

THE ST. OLAF COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

presents

FACULTY/GUEST RECITAL

Music from Diverse Voices

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2022 • BOE MEMORIAL CHAPEL • 7 P.M.

PROGRAM

- Sarum: Variations on an Advent Chant** Deirdre Piper (b.1943)
Verse I: Creator of the Starry Height
Karen Olson, *organ*
- Lullaby Variations for Solo Piano** Jiyoun Chung (b.1982)
April Kim, *piano*
- Baroque Suite for Unaccompanied Cello** Dorothy Rudd Moore (1940–2022)
I. Allegro
- Lamentations: Black/Folk Song Suite** Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson (1932–2004)
I. Fuguing tune
David Carter, *cello*
- We Wear the Mask** Del’Shawn Taylor
Emery Stephens, Jr., *baritone*
April Kim, *piano*
- The Navajo Piano** (2014) Connor Chee
Navajo Vocable for Piano No. 9
Kathryn Ananda-Owens, *piano*
- Stormy, Husky, Brawling** Stacy Garrop (b.1969)
Karl Wiederwohl, *bass trombone*
- Trois Improvisations** Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979)
Prélude
Petit canon
Improvisation
Catherine Rodland, *organ*

*Unauthorized photography or video and audio recording is prohibited.
Please silence cell phones.*

PROGRAM NOTES

Tonight's recital highlights music that was purchased last spring to include more BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and woman musicians in the Halvorson Music Library collection. This project is part of the St. Olaf College Libraries' larger work towards Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The Libraries bought music for all of the studio instruction areas supported by the music department; even if you don't hear your instrument tonight, we bought new music for it! A complete list of the new scores is available at <https://libraryguides.stolaf.edu/deimusic>

Sarum: Variations on an Advent Chant – Verse 1: Creator of the Starry Height

Born in England, Deirdre Piper spent most of her career in Ottawa, teaching at Carleton University and serving as director of music at the Anglican Church of St. Matthias. She was active in Canadian music societies, including the Royal Canadian College of Organists and the Association of Canadian Women Composers. Works written before 1996 were composed under the name David Piper.

Sarum (1993) is a set of four variations on the chant *Conditor alme siderum*, which is number 245 in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnals used in Boe Memorial Chapel. The term *Sarum* refers to the liturgical rites used at Salisbury Cathedral in England. Piper creates the twinkling effect of the "starry height" by composing a very high, repeating pattern with the chant tune repeated, lower and lower, to the end of the piece.

From Karen Olson: I first encountered *Sarum* on David Palmer's recording *Canadian Organ Music Showcase*. As a church organist, I thought it would be useful as music for Advent services. Besides, I have a real weakness for ostinato lines!

Lullaby Variations for Solo Piano

The music of Jiyoung Chung is often heard in festivals and concerts in Asia, Europe, and the United States. Her current interest in composition lies in encompassing various cultural influences into her works. Her own identity as a Korean immigrant plays a big factor in her music making. She teaches composition at Central Washington University.

Lullaby Variations (2014) is based on a nine-measure simple theme. Unlike the sweet, gentle lullaby melodies known to many, this work expresses the challenging realities and emotions during the early years of parenthood. The pianist may choose the order of variations freely except for the last two, "Octaves" and "Finale," which should be played at the end, and "High" should always follow "Fuga."

From April Kim: I chose this piece to offer empathy to the folks who have and are going through the challenges in early years of parenthood, especially among the mothers and mother figures. Jiyoung composed this piece when her first son was born, and although it is a precious and beautiful time, it is also an extremely emotional and exhausting time as well; those experiences and emotions are displayed in this piece.

Baroque Suite – I. Allegro

American composer Dorothy Rudd Moore studied with Nadia Boulanger, whose work also appears on tonight's program. Moore wrote music for ensembles including the National Symphony and Opera Ebony, which premiered her opera *Frederick Douglass* in 1985. Together with her husband, Kermit Moore, she founded the Society for Black Composers, a musicians' collective in New York City that was active between 1968–1973.

Moore dedicated her *Baroque Suite* (1965) as a wedding present for her husband, who was a cellist. The *Suite* is Moore's take on the cello suites of composers like Johann Sebastian Bach. Although her Allegro is in $\frac{5}{8}$ time, which Bach would never have used, Moore clearly adapted Bach's 18th-century melodic gestures to her own 20th-century rhythms.

From David Carter: I chose this piece because it's a very interesting take on certain Baroque compositional techniques, spinning out material from a single motive, with a definite 20th century rhythmic approach.

Lamentations: Black/Folk Song Suite – Fuguing Tune

Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson (named for the Black British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor) was a highly successful American composer and conductor. He worked with musicians such as Marvin Gaye and Harry Belafonte and ensembles such as the Alvin Ailey Dance Company and the Dance Theatre of Harlem. He was a co-founder of the first racially integrated American orchestra, the Symphony of the New World.

Perkinson described *Lamentations* (1980) saying, “the common denominator of these tunes is the reflection and statement of a people’s crying out.” “Fuguing Tune” refers to the choral counterpoint found in 18th-century American songbooks, like William Billings’s *Continental Harmony*. Here, Perkinson transforms that imitative choral style into syncopated, blues-inflected counterpoint played by a single cellist.

