MCCORMICK PERCUSSION GROUP

SOLI FOR SOPRANO WITH PERCUSSION ORCHESTRA

ROBERT MCCORMICK  CONDUCTOR
JAMIE JORDAN  SOPRANO

MATT BARBER  |  BALJINDER SINGH SEKHON, II  |  JEAN BARRAQUÉ
To the Roaring Wind is a song cycle on four poems from the collection Harmonium by the great American poet, Wallace Stevens (1879-1955). Stevens’s poetry is deeply moving and intricately meaningful; a simple recitation of these poems could qualify as a musical performance, due to his care with the rhythm and sonic qualities of his words. This presented me with a great compositional challenge, since added music can easily subvert the balance of timing and sound a poet worked so hard to achieve. The particular poems I selected are related in their use of wind as an image or a symbol, but just as important to me was Stevens’s preoccupation in Harmonium with themes of conflict between individuality and society, and the purpose and potential of poetry and art in American life.

The piece opens with a prelude composed for triangles and snare drums, during which the soloist recites To the Roaring Wind, the poem after which I named the whole composition. It is a poem about writing poetry—a kind of “prayer” to an oracle—and is the final poem of Harmonium. Between each of the songs is a short interlude, in which the percussionists all improvise according to a set of harmonic rules. Players situated offstage join the four onstage players in these improvisations. The focus of the piece thus moves to and from the soloist as the piece progresses.

Valley Candle

The first song is Valley Candle, which sets a very abstract, austere, and arcane poem. There are several possible interpretations of this poem, which range from a description of mortality to an allegory representing the human mind. I am struck with the stark boundary between the candle and the night nature surrounding it. I decided to emphasize the abstract nature of the poetry, and composed music for it as though it were a ritualistic celebration of a religious text from a culture we know very little about. Of special interest is a change from pitched to non-pitched percussion instruments when the poem moves from words about the candle itself to words about its image, as though the non-pitched sounds were the image of the previous pitched sounds.

Fabliau of Florida

Fabliau of Florida is the second song. I chose this poem for its sensuality of sound and imagery in contrast to the first song, but I also could not pass up the opportunity to set a poem about Florida for musicians in Tampa. As is typical for Stevens, this poem deals with boundaries: between shore and water in the imagery, but at the symbolic level between individual musings and the reality of the world around. The poem evinces a sense of childlike wonder at the world in a storybook fashion; each short stanza has a different, ephemeral emotional quality. I sought to reflect this in the music by choosing sounds in the voice and percussion according to the complexity of the sentiment being expressed at the moment. The very last stanza speaks of an eternal “droning of the surf,” and this is expressed in the music with a drone on low-F and middle-C throughout the whole song.

Ploughing on Sunday

Ploughing on Sunday is a scherzo-like song which sets a witty and joyful poem. The poem moves from a light and almost mechanical description of the birds and weather on a farm to a personal, jubilant, but somewhat menacing challenge from the farmer to the rest of the world. The farmer personage descends like an apparition to flaunt societal norms, and then disappears suddenly with the return of the birds and the weather. I asked the percussionists to play on unusual instruments and make sounds which evoke the earthy and comedic quality of the words.
TO THE ROARING WIND

The composition ends with a reprise of To the Roaring Wind, this time as a song. In this poem, Stevens calls the wind “Vocalissimus” – the greatest voice. When viewed in light of themes explored elsewhere in Harmonium, where religion is often portrayed as ultimately empty attempt to understand humans’ relation to their surrounding world, the “Vocalissimus” of this poem could be nature itself interpreted as an oracle from which a poet might seek inspiration. In my setting, I have imagined the poem as a “prayer” which is repeated three times, each time with more urgency and intensity as it continues to go unanswered. At the end of this spell of longing the soloist simply finds her voice and begins to vocalize ecstatically, without words. The piece ends with the same spoken words as the prelude – “Speak it!” – a final answer to this prayer and to all of the preceding poems in Harmonium, and one which affirms individual freedom and the necessity of poetic expression.

I would like to thank Robert McCormick and Jamie Jordan for commissioning this piece for the present recording, and for their dedication to contemporary music. I must also thank Baljinder Sekhon for his suggestions on composing for percussion, and his general encouragement and support.

