



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas
College of Music

Ensemble Recital | Monday, October 31, 2022 | 8:00 pm | Recital Hall

SPECTRUM: New Works from North Texas

H2O (2020)Heather Pryse (b. 2000)
video • stereo audio (film by Ralph Steiner)

diamant (2020) Benjamin Damann (b. 1994)
Brooke Miller, clarinet

Graspings (2022)..... Willyn Whiting (b. 1993)
Colin Stokes, cello

Thy Sting (2022)..... Connor Scroggins (b. 1997)
2-channel fixed media

Hxó (2020) Sungji Hong (b. 1973)
Anne Dearth Maker, flute

Spirit (2018)..... Shulamit Ran (b. 1949)
Brooke Miller, clarinet

Sankta Lucia (2022).....Beige Cowell (b. 2001)
I. Natt
II. Morgon
III. Dag

Soloist: Anna Schmelter • *Conductor:* Julian Yanas

Sopranos: Victoria Cerda, Abigail Cockrum, Danielle Harrington,
Rachel Moes, Anna Poole

Altos: Kara Bonordon, Tess Miller, Anna Schmelter, Savanna Singelton

Tenors: Caleb Aguirre, Samuel Benavidez, Craig Smith, Nate Taylor

Basses: PJ Mooney, Findlay Morton, Cameron Purcell, Matthew Richards

H2O - Heather Pryse

H2O is a multimedia work for solo piano meant to accompany the art film *H2O* (1929), which features original photography and film composition by Ralph Steiner. The structure of the piece was determined by the velocity of the water and the text before the film, which stated that the piece is meant to become more abstract as it progresses. The tempos and textures change to reflect changes in the nature of the water.

Diamant - Benjamin Damann

Diamant is an exploration of the crystalline structures of diamonds through the lens of number theory and partitions. A nine-note set is broken down into many component parts and reassembled into related modal areas based on the tritina verse poetic form. The dichotomy between the glimmering brightness of a cut, polished diamond and the intense pressure of carbon atoms being compressed into a raw diamond are represented by timbral maximization. Delicate passages of key clicks and mouthpiece manipulations foiled against aggressive multiphonics exemplify the wide sonic spectrum available to the clarinet and both the natural and industrial qualities of a diamond.

Graspings - Willyn Whiting

This miniature for solo cello titled *Graspings* is a fantasy on a specific technique, designed to be challenging for the performer. It is meant to showcase the instrument in an unconventional way, and the abundance of rolled chords are supposed to evoke themes of distraction and over-stimulation.

Thy Sting - Connor Scroggins

Life is delicate. The more one cherishes and protects it, the clearer its frailty becomes.

Hxó - Sungji Hong

"Hxó" is a Greek word meaning "echo," a reflection of sound after the direct sound. In this piece, the flute explores echo in various ways. The main idea is based on a short staccato attack followed by a quiet fluctuation of timbral trills. The first few measures depict a sound recording I captured of my son screaming playfully in a huge underground parking lot with a beautiful echo effect. The echo of the scream was reflected three times. *Hxó* was commissioned by the Texas Flute Society for the 34th Myrna W. Brown Artist Competition. *Hxó* for solo flute was completed in March 2020 in Denton, Texas. It was first performed on May 23, during the Annual Texas Flute Festival by these four finalists: Hyunjee Lee, Denis Savelyev, Grace Wang, and Yi Xiang. This piece is available from Tetractys Publishing in the United Kingdom. It is dedicated to Elizabeth McNutt, experimental flutist and friend, who has been an inspiration for the piece.

