



WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
College of Fine Arts and Communication
& School of Music

present

NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL 2021
CONCERT I

Music written for and performed by
Craig Hultgren, cello

Monday, March 8, 2021
7:30 PM

THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND COMMUNICATION PROUDLY
CELEBRATES OVER 50 YEARS AT WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

College of Fine Arts
and Communication Recital Hall

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Craig Hultgren, cello

Elegy for the Eremocene (2020)

Robert Scott Thompson

solo cello

Lacrimosa MMXVIII (2018)

Joseph Koykkar

electric cello & pre-recorded sound design

The Subdued Ferocity of Exile (2013)

Emanuela Ballio

solo cello

Sliding High (2013)

Juan María Solare

solo cello

Snakeskin (Verso) (2019)

Holland Hopson

electric cello & live electronics

Bystander (2016)

Dorothy Hindman

solo cello

PROGRAM NOTES & COMPOSER/PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

Elegy for the Eremocene. “Earth’s biodiversity is a dilemma wrapped in a paradox. The paradox is that the more species humanity extinguishes, the more new species scientists discover. Like the conquistadors who melted the Inca gold, they recognize that the great treasure must come to an end—and soon. That understanding creates the dilemma: will we stop the destruction for the sake of future generations, or go on changing the planet to our immediate needs? If the latter, planet Earth will enter a new era of its history, cheerfully called by some the Anthropocene, a time for and all about our one species alone. I prefer to call it the Eremocene, the Age of Loneliness.” — Edward O. Wilson. This composition for solo cello is derived from the larger chamber work, *Seul dans un jardin de roses blanches, J’entends une mosaïque d’oiseaux* - Homage to Boulez. Compositional stochastics, applied to the 12-tone matrix, are used in the creation of the work, and sound and silence are utilized in equal measure. Alluding to the deafening silence of the possible Eremocene, the music unfolds in muted tones and colors, balanced softly on the edge of audibility.

Robert Scott Thompson is a composer of both instrumental and electroacoustic music and is currently Professor of Music Composition at Georgia State University in Atlanta. He earned the B.Mus. degree from the University of Oregon and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California at San Diego (UCSD). His primary teachers include Bernard Rands, Roger Reynolds, Joji Yuasa, and F. Richard Moore.

He has created work in a wide variety of forms ranging from chamber and orchestral music to works for the virtuoso soloist, electroacoustic music, and video and performance art. He was a Research Assistant of the Center for Music Experiment (CME) Computer Audio Research Lab (CARL) during the 1980s, assisting significant composers in the realization of advanced computer music works. In 1991, he was named a Fulbright Fellow and Research Scholar for the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) and was Composer in Residence at the Danish Institute of Electroacoustic Music (DIEM) where he collaborated on fundamental research in computer music and composed the long-form acousmatic work – *The Strong Eye*. More recently (2007), he was Composer in Residence at the Institut International de Musique Electroacoustique (France, 2007).

In many ways, *Lacrimosa MMXVIII* may be interpreted as a musical statement for the times we live in. Historically, *Lacrimosa* (Latin for weeping) is a text that is part of the Requiem Mass often set by past composers for chorus and orchestra. This composition breaks with that tradition since it is a nine-minute instrumental work featuring the electric cello (ecello) blended with a “virtual” ensemble comprised of sounds based on acoustic cello techniques, effects, and musical motives. Using a variety of software programs, the composer has made prerecorded tracks which the ecello will synchronize with in performance. Emotionally, this piece reflects the somber, sorrowful and darker side of the human experience.

Joseph Koykkar is a musician at home in a variety of music from classical to avant-garde to rock and blues. As a composer, he has had his music performed nationally and internationally for the past 30 years, including performances and commissions by many of the leading new music ensembles in the nation including the Relache Ensemble, Present Music, Zeitgeist, New York New Music Ensemble, North/South Consonance, Synchronia, and the California Ear Unit. He holds degrees from Indiana University (M.Mus.) and the University of Miami (DMA). As a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (retired 2019), he taught courses in electroacoustic music/sound design and served as Music Director for the UW’s Dance Program.

The Subdued Ferocity of Exile is a miniature composition created for Hultgren's 2013 Fifteen Minutes of Fame, Occupy Cello concert in New York. The theme for the Occupy Cello performance was to upset the musical status quo for acoustic solo cello. The pieces on the program featured forward-looking concepts that challenged the traditional role of the instrument. The title of the work comes from a note slipped under the composer's door. There was written, "The subdued ferocity of exile doesn't change the sound over the centuries."

Emanuela Ballio is from Milan, Italy. At the age of 22 she graduated in composition with top marks from "G.Verdi" Conservatory in Milan under the guidance of U.Rotondi. She studied electronic music and film music and was awarded an advanced degree in composition with F.Donatoni at the "Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia" in Rome. She teaches composition at the Conservatory "Luca Marenzio" of Brescia. Emanuela Ballio's approach to composing is characterized by an intellectual curiosity and versatility that has led her to write not only for orchestra, choir and solo instruments, but also for unusual chamber groups, such as accordion quartet, recorder ensemble, mandolins orchestra and military band.

Sliding High unfolds itself in harmonics in the uppermost register of the cello, and ascending glissandi at different speeds. Hence its title.