- Matt Barber

TWELVE VIRTUES | BALJINDER SINGH SEKHON, II

Scored for 12 percussionists and soprano voice, Twelve Virtues is a ritualistic work that explores traditional human values in a modern light. The work begins with the singer alone on the stage, surrounded by a circle of percussion instruments, with the percussionists offstage. As the work progresses, the percussionists process to the stage in pairs, while carrying a variety of small instruments, and slowly surround the singer while delivering small metallophones to her. The twelve sections of this piece are connected in a narrative that uses the percussionists as an extension or alter ego of the singer. I composed the text specifically for this piece and the general statements, words, and concepts were inspired by a variety of existing writings. These include the Tao Te Ching, The Bible, the Teachings of Rumi, Catechism of the Catholic Church, a variety of dictionaries and thesauruses, etc. Although it could, this work is not designed to take a religious, or even spiritual, stance. My aim was to put this together in a way that would allow personal interpretation of the message. At the most basic level, Twelve Virtues is a work that explores values that are important to me, and are likely important to everyone who strives to treat themselves and those around them with the utmost care. I would like to offer a special thanks for Bob McCormick, Jamie Jordan, and the USF percussionists for their commitment and dedication while preparing this premiere.

- Baljinder Singh Sekhon, II

CHANT APRÈS CHANT | JEAN BARRAQUÉ

Jean Barraqué composed Chant après chant (“Song after song”) in 1966 to fulfill a commission from Les Percussions de Strasbourg, a percussion sextet formed in 1962 for the Strasbourg Festival; it would be the only composition he wrote for commission. The instrumentation includes a solo soprano and piano in addition to a battery of six percussionists. This limited performances by the Strasbourg ensemble, who had wanted a piece for percussion alone. Barraqué originally envisioned working the soprano and piano parts into the percussion ensemble to create a version restricted to percussion only, but he abandoned those plans early in the attempt. Subsequent performances have been limited by both the instrumentation and the technical demands of the work. While the soprano and piano parts require virtuosity, the multi-percussion setup requires intense concentration and dedication to logistic organization. Each of the six percussionists plays one or more pitched mallet instruments, a set
of tuned bass Thai gongs, and an array of bells, resonating metallophones, drums, and secco wood instruments.

In *Chant après chant* and most of his other compositions, Barraqué employs a liberal form of serialism which he devised after his study in Messiaen’s class. He designed these techniques in part to situate his work between the sparse and explicit serialism of Webern and the more radical and difficult serialism being developed by other Messiaen students, most notably Pierre Boulez. In a program note for the premiere of *Chant après chant* he wrote:

“The choice of percussion instruments was inspired by … the possibilities, sometimes rich but often restrained, that the use of percussion instruments implies. Their use influences how the piece is written: the writing is often directed, inflected, in response to imperatives that come purely from the sound and that determine the fluctuation in the formal commentary. A ‘family’ of timbres considered as real motive agents (with at the extremes the instruments of long resonance opposed to instruments of brief attack, and at the centre instruments of multiple possibilities) allows, despite the closeness of determined and undetermined sounds, an articulation of a serial nature on the polyphonic plane.

The score, crossed by a series of varied rhythmic cells, mixes or juxtaposes, through its seventeen parts, periods that are expositions, variations, commentaries, reconsiderations, and foreshadowings.”

Barraqué’s brief note offers the listener an ideal way to approach and make sense of this long, complex piece. He is concerned throughout with stark opposites which are unified by a middleground between the extremes. His note touches on this theme in its mention of long resonance – from the gongs, cymbals, and other metals – in opposition to sounds of brief attack and decay – the claves, temple blocks, and other woods. Unifying this opposition are the intervening drums and keyboard percussion – the “instruments of multiple possibilities.” Similarly, there are instruments with very clear pitch: the soprano and piano especially, as well as the mallet instruments, and at the other extreme the cymbals, wood sounds and other unpitched instruments which can only be arranged loosely from high to low. The spectrum from pitched to unpitched – the composer’s “determined and undetermined sounds” – is filled out by the tuned gongs, which can act as an intermediary between the unpitched gongs and cymbals at one extreme and the clearly pitched vibraphones at the other. This recurring theme of “unified opposites” may be heard explicitly in the unfolding of the piece as well, in its juxtaposition of frenzied activity and long periods of intense silence, sudden changes of dynamic from loud to soft, piercing shrikes and low groans, and thick and sparse textures. When these elements combine with the fragmented French of Barraqué’s text setting and the almost constant fluctuation in tempo, the result is a single, constant cycle of development; the “seventeen parts” mentioned in Barraqué’s note are not noted anywhere in the score or text and likely function more as a composer’s scaffold than as a formal device meant to direct the listener’s aural experience.

