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Marshall University Music Department Presents a Graduate Recital, Levi Billiter, percussion, assisted by Jenna Palmer and the Marshall University Percussion Ensemble

Levi Billiter
Marshall University

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents a

Graduate Recital
Levi Billiter, percussion

assisted by

Jenna Palmer

and the

Marshall University Percussion
Ensemble

Saturday, December 4, 2010

Smith Recital Hall

3:00 p.m.

This program is presented by the College of Fine Arts through the Department of Music, with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at www.marshall.edu/cofa/music.

Program

Polaris

Mark Ford
b. 1958

Five Scrolls of Musashi

Richard Johnston
b. 1978

- I) First Scroll – Earth
- II) Second Scroll – Water
- III) Third Scroll – Fire
- IV) Fourth Scroll – Air
- V) Fifth Scroll Void

Ethnic Blend

arr. Levi Billiter
b. 1985

(Udu Dances)

Robert J. Damm
b. 1956

Udu – Jenna Palmer

Balance

Shane Hoose
b. 1985

Concerto for Vibraphone and Percussion Ensemble

Ney Rosauero
b. 1952

- I) Recitativo – Allegro
- II) Acalanto
- III) Vivo - Presto

Conductor

Steven Hall

Ensemble

Michael Cochran
Anna Maria Firth
Ross Patrick

Tyler Stewart
Reece Watkins
Amanda Young

Notes

Polaris

Polaris is a one movement solo based on a rhythmic theme in 7/8 meter. Set in a modified rondo form, two separate ostinatos help unify the music while themes from the opening chorale and allegro sections are developed. As the North Star has served as a navigation reference for centuries, *Polaris* reflects the inner part of each of us that guides our decisions and shapes our identity.

--- Mark Ford

Five Scrolls of Musashi

In 1645, Miyamoto Musashi, arguably the greatest Japanese duelist of his time, wrote his treatise on strategy applicable to one-on-one swordsmanship, one-against-many conflict, and large-scale battle. The text contained the basics of Musashi's own "Two Heavens" school of the sword. Divided into five scrolls (or "rings") named after the five elements, his text is the inspiration for this set of short pieces for solo timpani.

The *First Scroll (Earth)* serves as an introduction within both the Musashi text and this set of pieces. Influenced by Takemitsu's percussion writing for the score to Kurosawa's *Ran*, this scroll serves to prepare the listener for a solo timpanist's performance. Musashi uses the *Second Scroll (Water)* to comment on the basics of swordsmanship, and so this piece is based on simple *iaido* forms, with a particular focus on independence of limbs.

The *Third and Fourth Scrolls (Fire and Wind)* are heavily influenced by two significantly different ensembles from traditional Japanese music: the *taiko* and *gagaku*, respectively. The aggressive qualities of *taiko* performance combined with the final duel of Hiroshi Inagaki's *Samurai Trilogy* to inspire and shape "Fire," representative of Musashi's scroll on conflict. Contrastingly, the *gagaku*'s ethereal melodies guided the creation of the fourth piece in this set, where the timpani sing a hushed, airy tune.

Finally, the *Fifth Scroll (Void)* is Musashi's take on the Zen concept of No Mind. The timpanist performs an ostinato pattern on the four drums but the focus lies in the tuning of the drums. Ideally performed without tuning gauges, this piece forces the player into a state of No Mind.

--- Richard Johnston

Ethnic Blend

Ethnic Blend is an improvised solo for udu and tank drum. The piece is structured around Robert J Damm's *Udu Dances*. Sections from Movement 1, *Latin American and movement 3, Middle East* were combined to create a work that would be idiomatic to each instrument.

Tank Drum is an instrument based on the design of a tongue drum. Wide tongues are cut into the instrument and tuned to specific pitches. The pitch is determined by the length, width, and thickness of each tongue and the relationship to the fundamental pitch of the tank itself. The drum is a low class version of an instrument already being manufactured called the HAPI drum. The HAPI drum uses the same principles as the tank drum but the body of the instrument is shorter and is designed to fit comfortably on the performer's lap.

According to Frank Giorgini, a modern day designer of udu drums, the udu is a clay pot drum modeled after the Nigerian side-hole pot drum. It is made entirely of clay, in the form of a narrow necked, vase-like vessel, with a circular hole in the side in addition to the opening at the top. Sound is produced when the performer strikes one or both holes with his/her hand(s) and air is forced around the bowl and back out the hole.

---Levi Billiter

Balance

Balance (2006) is an exploration of the expressive possibilities of electroacoustic and percussion instruments. The interaction of different gestures is used to delineate form and produce tension and release. Sonic material exists on two levels: long, sustained sounds which continuously evolve to create new textures and are articulated with shorter, percussive sounds. The objective was to create an overall texture in which the acoustic and electronic components interact, yet retain a high level of individual musicality. This conic equilibrium between acoustic and electroacoustic gestures creates the "balance" referred to by the title.

--- Shane Hoose

Concerto for Vibraphone and Percussion Ensemble

The Concerto for Vibraphone and Orchestra was written in Santa Maria, RS, Brazil in 1995 and 1996 and is dedicated to Evelyn Glennie. The work was originally written for vibraphone and chamber orchestra. The work is written in three movements and has a bridge connecting the last two movements without pause. The first and last movements are constructed over a mixed scale that combines lydian and mixolydian modes, which are quite often found in the folk music of northeastern Brazil.

The first movement develops from a chromatic theme, presented in a

slow tempo in the opening measures of the work, and represents the constant life struggle of the poor people in the dry lands of northeastern Brazil.

The second movement is based on the Brazilian folk lullaby called *Tutu Marambá*, and depicts a child's peaceful passage to a dream-filled slumber. The effect of playing the vibraphone with the rattan handle of the mallet recalls the sound of music boxes used to lull children to sleep.

The last movement depicts the flight of seagulls, which was inspired by time spent by the composer at Ipanema Beach in Rio de Janeiro, while watching a breathtaking view of the sun setting over the Arpoador rock formations. Percussive Notes magazine calls the concerto "an excellent showcase for the solo vibist, and, like the Marimba Concerto, another excellent work that audiences will find enjoyable and exciting."

--- Ney Rosauero

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