

NORTH CAROLINA NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE
INITIATING NEW IDEAS ABOUT NEW MUSIC
WWW.ECU.EDU/NEWMUSIC

2016-2017 SEASON

All events free, at A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall, unless noted

Michael Lowenstern, bass clarinet
Sept 29, 2016

Virgil Thomson's Four Saints in Three Acts
ECU Opera Theater, tickets @ 800-ECU-ARTS
October 23, 24, 25

Julia Den Boer, piano
November 3, 2016

Premiere Performances

Student composers/student performers
November 11, 2016

Sharon Harms, soprano & Steven Beck, piano
January 26, 2017

Frequencies

Student contemporary music ensemble
February 16, 2017

ECU Orchestra

Jorge Richter, Director
March 4, 2017, Wright Auditorium

Meridian Arts Ensemble

Brass quintet & percussion
March 18, 2017

Premiere Performances

Student composers/student performers
April 1 & April 20, 2017

ECU Sinfonietta

Scott Carter, Director
NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE Commission
by James Mobberley
April 2, 2017

East Carolina University *School of Music*

and the

**NORTH CAROLINA
NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE**

presents

**PREMIERE
PERFORMANCES**

NEW MUSIC BY ECU COMPOSERS

Supported by funding from the
Robert L. Jones Distinguished Professorship
and listeners like you

November 11, 2016
7:30pm
A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall

This evening's music

Light Beneath the Canopy (a final movement) Isaac Ward
Patrick Rose, Rebecca Spade, trumpet;
Caleb Harris, Kelsey Blake, Andrew Howell, Emma Johnson, horn;
Steven Kosch, Taylor Babson, tbn; DeAndre Wilson, bs tbn;
Josh Bishop, euphonium; Ian Graves, tuba; Brandon Banks, piano;
Daniel Crisp, Eli Helms, John Weeks, perc; Helen Park, Conductor

Quartet No. 1 in C Minor Dallas Herndon
Sarah Grace Bindrim, Ryan Tolentino, Violin;
Rebecca Kim, Viola; Steven Farr, Cello

Distances in Between Julian Ward
fixed media

There's a Certain Slant of Light Sarah Hemminger Johnson
Grace Ashley, soprano; Emerson Voss, piano

Portraits Brittany J. Green
IV. Bessie's Song
V. The Girl Beyond the Clouds
Irem Ozay, piano

Intermission

Midnight Impression Julian Ward
Eileen Snyder, Brandon Banks, piano;
Daniel Peterson, Daniel Crisp, Eli Helms, percussion

My Beautiful Dream Joshua Poyner
Santiago Vasquez, violin; Justin Sturz, piano

Momentum Blake Ryall
Eli Helms, marimba; Blake Ryall, tuba

Stars Kelly Hart
Eli Helms, Daniel Crisp, marimba

3lemental Showdown Daniel Peterson
Daniel Peterson, skin; Daniel Crisp, metal; John Weeks, wood

Join us for our next event with
guest artists

Sharon Harms, soprano
Steven Beck, piano

January 26, 2017, 7:30pm
A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall
Free admission

Distances in Between was realized using Pro Tools, a program for sound mixing and sound production. All of the sounds you will hear are altered forms of just a handful of samples that I recorded in the studio. These sounds have been filtered, expanded, and detuned. Writing in Pro Tools allowed me the opportunity to play around with the placement of sounds in a stereo space which this piece takes advantage of.

—Julian Ward

There's a Certain slant of Light is a selection from my operetta (*The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane*, based on the play by Laird Koenig). The text, taken from a poem of the same name by Emily Dickinson, is recited by the titular “little girl,” thirteen-year-old Rynn, as a subtle reflection of the infinite dichotomies in life – that of light and dark, joy and despair, self and other. The piano “drone” stands as a contrasting figure to the singer’s free-flowing, almost chant-like melody. The focus of this musical setting is to highlight this juxtaposition of different, sometimes contradictory images, as reflected in Dickinson’s poem and Koenig’s scene.

—Sarah Hemminger Johnson

Portraits is a five-movement piano set that depicts people and experiences I have encountered throughout my life. *Bessie’s Song*, the fourth movement, is based on a poem entitled *I Am You*. This movement, marked *senza misura* (in free time), conveys a sense of meditative floating and subtlety. The movement explores the feelings the author of the poem encounters while meditating: longing, fear, uneasiness, realization, and reassurance, all leading her to self-awareness and the discovery of who she really is.

The fifth movement, *The Girl Beyond the Clouds*, portrays the complexity of struggling between who you are and who the world thinks you should be. Based on a poem by the same name, the piece tells the story of a woman who hesitates to show the world who she is. The harmonic and melodic themes throughout various sections of the movement juxtapose the bleakness and beauty life can sometimes bring, creating a mood of melancholy and meditation.