These oppositions form a musical dialogue in a way which mirrors both the form and content of the text of *Chant après chant*. The text is an excerpt from Austrian author Hermann Broch’s novel *The Death of Virgil*, a work which commanded nearly all of Barraqué’s mature creative efforts. *The Death of Virgil* is an exploration of Virgil’s final hours, written in a stream of consciousness reminiscent of James Joyce, illustrating Virgil’s heightened perceptive faculties and his spiritual and artistic revelations he experiences as he nears death. Barraqué notes that the excerpt comes from a part of the novel which “relates the night-time dread that compels a creator – on the threshold of death – to destroy his own work,” speaking here of Virgil’s demand that his epic work, the *Aeneid*, be destroyed; interspersed between individual words and phrases of the Broch excerpt is text by the composer himself, which serve as commentary on, development of, and challenges to the ideas in the original.
The text – the composer in dialogue with the author – is, like the music, concerned with oppositions: creation and destruction, childhood and death, silence and resonance, impending death imparting both dread and transcendent vision, and the Platonic notion of ideal forms opposed to imperfect “images” thereof. Virgil comes to believe that human creative action only weakly reflects the “pre-echo of the ultimate completion,” – the perfect conception of a work of art always precedes, both temporally and metaphysically, its imperfect creation. The very first line, “Something that was almost a material image,” illustrates something in the process of coming into being, and which will degrade from its perfect conceptual pre-existence as it gradually emerges into reality as a completed work. This slow process of coming into existence is reflected in the long unfolding of the text and the music over time.

There is little doubt that Barraqué was also attracted to this passage of Broch’s work for its evocation of specifically musical and aural imagery. The original text speaks of “terrestrial resonance,” “seas of silences,” and “the melodic invisibility where all poetry takes root,” together invoking the world of all possible sounds. Broch’s Virgil imagines sound as “earthly” – clearly existing fully formed in the world, and silence as a “sea” – a preexistent, formless liquid from which sound arises. Virgil further imagines an “image of a child’s voice” singing “song after song,” a childlike creation in direct contradistinction to Virgil’s own destructive intentions at the end of life. To this complex symbolism Barraqué adds his own commentary: he calls forth the Demiurge, a Platonic and Gnostic creator-deity who was believed to have formed the present world in its imperfection. But the Demiurge is both “creator and demon,” – respectively benevolent and malevolent in Platonic and Gnostic depictions – connoting a connection between creation and destruction.

Throughout Chant après chant the piano usually acts as an intermediary between the melodic soprano and the percussion ensemble; this is yet another mediated opposition. The soprano, for her part, moves through the text very slowly, sometimes one phrase or one word at a time. This occasionally makes for a strange inversion of the normal soloist/ensemble dynamic: rather than composing the percussion music to accompany the voice, it is as though Barraqué is using the vocalized text – and sometimes vocalization without words – to comment upon the activity of the percussion ensemble. On the other hand, the soprano may be perceived as a definite protagonist – a spirit in profound disquiet. Barraqué may have added the Demiurge to the text to give the soprano a vivid personal adversary to struggle against, even as she nears his enlightened state. In the end the laughing Demiurge fades away into the dream world, his “revolt” stilled. The final word, “hushed,” brings the composition to a sudden, striking close, made only more stunning by the lack of a double bar. Barraqué has exhausted all the material for this piece – it is now fully materialized in the world – and this ending is clearly meant to imply the continuation of his Death of Virgil cycle. But Chant après chant would be the final completed installment in the cycle, Barraqué’s death leaving its final bar hanging forever.

- Jessyca Rose and Matt Barber
TO THE ROARING WIND
TEXT BY WALLACE STEVENS

VALLEY CANDLE
My candle burned alone in an immense valley.
Beams of the huge night converged upon it,
Until the wind blew.
Then beams of the huge night
Converged upon its image,
Until the wind blew.

