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Music Marathon

Date: Saturday, April 7 | 9:00am-5:00pm Location: Gruss Hall, Austin Arts Center, Trinity College The music marathon, held in Gruss Hall at Trinity College, is held up in opposition to the frequent practice by mainstream venues and performers to present entire seasons devoid of music composed by women because of the purported difficulty of finding quality music by women. A symbolic day of programming suggests that any musical organization could, if they chose, program entire seasons of high-quality works by women. Performances were selected from a competitive call garnering applicants from across the globe.

*Please Note: Because of the continuous nature of the event, times are approximate and may be subject to change

9:00 - 11:00 am

Holly Roadfeldt, piano, performs a program of music by Clara Schumann (1819-1896), Kala Pierson (b. 1977), Chen Yi (b. 1953), Lili Boulanger (1893-1918), Michelle McQuade Dewhirst (b. 1973), Julia Seeholzer (b. 1990), Rasa Daukus (b. 1977), and Joan Tower (b. 1938).

Beth Wiemann, multimedia, *An Anxious Awareness of Danger*

Sarah Masterson, piano, works by Margaret Bonds (1913-1972), Florence Price (1887-1953), and Philippa Duke Schuyler (1931-1967)

Eliane Aberdeam, composer, with **Sarah Carleton**, actor/librettist: *The Heart of Shahrazad* (with soprano Lara Lynn McGill and harpist Marissa Avon)

Emily O'Brien, recorder, works by Melika Fitzhugh (b. 1972) and Janet Peachey (b. 1953)

11:30 am - 12:45 pm

Martha Mooke, composer and electro-acoustic viola, *No Ordinary Window*, *Virtual Corridors*, *ICE 4*, " and *A Dream in Sound*

Patricia Reuben Abreu, piano, *Three Piano Pieces (Drei Clavierstucke)* by Melika Fitzhugh

1:30 - 3:45 pm

Nathaniel Gworek, percussion, *Amazonia Dreaming* by Annea Lockwood, *These Hands* by Marissa Dipronio, *Single Stroke Roll Meditation* by Pauline Oliveros, *Times Table* by Olivia Kieffer, *The Ex-Files: Maybe He's John* by Kimberly Osberg (featuring **Kimberly Osberg**)

Jenn Kirby, composer and electroacoustic media, *Phonetics*, *Knowing*, and *I Am Performing*

Michelle Murray Fiertek, soprano, and **Miguel Campinho**, piano, *Três Canções* and *O Gatinho Feliz* by Rami Levin

Helena Kopchick, bassoon, and **Sophia Tegart**, flute, *Transformations* Suites Nos. 1 & 2 and *Distillations* by Jessica Rudman

Nannette Solomon, piano, works by Betty Beath (b. 1932) and Elena Kats-Chrnin (b. 1957)

Jiwon Kim, violin, **Eun Hae Oh**, flute, **Micaela Freund**, viola, *White Helmets, as white as death* by Niloufar Nourbakhsh

4:00 - 5:30 pm

Stephanie Duzdevich, soprano, and Moirah Feiner Trenk, piano, *Tre canzoni spagnole* by Else Olivieri Sangiacomo (1894–1996) and *Poems of Juana Borrero* by Stephane Duzdevich

Misha Penton, soprano, with clarinetist, **Boja Kragulj**, *The Medusa Project* (multimedia) and *Threshold: a new music video* (an experimental postopera, directed by Penton)

Program Notes (Listed in performance order):

Holly Roadfedlt: Inspirations: Telling Her Stories

Great music begins with the spark of creativity that arises from the first moments of inspiration. These sparks can be found in poetry, visual art, personal interactions, and other sources, and in the hands of excellent composers, they develop into personal stories. It is this story telling that unites all of the pieces on this recital program.

This recital includes inspired music written by composers of different eras (19th-, 20th- and 21st-centuries), nationalities (composers who are living or lived in the United States, China, Australia, Poland, Germany and France), ages, and styles. Far from a random collection of pieces, this program demonstrates how each composer was influenced by numerous cultural perspectives, experiences, or even expectations.

