explores many textures throughout the work and pushes what is possible on this standard percussion instrument.

Andy Akiho is a steel pannist, percussionist, and seven-time Grammy-nominated composer. His music is known for pushing musical boundaries with intricate rhythms and unique instrument combinations. Akiho spent much of his younger years playing steel pan in both Trinidad and New York City. He started to compose serious works at the age of 28 and has composed many outstanding orchestral and chamber works. This highly sought after composer has music degrees from the University of South Carolina, the Manhattan School of Music, and the Yale School of Music and has been commissioned by many orchestras across the world.

Reflections on the New World

"Reflections on the New World" is the second movement of Ney Rosauro's piece *Two Reflections*. This movement is based on the composer's reflections about moving from Brazil to the USA. Melodies from this piece are based on themes from Dvorak's *New World Symphony*. The first of which is taken from the gospel theme in the second movement of the symphony which Rosauro uses to create three different variations. He also uses the overture from the second movement and the main theme from the fourth movement. The piece was written to celebrate the composer's 50th birthday in 2002 and was published in 2004.

Ney Rosauro is a Brazilian percussionist and composer from Rio de Janeiro. He did not start out as a percussionist, but rather he was a gigging musician on guitar, mandolin, and electric bass during his younger years. Rosauro finally began to study percussion at the age of 25 when he was in his last year at the University of Brasília. Percussion soon became the center of his musical career and led him to move to Germany to study at the University of Music in Würzburg, Germany. Additionally, Rosauro received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Performance and Composition in 1992 from the University of Miami in Florida. As a performer, he has given countless performances all over the world, appearing as a soloist in front of prestigious orchestras and wind ensembles. As a composer, Rosauro has written over 100 works for percussion including solos, chamber works, concerti, and percussion orchestra pieces.

Dance of the Knights

"Dance of the Knights" from Sergei Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet* is also known as the "Montagues and Capulets" Suite and is comprised of two sections. The first depicts a fateful encounter between the feuding Montagues and Capulets. The second section represents the first time Romeo and Juliet meet at her family's masquerade ball. This is often said to be Prokofiev's most recognizable work as it has been used in various pop culture settings; however, Sammut's arrangement of this piece takes a stylized and rhythmic turn. The beginning of the piece is put into a 7/8 time signature which augments and blurs the melody. Many aspects of the original suite are varied in this arrangement, but Sammut keeps the overall structure the same. This marimba solo was initially an improvisation by Sammut for his album *Four Mallet Ballet*. It has since been edited for the published version, but many aspects of the improvisation are still present.

Eric Sammut has received many awards for both his musical performances and compositions including the First National Marimba Prize of New York in 1995 and first place in the Leigh Howard Stevens International Marimba Competition in 1995. He studied percussion performance at the National Regional Conservatory in Toulouse, France and has taught marimba at academies in Toulouse, Paris, London, and Glasgow. Sammut has produced many solo percussion works, three CD recordings, and two concerti all while being the principal percussionist with the Orchestre de Paris.

Pigstep

“Pigstep” is a piece of music from the immensely popular game *Minecraft*. Released in June 2020 as part of the *Minecraft* Nether Update, this song has been well received by fans and was included in *A Minecraft Movie* released in 2025. It features heavy synths, mysterious sound effects, haunting melodies, and a danceable drumbeat. This arrangement of “Pigstep” for percussion quintet uses the low register of the marimba to recreate the bass motif from the original song and mallet dampening on the vibraphone as the synth sound. Additionally, an auxiliary percussion part adds many of the mysterious sound effects found in the original record from the game and the glockenspiel plays the pleasant yet mystifying melody.

Lena Raine is an American composer, producer, and video game developer from Seattle, Washington. She got her start in music from her dad who played violin and from participating in choir in her youth. Raine holds a degree in music composition from the Cornish College of the Arts. She is best known for her work on the soundtracks of *Minecraft*, *Celeste*, *Guild Wars 2*, and *Deltarune*. In total, she has helped produce 18 songs over the course of several years that are now included in the game of *Minecraft*.