FABLIAU OF FLORIDA
Barque of phosphor
On the palmy beach,
Move outward into heaven,
Into the alabasters
And night blues.

Foam and cloud are one.
Sultry moon-monsters
Are dissolving.

Fill your black hull
With white moonlight.
There will never be an end
To this droning of the surf.

PLOUGHING ON SUNDAY
The white cock’s tail
Tosses in the wind.
The turkey-cock’s tail
Glitters in the sun.

Water in the fields.
The wind pours down.
The feathers flare
And bluster in the wind.

Remus, blow your horn!
I’m ploughing on Sunday,
Ploughing North America.
Blow your horn!

Tum-ti-tum,
Ti-tum-tum-tum!
The turkey-cock’s tail
Spreads to the Sun.

The white cock’s tail
Streams to the moon.
Water in the fields.
The wind pours down.

TO THE ROARING WIND
What syllable are you seeking,
Vocalissimus,
In the distances of sleep?
Speak it.
TWELVE VIRTUES
TEXT BY BALJINDER SINGH SEKHON, II

[perfection]
Complete.
Missing every crack.
Nothing here lasts.
This makes nothing complete.
Complete.
Nothing missing here.
Every last crack makes this complete.

[humility]
Grounded. Grounded.
Grounded from the earth.
This soil keeps me.
There are echoes in me…
I am empty.
Within my boundary,
I am so empty.
Emptiness unearthed in me.
My begging bowl is humility.
Low. Low. Low.
Murder my ego. go. go.
I am no good.

[mortification]
Assault!
Destroy!
Erase.
Snuff! Snuff!! Snuff!!! Sssssssssssssssnuff!
Sssssssssslaughter!
Sssssssssslay!
Delete.
Execute.
Strengthen will.
Kill.
End.

[patience]
Stop.
Endure your suffering.
Wait.
Deliver me from haste.
Stop.
Show control.
Wait.
Be patient.

[meekness]
Submit.
Give up.
I am aware.
I’ll remain silent.
Step on me
you will see
what makes me

[obedience]
Command.
Obey.
In the spirit of love,
Take a vow.
Submit right now,
In the spirit of faith.
Command.
Obey.
Make a ssssssssssssound
Like thisssssssssssssssssssssss.

[simplicity]
ain’t no money ‘round here worth more than me.

[diligence]
Never stop.
Nonstop, Nonstop, Nonstop,
Ethic.
Lead yourself to freedom.

[prayer]
I’m dead.
I am grateful.
I’m dying.
All my memories are gone.
I’m insane.
My thoughts have been misplaced.
I’m in pain.
I’m seeking help.

what makes me happy.
Can you hear me?

[confidence]

You will protect me.
This is a state of certainty.
assurance
  stand up
  boldness
  cool
courage
determination
  faith in ones self
  fearlessness
  firmness
  spirit
  sureness
tenacity
Heart. Heart. Heart.
Strong. Strong. Strong.

[charity]

I pour myself out.
Abolish my arms and speak the truth.
When you arrive,
  bring no rewards.
Carry no gifts my way.
Bring no tokens.
Carry yourself to me.
I am unarmed.
You can have any part of me.

[union]

I am connected to everything.
We’re gathering here.
You are connected to this union.
End, when I say.
End.
CHANT APRÈS CHANT

TEXT BY HERMANN BROCH
Translation from German by Albert Kohn
Barraqué’s additions are in italics
Words in brackets are part of the text but not set in the composition

Quelque chose était presque une image matérielle
La ..... image ..... fenêtre
MAIS
DEHORS
presque image
(bouche fermée et variante)
La fenêtre découpée dans le clair de lune–
Pas un instant qui puisse devenir un présent figuratif–
Impossibles les moments, ces moments traversés par
L’ÉCLAIR
« se transmuait »
Mais,
il ne faut pas changer les visages transparents.....
..... et humains
..... d’une forme
« Terreur »
« se transmuait »
Et le geste INACCOMPLI
Ah Il le faut
C’était pour l’oreille une
Résonance Seconde

MAIS il faut transparaitre dans l’inaccompli du visage–
« Au delà de la perception »
Oh La transparence de l’inaccompli–
[Ah Il se pouvait]
accouplés dans une étrange unité
où il existait
Un (pré écho de l’ultime achèvement)
Il prétait l’oreille à l’inaudible
Il ne flottait plus que l’image de la voix enfantine

( ..... MERS DE SILENCES ..... )
Résonance terrestre
LE Démiurge devint acceptable et admis–
Les notes résument-elles encore?
Apparence
Ni jours, ni nuits
Seule la « Mer DE SILENCES »
..... Chant après Chant ..... 
Débris inconsiderés, poignards de l’interrogation?
Mai
Transparence
Mer(s) de/et Silence
Dans l’invisibilité mélodique ou prend racine toute poésie.

