

Acknowledgements

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- Thank you to my lovely guest artist and human ray of sunshine, Mandy Moreno. Putting together our jazz set for this recital was easily my favorite part of the whole process! Collaborating with you was fun, easy, and educational.
- I would like to thank my family and friends for providing a strong support system as I pursue a career in music. Thank you for always pushing me to do more than I believe is possible.
- Thank you to all the hardworking staff and faculty in the UND Music Department. Fostering an educational environment that meets expectedly high standards is a challenge in the middle of a pandemic, but you're all succeeding. I see you and appreciate you.
- Thank you to Dr. Cory Driscoll for coordinating the recording and live-streaming of this recital.
- Thank you to every music teacher I've had in the past who has influenced the musician I am today.
- Thank YOU for tuning in!

This recital is in partial fulfillment of a
Masters of Music: Percussion Performance.

UND MUSIC
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Rachel Agan
percussion

Graduate Recital

featuring
Mandy Moreno
voice



Josephine Campbell Recital Hall
Sunday, April 18th, 2021
2:00 pm

Program

Rebonds Iannis Xenakis
A (1922-2001)

Fernando's Waltz Paul Smadbeck
(1956-)

Stop Speaking Andy Akiho
(1979-)

Stompin' in Seven David Reeves
(1973-)

Intermission

Nightingale Norah Jones
arr. Rachel Agan (1979-)

Of Saints and Sorceresses

A jazz set conceived by Rachel Agan

- I. High and Dry (1995)
- II. Baby I'm a Fool For You (2009)
- III. All Is Found (2019)
- IV. Rose Leaves (2019)
- V. Your Heart is as Black as Night (2011)

Mandy Moreno, voice

Crystal Silence Chick Corea
(1941-2021)

Northern Lights Eric Ewazen
(1954-)

Program Notes

Rebonds (1987-9) Iannis Xenakis

Xenakis was a Greek-French composer active in the late-20th century in Paris. Prior to his multifaceted career, he fought in the Greek Civil War during which he sustained massive facial injuries from tank shrapnel. He was excommunicated by the Greek government when the Democratic Army of Greece (DAG) lost, and became a naturalized citizen of France in the late 1940s. During his years in Paris, he joined an architectural firm and gained experience as an engineer and mathematician, in addition to studying composition under Oliver Messiaen. Messiaen encouraged him to utilize his diverse background in his composing; Xenakis went on to innovate the use of set theory and mathematics in contemporary music. *Rebonds*, composed between 1987-1989, is one of several percussion pieces composed by Xenakis using mathematical properties. Split into parts A and B, the piece is structured using the Golden Ratio. The Golden Ratio is one in which the ratio of two parts is equal to the ratio of the sum to the larger of the two quantities. In this case, part A : part B is as A + B : part A. Although only part A is being performed today, we still experience the Golden Ratio, because the climactic point in the piece occurs approximately two thirds of the way through the movement.. Part A is not performed as often as part B, possibly due to the rapid polyrhythmic flurries littered throughout the piece, especially surrounding the climax.

Fernando's Waltz (2010) Paul Smadbeck

Paul Smadbeck played percussion growing up in Manhattan and graduated from Ithaca College with his Bachelor's and Master's in Music. For a time, he was a frequent performer and composer of percussion music. He is known especially for his marimba solos *Rhythm Song* (1984) and *Virginia Tate* (1999), both staples of marimba literature. *Fernando's Waltz* was commissioned in 2010 for the International Marimba Festival and Conference, and was named after the host and artistic director, Fernando Meza. This piece contains similar musical qualities of his more famous pieces in the use of beautiful, changing harmonies between four mallets, worked over a grooving permutation. He now makes his living as a successful realtor.

Program Notes

Stop Speaking (2011) Andy Akiho

Andy Akiho is a trailblazer of new music composition and performance, specializing in percussion. He is known for his unconventional instrumentations, including steel pan, ping pong, metallic drum set, toy piano, and combinations of brass, winds, percussion and voice in chamber music that create unusual timbral contrast. He often uses electronics or digital playback in his compositions, exemplified by his 2011 composition for snare drum and digital playback, *Stop Speaking*. This piece was commissioned by Tom Sherwood for the 2011 Modern Snare Competition hosted by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Stompin' in Seven (2013) David Reeves

David Reeves is a contemporary composer who draws inspiration from a wide variety of genres. He ranges from jazz, funk, world music, electronic music, marching band music, and more. His vast experience with marching band music stems from his performing years in the DCI World Champion Star of Indiana (1991-1993). He later instructed the Husky Drumline at the University of Washington (2001-2009), where he also received his Bachelor's in Percussion Performance. His strong snare drum skills are evident in his percussion compositions, and *Stompin' in Seven* is no exception. The piece is a through-composed multi-percussion solo written in an improvisational style, inspired by Herlon Riley, jazz and gospel drummer from New Orleans.

