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Guest Artists in Recital - LAPQ

Los Angeles Percussion Quartet

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Guest Artists in Recital – LAPQ

(Los Angeles Percussion Quartet)

September 27, 2013



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September 27

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Los Angeles Percussion Quartet

october

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november

November 5

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Los Angeles Percussion Quartet



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September 27, 2013 ■ 8:00 P.M.

Salmon Recital Hall

Program

<i>Occasus</i> (2010)	Jeffrey Holmes (b. 1971)
<i>the Year Before Yesterday</i> (2012)	Shaun Naidoo (1962 - 2012)
<i>Mallet Quartet</i> (2013)	Joseph Pereira (b. 1974)
<i>-pause-</i>	
<i>Lullaby 5</i> (2013)	Nicholas Deyoe (b. 1981)
<i>Third Construction</i> (1941)	John Cage (1912 - 1992)

Artists

Los Angeles Percussion Quartet is an innovative and dynamic chamber music ensemble whose award-winning repertoire, featuring newly commissioned works by California’s greatest composers, is touted as “championing composers of thought-provoking and uncompromisingly intelligent music.” (Percussive Notes)

LAPQ’s 2012 seminal album, *Rūpa-khandha*, broke new ground as the first 7.1 surround-sound high-fidelity recording of percussion chamber music. The quartet’s recorded performance “presents the entire color-spectrum of global percussion instruments intelligently and with great competency,” (Neue Musikzeitung) and subsequently earned the group multiple nominations in the 55th Grammy Awards, including in the prestigious category of Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance.

Throughout LAPQ’s five-year history, their performances have delighted audiences in concert halls, museums, warehouses, and living room salons, with appearances in many of California’s most distinguished concert series, including Monday Evening Concerts, Music and Conversations, People Inside Electronics, Morrison Artists, Fullerton Friends of Music, April in Santa Cruz, and the L.A. Composers Project. Equally committed to outreach and education, LAPQ have presented workshops and masterclasses to young musicians at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, University of Southern California, California Institute of the Arts, CSU Sacramento/Bakersfield/East Bay, and Occidental College, among others.

The individual members of LAPQ are active freelance performers and educators throughout Southern California, and are graduates of leading music conservatories, including the University of California - San Diego, Oberlin Conservatory, Northwestern University, the Thornton School of Music (USC), and the Herb Alpert School of Music (CalArts). LAPQ exclusively makes music with Sabian Cymbals, Innovative Percussion sticks and mallets, REMO drumheads, and Black Swamp percussion.

Program Notes

Program Notes (provided by the composer, unless indicated)

Occasus, was written in the Spring of 2010 for the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet. This work is comprised of twelve sections that are differentiated by textural contrasts and pitch transpositions, and are united through recurring timbres, motives, and a consistent harmonic landscape. The title is in Latin, and can mean “setting” (as in the setting sun), and can also mean “downfall, ruin, death”. The pessimistic programmatic element from which this work emerged is present on a multiplicity of levels, including descending motives, segmented formal structures with clear divisions, intense climaxes, and even in the immediately decaying sound quality inherent to the percussion family of instruments.

Program Notes

The Year Before Yesterday: This work was commissioned by and dedicated to the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet in 2012 by the group’s longtime friend and collaborator, Shaun Naidoo. When finished with the score, Shaun expressed to us his pleasant surprise at the ease and clarity with which the music came to him. While composing at his computer, he left the default title of “song” remaining at the top of the score, which he felt best captured the essence of this particular mallet quartet. (Nick Terry)

Mallet Quartet: I have always found it fascinating to discover ways to manipulate sound-how notes are played and more importantly what happens after you play them and how they resonate or speak in different ways. My Mallet Quartet (2013), written for the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet, for two vibraphones and two marimbas, attempts to consider all elements of sound on these instruments. Each pitch is considered on its own as a scale, of many timbral particles waiting to be examined. For the most part the focus is on the resonances, the attacks, and the overtones. Whether it’s the playing technique used or simply the natural sounds of the instrument, these can all be exposed and manipulated in different ways, depending on the register they are in. For example, an sfz chord played with a sharp attack has two distinct elements to its fundamental sound. The first is the percussive unpitched attack, which on marimba in the lower register may have a sound similar to a wood plank or a woodblock in the upper register. On the vibes, there are more obvious metallic spectral overtones, which with hard mallets can be as obvious as the fundamental pitch, especially at louder dynamics. A sharp attack becomes a dead stroke, and/or a muffled tone, naturally implying some sense of space between sounds, and can be filled by a particular resonance or even the use of silence. A fast run can be given shape in the traditional melodic way, but can also be echoed by different kinds of glissing. One of the timbral techniques requires the player to play a “ricochet” on the frame of the instrument with the rattan handles of the mallets-producing an echo effect of unpitched glissando from low to high. Some other notable devices are the use of hand muffling, which naturally bends the pitches to quarter tones and then with more pressure, transforms pitches into unpitched sounds. There is also the use of harmonics on the vibraphone as part of the normal playing technique and the use of bass drum mallets to expose the vibrato “beats” of the lowest notes of the marimba.