« PAS ENCORE ET DÉJÀ »
l’espace d’argent ..... solitude nocturne
pas encore et déjà
Il marche le Démiurge,
créateur et démon
qui
submerge le Dome
Et, à travers, circule l’étincellement du rêve, la révolte
et l’abstention du mot–
Il marche à travers
LE DOME DU RÊVE

..... RIT ..... DANS LE Rêve, personne ne rit quand il n’y a pas
d’issue ..... oserait ..... rire
révolte
s’était tue
Something was almost a material image
The ..... image ..... window
BUT
OUTSIDE

almost image
(mouth closed and variant)

The window silhouetted in the moonlight–
Not an instant that could become a figurative present–
Impossible the moments, these moments traversed by

LIGHTNING
« past transmutation »
But there must be a shining through in the imperfect of the countenance–
But,
not a changing of transparent countenances.....

..... and human ones
..... of one form

« Terror »
« past transmutation »

And the IMPERFECT gesture

Ah it has to
It was to the ear a

Second Resonance

« Beyond perception »

Oh The transparency of the imperfect–
(Ah it could have been)
joined in a strange unity

yes it existed

A (pre-echo of the ultimate termination)

It listened to the inaudible

Nothing floated but the image of the childlike voice
(..... SEAS OF SILENCES .....)

Terrestrial resonance

THE demiurge became acceptable and admitted-

Have the notes resumed again?

Appearance

Neither days, nor nights

Only the « Sea of SILENCES »

..... Song after Song ..... 

Thoughtless fragments, daggers of interrogation?

But

Transparency

Sea(s) of/and Silence

In the melodic invisibility where all poetry takes root.
« NOT YET AND ALREADY »

the silver space ..... 
nocturnal solitude 

not yet and already 

The demiurge marches, 

creator and demon 

who 

submerges the Dome 

And, across, the sparkling of the dream circles 

the revolt 

and the abstention of the word–

He marches across 

THE DOME OF THE DREAM 

..... LAUGHS ..... IN THE Dream, no one laughs when there is no 

exit ..... dared ..... to laugh 

revolt 

hushed.
THE MCCORMICK PERCUSSION GROUP

The McCormick Percussion Group was formed to explore and perform significant musical chamber works featuring percussion, but often with instruments outside of the percussion family. Among the most recorded ensembles of the genre, the ensemble has recorded over two dozen albums including many on the Ravello label. In order to assure the composers’ musical intentions, many of the recordings are composer supervised. Under the direction of Robert McCormick, the McCormick Percussion Group makes its home at the University of South Florida in Tampa. They regularly record off campus at the Springs Theatre in Tampa. (www.SpringsTheatre.com). The Springs Theatre Recording Studio opened in 1938 as a movie theatre and was later converted into a recording studio specializing in audio and video recording, production, mastering, editing, mixing and motion picture sound track scoring. The 7000 plus square foot theatre has a beautiful and natural ambience and a wonderful collection of microphones and recording equipment. The McCormick Percussion groups records with Zildjian Cymbals, Grover Pro Percussion and Encore Mallets.

Other recordings of Robert McCormick published by Ravello Records:

CONCERTI FOR PIANO WITH PERCUSSION ORCHESTRA (RR7862) featuring pianist Ji Hyun Kim
(works by Mel Mobley, Igor Santos, David Gillingham and David Noon)

CONCERTI FOR STRINGS WITH PERCUSSION ORCHESTRA (RR7820) featuring outstanding guest performers Carolyn Stuart, violin; John Graham, viola; Dee Moses, bass, Haiqiong Deng, zheng
(works by Baljinder Sekhon, David Liptak, Michael Sidney Timpson and Daniel Adams)

MCDUO (RR7814) featuring Kim McCormick flute and Robert McCormick percussion (works by Daniel Adams, James Lewis, Paul Reller, Howard Buss, Chihchun Chi-sun Lee, and Hugo Weisgall)

THE MUSIC OF GUI SOOK LEE (RR7810) featuring the outstanding young Korean composer in a program of her works for percussion ensemble.

