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Performer(s)

Mike Roe, Sean Sweeden, Kelby Ferguson, Paxton Taylor, Connor Davis, Grant Davis, Kate Knox, Amy Mayes, and Michael Burner

The University of Arkansas
Department of Music Presents:

University of Arkansas New Music Ensemble

Sunday, April 14, 2013, 8:30 PM
Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall

Moving Air.....Nigel Westlake (b. 1958)

Michael Roe, Sean Sweeden, Kelby Ferguson, Paxton Taylor; Percussion

New York Counterpoint.....Steve Reich (b. 1936)

Amy Mayes, Clarinet

In Motion

Hand Covers Bruise.....Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross

When it Rains.....Brad Mehldau (b. 1970)

Connor Davis, Piano; Grant Davis, Drums; Kate Knox, Bass

~Intermission~

Born to be Wild.....David Lang (b. 1957)

Mike Roe, Percussion

Cheating, Lying, Stealing.....David Lang (b. 1957)

Amy Mayes, Bass Clarinet; Michael Burner, trombone; Megan Dobbs, Mike Roe, Percussion;
Kristy Mezines, Piano; Ron Juzeler, Cello

Two Instrumental Rounds in Snaketime.....Moondog (1916-1999)

Sophie Yanik, Flute; Jacob Lee, Clarinet; Curtis Simmons, Horn

Motown Metal.....Michael Daugherty (b. 1954)

Curtis Simmons, Emily Willis, John Brilhart, Peter Hamby, Horns; Jen Fox, Nathan Cunningham,
Patrick Oliverio, Andrew Jones, Trumpets; Elliot Green Joel Head, Michael Burner, trombone; Corey Divine,
Trumpet; Dallas Tucker, Percussion; Megan Dobbs, Mike Roe, Percussion

Nigel Westlake (b. 1958)

Australian Nigel Westlake enjoys a diverse career as a clarinetist, composer and conductor. He studied clarinet with his father—the principal of the Sydney Orchestra—and became one of the country's leading clarinetists. After playing the clarinet in international tours with various performing ensembles, he began to pursue composition seriously. His chamber music is widely played in Australia and throughout the world.

Film score credits include *Babe*, *Miss Potter*, *Children of the Revolution*, *A Little Bit of Soul*, *The Nugget* and the Imax films *Antarctica*, *Imagine*, *The Edge* and *Solarmax*. Westlake is an important composer for Australian films and television and has received the Australian Film Institute Award for Best Original Music Score. Also one of the country's leading art advocates, he is the founder of Smugglers of Light, a non-profit organization that equips at-risk youth with artistic opportunities.

Moving Air for percussion quartet and pre-recorded tape was commissioned by Synergy Percussion with a grant from the Australia Council of performing arts. The pre-recorded track consists of both unconventional sounds—slamming car doors, breaking glass and garbage cans—and percussion sound samples. Westlake instructs the performers to “play it loud” to create maximum “air movement.”

Steve Reich (b. 1936)

Steve Reich is an American composer most known for his pioneering compositions in the world of minimalist music. His music has been performed by prominent ensemble throughout the world, and in 2009 he won a Pulitzer Prize for eighth blackbird's recording of his *Double Sextet*.

Reich's earliest music experimented with what is known as tape music, where he would create loops of speech and layer them on top of one another several times over. This allowed the layers to fluctuate in and out of sync with one another, and he went on to use this technique in pieces that would require live performers—which is how *New York Counterpoint* (1985) is designed. *New York Counterpoint* is the second piece in Reich's “counterpoint” series: other pieces in this series include *Vermont Counterpoint* (flute, 1982), *Electric Counterpoint* (guitar, 1987), and *Cello Counterpoint* (cello, 2003).

The counterpoint series involves the performer playing live against his/her pre-recorded tape; this yields a rhythmic construction that is reminiscent of Reich's *Piano Phase*. The patterns and metrical ambiguity play a sort of “mind game” on the audience: Reich says, “*New York Counterpoint* is in three movements: fast, slow, fast, played one after the other without pause. The change of tempo is abrupt and in the simple relation of 1:2. The piece is in the meter $3/2 = 6/4 (=12/8)$. As is often the case when I write in this meter, there is an ambiguity between whether one hears measures of 3 groups of 4 eighth notes, or 4 groups of 3 eighth notes. In the last movement of *New York Counterpoint* the bass clarinets function to accent first one and then the other of these possibilities while the upper clarinets essentially do not change. The effect, by change of accent, is to vary the perception of that which in fact is not changing.”

Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross

Atticus Ross (b. 1968) was heavily involved in the rock and roll scene in the United Kingdom before coming to the United States in 2000. He has produced albums for artists such as Nine Inch Nails and Korn, and is now part of the band How to Destroy Angels alongside Trent Reznor.

Trent Reznor (b. 1965), a member of Nine Inch Nails, has enjoyed a legendary presence in the rock and roll scene. He has won several Grammy Awards with NIN and has been called "the most vital artist in music." Reznor, alongside Ross, composed his first film score for David Fincher's film *The Social Network* and subsequently won the Academy Award for best score and the Golden Globe Award for best original score. The duo followed that success by composing the score to the 2011 movie *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*.

