



University of North Texas  
College of Music

Ensemble Concert | Saturday, April 18, 2026 | 8:00 p.m. | Paul Voertman Concert Hall

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**Nova Ensemble**  
**Elizabeth McNutt, director**

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Guitar Conduction #1: Taut Steel (2013) ..... Jon Christopher Nelson  
(b. 1960)

George McGuinness, electric guitar

Phi (1963) ..... Frederic Rzewski  
(1938–2021)

Jessica Wu and Ella Peirce, flute  
Min Ching Lin, cello  
Yan Li, piano  
Chris Trlak, percussion  
Agustín Alonso, conductor

Totem (2026)\* ..... Simón Ramírez  
(b. 2003)

Filling in the Numbers (2026)\* ..... George McGuinness  
(b. 2000)

Animent (2026)\* ..... Brody Duke Silver  
(b. 2006)

Elizabeth McNutt, flute  
Simón Ramírez, piano  
George McGuinness, electric guitar  
Brody Duke Silver, electric bass guitar  
*World Premiere\**

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**Program five hundred sixty-seven of the 2025–2026 season**  
**Photography and videography are prohibited**

-INTERMISSION-

Land of Winter (2024) ..... Donnacha Dennehy

I. December (b. 1970)

II. January

III. February

IV. March

Rome Ababat, flute and piccolo | Julia Funck, clarinet

Andrew Rutten, clarinet and bass clarinet | Alexander Kang, oboe

Donovan Neal, bassoon and contrabassoon

Ming-Wei Hsieh and Amy Wang Hiller, violin

Madilynn Riley, viola | Ellen Miner, cello

Sara Nell Chase, double bass

Chris Doty, trumpet | Jasmine Perry-Grice, horn

Nick Cavallo, trombone | Hunter Gross and Ming Yang, percussion

Brandon Lau, piano and celesta

Nathan Howard, conductor

## Program Notes

### **Guitar Conduction #1: Taut Steel (2013) | Jon Christopher Nelson (b. 1960)**

*Guitar Conduction #1: Taut Steel* was commissioned by Stefan Östersjö. The composition is a structured improvisation that explores a variety of contemporary electric guitar techniques within an acousmatic context. The score is intended to provide a rough framework within which the guitarist improvises in response to the fixed media. The work constitutes an acknowledgement of the influential role rock music played during the formative years of my musical training.

Jon C. Nelson.

### **Phi (1963) | Frederic Rzewski (1938–2021)**

*Phi* is an early work by Rzewski, written during his college years in Italy, where he studied under the tutelage of Luigi Dallapiccola as part of a Fulbright grant. The piece features sections built on a continuous stream of 16th notes, an element also explored in later works such as *Coming Together* (1971). In *Phi*, Rzewski skillfully utilizes chaotic textures, vertical punctuations, and silence to disrupt the listener's expectations. The piece also explores timbral possibilities through extended techniques and prepared piano, extending the timbral palette of the percussion instruments.

Agustín Alonso.

### **Totem (2026) | Simón Ramírez (b. 2003)**

Archetype persists past all; icons speak volumes to the open ear.

Simón Ramírez.

### **Filling in the Numbers (2026) | George McGuinness (b. 2000)**

*Filling in The Numbers* is a piece which combines improvisation with strict, mathematical structuring. The performers are directed to select seven sounds and/or gestures to play, improvise on, and embellish in performance. As the piece goes on, individual sounds are mathematically organized and coordinated between the performers. In performance, the listener will hear the exploration of the selected sounds and gestures reinterpreted and reorganized as the music goes along. The piece then is an exercise in musical variation, in both the basic musical material and the structural relationships between material.

By Agustín Alonso.

### **Animent (2026) | Brody Duke Silver (b. 2006)**

Animent is a nature scene that explores the relationships between four distinct animals, each embodied by a performer. The interactions between these characters are left entirely to the performers' discretion, allowing the piece to unfold differently with each realization. Encounters may be fleeting or violent (ex: the human may kill the elephant, or swat the hornet). The piece concludes only when all four animals have died, bringing the ecosystem to its end.

Brody Duke Silver.

### **Land of Winter (2024) | Donnacha Dennehy (b. 1970)**

Donnacha Dennehy's *Land of Winter* is a "contemporary tone poem" (Craig Bird, *Cultural Attaché*, 2024) that metaphorically explores the interaction of light within landscapes of Ireland along the twelve months of the year. Commissioned and recorded by Alarm Will Sound, it received two 2026 Grammy nominations for Best Small Ensemble/Chamber Music Performance, and Best Contemporary Classical Music Composition. This performance features the first four sections of the work, starting in December, the first month of winter. This first section opens with what the composer calls "overtone blooms," which alternate naturally tempered pitches, achieving a spectralist-like effect. Later movements explore string techniques like non-vibrato, *sul fasto*, and natural harmonics (January), interrupted, post-minimalist vertical rhythmic gestures (February), and arpeggios, polyrhythms, and various tuplets (March), with the initial gesture weaving through every section.

By Agustín Alonso.