

# **I**MPULSE **N**EW **M**MUSIC **F**FESTIVAL



Saturday, August 3

7:30pm

Thayer Hall, Colburn School

## CONCERT PROGRAM

*Journeying through Farewell* John VIDOVIC  
*angel/atom* Chloe VILLAMAYOR  
*How Human of Me to Feel This Way* Evan WRIGHT  
*Viae* Juan Carlos ALIAGA DEL BOSQUE

### **Festival Debussy Trio**

Erin McKibben, flute  
Diana Wade, viola  
Alison Bjorkedal, harp

*Echoes Beneath the Subway* Xuesi XU  
*Gradus I* Zachary BELL  
*Talk About Velvet* Heather MEASE  
*Reset* Collin KEMENY

*This concert is dedicated to Sarah Gibson.*

**Festival Piano Trio**  
Ambroise Aubrun, violin  
Jennifer Bewerse, cello  
Mari Kawamura, piano

*polarité* Bianca QUIGLEY  
*Vertical Linearity* Manolis EKMEKTSOGLU  
*Infinite* Alexa CANALES  
*The Painted Grotto* Vincent ZHANG

### **Brightwork Ensemble**

Sarah Andon, flute      Brian Walsh, clarinet  
Shalini Vijayan, violin      Joo Lee, cello  
Aron Kallay, piano      Yuri Inoo, percussion

## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTORS

Impulse New Music Festival (INMF) was founded in 2019 to champion the creation, performance and education of new music. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, we support composers with high-caliber creative training and professional development opportunities, including our flagship summer program, Calls for Scores and New Voices competitions, Seasonal Workshops, and newly-launched *INMF4All* outreach program.

During these six years, our organization has grown to be an important resource for the new music community: our Summer Program faculty consists of top composers and musicians from the greater Los Angeles Area, with emerging-artist participants representing most of the country's top composition programs. We have achieved this through generous support from Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Ditson Fund of Columbia University, New Music USA, Los Angeles County Arts & Culture, and the State of California, among others.

We are especially grateful for the critical support that comes from you—our community of artists, alumni, and music-lovers. If you are interested in learning more about our nonprofit, making a contribution, or think that your organization could be a good partner, we would love to hear from you. Contact our Directors or find us after the show tonight!

Thank you and we hope you enjoy tonight's performance,

Brandon J. Rolle & Vlad Vizireanu  
Artistic Director Executive Director

## PROGRAM NOTES

### *Journeying through Farewell*

John VIDOVIC

*Journeying Through Farewell* is a piece meant to evoke varying stages of departure. It is a journey that everyone embarks on in various ways. It could be as simple as farewell to friends to an emotion that leaves us empty inside from losing a loved one. It is the emptiness you feel before it happens. This piece is set in a Romantic and expressive style as an altered Rondo with a slower, introspective and imitative middle section. Through each statement of the main melody and changes in accompaniment, the journey through this feeling of farewell is drawn out. It ends with the sustained flute and viola playing the opening melody together. This harkens back to the beginning where we recall its first presentation in the harp which now fades into the background as the piece descends to its closing major 7th chord. Despite a sense of finality, the piece ends with what seems to be a lingering thought that wants to continue, but instead, fades into silence.

### *angel/atom*

Chloe VILLAMAYOR

so sick of things within this world / but maybe dirt's what i deserve / angels of the atomic type / rotten's just a sweeter ripe. On finding familiarity in the immaterial and awe in the material.

### *How Human of Me to Feel This Way*

Evan WRIGHT

"How Human of Me to Feel This Way" is a meditation on self-compassion. It is based on a three-chaptered narrative that reflects the internal journey I have taken going from "what's wrong with me" and shifting to a belief of "self-worthiness" and "self-love". The narrative is similar to the format of a journal entry which is spoken in the final chapter. We conclude the piece with a love and kindness affirmation. The piece encourages listeners to practice self-compassion and brings awareness to the journey of self-acceptance. "These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name." Revelations 3:7-8

### *Viae*

Juan Carlos ALIAGA DEL BOSQUE

While writing "Viae" (Pathways), I aimed for an overall progression from an initial disordered mass of sound to a more familiar and organized version of that starting material. In the middle, one can hear different versions of the theme, quickly transforming in rhythmic, textural or melodic moments. *Viae* seeks pathways through which the initial mass of sound can develop,

like a story that begins over and over trying to find the correct ending. In the end, an abrupt interruption is needed and the search for resolution is suddenly cut short.