The two Reznor and Ross selections on tonight's program are *In Motion* and *Hand Covers Bruise*. Both pieces for jazz trio are from David Fincher's film *The Social Network*.

Brad Mehldau (b. 1970)

American jazz pianist is celebrated for his improvisation both as a soloist and a member in a trio. He has performed and recorded extensively since the early 1990s. The Brad Mehldau trio—including drummer Jeff Ballard and bassist Larry Grenadier—records regularly under the Nonesuch label. Current projects include duo tours with pianist Kevin Hays, drummer Mark Guiliana, and progressive-bluegrass artist Chris Thile.

In addition to his trio and tour projects, he has performed with Pat Metheny, Joshua Redman, Michael Brecker, and countless other high profile jazz musicians. His composition have been included in several movies—Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* and Wim Wender's *Million Dollar Hotel*—and has had works commissioned by Carnegie Hall.

When it Rains from tonight's program is from Mehldau's recording project *Largo* (2001). *Largo* is a collaboration between Mehldau and producer Jon Brion and stems from Mehldau's experience performing at the Largo club in Hollywood. This album is a tribute to the pop artists he heard at this club (such as Rufus Wainright and Fiona Apple) and also to his relationship with Jon Brion.

David Lang (b.1957)

David Lang is a unique personality who is committed to constant innovations in his compositions. He has recently written for the New York City Ballet, the London Sinfonietta, Kronos Quartet and has had works performed by the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Santa Fe Opera, and countless new music organizations throughout the world. A winner of the Pulitzer Prize with his *little match girl passion*, Lang is described by the *New Yorker* as a "postminimalist *enfant terrible* [who] has solidified his standing as an American master."

Lang, along with composers Julia Wolfe and Michael Gordon, founded the New York City-based Bang on a Can organization, which continues to revolutionize the performer-audience relationship. One fixed feature of Bang on a Can is the 12-hour marathon concerts during which audiences come and go at will. According to the *New York Times*, Bang on a Can plays "a central role in fostering a new kind of audience that doesn't concern itself with boundaries."

Two works in tonight's performance are from David Lang. *Born to be Wild* is a 1994 arrangement of the Steppenwolf song, arranged for solo percussion. The second piece, *Cheating, Lying, Stealing*, is for a sextet. Lang's *Cheating, Lying, Stealing* demonstrates his honesty and clarity as a composer and as a human. Of this piece, Lang says, "A couple of years ago, I started thinking about how so often when classical composers write a piece of music, they are trying to tell you something that they are proud of and like about themselves. Here's this big gushing melody, see how emotional I am. Or, here's this abstract hard-to-figure-out piece, see how complicated I am, see my really big brain.... It's interesting, but it's not very humble. So I thought, 'What would it be like if composers based pieces on what they thought was wrong with them?'" Every aspect of *Cheating, Lying, Stealing* steers the audience away from pretension and towards honesty and acceptance.

Moondog (1916-1999)

Born Louis T. Hardin in 1916, "Moondog" markedly influenced Minimalism in the 20th century. He was blind from the age of 17 and, a mostly self-taught composer and percussionist, wrote thousands of rounds in braille notation.

In 1943, he moved from his birth-state of Missouri to New York City. His eccentricity stood out even in the big city: he always dressed in Viking regalia, with homemade cloaks, a Viking helmet and spear, and a long beard. Homeless by choice, Moondog became a cultural icon, and was "adopted" by the New York Philharmonic in the 1940s. Every day, he sat and played his music at the corner of 54th Street and 6th Avenue—an intersection that is still widely known as "Moondog's Corner."

Steve Reich and Phillip Glass both acknowledge the tremendous effect that Moondog had on their works and on the Minimalist scene. Moondog's works have been performed by the New York Philharmonic and the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and he also enjoyed a great stage present in Germany in the latter half of his life. The Two Instrumental Rounds in *Snaketime* on tonight's program are just two of thousands of his rounds. "Snaketime" is Moondog's eccentric title for the 5/4 time signature.

Michael Daugherty (b. 1954)

One of the ten most often-performed living composers, Michael Daugherty has been a composer-in-residence with many prominent American orchestras. The recent recording by the Nashville Symphony of his *Metropolis Symphony* and *Deus ex Machina* won him three Grammy awards (2011). Daugherty's composition style is indebted to Latin and jazz musical idioms and is influenced by big band and pop music.

The influence of pop culture pervades every aspect of Daugherty's work. He describes American pop icons as "the emotional reason" behind his compositions; these "icons" (photographs, small towns, landscapes, even antique furniture!) are weaved into the layers of his polyrhythms and energetic melodies.

The iconic inspiration behind Daugherty's piece on this program, *Motown Metal*, is the industrial setting of Detroit. Commissioned by the Detroit Chamber Winds and premiered in 1994, *Motown Metal* invokes rhythms and textures of the Detroit automobile industry as well as the urban "Motown" style. This piece is representative of Daugherty's synthesis of funk, big band, and Latin inspirations that he weaves into his compositions.