

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Department of Music

UW Percussion Ensemble

Spring 2022 Concert

Directed by: Dr. Andrew Wheelock

Guest Directors:

Dr. Andrew Spencer and Carl Dixon

Featuring:

Natrona County High School Percussion Ensemble

Directed by: Sean Weis

Friday
April 15, 2022

BCPA Concert Hall
7:30 p.m.

Program

Vibe-a-licious Dan Moore
NCHS Percussion Ensemble

Sunset Road Bela Fleck
NCHS Percussion Ensemble arr. David Steinquest

Cyclone Jim Caselle

The So-Called Laws of Nature, *part II* David Lang

Extremes Jason Treuting

O'Magnum Mysterium M. Lauridsen
Directed by Dr. Andrew Spencer arr. Andrew Spencer

White Feather John Psathas
(b. 1966)

UW Samba Bateria arr. Carl Dixon
Directed by Carl Dixon

Joined by members of the Laramie High School Percussion Ensemble

Personnel

UWYO Percussion Ensemble	Natrona County High School Percussion Ensemble
Lucas Donato	Jordyn Abegglen
Conor Nolan	Alexander Bryan
Javier Sanchez	Zoe Bryan
Brent Church	Jayden Cronin
Parker Allen	Grace Dailey
Tony Trent	Zechariah Derby
Ethan Walsh	Hailey Elliott
Abi Tharp	Kolton Frick
Taylor Saunders	Kyle Gudger
Bryce Schlachter	Logen Harris
Sean Clark	Brody Haskins,
Logan Otto	Zachary Hawley
Lex Fermilia	Audrina Johnson
Carmyn Buckman	Owen Jones
Miles Lang	Wyatt Jones,
Alicia Stevens	Jonathan A Krum
Shantell Hillius	Fares Leon
Grace Troxell	Maxton McCullough
Trynitee Heath	Mason Napier
Dane Frankhouser	Skylar Neal
	Hudson Nicol
<i>Additional Samba Bateria members:</i>	Tainin Robinett
Tyler Longfellow	Jack Sheets
Sam Parks	Elizabeth Siegrist
Bradley Walgren	Corbin Sisco
Dr. Camille Okpodu	Ashton Spalding
<i>(UWYO A&S Dean)</i>	Gavriel Walker
Emily Gull *	Kai M Wolz
Arran Soule *	
Cole Everett *	
Ethan Hutchison *	
Eric Sieger * (LHS Perc Ens. Director)	
*Laramie High School Percussion Ensemble members	

GUEST CONDUCTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Andrew Spencer



Andrew Spencer is Professor of Percussion at Central Michigan University. An active recitalist and clinician, he has performed as a soloist in the United States, Poland, Japan, Canada, and Costa Rica. In 1999, he released "Slender Beams," a recording that features work by composer Dave Hollinden. Spencer has also premiered works by David Gillingham, Mark Polishook, Samuel Adler, Robert May and Henry Gwiazda among others. Equally experienced in orchestral performance, Dr. Spencer is timpanist with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, and Principal Percussionist for the Midland Orchestra. Additional positions have included timpanist/principal percussionist with the West Michigan Symphony Orchestra, Yakima Symphony Orchestra, Cascade Festival Orchestra, Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Orchestra and Fargo-Moorhead Civic Opera Company. He has performed with the Oregon Symphony, Spokane Symphony, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. In addition, he has performed with numerous chamber ensembles throughout the United States, and plays drum set with the CMU Faculty Jazz Ensemble with

whom he has recorded two CDs, "Caught In The Act" and "Conspiracy Theory".

Dr. Spencer received his bachelor of music and master of music in performance (percussion) and studied with Dr. Terry Applebaum at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. He earned his doctor of musical arts in performance and literature (percussion) from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York where he studied with John Beck. In addition, Eastman granted Dr. Spencer the coveted performer's certificate as a percussion soloist.

"Spencer's energy put the piece in overdrive." - Seattle Post Intelligencer

Carl Dixon

Versatile percussionist Carl Dixon is at home with music spanning multiple genres, continents, and instruments. He can be found performing in concert halls, jazz clubs, dance parties, festivalstages, and street parades.

