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### Chapman Percussion Ensemble

Chapman Percussion Ensemble

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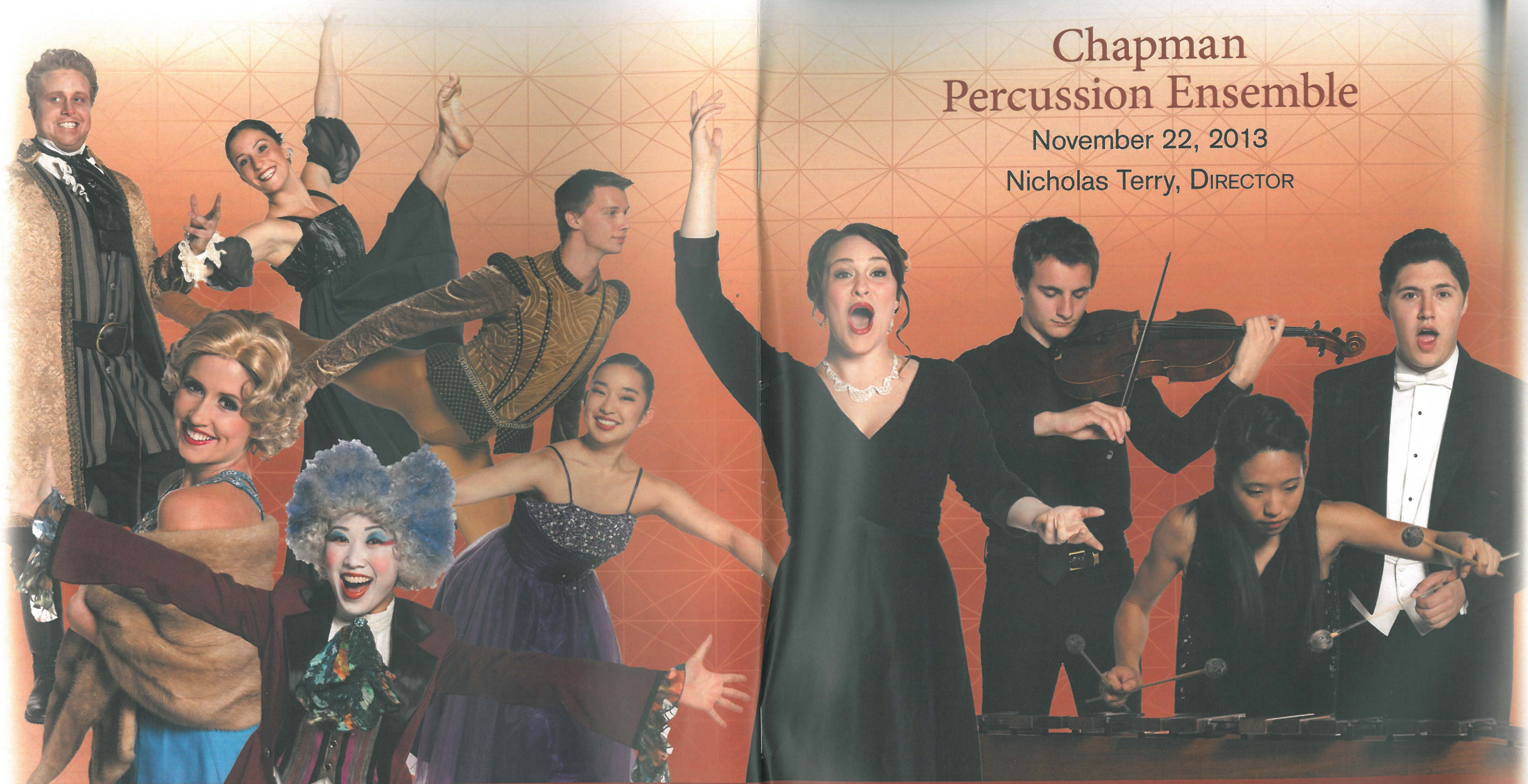
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# Chapman Percussion Ensemble