### ***Echoes Beneath the Subway***

Xuesi XU

Before composing this piece, a vague image appeared in my mind: an unremarkable person standing in a subway station. I tried to express this scene through music while also infusing my emotions into it. This piece employs many unconventional playing techniques, such as using special devices inside the piano. I imagined a unique sound that rises and falls, lengthens and shortens, and finally resonates deeply.

### ***Gradus I***

Zachary BELL

While writing "Gradus I," I was somewhat preoccupied with thoughts surrounding my skills as a composer, or lack thereof. Over the past few years, I've been striving towards improving as a composer and musician under the guidance of my teacher, Michael Hersch. A brilliant composer, Hersch writes from his brain to the page directly, and has recommended that I do the same for various reasons, which I agree with. While I'm able to do this, it is far more tedious and time-consuming, and often times I have to return to the piano in order to finish pieces on time, thus compromising the process. This piece is partially about this frustration and internal struggle regarding my process as a composer. The title is derived from "Gradus ad Parnassum," meaning "steps to Parnassus," a text written by Fux that sheds light on his study with Palestrina. This piece is another "step" in my never-ending journey of improvement.

### ***Talk About Velvet***

Heather MEASE

In 1927, a producer for Victor Records rolled into a Tennessee city with cutting edge technology: microphones, a new tool in the nascent era of electrical recording. With the help of two skilled engineers, producer Ralph S. Peer recorded nineteen acts in a hotel room. The goal of this two-week recording project, known now as the Bristol Sessions, was to respond to a perceived market demand for the music of rural Appalachia, or a consumer-tailored version of it. The producer culled the repertoire brought by musicians for what would sell best to a broad audience: modified renditions of singable old time, white gospel, novelty acts, and none of the vaudeville or pop many of them regularly performed. Packaged with tall tales of remote recording sessions with barefooted hillbillies, commercial country music was born. What draws me to country, old time, trad, etc., is an inability to sit still under the scrutiny of definition and expectations of authenticity. At its origins, and at most genesis points, is a porous boundary

and a stylistic multitude that muddies a distinction between influence and the thing itself. And this is still true, although unnecessarily controversial. While composing the central tune of this piece with two turntables, two records, and a mixer, I thought about an innate malleability. And I thought about the grain of this country while rubbing together acorns covered in sand and trying to remember how summer nights in Virginia sound.

### ***Reset***

Collin KEMENY

Reset closed an eighteen-month, unintended break from music following a difficult creative period. While perusing a doctorate, I was barraged by rules, often coded through stylistic limitations and a push for technical "advancement", that felt arbitrary and, at times, even contrary to the contemporary music that I love. Composing became a guessing game on how to write notes that were... academic enough, four years of which left the process bereft of life. I've since sat with empty staff paper, muted by the overwhelm in navigating these past messages. Reset. With time, music beckoned again. Perhaps I experienced burnout and needed a rest, perhaps I needed time to decode, either way, I aimed to write this work with a difference mindset. I found joy in the compositional process again, and ultimately, I hope that's what you hear in these notes, bustling exuberance from rekindled passion.

### ***polarité***

Bianca QUIGLEY

Polarité uses piano prepared with neodymium magnets that alter its timbre, creating resonant bell-like sounds in some places and buzz tones in others. These magnets produce unexpected microtonal shifts, introducing a novel sound to the Pierrot ensemble. Throughout the piece, delicate filigree coexists with bold, buzzing textures. The structure is fluid, allowing for organic development that mirrors the natural ebb and flow of magnetic forces.

### ***Vertical Linearity***

Manolis EKMEKTSOGLU

As an effort to explore the tension and timbral correlations between linear and vertical possibilities offered by the instruments of the Brightwork ensemble, I created this piece allowing these contrasting forces to interact in the way we create the textures of electronic music: the first part is idiomatic of this notion as the Brightwork ensemble players are called to execute a series of note aggregates (chords/verticality) in absolute dynamic balance. This verticality still exists in the figurations later in the piece, as it is rare to hear the performers play alone. Whenever solo parts exist, they serve as a break between the tutti parts and illustrate AI aesthetics created using my Max/Msp "from scratch" designed devices. The creation of fluid

transitions between horizontal and vertical planes was the real challenge of Vertical Linearity. This approach creates a sense of constant motion. The solo parts are assigned to piano and percussion and play the role of a busy stasis as they coexist with the vertical background of the rest of the instruments. The linear elements sometimes interact with vertical structures extensively; sometimes, they trigger one another. The work is inspired by spiritual healing processes. In the last 2 minutes (D played by all instruments), the audience is invited to meditate.