From David Carter: I’m learning the entire piece for a spring recital, and it is ingenious in how the cello is used in a multi-voice sense. The first movement, “Fuguing Tune,” is especially interesting in its use of jazz- and blues-inspired altered harmonies.

We Wear the Mask

Del’Shawn Taylor is an internationally award-winning baritone, composer, pianist, educator, author, and arts equity advocate. He has worked with the Cincinnati Song Initiative, as well as emerging opera companies such as the Thompson Street Opera Company and White Snake Projects. Along with librettist Samiya Bashir, he is working on a show for the 2023 New Works Collective at Opera Theatre of St. Louis.

We Wear the Mask (2021) combines Paul Laurence Dunbar’s well-known 1895 poem with additional texts from Paris Lewis and the composer himself. Taylor explains that the original poem was “[Dunbar’s] way of reflecting on the lives of African Americans shortly after the Civil War, which was a time that should have been for celebration, but which was actually a time of heightened racism and oppression for African American communities...[This song] sounds the alarm that no longer will marginalized communities wear the mask.”

From Emery Stephens, Jr.: I chose to perform *We Wear the Mask* in honor of the 150th birthday of poet Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906). I grew up reading about his critical acclaim as a national literary treasure who championed African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) and conversational writing style. Last summer, Dr. April Kim and I were featured at the Source Song Festival in Minneapolis and had the distinct pleasure of working directly with the composer. As a person of color who has often navigated spaces where I had to hide my true feelings to survive, this poem speaks directly to me in facing societal oppression

TEXT

We wear the mask that grins and lies.
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes.
We wear it while we walk the mile cloaked in our dismay.
This debt we pay to human guile; with torn bleeding hearts we smile.
Why should the world be over-wise in counting all our tears sighs?
Let them only see us while we wear the mask.
We smile, but O great Christ, our cries to thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile beneath our feet, and long the mile.
But the world dreams otherwise, but let them dream no more!
Let them dream no longer!
I stand before you masked no more. Your truth is set a-blaze.
The life you left for me to live has seen its final days.

Navajo Vocale for Piano No. 9

Navajo pianist and composer Connor Chee combines his classical piano training with his Native American heritage. He made his Carnegie Hall debut at the age of 12 after winning a gold medal in the World Piano Competition. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music, Chee’s solo piano music is inspired by traditional Navajo chants and songs.

The term “vocables” refers to the non-lexical syllables used in Indigenous chants to carry melodic lines. Chee transfers the vocables to the piano, bringing what was once a strictly oral tradition to a new outlet. *Navajo Vocale No. 9* (2014) is based on a traditional Navajo Corn Grinding Song. Listen for the vocable melody as it moves from the upper register to the low register and back over the course of the piece.

From Kathryn Ananda-Owens: I fell in love with Connor Chee’s piano music after a mutual friend sent me a link to his YouTube video of “Weaving” from *Scenes from Diné’tah*. This evening’s performance is dedicated to my cousin Bijji’baa Garrison and her fellow health care professionals on the Navajo Nation in honor of their heroic efforts during the pandemic.

Stormy, Husky, Brawling

Chicago-based composer Stacy Garrop writes music centered on dramatic and lyrical storytelling, taking audiences on sonic journeys. She has composed music for ensembles including the St. Louis Symphony and the Grant Park Orchestra, and is working on a new opera for Chicago Opera Theater to premiere in 2024.

Stormy, Husky, Brawling (2020) takes its name from a line in Carl Sandburg's poem "Chicago," which describes how the city fuses crime and poverty with tremendous energy and life. Garrop wrote the piece for trombonist Sun He, who commented, "I remember the first time I walked on the street in Chicago, by the corner of Michigan and Roosevelt, and how I felt the energy of this city almost brought my blood to a boil." Garrop's music depicts the city rising from the fog, pulsing with energy, and then fading back into the mist of Lake Michigan.

From Karl Wiederwohl: Having never heard *Stormy, Husky Brawling*, I was simply intrigued by its title. I was curious and eager to learn how the composer might write for the bass trombone to evoke these qualities that are so often associated with the instrument.

Trois Improvisations

French musician Nadia Boulanger is better known as a teacher than a composer. Her students included notable American musicians such as Aaron Copland, Philip Glass, and Quincy Jones. Her teaching was remembered for her pithy remarks, such as, "You need an established language and then, within that established language, the liberty to be yourself. It's always necessary to be yourself – that is a mark of genius in itself."

Boulanger composed these three pieces in 1911. Cellists may recognize the last two movements, because she later re-arranged them for cello and piano. *Prélude*, the longest of the set, asks the organist to demonstrate the many timbres available on the instrument. *Petite canon* is little not only in duration, but also in the gap between the imitative parts, which echo each other only an eighth-rest apart. Finally, the *Improvisation* is structured much like the Piper piece that opened this recital: gentle undulations in the upper part with the melody cycling below.

From Catherine Rodland: I started the Boulanger pieces in the midst of an Organ Studio Class project of learning and performing music of female organist-composers. I've always been very interested in Nadia Boulanger because of her history as an amazing theory and composition pedagogue. I didn't know she wrote any organ music until I found these gems.