November 22, 2013

Nicholas Terry, DIRECTOR



 **CHAPMAN** | COLLEGE OF  
UNIVERSITY | PERFORMING ARTS

COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS  
CONSERVATORY OF  
**music**

fall 2013

# FALL 2013

## calendar highlights

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### september

September 26-28, October 3-5

#### **Present Laughter**

by Noël Coward

Directed by Andrew Barnicle

September 27

#### **Guest Artists in Recital -**

**Los Angeles Percussion Quartet**

### october

October 18-20

#### **Opera Chapman:**

#### **"Gems of the Bel Canto Era"**

Peter Atherton, Artistic Director

Carol Neblett, Associate Director

October 24-26, November 7-9

#### **Spring Awakening**

Music by Duncan Sheik

Book and Lyrics by Steven Sater

Directed by Jim Taulli

### november

November 5

#### **Guest Artists in Recital -**

#### **Ray/Kallay Duo**

Featuring Aron Kallay and Vicki Ray

November 9

#### **Chapman University Wind Symphony:**

#### **"Dreams, Dances, and Visions"**

Christopher Nicholas, Music Director and Conductor

November 15

#### **The Chapman Orchestra:**

#### **"Gods & Monsters"**

Daniel Alfred Wachs, Music Director and Conductor

John Elias Kaynor, cello

November 16

#### **Chapman University Women's**

#### **Choir and University Choir**

#### **in Concert**

Angel Vázquez-Ramos, Conductor

Stephen Coker, Conductor

November 20-23

#### **Fall Dance Concert**

Directed by Liz Maxwell

November 24 and 25

#### **Chapman University Singers:**

#### **Britten's War Requiem**

James Conlon, Conductor

### december

December 6 and 7

#### **50th Annual Holiday Wassail**

#### **Banquet and Concert**

## CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

### *Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music*

*presents the*

## Chapman Percussion Ensemble

Nick Terry, *director*

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November 22, 2013 ■ 8:00 P.M.

Salmon Recital Hall

Program

<i>Ionisation</i> , 1931	Edgard Varese (1883–1965)
<i>Proposal</i> , 1990 from <i>Intentions: for percussion trio</i>	Eugene Novotney  (b. 1960)
<i>Ta &amp; Clap</i> , 2005	Nico Muhly (b. 1981)

-Intermission-

<i>Quartz City</i> , 1997	David Johnson (b.1948)
Brietta Greger, vibraphone	
<i>Splendid Wood</i> , 2006	Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962)
<i>Ionisation</i> (reprise)	Edgard Varese

Chapman Percussion Ensemble

Christopher Bright  
Cole Castorina  
Christina Cheon  
Jordan Curcuruto  
Katie Eikam  
Brietta Greger  
Joy Liu  
Storm Marquis  
Nolan Petrehn  
Margaret Telles

Program Notes

At age 32, in 1915 Edgard Varese arrived in New York City on what was initially conceived as an exploratory expedition across the Atlantic. Leaving Europe, whose musical identity was at this time in the midst of a profound evolution beyond tonal music, an energized Varese held no less ambition than to transform the most basic elements of musical experience. An uncompromising futurist, Varese dedicated his life’s work toward composing radical new works, advocating for the liberation of timbre, and for the inclusion (the necessity really) of electronic sounds:

“Our musical alphabet must be enriched. We also need new instruments very badly. . . . Musicians should take up this question in deep earnest with the help of machinery specialists. I have always felt the need for new mediums of expression in my work. I refuse to submit myself only to sounds that have already been heard. What I am looking for are new technical mediums which can lend themselves to every expression of thought and can keep up with thought.

In 1926 Varese’s orchestral tone poem *Amériques* was completed, and introduced its listeners to one of the largest, and noisiest percussion sections ever heard. A dozen percussionists, playing mostly non-pitched instruments including anvils, shakers, cymbals, gongs, a lion’s roar, and the spinning whirling cry of sirens (inspiration compliments of the New York City fire department). Noise and volume aside, the grandness of this work could not be denied, and Varese’s commitment to advancing the musical language only strengthened. In 1929 he began work on *Ionisation*, one of the first classical compositions in history to rely nearly exclusively on non-pitched sound. Of the three-dozen instruments employed in the piece, only three are in equal-temperment (the piano’s full-arm clusters of pitches, tubular bells, and glockenspiel), and they enter only in the final coda of this seven-minute work. (NT)

*Intentions* is a set of four unique etudes that focus on smaller percussion instruments most commonly referred to as *orchestral accessories*, and includes such instruments as triangle, tambourine, cymbals, and bass drum. In *Proposal*, three tambourine players explore the full palette of colors and sounds, including hand “pops”, finger rolls, and a combined knee/fist technique. Compositionally, the three players share a simple motive that is subjected to imitation and rhythmically offset. The resulting effect creates a complex and hard-driving groove. Outside of a Baptist praise band, *Proposal* is likely the most efficient and enjoyable way for one to develop their tambourine chops. (NT)