### *Infinite*

Alexa CANALES

"Infinite" is a fast-paced work for pierrot ensemble plus percussion. The piece is constantly propelled forward by a motive that appears in the opening measures. This motive recurs throughout, serving as the source of each new passage. The restless energy introduced at the beginning only pauses to take a step back in select moments. These moments, when they happen, explore expressive and lyrical variations that are inspired by the same idea.

### *The Painted Grotto*

Vincent ZHANG

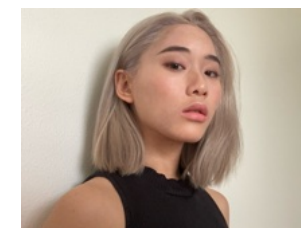
"The Painted Grotto" is a composition inspired by my visit to Tibet, a region in western China rich in spirituality and Buddhist heritage. Among my most unforgettable experiences were the "painted grottos," ancient sites dating back 3,000 years. These caves, adorned with Buddhist art and relics, encapsulate Tibetan and Chinese history. Generations of artists have created sculptures here, leaving a legacy spanning millennia. Though plundered by colonizers, the murals largely remain intact, depicting mythical narratives of Buddhas, deities, and heavenly scenes. The vibrant imagery of "Swan in the Lotus Pond," "The Dancing Bodhisattva," "Avalokitesvara Under a Bodhi Tree," and others sparked a musical vision in me. I imagined the ancient artists breathing life into their creations, and sought to capture this through music. Using piano inside techniques, triangle sticks, and pizzicato strings, I recreated the cave's ambiance. The simulation of water droplets and subtle drumming on the piano's cast iron evoke a spectrum of timbres, mirroring the vibrant cave hues. My composition aims to conjure sonic images, allowing the audience to visualize the magnificence of the Tibetan painted grottos through the interplay of timbre and harmony.

## COMPOSER BIOS

**John VIDOVIC** is a composer, guitarist, arranger, and instructor for guitar, piano, theory and composition. I received my B.A. from UCLA and 2 M.M. degrees from the S.F. Conservatory of Music in Composition (2017) with David Garner and Guitar Performance (2019) with David Tanenbaum. I spent the summer of 2014 & 2015 studying in Paris at La Schola Cantorum with David Conte and Michel Merlet. My compositions are greatly influenced by folk music, the great masters of classical music and choral traditions of Orthodox liturgical music. With over 20 years of teaching experience, I currently run a private studio and work as an adjunct professor of music teaching guitar and piano at LoneStar College and Houston Christian University.



**Chloe VILLAMAYOR** is a Los Angeles-based genre-fluid composer, violinist, singer-songwriter, producer, and collaborator. She believes music is not simply a reflection of the world but a tool to heal those within it. Chloe is an alumnus of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Composer Fellowship Program, New Amsterdam Records' Composer's Lab, and recently, the Impulse New Music Festival. She has worked with Hub New Music, and members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Salastina, and International Contemporary Ensemble. Additionally, Chloe has collaborated with the rock band Frat Mouse, choreographers from USC's Kaufman School of Dance, and filmmakers from USC's School of Cinematic Arts. Chloe is pursuing her Bachelor's of Music degree in music composition at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music, where she has studied with Christopher Trapani, Ted Hearne, and Nina Young.



**Evan WRIGHT** is Los Angeles-based composer and vocalist with a passion for collaborative storytelling in filmmaking and chamber music.

Evan recently worked as a composer assistant on the Apple TV show, “Lady in the Lake” scored by Dr. Marcus Norris. A graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, Evan is working as a film composer, vocal contractor at Disneyland and Knotts Berry Farm and was an artist-in-residence at the Emerging Composers Program, The Wassaic Project, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and Wildarces Residency all within the past year. Wright recently had his score for “My Brother and Me” premiere at the American Black Film Festival in June 2024.



