

The University of Iowa Electronic Music Studios present
Fall Concert 2014

Lawrence Fritts, Director

Chimespace is a combination of two principal ideas: the ringing of bells and the area in which these sounds are heard. My source material derives from recordings of table bells and handbells that are part of my personal collection. In this composition I explore the relationship between the onset of a bell and its decay and how that sound envelops the listener.

Jonathan Wilson is a second-year doctoral student studying music composition with David Gompper at the University of Iowa. Jonathan received his Master of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees in music composition from Western Illinois University. He has studied with Lawrence Fritts, James Romig, James Caldwell, Paul Paccione, and John Cooper. His compositional process tends to follow a concept-oriented approach, which generates the structural ideas for his works. Jonathan is a member of the Society of Composers, Inc., SEAMUS, the Iowa Composers Forum, and the American Composers Forum.

IC1223 is a sound installation located in the lobby of the Becker Communication Studies Building. The installation explores two different soundscapes in Iowa City; sounds of the day from 1-2 PM, and the very early morning, 2-3 AM. Four computers process gathered field recordings to reveal the many different types of sounds contained in the overall soundscape. Part 1 started before tonight’s concert began, and was a transition from Night to Day. Part 2 will begin immediately after the penultimate piece, and will transition from Day to Night recordings.

Jonah Elrod is a PhD student studying music composition at the University of Iowa. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in music education from the University of Arizona, and a Master of Music degree in theory and composition from the University of New Mexico. Jonah is currently a teaching assistant for music theory, and is an associate director of the University of Iowa Electronic Music Studios. Recently, Jonah has been using algorithmic techniques to generate musical material, which he then manipulates to create his works. He is currently studying composition with David Gompper and Lawrence Fritts.



December 14th, 2014
Becker Communications Building
Room 101, Lecture Hall
7:30 PM

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<i>The Aggressor</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i> Kassia Lisinski, <i>poet</i>	Barry Sharp
<i>Piques and Valleys</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i>	James Naigus
<i>Ominous Groove</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i>	Bernard Short
<i>Samā</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i>	Nima Hamidi
<i>Compulsory Deviations</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i>	Joseph Norman
<i>restoration/alienation</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i>	Jacob Simmons
<i>Odd Combo</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i>	Jonah Hatten
<i>Plunge and Tumble</i>	<i>stereo, fixed media</i>	Paul Duffy
<i>Chimespace</i>	<i>eight-channel, fixed media</i>	Jonathan Wilson
<i>IC1223</i>	<i>sound installation</i>	Jonah Elrod

Odd Combo

This piece uses sounds taken from everyday life as well as long tonal sounds. The sounds were manipulated and arranged to explore rhythmic motifs. The long tones are used to create space for the rhythm to move through.

Jonah Lyddon Hatten is an undergraduate student studying History at the University of Iowa. He graduated from Indianola High School where he was a member of the school orchestra, band, and jazz band. Though he has never formally studied composition, the music of Moondog, John Fahey, MF Doom, Neil Young, and Andrew Bird peaked his interest in the compositional process.

Plunge and Tumble

As a kid, I was very involved with gymnastics. Inherent in any gymnastics event, such as the still rings or floor exercise, is a sequence of movements whose push and pull on the body create a kind of kinesthetic rhythm. To this day, those movements remain an integral part of how I perceive rhythm, tension, and release in music. This piece was created with the idea of a gymnastics routine in mind. The gestures wield momentum in a way that reminds me of a gymnast tumbling on the floor. For example, a gymnast begins in the corner of the floor, sprints toward the center, and throws his or her momentum into a series of twists and turns that conserve the momentum until, say, a final flip. My use of long tones parallels the initial sprint, and the gestures that punctuate the long tones parallel the series of twists, turns, and flips.

Paul Duffy is a graduate student of composition at the University of Iowa. He has studied privately with Craig Weston, Louis Karchin, Josh Levine, David Gompfer, and Lawrence Fritts. His recent works include a choir piece selected for performance at the 2014 Midwest Composers Symposium in Cincinnati and a trio for bass and marimbas being choreographed for the 2015 University of Iowa Department of Dance Faculty/Grad Concert. His current compositional interests include fixed media, the use of algorithmic techniques to create brief gestures, and the construction of acoustic pieces from a single pitch.

Compulsory Deviations is a fixed media piece that comprises sounds exclusively recorded by the composer as source material. The sounds in question were drawn from the guitar and produced using a varying array of techniques and effects. The structure of the piece is derived from three primary sound techniques that undergo sonic transformation ultimately resulting in sound masses: tremolo, trills, and harmonics (natural and artificial). An undercurrent of coloration to these primary techniques involves the use of glissandi and collections of sustained tones whose timbre has been altered.

Joseph Norman is currently working on his PhD at the University of Iowa while study composition with Dr. Lawrence Fritts. He previously obtained his Master's degree in composition at the University of Maryland while studying under Dr. Thomas Delio and Dr. Lawrence Moss, and his undergraduate degree in classical guitar performance and composition at St. Mary's College in Maryland while studying composition under Dr. David Froom and Dr. John Leupold.

restoration/alienation focuses on swells of dynamics and density of texture while exploring contrasting timbres and registers. The building and receding of swells occurs on both a large and a small scale, as pitched and non-pitched elements contrast and combine for an array of textures. The title of this piece alludes to the issue of conflict resolution, an inevitable issue for all those participating in a society. Attempts to resolve conflict often end in one of two ways, depending on the approach and the amount of tact used: the restoration of peaceful relations between individuals or groups of people, or the further alienation of one or more individuals.