Composer and pianist **Juan María Solare** was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1966 and has lived in Germany since 1993. He studied with María Teresa Criscuolo, Fermina Casanova, Juan Carlos Zorzi, Francisco Kröpfl, Johannes Fritsch, Helmut Lachemann and Hans-Ulrich Humpert. Solare was the last pupil of Mauricio Kagel. He obtained scholarships from the DAAD, the foundation *Heinrich-Strobel-Stiftung* (Baden-Baden) and the *Künstlerhäuser Worpswede*. Currently, Solare teaches piano at the *Musikschule Bremen*, tango music at the *Universität Bremen* and composition and arrangements at the *Hochschule für Künste* in Bremen. Most of his over 300 compositions are performed throughout Europe and broadcasted regularly. Eight CDs by diverse performers include music by Solare. As a pianist, the core of his repertory is the classical music of our own time (Cage, Schönberg, Pärt) and Argentine tango music - featuring his own works in both categories. Besides composition and pianistic activities, he writes for music magazines in Madrid, Mexico, Buenos Aires, Köln, and London and for the radio, *Deutsche Welle* on Südwestfunk.

Snakeskin (Verso) is inspired by a visit to the Cahokia Mounds near Collinsville, Illinois. The mounds were once home to the largest native civilization north of Mexico. In the piece, the performer chooses phrases from groups of simple gestures. These phrases influence the shape and progression of the electronic sounds. The cello and electronics together accumulate and erode in processes reminiscent of the construction and eventual abandonment of the Cahokia mounds. *Snakeskin (Verso)* was written for Hultgren.

Holland Hopson is a composer, improviser, and electronic artist. As an instrumentalist, he performs on claw hammer banjo, soprano saxophone and electronics. He has held residencies at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, Florida; STEIM, Amsterdam; Experimental Music Studios, Krakow and Katowice, Poland; Sonic Arts Research Studio, Vancouver, Canada; LEMURPlex, Brooklyn; and Harvestworks Digital Media Arts, New York where he developed a sound installation based on Marcel Duchamp's sculpture, *With Hidden Noise*. An avid phonographer, Holland has recorded sounds on five continents and in over a dozen countries. Holland's latest solo recording is *Post & Beam*, a collection of traditional and original songs arranged for banjo and live electronics. The *Albany Times-Union* called *Post & Beam*, "a haunting, often mesmerizing album of old songs and new sounds." Hopson is an assistant professor in the New School of Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

Bystander. Bystander cellphone videos have become increasingly important to counterbalance, confirm, and deny official and media reports of current events. Recent bystander videos have exposed a man ranting against Spanish-speaking mall employees, BBQ Becky, and more serious atrocities such as the Las Vegas shooting and police brutality. While these videos are generally made to ensure justice, the term bystander has other, more negative connotations. This piece uses audio from a bystander video of a violent arrest that resulted in death. The victim in the video screams eight times; there are eight corresponding sections in the piece. The frequencies and amplitudes of each scream provides source material, microtonal pitches and dynamics for *Bystander*. Fragments of speech from several bystanders are also captured in the video and included, especially when they occur simultaneously with the victim's screams. Like the video, the music of *Bystander* is quietly, powerfully disturbing.

Virtuosic and hardcore, **Dorothy Hindman's** music requires like-minded pioneering spirits. Her collaborators include today's most trailblazing new music performers: Splinter Reeds, Bent Frequency, ensemble dal niente, [Switch~ Ensemble], TURNmusic, Corona Guitar Quartet, Fresh Squeezed Opera, Heartland Marimba Quartet, The Hadit Collective, the Gregg Smith Singers, Empire City Men's Chorus, Voces Inaudita, Duo 46, and virtuosos such as bassist Robert Black, cellist Craig Hultgren, percussionist Stuart Gerber, and pianist Jacob Mason. Multimedia collaborations include music for Carrie Mae Weem's film *Italian Dreams*, and *The Wall Calls to Me* with visual artist Sally Wood Johnson which has been exhibited in major museums throughout the Southeast. A tumultuous, unstable, and often dangerous youth fuels much of Hindman's music, but has also energized decades of volunteerism and advocacy, especially in new music. In her early career, she co-edited the *Living Music Journal*, and co-founded the Birmingham Art Music Alliance, now in its 25th year, securing grant support and co-producing annual series of new music by Alabama composers. From 2011 to 2015, she wrote, produced and broadcast the weekly *Po Mo Show* on WVUM, 90.5FM Coral Gables, promoting living composers and new music written since 1980. From 2011 to 2014, she was a critic for the *Miami Herald* and *South Florida Classical Review*, often documenting important world and US premieres. Hindman has recently launched the Justly Tuned concert series under the auspices of FETA (Foundation for Emerging Technologies and the Arts), presenting new music that engages with social and political issues, exploring music as communication, commentary, and catalyst for change, and promoting unheard stories, underserved voices, and fresh ideas. Hindman earned her Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Miami, and a Master of Arts from Duke University. She was a tenured professor at Birmingham-Southern College, where she taught from 1994 to 2010. In 2012, Hindman joined the faculty at the Frost School of Music, where she currently serves as Associate Professor of Composition.

Cellist **Craig Hultgren** has been active in new music for decades. He now resides outside of Decorah, Iowa as the farmer-cellist. *The New York Classical Review* commented that he, "... played with impressive poise and sensitivity..." for Dorothy Hindman's 2016 chamber music retrospective at Carnegie Hall. A recipient of two Artist Fellowships from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, he was a member for many years of Thámýris, a contemporary chamber music ensemble in Atlanta. He is a founding member of Luna Nova, a new music ensemble with a large repertoire of performances available on iTunes. Hultgren is featured in four solo CD recordings including UK composer Craig Year's hyper-media concerto *Black Cats and Blues* on Métier Recordings. Recently, Hultgren entered the realm of digital online releases with four works *Songs for Cello and Piano* by Ben Hippen available on Spotify. For ten years, he produced the Hultgren Solo Cello Works Biennial, an international competition that highlighted the best new compositions for the instrument. He is a founding member and former President of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance and was on the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Youth Orchestras of Birmingham and their Scrollworks program. Currently, he is Vice President of the Oneota Valley Community Orchestra Board of Directors in Decorah and serves as Chair for the Iowa Composers Forum.

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