MUSIC FOR KEYBOARD PERCUSSIONS (RR7804) works by Sven David Sandstrom, Chihchun Lee, Edward Jay Miller, Stuart Saunders Smith, Daniel Adams and Michael Sydney Timpson.

ROBERT MCCORMICK

Robert McCormick is currently Professor of Music at the University of South Florida. He is a former member of the Harry Partch Ensemble and served as principal percussionist with the Florida Orchestra for twenty seasons. Robert has over published 50 albums to his credit, including many with the internationally recognized McCormick Percussion Group and McCormick Duo (flute/percussion). He has received high critical acclaim in many review journals including Gramophone, Fanfare, American Record Guide, Percussive Notes, The Strad, etc. Robert was the recipient of the 2006 Florida Music Educator of the Year Award; the 2006 Keystone Percussion Composition Grand Prize, the 2010 Jerome Krivanek Distinguished University Teacher Award, and a 2012 Global Music Award for his album titled CONCERTI FOR STRINGS WITH PERCUSSION ORCHESTRA.
BALJINDER SINGH SEKHON, II

Clearly knowing the power of “sonority” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), the music of Baljinder Sekhon is frequently presented around the world. Performances of Sekhon’s music have included those in Thailand, Mexico, Brazil, France, Sweden, Canada, the Netherlands, Taiwan, Norway, China, South Korea, Japan, and across the United States. From works for large ensemble to solo works to electronic music, Sekhon’s works often seek to demonstrate concepts of human values. In February of 2013, Sekhon received his Carnegie Hall debut when the USF Chamber Singers, directed by James Bass, premiered his a cappella choral work *There Are No Words*. His recent orchestral work *The Offering* is a 22-minute, three-movement concerto for saxophone and orchestra that received its premiere by saxophonist Doug O’Connor and the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra in July 2011. Another recent orchestral work, *Ancient Dust*, was premiered at the Cabrillo Festival for Contemporary Music where it was described as “still and mysterious, animated, haunting and peaceful” by the *Epoch Times*. In 2009, Sekhon composed a voice and chamber orchestra work for Grammy-nominated soprano Tony Arnold. Musica Nova premiered the resulting work, *Post*, under the direction of acclaimed conductor Brad Lubman. Additional platforms for the performance of Sekhon’s music have included the Seoul Arts Center, National Orchestra Institute, The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space, the Paris Conservatory, MATA’s Interval Series, New World Symphony’s Musician Forum Series, the World Saxophone Congress, International Viola Congress, Juventas New Music Ensemble, Percussive Arts Society’s International Convention, Bang On a Can Marathon in New York City, and a full concert of his works at John Zorn’s contemporary art space The Stone. “Honest and Energy Packed” (*Austin American-Statesman*), his work *Lou* for solo cello and percussion quartet was recently released by the McCormick Percussion Group on Ravello Records. Additional commercial recordings include the release of *Drifting Seeds* by the Couloir Duo and *Bunker* by Evolution Percussion. Sheet music of Sekhon’s works is available internationally from Keyboard Percussion Publications, Glass Tree Press, Steve Weiss Music, Le Vent Music (Taiwan), and Southern percussion (UK).

Sekhon serves as Visiting Professor of Composition at the University of South Florida and holds a PhD from the Eastman School of Music where he is a three-time recipient of the Howard Hanson Orchestral prize. Additional honors include the Wayne Brewster Barlow Prize, New Music USA’s Composer Assistance Grant, Audio Inversions Prize, Percussive Arts Society Composition Competition, Brian M. Israel Prize, Boehmler Foundation Commission, Met Life Creative Connections Grant from New Music USA, Belle Gitelman Prize, Barbara B. Smith Prize, the Juventas New Music Ensemble, multiple awards from ASCAP including the Morton Gould Young Composer Award (2006), and he was named the FSMTA Commissioned Composer of 2012. His numerous appearances as a percussionist include those at the L.A. Philharmonic’s Green Umbrella Series in Walt Disney Hall, Festival Spazio Musica in Cagliari, Italy, and at the Bang On a Can Marathon in New York City. Sekhon currently resides in Tampa FL with his wife Teresa and their two daughters Izabel and Skyler. www.SekhonMusic.com.
JAMIE JORDAN

