



University of North Texas  
College of Music

Ensemble Concert | Monday, April 7, 2025 | 6:30 p.m. | Paul Voertman Concert Hall

---

**UNT Percussion Ensemble**

**Dave Hall, director**

---

from Don't Look Down (2020) ..... Christopher Cerrone  
I. Hammerspace (b. 1984)  
II. The Great Empty

from Millenium Canticles (2022) ..... Missy Mazzoli  
III. Bloodied Bells (b. 1980)

Weeds (2019) ..... Cassie Wieland  
(b. 1994)

from Perspective (2022) ..... Jlin  
Fourth Perspective (b. 1987)  
Dissonance

from Patterns and Form (2024) ..... Alejandro Viñao  
III. The Fabric of Form (b. 1951)

a space for everything (2025) ..... Dave Hall  
(b. 1983)

---

*Program six hundred thirteen of the 2024–2025 season  
Photography and videography are prohibited*

## Program Notes

**Don't Look Down** is an accidental diary of having lived through the worst pandemic of the last hundred years. When I started writing this piece in February 2020, it would be inconceivable to imagine the world we live in now. The one thing that kept me sane during this period was clocking into work—that is, working on this piece. So looking back, it's not at all surprising the piece would wind up reflecting both the strangeness and the instability of the world we live in.

The title of the work takes its name from an article by the economist Paul Krugman, himself referring to the moment when the cartoon character Wile E. Coyote would look down and suddenly realize he'd fallen off a cliff, at which point he would actually drop. The first movement, "Hammerspace," is the world before: all grooving and relentless energy. The pianist hammers away at the high notes of the piano which have all been muted with putty. I imagined his part as like a drum solo performed in an echo chamber—the rhythmic muted notes create unique and fantastic sympathetic resonances with the lower strings of the instrument when the pedal is held down. A variety of percussion instruments support him, from the more traditional to drum set to other oddities like a bicycle pump and sandpaper block.

The piece "looks down" at the start of the second movement, "The Great Empty," when all of sudden, all of the energy stops and we are left with an uncertain and static soundscape: instead of playing the piano, the pianist "bows" the instrument by drawing fishing tackle over the strings. The percussionists play cheap harmonicas and blow over the tops of wine bottles alongside other instruments to create a dissonant and deliberately out-of-tune sound world. The piano part that interjects halfway through is similarly out-of-tune: the pianist has placed small pieces of putty, causing the piano to sound as out of tune as the percussion instruments. The title of the movement is drawn from a photographic series that was shown in the New York Times of city centers devoid of people.

– Christopher Cerrone

**Millennium Canticles** was inspired by the dark comedic play *Mr. Burns* by Anne Washburn. In the play, a group of survivors in a post-apocalyptic world try to remember the plot of an episode of the television sitcom "The Simpsons." They recreate the episode in an increasingly ritualized and exaggerated way to cope with their trauma and to find meaning in the world.

– Missy Mazzoli

### **Weeds**

A weed is simply something growing where it shouldn't.

This work was inspired by a person or object being taken out of its natural environment; this idea of misplacement is interesting to me because it is a feeling that some people crave, while for others it is extremely discomfiting – and sometimes it can be both. In this trio for three percussionists, I am looking at the idea of misplacement from the angle of being comforted by your environment, and the role that familiarity plays in this comfort. Throughout the piece the three musicians move within their stations to build something out of nothing together, and as the material becomes more familiar, it grows.

– Cassie Wieland

### **Perspective**

*Perspective* was written for Third Coast Percussion through a highly collaborative process. After exploring and sampling instruments from TCP's vast collection of percussion sounds at their studio in Chicago, Jlin created an electronic version of each of the work's seven movements using these samples and other sounds from her own library.

***continued on following page***

The members of Third Coast Percussion then set about determining how to realize these pieces in live performance. Diving into each of the audio tracks, the percussionists found dozens of sonic layers, patterns that never seem to repeat when one would expect them to, and outrageous sounds that are hard to imagine recreating acoustically. Even typical percussion sounds like snare drum, hi-hat, or kick drum exist in multiple variations, subtle timbral shades in counterpoint or composite sounds.

In pursuit of the broad expressive range of Jlin's original tracks, TCP's live version of this piece incorporates mixing bowls filled with water, bird calls, and a variety of gongs and tambourines, as well as many variations of drum set-like sounds: instruments that are like a hi-hat but not a hi-hat, or serve the function of a snare drum but are not a snare drum.

Jlin named her piece *Perspective* as a reference to this unique collaborative process, that this work would exist in two forms, the same music as interpreted through different artists and their modes of expression.

In addition to concert performances, Third Coast Percussion will feature the full 7-movement *Perspective* in its Carnegie Hall debut in January 2023, as part of a collaboration with Movement Art Is. That project features choreography by MAI founders Lil Buck and Jon Boogz, and new music by Tyondai Braxton in addition to Jlin's work and TCP's arrangements of music by Philip Glass.

*Perspective* by Jlin was commissioned for Third Coast Percussion by the Boulanger Initiative, the Maxine and Stuart Frankel Foundation, Carnegie Hall, the Lester & Hope Abelson Fund for the Performing Arts at the Chicago Community Foundation, the DEW Foundation, and Third Coast Percussion's New Works Fund.

– Third Coast Percussion

### ***Patterns and Form- III. The Fabric of Form (La Trama de la Forma)***

In this movement I explored a process that the composer György Ligeti called 'micro-polyphony' which features in some of his works from the 1960s such as "Atmospheres" and "Lontano." These works have such a beautiful static quality. I wanted to take Ligeti's micro-polyphony in a different direction. This involved transforming the static nature of the micro-polyphonic texture into rhythmic patterns that eventually 'groove' in a clear and recognizable form. I wanted the music in this movement to evolve from a sound world that is texture-like into a sound world of rhythms that are pulsed, immediate and dance-like. And I wanted this process to happen repeatedly throughout the movement, each time unfolding 'the fabric of form' in a different way. The movement starts with apparently formless, dark or obscure patterns, which over a period of time, reconfigure themselves from within to become rhythms familiar to us for having the dance-like quality of popular music. The interest here lies more in the process of transformation than in the departure or arrival points.

Harmonically, this process moves from initial clusters of different intervallic widths (a third, a fourth or a fifth) into modes that are derived or 'carved out' from the notes of the clusters and have a scale like structure. This harmonic transformation accompanies a similar rhythmic transformation resulting in a fluid and integrated discourse which describes a voyage from apparent chaos to a well-defined rhythmic form.

– Alejandro Viñao

***a space for everything*** was composed for the UNT Percussion Ensemble in the spring of 2025. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Jonah, Raina, Luke, Brayden, Ryan, Tim, and Sebastian for premiering the work tonight.

– Dave Hall

---

## **UNT Percussion Ensemble Personnel**

Ryan Blankenship

Tim Franklin

Luke Gibson

Hunter Gross

Brayden Haslam

Sebastian Havner

Tzu-Ling Hung

Raina Liao

Isaac Morgan

Patrick Overturf

Jonah Payne

Madi Romberger

Jack Spelman

Chris Trlak

Grace Tsai

Ben Waddill

Ming Yang