**Juan Carlos ALIAGA DEL BOSQUE** is a Peruvian composer and violinist. His work is strongly influenced by his interest in philosophy, as he seeks to explore the idea of the most human path to shape music. His compositions have been performed in Europe, North America, and South America. He has participated in various competitions, such as Taki 2022 in Peru, where he won first prize. Juan Carlos received his bachelor’s degree in composition from the Universidad Nacional de Música



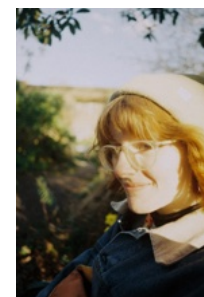
(UNM) in Lima, Peru, and earned his Master of Music degree from Mannes School of Music. He also studied violin at UNM and holds a bachelor’s degree in physics from Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP). As a performer, he has an eclectic approach and has been part of classical, traditional, and improvisatory ensembles. He was a member of the Alternative/Indie band Gris Volta, which was featured in The Guardian article "December's best music across the MAP," and has performed with Grammy-winning singer Susana Baca. He was a faculty member in the Performing Arts Department at PUCP and is currently a doctoral student at the Peabody Institute.

**Collin KEMENY** is a composer whose works range from experimental shows that utilize found objects and audience participation to intimate concert music. While color and timbre drive his artistic voice, his works thematically explore music's abstract and sentimental attributes. Collin’s most recent projects include co-producing



and composing A Recipe for Action, an immersive performance that combines structured and improvisatory music, dance, and visual art and raises awareness and resources for the food insecure in Austin, and Wet Dirt, a one-act chamber opera that explores queer stigma through an intimate story of loss and love. Collin holds a DMA from the University of Texas at Austin and has received commissions by the North Coast Winds, FiveOne Experimental Orchestra, Boulder Altitude Directive, Overtone Industries, and others. Collin has earned awards and recognitions from Vesper, Playground Ensemble, Austin Chamber Music Center, and the Cleveland Chamber Symphony and is a recipient of SOURCE funding, a Rainwater Innovation Grant, FADC Grant, and a Clock teaching award. Additionally, he held fellowships at the Talis Festival and Academy in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and at the Oregon Bach Festival. Outside of composing, Collin is an avid hiker and gardener - often finding inspiration from nature.

**Heather MEASE** is a composer, electronic musician, and multimedia artist. Heather’s creative research focuses on intersections of early and new music, the grain and appropriation of media, early recording and reproduction technologies, and DJing/remix as composition. She hosts Near Country, an exploration of country music from margin to center on Noods Radio, and Semibegun, an intermedia project exploring expanded themes of early music through writing, radio, performance, composition, and mixtapes. Heather is a visiting assistant professor at Oberlin College in Technology in Music and Related Arts (TIMARA). [www.hmmease.com](http://www.hmmease.com)



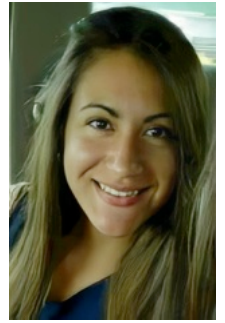
**Xuesi XU** is a composer with degrees in composition from Florida State University (D.M.), the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (M.M.), and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music (B.M.). He writes music to challenge the traditional exotic stereotypes associated with Eastern music. His music has been performed by leading orchestras such as the Albany Symphony Orchestra, RIT Philharmonic Orchestra, University of Illinois Philharmonia Orchestra, Shanghai Opera House Orchestra, Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, North/South Consonance Chamber Orchestra, and ensembles such as Slee Sinfonietta, Divergent Quintet, Arditti Quartet, icarus Quartet, and Kamratōn ensemble.



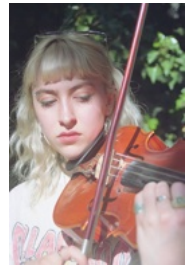
**Zachary BELL** (b. 2000) is an American composer who strives to create potently expressive, thoughtfully-written pieces of music; music that is at times beautiful, angsty, ecstatic, sardonic, and vulnerable. His works have been performed and recorded across the United States at venues such as the Peabody Conservatory, Rice University, Baylor University, Ball State University, Columbus State University, Appalachian State University, Fresno State University, San Antonio College, and the UMKC Conservatory, and at festivals including the Collaborative Composition Initiative, Divergent Studio, the Del Mar International Composer Symposium, the Atlantic Music Festival, and multiple International Trombone Festivals. Zachary's work has been performed and/or recorded by ensembles including Unheard-Of//Ensemble, Ensemble Linea, Hub New Music, loadbang, Bent Wrench, the Ohio Trombone Quartet, the Baylor Symphony Orchestra, and the Baylor Wind Ensemble, and has been commissioned by bass trombonist Shane Stewart. Zachary is currently earning a DMA in Composition at the Peabody Conservatory, where he is studying with Felipe Lara. He studied at the Peabody Conservatory with Michael Hersch for his MM degree in Composition and Music Theory Pedagogy, and earned his BM in Composition from Baylor University, where he studied with Scott McAllister and Ben Johansen.