Carl teaches percussion and directs the Brazilian Bateria and LatinJazz percussion ensembles at the [University of Colorado-Boulder](#). He is the Musical Director of the [Boulder Samba School](#) and Bateria Alegria, a community based Brazilian drumming ensemble. He teaches private lessons in all areas of percussion and has presented workshops at Indiana University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Northern Illinois University, Naropa University, Colorado College, Colorado State University-Pueblo, University of Northern Colorado, the Colorado and Wyoming PAS Days of Percussion, and the California BrazilCamp. In 2022, Carl will serve as guest teacher in residence at the University of Wyoming to start and develop a Brazilian Bateria ensemble. Carl's arrangements of traditional rhythms found in Brazil's samba schools and blocos have been performed by university and community ensembles across the country.



As a drumset player and percussionist, he has performed/recorded with Ginga, Pink Martini, Casuarina, Paula Santoro, Moyses Marques, Alessandro Penezzi, Ronaldo Andrade, Kailin Yong, Jake Schepps, Pat Bianchi, Jeff Jenkins, Dexter Payne, Doug Walter, and nationally touring Broadway musicals. While studying music in Rio de Janeiro, Carl has played with the samba school Salguerio and the bloco Bangalafumenga. Carl's percussion and oud duo with Derek Wright released their debut album *Pairings* in 2020.

Carl is the Principal Percussionist of the Central City Opera and Fort Collins Symphony, percussionist with Opera Colorado, and has performed with the Colorado Symphony, Colorado Ballet, Boulder Philharmonic, Colorado Springs Philharmonic, and Greeley Philharmonic orchestras.

In 2018, Carl founded [Virada Drums](#), a business that imports and distributes authentic quality percussion instruments from Brazil. Virada Drums serves professional percussionists and students, and regularly assists schools in selecting instruments, planning repertoire, and advising ensemble directors.

Carl received a Master of Music degree in percussion performance from the University of Colorado-Boulder, where he studied with Dr. Douglas Walter and Paul Romaine, and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studied with Anthony Di Sanza. Other important teachers include Michael Spiro, Mark Lamson, Jorge Alabe, and Mestre Marcão.

A Wisconsin native, Carl spends his free time in the mountains rock climbing, backcountry skiing, and road biking.

Program Notes

Cyclone (2010) – Jim Casella

Cyclone is an ambitious work for percussion ensemble featuring a quartet of marimbists (sharing two facing instruments) who are accompanied by piano and 7 multipercussionists. The piece was commissioned by Lewis Norfleet, director of the Union High School percussion ensemble from Camas, Washington, to be premiered at their performance at the 2010 Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois.

Cyclone was inspired by events encountered by my close friend Ryan Dahlem and his father John during their expedition to summit Mount Everest in the spring months of 2010. During this time I found myself somewhat obsessed with their journey, fascinated by the determination required and the physical toll high altitudes inflict on these dedicated souls. It's not just a trip to Nepal and up the mountain with a tour guide, but rather months of rigorous training, several weeks of acclimatization and conditioning on numerous climbs to median camps (and back down), and ultimately hoping for an ample window in the weather at the 29,029-foot summit before monsoon season arrives.

During the days leading up to their summit bid, Cyclone Leila was gaining momentum over the Bay of Bengal and threatening weather conditions for Himalayan climbers. It was during this time of optimism and excitement that climbers were conditioning and methodically preparing their bodies for the task of walking to the highest point on earth, unaware that the jet stream could bring conditions rendering their attempt futile. Amid some unusually dangerous conditions that even led their Sherpas to advise against continuing the expedition during their final ascent, Ryan and John prevailed in summiting and descending safely. Above 25,000 feet (known as the "death zone"), climbers are at great risk, even in optimal conditions, so making it back alive despite the storm was a real victory. They were so badly beaten by the weather, exhaustion, and altitude sickness that they are unable to recollect blocks of time during their descent, a time during which 80 percent of the deaths occur. Incidentally, John and Ryan became the oldest father/son team ever to summit Everest.

