

**ALEXANDROS D. FRAGISKATOS,  
PERCUSSION**

*WITH*

SARAH HARTONG, FLUTE  
SIU YIN LIE, PIANO  
NIEL HATHAWAY, DOUBLE SECOND

DOCTORAL RECITAL SERIES  
KATZIN CONCERT HALL  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2015 • 2:30 PM

**ASU** Herberger Institute  
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS  
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Music

## Program

**Ripple (1999)** Akira Miyoshi  
(1933 - 2013)

**In Common (1991)** Stuart Saunders Smith  
(b. 1948)  
with Sarah Hartong, flute

**She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket (1986)** Kevin Volans  
(b.1949)

**\*\*Intermission\*\***

**not (1992)** Thomas DeLio  
(b. 1951)  
with Siu Yin Lie, piano

**Monodrame IV (2002)** Yoshihisa Taira  
(1937 - 2005)

**Jump (2004)** Roger Zahab  
(b. 1957)  
with Neil Hathaway, double second

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Out of respect for the performers and those audience members around you, please turn all beepers, cell phones and watches to their silent mode. Thank you.

**Ripple** for solo marimba  
Akira Miyoshi

Japanese-born Akira Miyoshi is one of the seminal composers of serious contemporary marimba music. His 1962 suite for marimba *Conversation* was one of the first masterpieces commissioned and premiered by world-renowned marimbist Keiko Abe. This was soon followed by his equally virtuosic 1964 work *Torse III* and a flourish of compositions by other Japanese composers that have become staples of contemporary marimba literature. As a child, Miyoshi studied piano with Kozaburo Hirai and Tomojiro Ikenouchi before enrolling at the Conservatoire de Paris in 1955. While in France, he studied composition privately with Ramony Gallois-Montbrun. He then returned to Japan and, in 1960, graduated from Tokyo University with a degree in French literature. Early on, Miyoshi was greatly influenced by French composer Henri Dutilleux; however, he eventually developed his own personal style. This included the technique of motif transformation and the use of incremental rhythms found in Japanese traditional music. Aside from marimba and percussion music, Miyoshi composed in numerous genres ranging from orchestra and chamber music to vocal music and opera.

*Ripple* is one of Miyoshi's last composed marimba solos. It was written as an obligatory piece of the 2nd World Marimba Competition in Okaya, Japan. The title refers to the magma running under the crust of Japan and its islands, which have over 100 active volcanoes. Miyoshi said the piece "begins as fine oscillations and grows into a series of various motions.... The energy of the motions for this piece erupts from deep within the incandescent earth." This is heard from the very outset with emphatic strikes of the same pitch separated by soft, sustained sound, or the "oscillations" to which Miyoshi referred. These fragmented strikes eventually spiral out or "erupt" into many notes and longer flowing gestures. They themselves oscillate between contrasting passages of distant beauty and imminent chaos.

**In Common** for flute and vibraphone  
Stuart Saunders Smith

Though he began his collegiate studies at the Berklee School of Music in 1967, Stuart Saunders Smith went on to complete both his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Hartford's Hartt School of Music in 1970 and 1972 respectively. There he studied percussion and composition before earning his doctorate in 1977 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. At Illinois, his teachers included Salvatore Martirano, Herbert Brün, and Ben Johnston. Smith's music is known for its extreme melodic and rhythmic complexity. He often employs "mobile form," or music that does not have a fixed score but freely interacting parts. Smith also utilizes spoken text and "trans-media" systems that incorporate a variety of performance artists like

dancers, mimes, actors, etc. Many of his works are written for percussion including solo vibraphone, drumset, orchestra bells, as well as multi-percussion and a special emphasis on percussion-theater music. Smith and his wife, Sylvia, who is also a percussionist, reside in Vermont. Sylvia is the editor and owner of Smith Publications, which is dedicated to the advancement of new music.