Jacob Simmons (b. 1987) is a first year PhD student in composition at the University of Iowa where he currently studies with Lawrence Fritts. He holds a M.M. in composition from Belmont University (Nashville, TN), and a B.M. in composition from Cornerstone University (Grand Rapids, MI). His previous instructors include Bill Pursell, Mark Volker, and David Culross. Jacob has written for a wide variety of vocal and instrumental genres. Jacob’s works have been performed in Michigan, Tennessee, and Iowa.

Program Notes and Composer Biographies

The Aggressor is the opening piece of an original collaborative production entitled *No Armistice*. Through vignettes of dance, music, and poetry, the production examines the psychological effects of fear, particularly that which is experienced in the presence of war. *The Aggressor's* music attempts to embody the trepidation a soldier would experience at the cusp of battle, amplifying the internal chaos and energy that consumes a person’s mind in the threat of violent death. After a sonic digression into the external world, we gradually return to this inner torment, which overwhelms the sufferer at the close of the piece.

American composer **Barry Sharp** received his B.M. in Composition from Murray State University and is currently pursuing his M.A. in Composition at The University of Iowa. His current compositions exploit the gravity of a single note or notes to bring about evocative musical landscapes in which narrative and thematic material arises. Recent performances of Barry's music include the premiere of his second string quartet, *RAW (String Quartet No.2)* (2014), by the JACK Quartet at the University of Iowa; *Spirit Song* (2013) for solo vibraphone in the U.S. and Thailand; and *Sonance and Excursus* (2013) for fixed media, at NSEME 2014, 2014 New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, Vox Novus's 2014 Circuit Bridges Concert, and the 27th Biannual International Electroacoustic Festival at Brooklyn College. Barry's primary teachers in composition have included David Gompper, Lawrence Fritts, Brian Ciach, and Mike D'Ambrosio.

The Aggressor. | Kassia Lisinski

Yes, fear,
I have seen you.
I have been you,
been the raised hackles
of our ancestors,
and set my sights
needle-focus.
tooth sharp. gnashing
broken jaws
into the night,
howling
like an ape,
baring teeth.

I have been that,
been forced far within
through the lock hole
of ancient memory
to the wired old ways
of the trees,
of the desert,
of the water,
of the animal
in my brain.
The shadows
of the aggressor
have poured forth into
my swelling veins.
I remember.
How could I forget.
An eon of mechanized
ease can never erase
this from us.
Violence has been done.

I know how to
tear down.

Piques and Valleys explores the unique nature of sounds as signals of curiosity and attention as well as vessels of subtlety.

James Naigus, currently a DMA candidate in horn at the University of Iowa, is a performer and composer of broadening recognition. He currently studies horn with Jeffrey Agrell, studied horn and composition with Paul Basler at the University of Florida during his masters degree, and while attending the University of Michigan for his undergraduate degree studied with Soren Hermansson, Bryan Kennedy, and Adam Unsworth. Naigus' compositions have been performed throughout the United States and beyond, with enthusiastic reception and rave review. In 2013 he was the Composer-in-Residence at the Southeast Horn Workshop in Richmond, VA. In 2009 he was awarded an honorable mention award in the International Horn Society Composition Contest, selected from 85 entries spread over 16 nations. He is currently published by RM Williams Publishing and Veritas Musica Publishing.

Ominous Groove is a fixed media piece that focuses on the use of normal everyday sounds like a bell ringing or ball hitting the floor. Then these sounds are taken and used to create gestures that make the listener feel like they are in another place and time.

Bernard Short is a first year PhD student studying music composition at the University of Iowa. He was born in Harlem, NY and raised in Far Rockaway Queens, NY. He earned a BA in Music with a Composition focus at Morehouse College in 2007, and a Masters in Music Education at The University of Georgia in 2012. From 2008-2014 he was a Director of Bands and Orchestra Director at the High School level whose motto was: Saving Lives One Note At A Time. To Mr. Short music is the expression of a person’s soul; an opportunity to communicate with someone without words messing up the message. The best way to describe him is as a man who is driven by the thrust to refine his ability to express his soul.

Samā (Theosophical Listening), my latest piece for Setar and Electronics, is continuing the idea of discovering Eastern/Iranian musical aesthetic in/with Western compositional techniques. This piece includes two parts: a structured improvising part for solo Setar along with an electronic pre-composed background. Microtones, drone and the harmonic language used in the electronic part are derived from material used in the instrumental part.

Nima Hamidi (b.1984) is a Persian composer, currently pursuing a PhD in Music Composition at the University of Iowa. He studied the Setar, an Iranian traditional instrument before studying composition. After living as a composer in Tehran until 2011, he moved to USA to discover new elements in composition to enrich his compositional language. His music is an attempt to discover a relation between Iranian traditional music and Western contemporary techniques.