



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas College of Music

Guest Artist Recital | Tuesday, January 28, 2025 | 8:00 p.m.
Paul Voertman Concert Hall

Ninkasi Percussion Group

Wheelhouse (2023) Ben Robichaux
(b. 1991)

Hymns for Ninkasi (2023) Brett William Dietz
(b. 1972)

I.

II.

III.

IV.

V.

VI.

VII.

VIII.

XX (2024) Joe W. Moore III
(b. 1986)

Lagom (2024) Susan Powell
(b. 1971)

*Program two hundred eighty-four of the 2024–2025 season
Photography and videography are prohibited*

Program Notes

Wheelhouse | Ben Robichaux

Wheelhouse is about repeating cycles that give way to gradual changes over time. Repetitive patterns slowly transform over the course of the work as do the various harmonies used throughout. Several motives get passed around the instruments as the entire ensemble acts as a machine that is relentlessly pushing forward. The mallet quartet is unique in its ability to play this type of musical material without (completely) giving way to exhaustion, and for this reason, I felt comfortable employing a post-minimal approach to this work. *Wheelhouse* was composed for the Ninkasi Percussion Group. – BR

Hymns for Ninkasi | Brett William Dietz

Hymns for Ninkasi is dedicated to the Ninkasi Percussion Quartet. Ninkasi was the Sumerian Goddess of Beer and Brewing. She was associated with both the positive and negative consequences of the consumption of beer. The original Hymn to Ninkasi was written down in c. 1800 BCE and is much older as evidenced by the techniques it details which scholars have determined were in use long before the hymn was written. The eight hymns can be played in entirety or separately. – BWD

XX | Joe W. Moore III

XX (2 variables/dos equis) was composed for the Ninkasi Percussion Group's performance at the 2024 National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy. The rhythmic content is based on the first letter of each member's name, inspired by a technique I learned from Nathan Daughtrey. I also collaborated with the group to select their two favorite pitches (2 variables), which are featured across the metallic instruments used in the piece: almglocken, metal pipes, pitched gongs, and crotales. The result is a vibrant and engaging work for percussion quartet. Enjoy! - JWMIII

Lagom | Susan Powell

The Swedish virtuoso vibraphonist/percussionist Anders Åstrand has been a major influence on my life musically, professionally and personally, and was one of the first individuals to encourage my journey as a composer. When Greg Lyons of the Ninkasi Percussion Group approached me about writing a new piece for their 2024 PASIC concert, I thought about the type of work I hoped to create, and Anders' upbeat, joyful compositions were at the forefront of my mind. Throughout the process, I found myself channeling his energy and enthusiasm for both music and life in general, and hearing his sage advice that often amounts to "just be you." Throughout the writing process additional influences crept in, including my deep appreciation and respect for the music of Nigel Westlake, novelty ragtime selections, and contemporary bluegrass styles, most specifically the genius of Béla Fleck. But it was Anders that I kept hearing in my head, not only the wisdom he has shared over the years, but also his own musical compositions that are so full of life. The title, *Lagom*, is a word of Swedish origin meaning literally "not too much, not too little, just enough." More than just a word, *Lagom* can be considered a philosophy of life that aims to balance all aspects of day to day living, which of course includes frequent breaks throughout the day for Swedish-inspired fika (coffee & cake). – SP

Ensemble Biography

Formed in 2019, the Ninkasi Percussion Group has performed and toured throughout the United States. Most recently, the group has performed at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention and the National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy. NPG focuses on performing current percussion chamber literature as well as composing and commissioning new works for the idiom. The quartet consists of Gregory Lyons (Louisiana Tech), Gustavo Miranda (Nicholls State), Oliver Molina (Northwestern State), and Joe W. Moore III (UT-Arlington).