By constantly drawing parallels between all the particles of sound, I was able to develop multiple scales of material to structure the piece as a whole. The introduction contains all the elements of the piece. From here on, all sections are to be developed, layered and woven onto and over each other. They often appear either clearly developed or completely disguised, dependent on the varied dimensions applied to their appearance. This idea of using a 3 dimensional approach to sound, which on one hand goes towards unpitched sounds, and on the other hand digs deeper beyond the fundamental tones into the natural overtones, constantly creates a shifting focus of tension. Pivoting between this axis of sound

Program Notes

appearance creates an endless spectrum for each pitch used, relating back to all the elements of creating structure though a total consideration of sound. The playing techniques, the pitch structure, and the timbres are all of equal importance, not one dominating the other.

Lullabies 1–5
No. 1
If you go to sleep, daddy will buy you something.
When you break it, he’ll buy you something new.
If you don’t go to sleep, something terrible will happen.
Something bad might happen anyway.

No. 2
Eventually, you’ll die.
You may be remembered fondly.
I may be remembered fondly.
It doesn’t really matter.

No. 3
Our experiences shape our memories.
Our memories color our experiences.
All memory tends to be suspect.

No. 4
We all live amidst filth.
Our fondest memories are tainted by our surroundings.
Who cares.
Degradation makes the heart grow fonder?

No. 5
We can’t change the world around us.
We can never truly change ourselves.
We can only learn to tune the relationship we have with our surroundings.

Third Construction: The third (and final) Construction is composed of 24 sections, each 24 measures in length. A 24-measure segment is further partitioned into a sequence of 2+8+2+4+5+3 measures, and simultaneously “rotated” between the four players (so that player 2 will have a sequence of 8+2+4+5+3+2, player 3 having 2+4+5+3+2+8, etc...). Thus, each performer executes *seemingly* incongruous musical phrases featuring a pervasive polyrhythmic saturation of eighth-notes, triplets, quintuplets, and septuplets. What can strike the listener at first as a disassociated, unraveling musical frenzy can, over time and owed to the unifying 24-measure cycle, begin to express a surprising degree of festively rhythmic, near dance-like propulsion. (Nick Terry)

Composers

The music of composer **Jeffrey Holmes** has been called “Captivating...haunting and slightly disorienting” by the Los Angeles Times, “Drifting...ethereal” by the San Francisco Classical Voice, and “Interesting and musically arresting, music to be really heard and deserving of reflection” by the Society of Composers, INC. As a traditionalist, he composes music for acoustic orchestral instruments, using standard notational methods; as a formalist, he works within a complex and unique diatonic, chromatic, and microtonal language; as a transcendentalist, he combines the inherent abstraction of sound with a greater meaning and possibility of interpretation through the use of lyricism and overt expression.

His music has been performed at festivals such as the Darmstadt Ferienkurs für Neue Musik (Germany), June in Buffalo (New York), Etchings Festival in Maulin a Nef, Auvillar (France), La Pietra Forum for New Music (Florence, Italy), at MicroFest (2003, 2005, and 2011) and both the HEAR NOW and “What’s Next?” festivals (Los Angeles), and in venues including Carnegie Hall (New York), the Historic Dvorak Museum (Prague, Czech Republic), and the Chapelle historique de Bon-Pasteur (Montreal, Canada). He has received commissions and performances from groups including the Penderecki String Quartet, Bass-baritone Nicholas Isherwood (Germany), Ensemble Sound Initiative (Paris, France), the JACK Quartet, ECCE - East Coast Contemporary Ensemble, “Duo Resonances” - France (Frédérique Luzy and Pierre Bibault), Piano Spheres, the Eclipse String Quartet, Trio Terroir, California Institute of the Arts Orchestra, USC Thornton Symphony, Xtet, Inauthentica, Duo Amantis, and others.

He holds a doctorate in music composition from the University of Southern California, and has studied with composers such as Georg Friedrich Haas, Donald Crockett and Stephen Hartke. Currently, he is Associate Professor of Composition and Theory at Chapman University. His music is published by Edition Svitzer (Copenhagen, Denmark), Doberman-Yppan (Quebec, Canada), and J.W. Pepper (USA), and has been recorded on the Sono Luminus label, distributed worldwide by Naxos.

Born in South Africa in 1962 **Shaun Naidoo** composed extensively for cabaret, musical theater, and modern dance in the late 1980s. During that period a series of collaborations with Warrick Sony and the Kalahari Surfers culminated in the Found Opera Season of Violence, which received an Honorable Mention at the Prix Ars Electronica in Linz, Austria in 1990. His cabaret troupe, “Shaun Naidoo and the Panic Attacks” received the Fringe Award at the South African National Festival of the Arts in 1988 for the revue Everything but the Shower Scene. Collaborations with the City Theater and Dance group as composer and musical director resulted in the acclaimed musicals Hotel Polana (1989) and Sunrise City (1988). The latter work incidentally became the last work to be banned by the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Composers

In 1990 he was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship and settled in Los Angeles, where he received Masters and Doctoral degrees in composition at USC. His output during the 1990s include numerous electro-acoustic works, which can be heard on C.R.I., New World Records, Evander Music, and Capstone Records.

