

THE ST. OLAF COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC PRESENTS  
FACULTY/GUEST CONCERT

# 10th Wave

Bethany Gonella, *flute*  
Weily Grina-Shay, *clarinet*  
Ashley Ng, *violin*  
Elizabeth York, *violin*  
Kelsey Farr, *viola*  
Patricia Ryan, *cello*  
April Ryun Kim '11, *piano*  
Eri Isomura '11, *marimba and vibraphone*  
Bjorn Grina-Shay, *drumset and vibraphone*  
Elwyn Alexander Fraser Junior '09, *voice*



Monday, January 13, 2020  
Urness Recital Hall • 8:15 p.m.

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# PROGRAM

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## to wAlk Or ruN in wEst harlem (2008)

Andy Akiho (b. 1979)

Bethany Gonella, *flute*  
Weily Grina-Shay, *clarinet*  
Ashley Ng, *violin*  
Patricia Ryan, *cello*

April Ryun Kim, *piano*  
Eri Isomura, *vibraphone*  
Bjorn Grina-Shay, *drumset*

## Film: to wAlk Or ruN in wEst harlem (2016)

Michael McQuilken

New York-based percussionist and composer, Andy Akiho, wrote this piece in 2008 for the Bang On A Can Festival. Since then, *to wAlk Or ruN in wEst harlem* has seen much success as a chamber piece and as its adaptation for percussion ensemble. This composition was based off of Akiho's experience of a violent encounter in West Harlem.

New York-based filmmaker and theater artist, Michael Joseph McQuilken, was asked by Akiho to create a narrative based on this piece without knowledge of the original backstory. At the time, McQuilken was deep into researching autobiographical accounts of human trafficking to direct the Pulitzer winning contemporary opera "Angel's Bone." The narrative of the film for *to wAlk Or ruN in wEst harlem* was influenced by this concept. The film was designed to create an honest view in the life of a victim including concepts like language barriers, opiate use and withdrawal, and Stockholm syndrome. See more of Michael's works at [michaeljosephmcquilken.com](http://michaeljosephmcquilken.com).

## String Quartet No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 110 (1960)

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)

1. Largo
2. Allegro molto
3. Allegretto
4. Largo
5. Largo

Ashley Ng, *violin*  
Elizabeth York, *violin*

Kelsey Farr, *viola*  
Patricia Ryan, *cello*

Dmitri Shostakovich, a Russian composer and pianist, is regarded as one of the most famous 20th century composers. Shostakovich lived and worked as a composer during the Soviet regime. To this day, his standing within the Soviet government remains controversial.

When Shostakovich began composing this string quartet in 1960, he had survived World War I and II, experienced the beginnings of de-Stalinization, and the height of the Cold War. After Stalin's death, he was in and out of favor with Soviet authorities because of his compositions and the subliminal musical gestures he wrote causing much criticism from the public.

Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 8 was composed in three days between 12-14 of July 1960, soon after being diagnosed with ALS and joining the Communist Party earlier that year. He had visited the ruins of Dresden and was composing the music for the film "Five Days, Five Nights," which was a documentary of the Dresden bombings by East German and Soviet filmmakers.

*String Quartet No. 8* consists of five movements that occur without breaks. According to the score itself, Shostakovich dedicated the piece "to the memory of the victims of fascism and war." However, there has been much controversy over the true meaning of this dedication. Several of his family members and historians have had disagreements over the intentions of this piece. For example, Shostakovich's son believed this piece was a dedication to victims of totalitarianism while the daughter of Shostakovich believed the dedication was imposed by Russian authorities.

The most intriguing of thoughts over this dedication was made by Shostakovich's friend, Lev Lebedinsky, who thought Shostakovich created this piece as his epitaph or a suicide note. According to Lebedinsky, the composer had thoughts of committing suicide around the time he composed this piece.

The opening four notes in the string quartet, D-Eb-C-B, read “D-Es-C-H” in German musical notation. These notes are the composer’s signature (Dmitri SHostakowitsch), commonly heard in many of his works as a self-quotation. In this case, it is heard in every single movement of the work. In the fourth movement, Shostakovich writes a light and cheerful quotation of the character Katerina from his opera “Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District,” in the moment that she is reunited with her incarcerated lover, Sergei. Another notable quote in the piece is the three loud consecutive knocks that is widely considered to reference the knocking of the KGB (Soviet state agency) at his door.