About half of these pieces were written for the performer: the works by Kala Pierson (currently living in the United States), Julia Seeholzer (currently living in Poland), and Rasa Daukus (currently living in Australia) were developed from stories shared with the performer via music and conversation. The performer also premiered 15 of Michelle McQuade Dewhirst's Piano Per Diem pieces, three of which will be included on this program.

It is this performer's desire to share what musically inspired these composers as well as reminding the audience that we need not be limited by a specific demographic. If we choose to look beyond traditional expectations of music making (who is composing, who is performing, where, and why), our creativity and skills can grow exponentially.

Beth Wiemann: This submission is of a single work, combining live performance, vocoder processing of the live clarinet sound, and pre-recorded processed audio. The work uses sampled sound and melodic quotation from a song by Gabriel Kahane (permission granted by that composer/performer) to build an enveloping though cool aural environment.

Sarah Masterson: This set features works by African-American women composers written in the early- to mid-20th century. Margaret Bonds' "Troubled Water" is a fantasia on the spiritual "Wade in the Water", while each movement of Florence Price's "Dances in the Canebrakes" is based on a traditional dance rhythm. Philippa Duke Schuyler's "Fortune Favored the Bold Player" is one of her only published piano works; the rest of the "White Nile Suite" is currently unpublished and unavailable. The full suite is described as a "musical sage depicting Arab history in Egypt and the Sudan". This short program would offer audiences and participants the opportunity to hear works that are rarely performed or recorded (in the case of Schuyler's piece).

Martha Mooke: *No Ordinary Window*, music and performance by electric violist/composer Martha Mooke, is a journey of the illuminating power of music – to the world, to the soul, to the imagination... where music is a window that never closes. Mooke writes: "Playing my electric violas through an array of effects processors at my feet, the music envelopes the audience, inviting them to experience this shared time of sounds and sensations in a uniquely personal way. The audience infuses my improvisations and delivery of the performance, as they become aware of the light, temperature, people next to them, and observe other sensations not usually acknowledged in traditional performances."

Following her trip to Havana, Cuba in 2015, where she presented her *No Ordinary Window Experience* (and a workshop at the Casa de las Americas) in Old Havana's historic Iglesia de Paula, CMBF Radio Musical Nacional wrote "Exploration, creation and spirituality deployed through electronic impulses; but above all, from the imagination, martha Mooke opened windows for aspiring musicians...from her art, flooded the spaced enclosures with cascade of sound that displayed the illuminating power of music... So, more windows opened in Havana."

Mel Fitzhugh: *Drei Clavierstücke* [2016] are three disparate pieces for solo piano, brought together for this concert:

I: *Elementar* was the basis of a string quartet written in 1993, but which was never performed on piano at that time.

II: *Erleuchtenden* is the situation which occurs when a Daichovo tangles with its own mirror rhythm, and then briefly flirts with a Baroque-style prelude. Left to its own devices, it should groove! Wobble! Dance!

III: *Ertragend* is also inspired by folk dances (and a bit by Bartok's love of folk dances, in a

way).

Jenn Kirby: *Phonetics* is written for voice and live electronics. It is performed using a headset microphone, a gametrak (controller) and a Max patch. The piece makes use of the voice as a sound source for live manipulations in a gestural electroacoustic performance. The piece repurposes obsolete hardware originally designed for a golf game and combines it with contemporary live electronic performance.

Knowing is written for voice and live electronics. A permutations poem is presented. The piece is subversive in nature, beginning as one thing and becoming another. Hint: spoken word, hip-hop, dance.

Ho-ma is written for voice and live electronics. It is performed using a headset microphone, a gametrak (controller) and a Max patch. The piece is inspired by chanting traditions, with the performer producing guttural sounds alongside a harmonic droning soundscape.