Over the past twenty years or so he composed for ensembles and artists around the world. His music has been heard most recently at Carnegie Hall, Dartington Castle (England), Walt Disney Concert Hall, REDCAT Theater, the Lincoln Theater in Miami Beach, the Bang on a Can Festival at MassMoca in Massachusetts, and in Brisbane, Australia. Recent performances include premieres in Germany and Taiwan.

In 2007, **Joseph Pereira** (1974) was appointed Principal Timpanist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic by Esa Pekka Salonen. Previously he was the Assistant Principal Timpanist/Section Percussionist of the New York Philharmonic, from January 1998 to September 2008. He currently runs the percussion department at USC’s Thornton School of music. Pereira received his master’s degree in percussion from The Juilliard School and a double bachelor’s degree in performance and composition/theory from Boston University.

As a composer Joseph Pereira’s commissions for the 2013/14 season are from the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet, pianist Joanne Pearce Martin, pianist Vicki Ray, Colin Currie, and The Manhattan School of Music. Last season he wrote a new work for the Miro Quartet and percussionist Colin Currie, which was premiered as part of their US tour. His string trio “Blur”, was selected as a winner of the 2013 American Composers Forum LA, String Trio Competition. In 2012, the Los Angeles Philharmonic commissioned and premiered his percussion concerto for soloist Colin Currie. Pereira performed the work again this past season with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel in Los Angeles and in London at the Barbican. In 2012, the LA Phil members premiered his new piece for amplified double bass quartet as part of the LA Phil Chamber Series. The Los Angeles Percussion Quartet, recorded his piece Repousse’, on a Sono Luminus release which was nominated for three 2013 Grammys. In the summer of 2010, he conducted the premiere of his new piece for seven percussionists at The Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. In 2007, his first orchestral piece, Mask, was selected by the American Composers Orchestra’s annual new music readings for top emerging composers. At the New York Philharmonic, he conducted the premiere of his Quintet for Winds in 2005 on the Chamber Ensembles series at Merkin Concert Hall. The New York Times said, “it is a restless yet lucidly textured work with an astringent harmonic language.” In 2006 chief music critic Anthony Tommasini featured Pereira’s work as a composer and percussionist in The New York Times Arts section article. All of his percussion works are published by Bachovich Music Publications.

Composers

Pereira has also performed with the New York Percussion Quartet, the New York New Music Ensemble, Alea III, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Robert Shaw Festival Singers, and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra as principal timpanist. He can also be heard on Telarc, Teldec, and Deutsche Grammophon/Itunes recordings and has recently been part of recording the soundtracks to major motion pictures. He regularly performs on the LA Phil's Green Umbrella series, of which he has performed solo works, and has premiered many pieces. His custom line of timpani mallets are manufactured and sold by JG Percussion.

Nicholas Deyoe is a composer, conductor, and guitarist born in Colorado and currently living and working in Southern California. Drawn to sounds that are inherently physical, Nicholas strives to create music that engages listeners intellectually and emotionally by appealing to their inner physicality. His compositions make use of noise, delicacy, drama, fantasy, brutality, and lyricism to create a diverse sonic experience. As a guitarist, Nicholas strives to further the already vast sound world of the electric guitar by experimenting with microtonal tunings, preparation, bows, and beer cans. He has received commissions from Carnegie Hall, USINESONORE Festival, The La Jolla Symphony, Palimpsest, and several soloists. His music has been performed in Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain, The Netherlands, Iceland, Japan, and throughout North America. As a conductor, Nicholas has performed with The La Jolla Symphony Orchestra, Red Fish Blue Fish, Ensemble Ascolta, The Darmstadt Preisträgerensemble, Noise, The University of Northern Colorado Symphony Orchestra, and many ad-hoc ensembles in the United States and Germany. He holds a Ph.D. in composition from UC San Diego where he studied with Roger Reynolds. Deyoe's compositions and improvisations can be heard on Populist, Spektral, and Eh? Records.

John Milton Cage Jr. was an American composer, theorist, writer, and multimedia artist regarded as one of the leading figures of the post-war avant-garde for his pioneering use of compositional indeterminacy, blending of electronic and acoustic sounds, and life-long collaboration with choreographer Merce Cunningham. From 1935 – 1943, in the period immediately preceding his invention of the prepared piano, Cage composed numerous works for percussion that would later be held as masterpieces. He was inducted into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame in 1982.



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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dale A. Merrill'.

Dale A. Merrill, Dean

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