The style of bleak augmented harmonies, in doubled octaves and wide range of notes covered within the quartet are characteristic of Shostakovich’s works, but there is much to be said regarding the irony in his works. Irony was common in Russian compositions around his lifetime, as feelings of oppression, terror, and grieving were encrypted in the music but never literally stated.

~ *Brief Intermission* ~

**Coming Together (1972)**

Frederic Rzewski (b.1938)

1. Coming Together
2. Attica

Ashley Ng, *violin*  
Patricia Ryan, *cello*  
Bethany Gonella, *flute*  
Weily Grina-Shay, *clarinet*

Bjorn Grina-Shay, *vibraphone*  
Eri Isomura, *marimba*  
April Ryun Kim, *piano*  
Elwyn Alexander Fraser Junior, *voice*

Written in response to the historical revolts of prisoners of the Attica State Prison in September 1971, *Coming Together & Attica* brings to life texts written and spoken by Attica inmates, Sam Melville and Richard X. The infamous prisoner takeover at the Attica State Prison was a protest for better living conditions and for the right to be treated as human beings. After four days of negotiations between prisoners and authorities, Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered state police to take over the prison by force. As a result, thirty-three inmates and ten correctional officers and civilian employees were killed, including Sam Melville.

1. Coming Together

In spring of 1971, Sam Melville had written a letter to his friend describing his passage of time while he was in prison. After his death in the riots, Melville’s letter was published in a magazine called, Ramparts. Rzewski came across this letter and was impressed by the “poetic quality of the text and ... its cryptic irony.” After reading the letter repeatedly, Rzewski was inspired to compose *Coming Together*. The text of the letter is repeatedly spoken throughout the piece:

“I think the combination of age and the greater coming together is responsible for the speed of the passing time. It’s six months now and I can tell you truthfully few periods in my life have passed so quickly. I am in excellent physical and emotional health. There are doubtless subtle surprises ahead but I feel secure and ready.

As lovers will contrast their emotions in times of crisis, so am I dealing with my environment. In the indifferent brutality, incessant noise, the experimental chemistry of food, the ravings of lost hysterical men, I can act with clarity and meaning. I am deliberate—sometimes even calculating—seldom employing histrionics except as a test of the reactions of others. I read much, exercise, talk to guards and inmates, feeling for the inevitable direction of my life.”

Coming Together is written for an indeterminate and unspecified number of melodic instruments. Seven pitches are used throughout the piece and are used to generate eight triangular structures of 28 notes. Each sequence is squared to create eight large sections of  $28 \times 28 = 784$  notes. The resulting chain of 6,272 notes are played by one or two instruments (the piano, in this concert) while other instruments add individual notes or melodic fragments based on rules specific to each section. In the final section of the piece, all instruments join in and play all the notes.

## 2. Attica

*Attica* was written based on a response by Richard X, an Attica State Prison inmate who was freed on parole several weeks after the 1971 riots. As Richard left the prison, a reporter asked him how it felt leaving Attica. His response was, "Attica is in front of me." This response became the text for this piece. In *Attica*, a 28-beat melody is divided into four bars of seven beats, which is squared to 49 beats. The four periods are then themselves "squared" to become a sequence of sixteen periods. These notes are played over a constant drone with a long dominant chord at the end.

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## About the Artists

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Twin-Cities based ensemble **10th Wave Chamber Music Collective** has a vision of bringing interdisciplinary classical music to performance spaces both inside and out of the normative setting. Our concert programs create a shared experience between music and various topics and social issues such as: world events, mental health, and loss. We endeavor to break down societal stigmas and barriers and inspire young people to become leaders in their own communities by presenting thoughtful and accessible programming.

Formed in December 2017, 10th Wave is a collective ensemble of professional musicians on instruments including (but not limited to): clarinet, flute, violin, cello, guitar, piano, marimba, percussion, and voice. Searching for innovative ways to connect with the community, 10th Wave has been featured in several music festivals in the Twin Cities: The Stone Arch Bridge Festival and Highland Music Festival, and at performance spaces within restaurants and breweries: Boom Island Brewing Co., The Red Sea Minneapolis, Black Dog Cafe, Underground Music Cafe, and Studio Z.

<https://www.10thwave.org/>

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