Michelle Murray Fiertek and Miguel Campinho:

Três Canções and *O Gatinho Feliz*, composed by Rami Levin, were commissioned by Veruschka Mainhard, a Brazilian soprano. The texts were written by her seven year old daughter, Laura Mainhard Carvalho. *Três Canções* was premiered in Rio de Janeiro in 2014. Today's performance of *O Gatinho Feliz* is its world premiere.

Translations:

O Gatinho Feliz (The Happy Kitten)

Once upon a time there was a cat that was pregnant.

Suddenly a kitten was born, with black eyes and brown fur like a tree.

He was very beautiful and cute. His name was Bilu.

He loved wool.

Bilu was with his mother on the street when he met a girl kitten.

She had red eyes and wore glasses.

Time passed. They grew up, fell in love and got married. They lived happily ever after.

Três Canções (ThreeSongs)

1. *Os Macacos Brincalhães (The Playful Monkeys)*

Life in the forest isn't easy.

So the monkeys decided to have a party.

All of the animals were invited.

There would be music, food, presents and fun.

So the monkeys arranged the cave with bananas and flowers.

The party started at two o'clock.

The swan started to play her flute.

*The tiger played the violin.
The bear played the drums.
The monkeys climbed on the rock and sang.
The elephant ate everything.
At the party they amused each other by imitating people.
The party was very cool.
Everyone was sad when it was over.
The zebra asked when there would be another party.
Mama monkey answered, "Every day."
Everyone smiled and thanked with kisses.
It was a wonderful day!*

2. O Pequeno barco (The Little Boat)

*Once upon a time there was a famous navigator
Who prepared his boat to sail the next day.
In the morning he put on his clothes and went onto the boat.
Minutes later he left with his friends.
In a while they were surrounded by only sea and sky.
The day was beautiful; the sun was shining beautifully, because it was summer.
Days later they came to an island and they began to hear salsa.*

3. Porcos(Pigs)

*There were five pigs playing in the mud.
One pig went out to lunch.
There were four pigs playing in the mud.
Four pigs were playing in the mud.
One pig went to the bathroom.
Three pigs were playing in the mud.
One pig went out to dinner.
There were two pigs playing in the mud.
Two pigs were playing in the mud.
One pig went for a walk.
There was one pig playing in the mud.
One pig went to sleep.
Good night, pigs.*

Nannette Solomon: Women's Voices From Down Under: Piano Music Of Betty Beath and Elena Kats-Chernin

Australia's culture is a fascinating tapestry of diverse threads. Geographically closer to Asia than Europe, it bears the legacy of British manners and civilization, but is home to one of the most interesting indigenous populations in the world. These rich intersections have created a

burgeoning classical music scene in which composers have absorbed disparate elements running the gamut from Aboriginal and southeast Asian music and instruments, American jazz and blues, to more traditional and avant-garde Western techniques. Although Australia's concert life is a relative newcomer compared to that of Europe, many of the prominent composers throughout the twentieth century were women- who contributed works for opera, the concert hall, and educational purposes. This performance will feature piano works by two contemporary Australian women - Betty Beath (b. 1932) and Elena Kats-Chernin (b.1957), whose music embodies the above - mentioned compositional streams.

Beath, who studied at the Sydney Conservatorium and Queensland Conservatory (where she later taught), has had orchestral works performed throughout Australia, Europe, and the United States. During residencies and research trips to Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, she became interested in the sounds and rhythms of non-western music; these and other influences resonate in her 2012 Moments Remembered, a suite of seven short piano pieces that includes a movement based on Balinese folklore –“Seeking Raja Pala”- as well as “Tangalooma Tango” (Tangalooma is a former whaling station and wild dolphin resort in Queensland). I will also perform Beath's Didgeridoo (1991), a short piece that transfers the sound of this iconic Maori instrument to the piano.