Spirit - Shulamit Ran

Spirit was composed in memory of Laura Flax (1952-2017), the renowned New York-based clarinetist and my cherished friend. Our musical and personal association began in 1977 when Laura invited me to compose a solo clarinet work, *For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet*, in memory of her mother, Hazel Flax, whom I had known. After composing *For an Actor* for Laura I came back to the clarinet in many of my compositions over the years, sometimes as a lead instrument and at other times as an important voice. In all of my clarinet music Laura is present. The rich sound, blazing technique, the "brain and guts" that she brought to her playing, and her remarkable person, have inspired me in so many ways during the four decades of our friendship, and beyond. I did not want *Spirit* to be about absence, though. I wanted the piece to exhibit a wider range of emotions, as well as capture at least a tiny glimpse of Laura's brilliant spirit and spiritedness. Only in the work's final stretch does the sense of "parting," and of loss, take over. Upon completing *Spirit* on October 21, 2017 I found myself compelled to add at the bottom of the score the words "To Laura, always in my heart," as though in an effort to reach out, for a brief moment, and touch the unreachable.

Sankta Lucia - Beige Cowell

Lucy of Syracuse lived from 283-304 CE. She is one of eight women explicitly commemorated in the Catholic Canon of the Mass. Lucia was born to a wealthy family in Sicily, but her father died when she was an infant, and her mother raised her alone. She was a beautiful child, but even from an early age, Lucia did not desire men (or women for that matter), so she vowed to remain a virgin and dedicated her life to serving the poor. However, when she came of age, her mother found her a suitor. Lucia refused his affections time and time again, but it did nothing more than enrage the man. Because she was beautiful and wealthy, her suitor would take the girl for his wife regardless of her wishes. In an act of defiance, Lucia gouged out her lovely eyes, forever marring her beauty. She would never have to gaze upon the man again. But the suitor turned to the authorities, claiming Lucia was a Christian, an offense punishable by death. It is here that most people say she died, martyred for Christ. But, the rest of us know that Lucia fled with money and her mother's blessing, traveling north, bringing food and aid and light to all those in her path. Eventually, she herself became light, and now she stands guard at the dawn, protecting her people from the darkness that lies in wait. Sankta Lucia is celebrated in Sweden on December 13th, the winter solstice in the Julian calendar. The day with the longest night welcomes evil spirits in the stretches of darkness. The light-bringer pulls the sun back into the sky, and on that morning, if you watch and listen closely, you'll see a blind woman with light in her hair, followed by the sound of singing.

Swedish (svenska)

I. Natt

Natten går tunga fjät, Natten
går
kring jord som sol förgät, solen
glömmer
skuggorna ruva.
Då i vårt mörka hus,
stiger med tända ljus,
Sankta Lucia, Sankta Lucia!

II. Morgon

Sankta Lucia, hör oss
Morgonens Helgon
Natten går stor och stum,
nu hörs dess vingar,
i alla stilla rum,
Sankta Lucia, befria oss
Se hur vår tröskel står!
vitklädd med ljus i hår,
Morgonens Helgon är här.

III. Dag

Sankta Lucia, så hon ett
underbart
ord till oss talar.
Flykta snart ur jordens dalar,

Mörkret flykta snart
Dagen åter ny, Mörkret flykta!

Tala! Tala med oss!
stiga ur rosig sky, tala med oss
ur rosig sky
Sankta Lucia, Sankta Lucia!

English (engelska)

I. Night

Night walks with a heavy step,
the night goes by
As the sun departs from earth,
the sun forgets
Shadows are brooding.
There in our dark house,
Walking with lit candles,
Saint Lucia, Saint Lucia!

II. Dawn

Saint Lucia, hear us
The Saint of the Dawn
Night walks grand, yet silent,
Now hear its wings,
In every room so still,
Saint Lucia, free us
See how our threshold stands!
White-clad with light in her hair,
The Saint of the Dawn is here.

III. Day

Saint Lucia, so she speaks
wonderful
words to us.
Flee soon from the valleys of the
Earth,
The darkness shall flee soon.
The day is new again, escape
the darkness!
Speak! Speak to us!
Rise from the rosy sky, speak from
the rosy sky
Saint Lucia, Saint Lucia!
--trans. Beige Cowell



One hundred eighty-seventh program of the 2022–2023 season
Photography and videography are prohibited