Ta-ing and Clapping is a method of teaching rhythms wherein all beats are accounted for, resulting in a fully-rendered moto perpetuo that only implies empty spaces naturally found in a rhythmic pattern. In *Ta & Clap*, scored for percussion quartet, I wrote dense marimba music and then subjected this music to several processes of subtraction, resulting in a

## Program Notes

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rhythmic cycle that is sometimes presented in its entirety, sometimes filled with holes, and sometimes completely rendered out such that there are no holes at all. Although there is a lot of math at work, Ta & Clap is meant to be fun to play and challenging to learn. It is scored for 2 marimbas and any number of assorted percussion instruments at the discretion of the performers. Ta and Clap should be, however, consistently energetic, forceful, and severe. (Nico Muhly)

Author Mike Davis' *City of Quartz* is an exhaustive and critical accounting of Los Angeles' history from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century. David Johnson's *Quartz City* is a direct reference to Davis' book, as well as the composer's own musical impressions of L.A. In the music, we hear the sounds of cool West coast jazz, the din of freeway traffic, and a stroll through China town. (NT)

"Splendid Wood" is a joyous celebration of the sound of wood, one of nature's most basic materials, a part of all sorts of things in our world, but used most thrillingly and gloriously in instruments. Wood is the material that gives the marimba its unique sound, with a "round" sort of attack and a tone that blossoms out. This work reflects the evolving patterns inside a piece of wood, always shifting, and yet every part is related and contributes to the magnificence of the whole. This is a celebration of the splendor of the marimba. This work was commissioned in 2006 by Bradford and Dorothea Endicott, for Frank Epstein and the New England Conservatory Percussion Ensemble. (Jennifer Higdon)

## Composer Biographies

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**Edgard Varese** is recognized as an important innovator in percussion composition and orchestration. Dissatisfied with the conservative bent of his early musical training, he finally found encouragement in Berlin from people such as Richard Strauss, only to have his composing and conducting career interrupted by World War I. He moved to the United States after a stint in the French Army and there became a champion of contemporary music through his conducting of new-music concerts, composing, and writing. Varese's orchestration eventually utilized large percussion sections and was often very rhythmic in nature, while at the same time taking advantage of unique and startling timbres. He is best known among percussionists for his 1931 composition "Ionization," which is one of the earliest percussion ensembles and most important pieces in the percussion repertoire. (Percussive Arts Society)

As a percussionist and composer, **Eugene Novotney** has performed and presented lectures and master classes in North America, South America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia, and Africa. He is recognized internationally as a composer of contemporary percussion music, and his compositions are widely performed as standards of the literature. His snare drum composition, A Minute of News (The Noble Snare), has been used as the test piece for numerous snare drum competitions, including the Concours International de Caisse Claire - Conservatoire National de Region de Paris (2004 & 2007; Paris, France), the VIII Jornadas Internacionales de Percussion de Ribarroja del Turia (2006; Valencia, Spain), the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Modern Snare Drum Competition (2008; Atlanta, Georgia), the Concorso Internazionale per Strumenti a Percussione e Batteria (2009; Fermo, Italy), and others.

Dr. Novotney has also conducted research trips to Xian, Shanghai & Beijing, China, Ubud & Blabatu, Bali, Accra & Kokrobite, Ghana, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, resulting in numerous transcriptions, arrangements, and analytical studies. He has performed on several occasions in Trinidad's National Panorama Competition, and he has regularly served as an adjudicator for Pan Trinbago, the national governing body for the advancement of steelband music in Trinidad & Tobago. He was a member of the adjudication panel of Trinidad's World Steelband Festivals in 1998, 2000, and 2008 held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, and also was an adjudicator for Trinidad's World Steelband Festival 2005 held in Madison Square Garden, New York, NY. In addition, he was a member of the adjudication panel of the 2000 European Steelband Festival held in Paris, France, and the adjudication panel for the 2005 Trinidad National Schools Music Festival held in Port-of-Spain.