In the composer's own words:

*In Common* is about marriage. I used quite different compositional systems — one for the flute, one for the vibraphone — to represent the baggage of a previous life each partner brings to the marriage. There is one impossible passage to show the impossible aspects of marriage. The performers are surrounded by gongs which occasionally ring sympathetically. Only the players hear these secrets.

Smith dedicates *In Common* to his wife, "who requested this piece, and still requests [his] presence." Like many of his works, complex melodic and rhythmic lines are abundant. The seemingly unconnected and quarrelling lines of music are contrasted by brief moments of unity, clarity, and understanding. The surrounding tam-tams form the performers' "home" in which their dialogue takes place. Lastly, Smith offers this short poem:

Music is one of our little dances with death in which we lead.  
Music is one of our little dances with life in which we follow.

*She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* for solo percussion  
Kevin Volans

As one of today's best known South African composers, Kevin Volans continues to receive numerous commissions every year. His 1986 work *White Man Sleeps*, which was recorded by the Kronos Quartet, became the best-selling string quartet record in history in 1989 and 1992, and jumpstarted Volans's successful career. As a student, he studied music at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, and then the Hochschule für Musik in Germany as a pupil of Karlheinz Stockhausen. Volans also studied music theater with Mauricio Kagel, piano with Aloys Kontrasky, and electronic music with Johannes Fritsch. From 1976 to 1979, he made several trips back to Africa to record a variety of indigenous African music. This inspired him throughout the 1980s to embrace his African heritage and reject the stigma of white South Africans being viewed as Europeans. His compositions during this time period incorporate sub-Saharan musical materials. Though today Volans rejects the influence of African music on his works (possibly in reaction to being categorized as an "African composer"), some aspects of his recent works still feature characteristics of his African-inspired compositions.

Written as a virtuoso etude for percussionist Robyn Schulkowsky, *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* is, according to Volans, an exploration of "several different kinds of patterning, the principal one being cross-rhythms in triplets." Though it was written during the time of his African-inspired compositions, Volans claims that the title, which implies "she who sleeps alone," or without a lover, is the only African thing about the piece. Scored for four bongos, two congas, a kick drum, marimba, and a variety of striking implements, *She Who Sleeps* features sheer intensity in both speed and dynamics. The primal nature of the piece is maintained throughout, even amongst the softer sections, which still harness the speed, but in gentler flourishes. The composition ends with a coda for the marimba, a lullaby-like serenade for she who sleeps.

*not* for piano and percussion  
Thomas DeLio

"I am interested in forms that seem to impose as little as possible on sound, but rather reveal the inner nature of sound itself," says internationally renowned composer and theorist Thomas DeLio. With this philosophy, he has composed some of the most unique pieces of the 20th and 21st centuries. Works that at first seem to be driven by silence, however, are in fact about the sounds heard between the spaces. DeLio completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees at the New England Conservatory of Music and his Ph.D. at Brown University in 1979, where he studied with Robert Cogan. As a researcher and writer, DeLio has published over 30 articles in prominent journals such as *The Journal of Music Theory*, *Interface*, *Perspectives*, *Art Forum*, and *The Musical Quarterly* as well as authored five books. He is currently a professor of music theory and composition at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Though he has composed for many instruments, DeLio has an affinity for percussion because it can achieve sounds across a wide spectrum of timbres, both pitched and non-pitched. *not* utilizes tom-toms, cymbals, vibraphone, chime, and claves — a variety of sounds that include skins, metals, wood, pitched, and non-pitched. Even the piano, which DeLio rightfully views as a percussion instrument, offers yet another timbre — hammered strings. As a listener, one is encouraged to embrace the segments of sound independently. The silences serve to isolate these sound events. Composers like John Cage and Morton Feldman have long used silence as part of their compositional process; however, DeLio's use aims at wiping our memories clean and removing any bias in order to allow for full appreciation of the present moment. "The title is a reference to [Samuel] Beckett," says the composer, "*not* as in 'sound nor silence,' what differentiates them."