**Alexa CANALES** is a composer, pianist, and educator who is deeply interested in explorations of color, rhythm, and texture in her work. Her compositions have been performed by musicians and ensembles across the United States and in Europe. This includes performances by the SOLI Chamber Ensemble, the Brightwork Ensemble, the Helix! New Music Ensemble, the New Brunswick Chamber Orchestra, and the Boston Percussion Group. She is the recipient of numerous grants and commissions in support of her work. Recent commissions include the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra and the Impulse New Music Festival. The Wellesley Symphony Orchestra commissioned her to write an orchestral work in honor of conductor Max Hobart's retirement after 28 years of serving as Music Director. Canales has participated in various summer music festivals and programs including the New York New Music Intensive, highSCORE, and the Atlantic Music Festival. Most recently, she participated in the 2024 LunART Festival Composers Hub. Canales holds degrees from Rutgers University (Ph.D. and M.A. in Music Composition) and Boston College (B.A.) where she studied composition with Robert Aldridge, Tarik O'Regan, Steven Kemper, and Thomas Oboe Lee.



**Bianca QUIGLEY.** Hailing from Salt Lake City, Utah, Bianca Quigley is an award-winning new music composer. She's passionate about the sonic differences between acoustic and electronic sound creation, the space where they become indistinguishable, and the relationship between performer and machine, and her music reflects these interests. Bianca is also a talented violist, active in the world of improvisation and new music performance with a decade-old background in solo performance, orchestral music, and chamber ensembles. Her music has been performed by acclaimed ensembles and artists including Jack Quartet, Sai Hashimoto of Yarn/Wire, Pamela Reimer of Ensemble Paramaribo, and André Leroux of the Quasar Saxophone Quartet. She recently placed in the Prix D'ete Composition Competition. Bianca holds a BM in viola performance from Westminster University and an MM in composition from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins.



**Manolis EKMEKTSOGLU** is a Greek composer and an Assistant Professor of Instrumental and Electronic Music Composition at the Istanbul Technical University, Departments of Sonic Arts and Composition, (M.I.A.M.). Manolis participated in the “Labor Beethoven 2017-2020” project, funded and organized by the Berlin Academy of the Arts. He is the recipient of the third prize in the Karol Szymanowski Composition Competition 2023 with the work Motion, in Two, for solo violin. His pieces have been performed in festivals in several countries, such as Greece (OutHear New Music Week, DissonArt ensemble, Off Borders Festival, Music in Motion festival), Germany (Neues Vocalsolisten Stuttgart, Earth, Sky, Space festival, Hitzacker Musiktage 2018), Italy (Soundiff), Spain (ensemble Regards Mixtur festival 2016), Austria (NAMES ensemble, Synaesthesia ensemble, Crossroads festival), Iran (Reza Korourian Awards 2017), the UK (Resonance FM 104.4, Kinetic nights festival, Manchester, Gallois trio, Diotima Quartet, Psappha ensemble, Resonance FM, RNM 2022, TTI 2021), France (Vibration#2 project, Réseau inDREAM), the USA (Versipel New Music festival, Louisiana, MISE-EN festival, New York, Impulse festival 2024) and Argentina (Atemporánea 2022). Musical Practices in the Contemporary World is his first book, where he tries to sum up what has happened in New Music after the 70s, making meaningful connections with the past and providing suggestions from the contemporary repertoire.



ballet,"[Symphonies of the Eastern Sea] has already etched his name into the annals of young contemporary composers." Vincent has worked with the West Coast Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Metropolitan Orchestra, and countless local ensembles and choirs throughout the greater Vancouver region. Vincent graduated from the Royal Conservatory of Music with an associate diploma in piano performance and is currently pursuing his undergraduate studies in composition at The Juilliard School under the mentorship of Dean David Serkin Ludwig.

**Vincent ZHANG**, a multi-award-winning composer, pianist, and conductor, began his compositional journey during his piano studies at the age of 9. Initially scribbling irregular and random notes on paper and notation software, he later entered the realm of formal composition studies. Vincent collaborates with esteemed artists throughout North America, including visual artist James Turrell in his Vancouver exhibition at the Center of International Contemporary Art (CICA). He was featured and promoted by The New York Times as "an artist whose meteoric rise is watched with bated breath" (The New York Times). Vincent's enthusiasm for collaborating with artists across all disciplines is prominent in his musical career. He has written the large symphonic award-winning work "Symphonies of the Eastern Sea" for