Without intending to be literal or programmatic, Cyclone primarily consists of two parts. The first part represents the optimism and determination inspired by the goal of climbing the world's highest peak. First and foremost, the marimbas introduce the main device of circular motion by way of quick, repetitive 6-note figures which overlap between the facing marimbists. Frequent echo effects are meant to imply a grandeur and spaciousness to the environment. A driving rhythm and structured melody comprise this section, with perhaps a slight sense of uneasiness to the harmonic structure - hope mixed with some anxiety.

As part two takes over midway through the work, the tonality changes leading to a much more vulnerable and unpredictable energy that doesn't relent. The marimbas generally remain the focal point throughout, but the accompaniment becomes even more active, utilizing a variety of fast-switching and frenetic colors from each multipercussion setup. As the intensity increases toward the final climax, the four marimbists embark on a relentless flurry of contrapuntal 16th-note activity. During this time, they each continually ascend the instruments, volleying with each other's positions, as well as physically running around the instruments as their ascension persists within the circular and violent roundabout.

-Jim Casella

The So-Called Laws of Nature, part II. (2002) – David Lang

I went to college to study science. I was expected to become a doctor, or at the very least a medical researcher, and I spent much of my undergraduate years studying math and chemistry and physics, hanging out with future scientists,

going to their parties, sharing their apartments, eavesdropping on their conversations. I remember a particularly heated discussion about a quote from Wittgenstein: “At the basis of the whole modern view of the world lies the illusion that the so-called laws of nature are the explanation of natural phenomena.” This quote rankled all us future scientists, as it implied that science can’t explain the universe but can only offer mere descriptions of things observed. Over the years it occurred to me that this could be rephrased as a musical problem.

Because music is made of proportions and numbers and formulas and patterns, I always wonder what these numbers actually mean. Do the numbers themselves generate a certain structure, creating the context and the meaning and the form, or are they just the incidental byproducts of other, deeper, more mysterious processes? My piece tries to explore the “meaning” of various processes and formulas. The individual parts are virtually identical – the percussionists play identical patterns throughout, playing unison rhythms on subtly different instruments. Most of these instruments the performers are required to build themselves. Some of the patterns between the players are displaced in time. Some are on instruments which have a kind of incoherence built into their sound. Does the music come out of the patterns or in spite of them? I am not sure which, but I know that this piece is as close to becoming a scientist as I will ever get.

—David Lang

Extremes (2009) – Jason Treuting

With *Extremes*, composer Jason Treuting bypasses traditional music notation altogether, creating a system in which consonants and vowels contained in the six city names of Denver, Helena, Burlington, Brooklyn, Houston, and Cleveland receive either a short or long rhythmic duration (eighth note versus dotted-eighth, respectively). With a steady quarter note pulse shared amongst the four players, entire sections of music are developed in which the six city names are placed in cannon - recall the precise same musical process as Row) Row) Row Your Boat. In other moments, two players perform a series of chords, in 7/8 time, atop a rhythmic ostinato established by the very opening loop of "Denver/ Helena". *Extremes* is part of a larger, evening length work entitled "Imaginary City", composed by Treuting and realized by So Percussion.

White Feather (2019) – John Psathas

The title of this work refers to what is often considered the most common angel feather. I had originally intended to title the work “our ever-loving ghosts.” When I imagine angels, I think of the loved ones I’ve lost, still around me, somehow. Transmitting love and care. Supposedly, a sign our angels are with us is finding a feather. Coming across a feather in your path, or finding one in an unexpected place is thought to be a message from the angels. Specifically, the white feather is thought to be a sign of faith and protection. It can also be an angel telling you that your loved ones are safe and well. It is said our angels are always near us, looking over us and protecting us, yet we very rarely know that they are there. Sometimes, in the midst of our rapidly-paced living, they’ll send us small signs and signals to let us know they’re near, and will always be there for us (until we are “there” for others). These signs can be anything from a subtle flash of light, a rainbow, or an unexpected, sudden feeling of love and warmth within.

-John Psathas

This is the 51st concert in the 2021-2022 UW Music Department Season.
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