***Monodrame IV*** for solo vibraphone  
Yoshihisa Taïra

Born in Tokyo, Japanese composer Yoshihisa Taïra actually spent much of his life composing in France as a naturalized citizen. His early studies included composition lessons with Tomojirō Ikenouchi at the Tokyo National University of the Fine Arts and Music, where he graduated in 1965. After his arrival in France the following year, Taïra enrolled at the Paris Conservatoire and studied with notable composers André Jolivet, Henri Dutilleux, and Olivier Messiaen. Following his studies, he taught music composition at the École Normale de Musique in Paris. Taïra received numerous awards and honors during his lifetime, including the Lily Boulanger Prize, the UNESCO International Composers Tribune Award, and the designation of Officier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. His music, which spans the genres of solo, chamber, orchestral, and vocal, has been performed internationally and at various well-known festivals in places like Darmstadt, Berlin, Tanglewood, and Tokyo. With regard to his music, scholar Judith Herd asserts that Taïra's "treatment of time and space, sonority, poetic lyricism, silence[.]... precise articulation, abrupt dynamic contrasts and glissandi were derived from traditional Japanese music and art." These characteristics, along with the influence of Western contemporary music and French modernist aesthetics, formed the basis of Taïra's musical style.

*Monodrame IV* was written for virtuoso French percussionist Jean Geoffroy, who is the current artistic director of the Percussions de Strasbourg and a professor at the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique et de danse de Lyon. It is the fourth in Taïra's collection of works titled "monodrame," or "monodrama." The others include solos for percussion, bassoon, and guitar. As the name suggests, Taïra intends the piece to be a musical representation of a monologue. A variety of affects are expressed through the use of many textures, contrasting speeds and dynamics, specific vibraphone pedalings, and motor use. As a whole, sections of slow and daydream-like proportional notation (when rhythm is approximated by its occurrence in horizontal space) and a haunting chorale of independent rolls are juxtaposed with passages of precise and speedy sixteenth notes that seem to depict a ceaselessly active mind.

***Jump*** for two double second steel drums  
Roger Zahab

As a proponent of new music, composer and violinist Roger Zahab has given more than 100 first performances and has composed hundreds of works in a variety of genres. Born in Akron, Ohio, he studied violin performance at The University of Akron and the State University of New York at Stony Brook, where he received his undergraduate and graduate degrees, respectively. Zahab has been composing since the 1970s and his pieces have been performed

throughout North and South America, Europe, and Asia. He has received numerous honors and awards, including the Louis Lane Scholarship given by the Akron Symphony Orchestra in 1978 as well as a 1995 Artist Grant and 2005 Artist Fellowship from the Ohio Arts Council. Currently, Zahab is the Director of Orchestra and Senior Lecturer in many subjects at the University of Pittsburgh as well as a Core Founding Faculty member of Vermont College of Fine Arts's MFA in Music Composition.

*Jump* is Zahab's second composition for steel drums. The first is a double second solo called *i still dream*, which was commissioned and premiered by Josh Quillen, current member of the Sō Percussion quartet. This duo was written for Quillen and Jeff Neitzke, who were both students at The University of Akron. Regarding the "double second," it consists of two side-by-side drums. Each drum comprises a whole-tone scale, so between the two of them they have all twelve chromatic pitches. The range, depending on the builder, is around two and a half octaves. Though steel drum music is often associated with the calypso and soca style of Trinidad and Tobago (the instrument's birthplace), *Jump* is part of a new wave of compositions that demonstrate the instrument's contemporary capabilities. The title *Jump* possibly derives from the startling contrasts that exist in the piece. There is no clear tonality, as the piece often implies polychords, or the simultaneous use of two or more chords, which may leave the listener feeling "on edge." Celebratory and dynamically loud sections contrast with very light and delicate moments. Rhythmically, unison passages are opposed by instances of extreme syncopation, or displacement of the beat, perhaps in homage to the energetic style of music from which these instruments originate.