Praised for her “alluring clarity” (New York Times), Jamie Jordan is a sought after interpreter of contemporary classical music. She has performed at the Brooklyn Museum for the Brooklyn Philharmonic Chamber Music Series; Bruno Walter Auditorium as a Joy in Singing Finalist; the Detroit Institute of Art with Amphion Percussion; Disney Hall with the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group; The Harvard Club NY; June in Buffalo, Lincoln Center Festival and Miller Theatre with Ensemble Signal; The Liederkranz Foundation; Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art for the Bang on a Can Festival Marathon; Merkin Hall with Mimesis Ensemble; MATA Festival with Talea Ensemble; PASIC with Bob Becker; Shapeshifter Lab, the Stone, and Symphony Space with Encompass Opera Theatre.

Jamie Jordan has been a guest artist at Cornell University, Eastman School of Music, Ithaca College, Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Fredonia, Syracuse University, University of Maryland, University of South Florida, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Unruly Music Festival, and Wisconsin Flute Festival. She has performed in concerts sponsored by Ethos New Music Society, Society for New Music (Syracuse), and as a soloist with Alia Musica Pittsburgh and Southern Tier Symphony. Other performances include one-woman cabaret shows at Rose’s Turn and the role of Romilda (Xerxes) with the Connecticut Early Music Festival.

A passionate music educator, Jamie Jordan has sung on numerous pre-concert lectures for the New York Philharmonic, and worked as a teaching artist and archivist for the orchestra. For eight summers she was a clinician for Summer Sounds Music Festival in Washington. She has taught at Arizona State University, Eastman School of Music, and University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, and public and private schools throughout Michigan and New York.

Jamie Jordan grew up in suburbs of Chicago and Washington, D.C., and earned degrees in jazz studies, opera performance, and music education. jamiejordansings.com
COREY HOLT MERENDA

Corey Holt Merenda has performed and recorded a wide variety of 20th and 21st century piano works, several written specifically for her. She has performed on over two-dozen recordings, both classical and pop. American Record Guide declared her playing “intelligent and athletic” in review of her album, Unmistakably Modern, featuring music for solo piano, piano with electronics and piano with percussion ensemble. As a chamber musician and accompanist she has performed at numerous notable concert halls, including Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall in New York, Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Orchestra Hall in Chicago, and the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing. Merenda served as Vice-President of the Bonk Festival of New Music in Tampa FL and was a core performer at this festival for over 15 years. She has been a member of the Confluences trio (trumpet, trombone, piano) since 2002. Performing with the McCormick Percussion Group is a distinct pleasure for her.

MATT BARBER

Matt Barber (b. 1980 in Denver CO) is a composer, performer, and teacher currently residing in Rochester NY. His music has been performed by the Colorado Symphony, the Juilliard Orchestra, the Ossia New Music Ensemble, Musica Nova, the New York Miniaturist Ensemble, and other ensembles in the US. His composition Interface Chapel for solo contrabass, ensemble, and electronics is featured on a record released by the Open Space label in conjunction with Perspectives of New Music. He was recently commissioned to compose a piece in memoriam Milton Babbitt, his former teacher, for the same label, released in early 2012. In 2007 he was offered the honor of composing a piece for a concert in memoriam Betty Rogers. The resulting piece, Severall Figur’d Atomes, was premiered in November 2007 at Eastman. His piece 3 Orchestral Images was played by the Juilliard Orchestra at Alice Tully Hall and 14 times by the Colorado Symphony Orchestra in 1998 for youth concerts at Boettcher Hall in Denver.