He is Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at California State University-Humboldt, and is the founder and coordinator of the 'Percussion in World Music' program for the California State University Summer Arts Program. In 2006, Dr. Novotney was awarded the Wang Family Excellence Award by the California State University Board of

# Composer Biographies

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Trustees, a prestigious award that recognizes and celebrates California State faculty who, through extraordinary commitment and dedication, have distinguished themselves through exemplary contributions and achievements in their academic disciplines. Eugene Novotney currently serves as a member of the Board of Director’s of the Percussive Arts Society, and also, as the Chairman of the Percussive Arts Society New Music/Research Committee. His recordings have been released on the Bembe, Delos, SANCHI, Pogo, Rituals and Earthbeat (Rhino) labels, and his compositions are available through Smith Publications

**Nico Muhly** has composed a wide scope of work for ensembles, soloists and organizations including the American Ballet Theater, American Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Carnegie Hall, Chicago Symphony, percussionist Colin Currie, countertenor Iestyn Davies, pianist Simone Dinnerstein, violinist Hilary Hahn, Gotham Chamber Opera, designer/illustrator Maira Kalman, choreographer Benjamin Millepied, Music-Theatre Group, New York City Ballet, New York Philharmonic, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Paris Opéra Ballet, soprano Jessica Rivera, The Royal Ballet, Saint Thomas Church in New York City, Seattle Symphony, and artist Conrad Shawcross. Muhly has also lent his skills as performer, arranger and conductor to Antony and the Johnsons, Bonnie “Prince” Billy, Doveman, Grizzly Bear, Jónsi of the band Sigur Rós, and Usher.

In 2011, Muhly’s first full-scale opera, Two Boys, was commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center Theater and the English National Opera. Two Boys, which—with a libretto by Craig Lucas and direction by Bartlett Sher—chronicles the real-life police investigation of an online relationship and ensuing tragedy, premiered in London in spring 2012. A chamber opera, commissioned by the Opera Company of Philadelphia, Music Theatre Group, and the Gotham Chamber Opera premiered in New York in fall 2012.

Recently, the Los Angeles Master Chorale and Decca released an entire disc of Muhly’s choral music, A Good Understanding. The Aurora Orchestra recorded his Seeing is Believing, and with choreographer Stephen Petronio, Muhly created the evening-length I Drink the Air Before Me , both of which were also released on Decca. Among Muhly’s most frequent collaborators are his colleagues at Bedroom Community, an artist-run label headed by Icelandic musician Valgeir Sigurðsson. Bedroom Community was inaugurated in 2007 with the release of Muhly’s first album, Speaks Volumes. Since then, Muhly has released a second album, Mothertongue, and worked closely with labelmates Sigurðsson, Ben Frost, and Sam Amidon on their respective solo releases. In 2012, Bedroom Community released Muhly’s three-part Drones & Music, in collaboration with pianist Bruce Brubaker, violinist Pekka Kuusisto, and violist Nadia Sirota. Muhly’s film credits include scores for Joshua (2007), Margaret (2009) and Best Picture nominee The Reader (2008); all have been recorded and released commercially.

Born in Vermont in 1981 and raised in Providence, Rhode Island, Muhly graduated from

