

The 43rd Annual Bowling Green New Music Festival

October 12-15, 2022

College of Musical Arts - Bowling Green State University

Concert 7

Saturday, October 15 - 2:30pm - Bryan Recital Hall

Figure and Form (2022, consortium premiere)Molly Joyce

David Esselburn, vibraphone

Part of the Well Behaved Women Seldom Make History Project

the earthen lack (2018)David T. Little

- I. how it begins
- II. premonition
- III. our sickness
- IV. wait for sleep
- V. lament (but what will you remember?)
- VI. how it ends

Brian Snow, cello

Cosmic Rose (2022, world premiere).....Anne Le Baron

Rachel Constantino, horn - Shelly Du, harp

Visionary (2020).....Steven Naylor

Winner of the 2021 BGSU Competitions in Music Performance - Composition Division

Katherine Pracht Phares - Carolyn Anderson

Steven Naylor, piano

Program Notes

Figure and Form was commissioned by a consortium led by Emily Salgado, titled the "Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History Project." The project honored various female percussionists through newly-commissioned works connected to their playing and impact. I chose to study the work of Marjorie Hyams, an American jazz vibraphonist, pianist, and arranger known for her work in jazz groups throughout the 20th century. In response to a question about being a female player in several male-led bands, Hyams responded:

"In a sense, you weren't really looked upon as a musician, especially in clubs. There was more interest in what you were going to wear or how your hair was fixed — they just wanted you to look attractive, ultra feminine, largely because you were doing something they didn't consider feminine. Most of the time I fought it and didn't listen to them. [One of the ways you fought it was insisting on wearing a band uniform instead of a dress.] Only in retrospect, when you start looking back and analyzing, you can see the obstacles that were put in front of you I just thought at the time that I was too young to handle it, but now I see that it was really rampant chauvinism."

Therefore with the work, I sought to go from arpeggio and chords to a unity between the left and right hand by the end, hopefully attaining an unexpected "form" and inspired by Marjorie's comments about assuming an unexpected form to counter social expectation of feminist embodiment.

the earthen lack

"...in that last scene played between death and ourself there is no more feigning; we must speak straightforward French; we must show whatever is good and clean in the bottom of the pot."

— Montaigne, *Essays*, I.19

In recent years, I have found myself both intensely interested in and deeply moved by music, painting, and religious ideas from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Drawn initially to the 1611 English ballad *The Three Ravens*—a song that is threaded through many of my compositions, and from which the title *the earthen lack* is taken—I moved quickly toward other great works of that century: paintings by Zurbarán and Velázquez, and to the (slightly earlier) essays of Montaigne, where many such ruminations conclude. Each imbued with the rituals and doctrine of their time, these works engage—directly or not—with deep-rooted questions of human mortality and impermanence. *the earthen lack* investigates these interests and pressing questions: a spare and intimate ritual for the performer; a meditation for the listener. - D.T.L. December 2018

Cosmic Rose, for French horn and harp, refers to a pair of swirling galaxies which form the shape of a rose. The stunning Hubble image released by NASA depicts Interacting Galaxies Arp 273, found in the constellation Andromeda, is a combination of spiral galaxy UGC 1810 and UGC 1813. Although the two galaxies are separated by tens of thousands of light-years, they pass through one another. As I composed this piece, the image of the rose created by whirling galaxies that briefly merge as they intersect was a lodestone for me.

Cosmic Rose is dedicated to Rachel Constantino, who commissioned it with funding provided in part by the Meir Rimon Commissioning Assistance Program of the International Horn Society, and by the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music at the College of Musical Arts of Bowling Green State University.

Visionary

Hildegard von Bingen is an abbess living a monastic life in the 12th century. She has experienced visions of a religious and allegorical nature since childhood, but for decades has told nearly no one. Recently, she experienced a vision of far greater magnitude than any other she ever had, in which a voice from Heaven tells her to speak and write about her visions so that others may hear and read them. She faces great self-doubt in accomplishing this task, which has driven her to sickness. She talks to her closest collaborator and friend, Volmar, about this predicament, who tells her that she need not judge herself so harshly and must remember that she is indeed capable of the creative endeavor at hand. Volmar uplifts Hildegard's mind and spirit, encouraging her to pursue her task of writing what will become her great visionary book, *Scivias*.

Composer and performer bios and ensemble rosters are available online at bgsu.edu/festival.

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