—Brittany Green

The initial writing of *Midnight Impression* was for a reading by Yarn/Wire, who visited ECU as part of the NewMusic Initiative last October. One of the percussionists had mentioned at the time that, since they needed to use four mallets to play the xylophone part, it was hard to incorporate the wood block into the motion of the hands. So, I thought it would be rather simple to edit that part and get the piece premiered in the following spring. At the time, none of them mentioned that what I was asking for in the percussion parts was actually impossible! Dr. Wacker had me divide the two percussion parts into three, and Dr. Richardson helped me to make the piano parts more manageable without losing the musical ideas.

This piece is an experiment with motivic development and ensemble color. In the piano parts you will at times hear sharp attacks and motoric interactions with the Xylophones. Hopefully, it will almost feel as if they are actually percussionists when these things occur. The individual parts require much independence from the players, but when they are all played together they act as a single machine.

—Julian Ward

My Beautiful Dream is a recollection of a simple melody that was created during my childhood and stayed with me over the years. Flowing lines are used in both the violin and piano in order to paint a calming, gentle dreamscape that gradually moves the piece towards the unsung phrase that the music is based around: “Beautiful angel of my beautiful dream.”

—Joshua Poyner

The inspiration for *Momentum* (which represents one of my first true forays into the realm of composing original material) derives largely from personal perspective on what I consider to be a relationship between time and energy. While the roles of each voice are interchangeable in terms of their musical purpose, the marimba begins with a static, pulsating rhythmic figure that gradually expands outward harmonically. The tuba’s entrance and subsequent dialogue with the marimba begins an exchange of melodic and rhythmic energy that permeates the content of the work.

Brief pauses (often in one or both voices) are utilized to distribute the shifting importance of the musical conversation they share. This is also useful in following the formal progression of the work, which

About this evening's music

I would describe as a loose ABA' form that develops through an emphasis on achieving harmonic direction rather than abiding by functional harmony. The end of the work recalls the opening rhythmic idea across both voices, while the final chord expands outward from the tonic one last time with a consonant (yet not typically cadential) interval. This is used to imply that in this exchange of musical ideas, energy remains a universally constant and infinite force within and without the context of this work.

—Blake Ryall

Stars is a piece that I wrote as a way of trying new things. I have never written for percussion and wanted the experience along with becoming stronger at rhythm. The marimba has always been a favorite percussion instrument of mine in concert, so I decided that I would write a marimba duet. The duet consists of two separate parts that together make one sound. The rhythms fit together like a puzzle so that separately they may not be understood, but together they make musical sense. This idea turned out to be more challenging than planned, but I am very grateful for the support and ideas I received from Dr. Alford and Eli Helms. I would like to thank those that have encouraged me to continue writing music and hope that this piece conveys the emotion behind the journey I have taken as a composer.

—Kelly Hart

Elemental Showdown is a percussion trio based on the three main elements of percussion: skins, metals, and woods. Each player will emulate the idiomatic nature of their element/instrument, and try to compete for dominance. Amongst the battle there are some periods of resolution between each element and a certain groovy harmony is reached between all combinations of elements.

—Daniel Peterson

Light Beneath the Canopy

The subtitle of this piece is “a final movement,” because the piece is a part of a larger incomplete work with three movements. The first movement was premiered in the spring of 2015, with the same title, but with a different subtitle (a first movement). This movement calls back ideas from the previous movements, but also brings in new material that is uniquely its own.

The style of the music is adventurous and mysterious; the range of tempos change from slow to quick and the range of expression changes from calm to aggressive. At times the entire ensemble is exploited, bringing forth a powerful sound that contrasts with sections that use only a small portion of the ensemble and are more restrained. The brass, piano, and percussion are at times featured individually, and at other times mixed. This allows for possible sound-colors that any section would lack on its own.

—Isaac Ward

Quartet No. 1 in C Minor is inspired by lyricism and expressiveness, written in a Romantic style. Ideas are drawn from works such as Shostakovich's *String Quartet No. 8 in C Minor*, Fauré's *Élégie* (Op. 24), and Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. Overall, the mood is quite solemn and subdued.

Much like the beginning of the *String Quartet No. 8 in C Minor*, the *Quartet No. 1 in C Minor* opens with a single moving line, which gradually expands into a full ensemble. The melody itself is somewhat sequential, and recurs throughout the piece, voiced and stylized in various ways. A common element featured throughout the piece is the use of suspensions and syncopations to create a rather dramatic sense of momentum.

When the cello eventually plays the melody towards the middle, the melody from Fauré's *Élégie* is quoted as a counter-melody. The inspiration from Barber's *Adagio for Strings* can be seen towards the end, as all four parts gradually crescendo to an extremely brilliant chord, followed by complete silence. The 2nd violin then quotes a variation of the original melody as the ensemble moves into a final chord.

—Dallas Herndon