Born in Tashkent, Kats-Chernin emigrated to Australia with her family in 1975, where she studied at the Sydney Conservatorium. According to the Sydney Herald, “ Her status as one of this country's most prolific and consistently innovative composers remains unchallenged.” As an antidote to the pressures of large-scale compositions, Kats-Chernin often writes brief rags; these have become some of her most well-known and popular pieces. I will perform three rags with specific connections to Australia - Peggy's Rag (1996), written during a residency at the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's House in Sydney, and a tribute to that distinguished Australian composer; Removalist Rag (1996), begun at the Glanville-Hicks House; and Sunday Rag (1997), written on a hot February day of the Australian Summer.

Nilo Nour: *White Helments, as white as death*

Khalid Farah, Former Builder

Abu Omar, Former Blacksmith

Mohammed Farah, Former Tailor

These are some of the names of nearly 3000 volunteers who work for the White Helmets organization, and they have saved more than 82,000 civilian lives in the mercenary-controlled Syria since 2014. Their motto is: “to save a life is to save all of humanity.”

In this piece, I aimed to depict the most beautiful nature of this organization: to remain a human under the most inhumane conditions of war, which brings nothing but a thick blanket of destruction, death, and hopelessness. I searched for beauty in the most extreme and intense instrumental ranges of violin, viola, and flute. White Helmets have taught me that I must never give up hope. No matter how extreme the environment is, we must always, always fight for

what's right.

Stephanie Duzdevich: Elsa Olivieri Sangiacomo (1894-1996) was a composer, pianist, and singer who self-identified as an Italian with Mexican heritage—her mother was the daughter of Spanish merchants living in Mexico. Her first published work, *Tre canzoni spagnole* was championed by Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936), her composition instructor, whom she later married. Although Olivieri described the songs as “Mexican lullabies” dedicated to her mother, the texts derive from various sources. *La Muerte del Payador* sets words from an epic poem, Santos Vega, written in 1885 by Argentinean poet Rafael Obligado (1851-1920). The song describes the death of Santos Vega, a singing cowboy who dueled with the devil and lost. The second song, *Momento*, was actually the first to be composed. It is the only one of the three for which the composer acknowledges a poet, the Spanish Joaquín Dicenta Alonso (1893–1967). It describes Love appearing at the protagonist’s door as a bedraggled pilgrim, asking for food, warmth, and guidance. After being turned away, Love’s identity is realized from a distance, as it walks off.

Now asked to return and offered food and warmth, it laughs mockingly, saying “Love never passes through the same place twice.” The final song, *Duérmete mi alma*, is an old Sephardic folk tune. The words comprise a lullaby, a mother singing her child to sleep. Through her words, we learn that the father has left them for a “white girl,” his “new love.”

Respighi encouraged Olivieri to arrange *Tre canzoni spagnole* for orchestra. They were then premiered, on June 2, 1917, at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Although Olivieri ultimately chose to give up composing in order to support her husband’s career, she wrote both small and large-scale works, including two operas that have yet to be published or performed. *Poems of Juana Borrero* is a song cycle in progress. It sets poems by the titular 19th century Cuban poetess and painter. The three songs to date are scored for soprano and piano: *Sol Poniente* (Setting Sun), *Amargura* (Despair), and *Última Rima* (Last Poem).

Juana Borrero achieved literary and artistic recognition during her short life (May 17, 1877—March 9, 1896), an especially impressive feat given that she was a young woman living in a supremely patriarchal society. She lived during Cuba’s war for independence from Spain, a time when a woman’s place was inside the house, under guardianship of father or husband. Though brilliant and remarkably creative, she had virtually no personal freedom or privacy. Her imagination and artistic output became her vehicle for spiritual independence.

Largely unknown today, Borrero’s legacy had for most of the 20th century been relegated to footnote status in the history of Modernist writers. She was often described merely in relation to male poets such as Julián del Casal, to whom she was a friend. She has also been called a late Romantic, a designation which ignores the complexity of her oeuvre. But a growing contemporary discourse now argues that she is one of Cuba’s early Modernist writers. Her poetry delves deep into raw states of imagination, affliction, love, and death.