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# Composer Biographies

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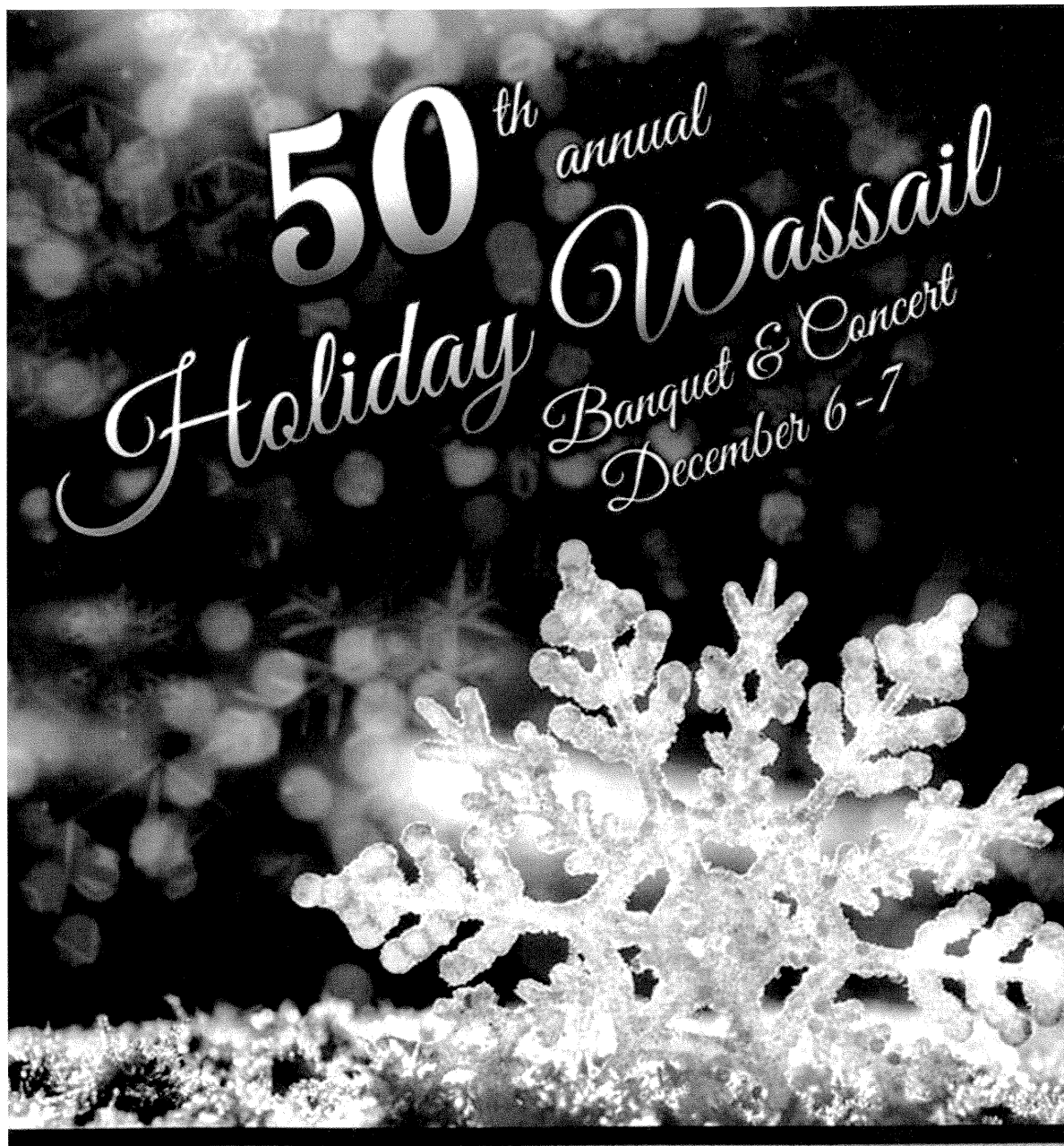
Columbia University with a degree in English Literature. In 2004, he received a Masters in Music from the Juilliard School, where he studied under Christopher Rouse and John Corigliano. From his sophomore year of college, worked for Philip Glass as a MIDI programmer and editor for six years.

**David Johnson** coordinates the percussion program at the California Institute of the Arts where he has been teaching since 1991. He plays marimba with Lian Records recording artists, the Lian Ensemble, and Dark Wing. He is the percussionist with the chamber ensemble XTET and plays in PARTCH, a chamber group dedicated to performing the music of Harry Partch.

He has worked directly with composers as diverse as Pierre Boulez and John Zorn. He plays vibraphone and marimba with the Vinny Golia Large Ensemble the Kim Richmond Jazz Orchestra, and pops/classical pianist veteran Roger Williams. He has played mallets and percussion with Yusef Lateef, Mel Torme, Dave Brubeck, Maureen McGovern, Wadada Leo Smith, and on movie soundtracks such as Spider Man 3 and The Matrix. He has performed with the L.A. Philharmonic, the Pacific Symphony, and the L.A. Master Chorale and was a member of the historic Blackearth Percussion Group in the 1970s. He has been recorded on many independent record labels including CRI, Opus One, Seabreeze, Nine Winds, New Albion, Lian Records, and New World Records. His own compositions for marimba, vibraphone and percussion are played around the world and are handled by Marimba Productions Inc.

Pulitzer-prize winner **Jennifer Higdon** (b. Brooklyn, NY, December 31, 1962) started late in music, teaching herself to play flute at the age of 15 and then beginning formal musical studies at 18, with an even later start in composition at the age of 21. Despite this late start, Higdon has become a major figure in contemporary classical music and makes her living from commissions, completing between 5-10 pieces a year. These works represent a range of genres, from orchestral to chamber and from choral and vocal to wind ensemble. Hailed by the Washington Post as "a savvy, sensitive composer with a keen ear, an innate sense of form and a generous dash of pure esprit," the League of American Orchestras reports that she is one of America's most frequently performed composers.

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# 50<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday Wassail Banquet & Concert December 6-7

December 6 & 7, 2013 6pm dinner, 8pm concert  
Reception & Dinner: Fish Interfaith Center  
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\$75 per person: includes reception, dinner, and concert.

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