Intermission (5 minutes)

Program Notes

Nightingale (2002) Norah Jones

Eight-time Grammy-Award winning American jazz artist Norah Jones released her debut studio album *Come Away With Me* in 2002. The album features four singles that all appeared on the Billboard charts in the early 2000s, and *Rolling Stone* rated the album #54 on their list of top 100 albums of the decade. While there are plenty of better-known songs off the album I could have chosen to arrange for solo marimba, *Nightingale* stood out for multiple reasons, not the least of which was the meaning behind the lyrics. In the song, Jones is asking this "Nightingale", likely a free-spirited individual, for life advice. She wants to fly away from her current life situation, fly away and be free like a nightingale. We all have something we want to escape, whether that be work, school, responsibilities, or other commitments.

Program Notes

Of Saints and Sorceresses

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High and Dry (1995) Radiohead

Radiohead is a British alternative rock group that was established in 1985. The song *High and Dry* is one of three singles from their critically acclaimed album *The Bends*. According to the vocalist Thom Yorke, the song is about a “loony girl [he] was going out with [who] became mixed up with ideas of success and failure.”

Baby I'm a Fool (2009) Melody Gardot

Music has played a critical role in Melody Gardot's life ever since she was 19 years old. She sustained a head injury from a bicycle accident and relied heavily on music therapy during her recovery. She frequently visits hospitals and universities to discuss the benefits of music therapy. *Baby I'm a Fool* was released as a single on her second album, *My One and Only Thrill* through Verve Records. Gardot explains in an interview that the song is about “two coquette individuals who won't admit that they're in love with each other.”

All Is Found (2019) Kristen Anderson-Lopez & Robert Lopez

Performed by Evan Rachel Wood in Disney's *Frozen II*, this song is sung from the perspective of Queen Iduna to her two daughters, Anna and Elsa, the two main protagonists of the franchise. The song was inspired by Norwegian lullabies originally. Additionally, I was listening to a lot of Civil Wars when first conceiving this version of the piece, which heavily influenced the outcome.

Rose Leaves (2019) Bailen

Bailen, consisting of siblings with the surname Bailen, is a newly-formed alternative rock trio from New York where were raised by classically-trained parents. On the release of their debut album *Thrilled to Be Here* (2019), Julia Bailen observes, “first records are special, because you spend your whole life writing them.”

Thanks for listening!

Your Heart is as Black as Night Melody Gardot

Another track off her *One and Only Thrill* (2009) album, the original version of *Your Heart is as Black as Night* has a jazz/blues feel. To suit the nature of marimba and voice, a Spanish habanera style a la George Bizet's opera comique, *Carmen* (1875), was adopted for this rendition of Gardot's song.

Mandy Moreno, voice

Crystal Silence (1972) Chick Corea

Chick Corea was an American jazz keyboardist and composer, a true pioneer of jazz fusion and electronic jazz. He was recently awarded two posthumous Grammys for Best Improvised Jazz Solo and Best Jazz Instrumental Album, following his unanticipated death from cancer at 79. The album on which *Crystal Silence* first appears, *Return to Forever*, functions dually as the debut album for the band of the same name; it features Corea on Fender Rhodes Electric Piano, Stanley Clarke on electric bass, Joe Farrell on soprano sax, and Airto Moreira and Flora Purim on percussion.

Northern Lights (1989) Eric Ewazen

Eric Ewazen studied composition under Milton Babbitt, Joseph Schwantner, Gunther Schuller, Warren Benson, Samuel Adler and Eugene Kurtz at Eastman School of Music and Julliard School of Music. His compositions for wind ensemble, orchestra and chamber music have a characteristic fantastical quality that bends the rules of tonality without breaking away completely. His compositions for marimba stretch the capabilities of the player, written with the note density of contemporary piano pieces. *Northern Lights* was written for Gordon Stout as an imitation of the natural phenomenon, the northern lights. Multiple styles and techniques are required to perform, as there are several contrasting sections and moods.