Sol Poniente sets Borrero's very first poem, written when she was seven. It describes the poet's artistic fascination with sunset: "In the evening, in that mysterious space where the lark concludes its song, and trembling Venus hides within the heart of the sea; As the reverberant sun dies, extending its glow through the empyrean, I feel inspiration descend upon my pensive brow."¹ Amargura grapples with mortality. Written between 1895-96, while simultaneously being deeply in love and dying, she uses the metaphor of a "sickly flower," symbolizing being in the bloom of life and on the cusp of demise. She makes reference to her "suffering breast" and constrictions within her throat. She uses violent "ripping" imagery to allude to the physical and psychological toll of tuberculosis.

Ultima Rima, Borrero's final poem, was dictated to her sister while the poet was on her deathbed. She was too weak to write. It is addressed to Carlos Pio Uhrbach, the young poet Juana left behind in Cuba, who was fighting in the war for independence. He died on the battlefield one year after her. The poem describes her suffering and asks that he give her one last, dreamed of kiss, leaving a tenuous perfume of lavender in her soul. Borrero and her family were political exiles in Florida at the time of her death at just eighteen.

Within the songs, both piano and voice express different aspects of Borrero's enigmatic persona. The piano voices Borrero's dynamic, afflicted psyche. It erupts in colors and harmonies unattainable by the human voice alone, mirroring the relationship between her psyche's complexity and her temporal identity. While the vocal line serves as the vehicle for her literal message, the piano's solo moments often disclose a combustible force lying just beneath the surface of her words. The cycle begins and ends in E flat. *Sol Poniente* remains in this key throughout, while *Última Rima* modulates to it towards the end, its final chord soft and arpeggiated. This last E flat chord symbolizes the poet's final breath—a release of the very thing tormented by her illness. Amargura's piano depicts her palpable anxiety, the realization that she is both in the bloom of life and death. It begins with a subtle and then frantic acceleration, expressing her panicked need to live everything—to express everything—before her limited time runs out. *Sol Poniente*'s vocal line expresses the words of a brilliant child, but a child nonetheless. The melody begins in a flowing 6/8 meter, at times sounding almost like a lullaby. It ends with a straightforward cadence. But then the piano takes center stage, dissolving the carefully contained harmonic structure, betraying the deep, darker rivers of Borrero's psyche, washing even her childhood words. A furious force rips through and past the comfortable tonal cradle. The piano returns again to the eerie motive first heard at the song's beginning, harkening to Borrero's intrinsic psychological shadow. This innate dark sensibility colored her short life, connecting Borrero to an intuitive knowing of her mortality, years before she became ill.

Misha Penton: The Medusa Project

The Medusa Project is a twenty-minute monodrama for soprano and mixed media. The work is inspired by, and is an abstract re-imagining of, the Greco-Roman Medusa myth. The Medusa Project's dramatic action is a poetic, internal monologue, wherein Medusa is not defeated by the

upstart boy-hero, Perseus, but instead, she remains triumphant. The postopera is a synthesis of live semi-improvised and improvised voice work, utilizing bel canto, experimental, and extended voice techniques, fused with original poetics and integrated into an original digital audio voice and film-scape. The work's structure is modular, in that it functions as a completely solo monodrama for voice and media, or additional improvising musicians may be added to a given performance. This work offers festival goers and festival participants the performance of an experimental postopera piece: a work which integrates media with classical and experimental vocal practices in a dramatic, operatic context. The Medusa Project is also an iterative piece, having a number of incarnations, including an online-only original film, a number of poetic writings, and several critically engaged hybrid experimental writing pieces that integrate poetry with the theories of Italian feminist philosopher Adriana Cavarero, French foundational feminist Hélène Cixous, and cultural studies scholar Steven Connor. The scope of the project in media, writing, and performance documentation is accessible through Misha's website at mishapenton.com through 2018.