In the last decade he has conducted many modern and contemporary works, including the music of Milton Babbitt, Edgard Varèse, Iannis Xenakis, Donald Martino, Andrew Rudin, Jean-Claude Risset, Henryk Gorecki, Robert Morris, Ramon Souto, Anthony Green, Baljinder Sekhon, Paul Coleman, Robert Pierzak, and many of his own works. He is especially noted for his facility with difficult pieces and pieces with non-standard notation. A dedicated teacher, he was Visiting Instructor of Music at Colgate University from 2009-2011. He completed his undergraduate work in composition at The Juilliard School under the instruction of Milton Babbitt, and is currently a candidate for PhD in composition at the Eastman School of Music, where he has held the Ball Dissertation Fellowship from the University of Rochester, and taught courses in computer music and composition.
JEAN BARRAQUÉ

French composer Jean Barraqué was born in Puteaux, January 17, 1928, and grew up in Paris after his family moved there in 1931. With a musical background in piano and choir, he began study in music theory with Jean Langlais (1907-91) in his teens. In 1948 Barraqué began study with Olivier Messiaen (1908-92). Through the influence of Messiaen and his students, Barraqué rejected his earlier late-romantic idiom and became interested in serialism, a technique he would employ in his mature works. By 1951 he had left Messiaen’s class to work in the electronic studio maintained by Pierre Schaeffer (1910-95), a pioneer of electronic music, where he completed one piece of musique concrète, entitled Etude for tape in 1953.

Through the mid 1950s Barraqué was involved in an intense romantic relationship with the French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault (1926-84), who introduced him to Hermann Broch’s 1945 novel The Death of Virgil in 1955. Broch’s work remained an obsessive interest for both Foucault and Barraqué, and the latter planned an expansive thirteen-work cycle, La Mort de Virgile, deriving from or acting as a commentary upon the novel. He finished only three of the thirteen projected parts of the cycle; these are Le temps restitué (1957/68), ...au-delà du hasard (1958-59), and the present composition Chant après chant (1966).

From 1961 he was involved in a passionate but sometimes difficult relationship with Jeanne Bisilliat, with whom he shared mutual friends. His last decade of work was hindered by an automobile accident, depression, poor health, and alcoholism. He died in Paris in 1973 at 45 years of age. Over the course of his life, Barraqué published only seven compositions.

HERMANN BROCH

Austrian author Hermann Broch was born in Vienna to a Jewish family on November 1, 1886. After maintaining the family textile business, he sold the factory in 1927 at 40 years of age in order to pursue a full-time literary career. When the Nazi party annexed Austria in 1938, Broch was arrested and placed in a concentration camp, where he began his novel, The Death of Virgil. He was eventually released due to the efforts of several friends (including James Joyce). Broch was allowed to emigrate, first to Britain and then to the United States, where he would spend the rest of his life. Broch published The Death of Virgil in 1945, and died in New Haven, Connecticut in 1951 at age 64.
TO THE ROARING WIND | MATT BARBER
Percussionists: Kevin Cross, Amanda DeZee, Beran Harp, Chris Herman, Jeff Temple, Baljinder Sekhon

1 PRELUDE ................................................................. 2:10
2 INTERLUDE I ......................................................... 1:27
3 VALLEY CANDLE ..................................................... 2:01
4 INTERLUDE II ......................................................... 1:20
5 FABLIAU OF FLORIDA ........................................... 6:13
6 INTERLUDE III ....................................................... 1:28
7 PLOUGHING ON SUNDAY ......................................... 2:23
8 INTERLUDE IV ........................................................ 1:15
9 TO THE ROARING WIND ........................................ 3:47

10 TWELVE VIRTURES | BALJINDER SINGH SEKHON, II ..........18:14
Percussionists: Matthew Barber, Alan Bonko, Meghan McManus, Chris Herman, Jeff Temple, Joey Bourdeau, Kevin Cross, Daniel Dau, Amanda DeZee, Jacob Gonzalez, Erik Hagen, Beran Harp, Paul Gavin, Baljinder Sekhon

11 CHANT APRÈS CHANT | JEAN BARRAQUÉ ................. 26:45
Percussionists: Beran Harp, Kevin Cross, Chris Herman, Amanda DeZee, Armando Ayala, Jacob Dike
Solo piano: Corey Holt Merenda

TOTAL TIME 67:05

Special thanks to: The exceptional Springs Theatre Recording Studio. Thank you Matt Barber, Jamie Jordan, Baljinder Sekhon, Corey Merenda, Paul Reller and all performers for their ideas, program notes, suggestions and inspiration. Partial funding of this project was provided by a University of South Florida College of the Arts Summer Provost Grant.

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