

MUSIC that
dares to **Explore**

Cleveland Chamber Symphony
Young & Emerging Composers Concert
Steven Smith, Music Director
Sunday, October 31st, 3:00pm
Baldwin Wallace University - Gamble Auditorium

www.clevelandchambersymphony.org

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Three Xiangxi Folk Songs

Daixuan Ai (Baldwin Wallace University)

Prelude for Chamber Orchestra

Victoria Belfiglio (Cuyahoga Community College)

Sonic Splattering

Ezekiel Paulowski (Kent State University)

An Answer for Mr. Ives

Jay Westfield (University of Akron)

Nibiru

Ka Hei Cheng (Bowling Green University)

-Short Pause-

Intrusive Thoughts

Sam Friedman (Oberlin College)

Elentiya

Sarah Mellinger (Hiram College)

Mariposa de Obsidiana

Julián Fueyo (Cleveland Institute of Music)

On Cassiopeia's Throne

Neva Derewetzky (Wooster College)

Half a Fractured Mind

Adonai Henderson (Cleveland State University)

*please, no digital recording during the performance.

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Very special thanks for the **Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music** for live streaming this performance.

Please join us for our yearly new music festival!



www.neosonicfest.org

This Y&E performance was originally scheduled for April 5th, 2020 during our 7th Annual NEOSonicFest, a new music festival for Northeast Ohio. It was postponed due to the pandemic.

Steven Smith has been the Music Director of the Grammy Award-winning Cleveland Chamber Symphony since 2005. He recently completed a very successful decade-long tenure as Music Director of the Richmond Symphony. He also served as Music Director of Santa Fe Symphony & Chorus from 1999 to 2013, and as Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra from 1997 to 2003.

Daixuan Ai is a composer and pianist currently pursuing a master's degree in Composition at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music while teaching music theory as an assistant instructor. She graduated from Baldwin Wallace University with a bachelor's degree in Composition. Daixuan has also been studying harmony, counterpoint, and music analysis at the European American Musical Alliance Institute and she is a student of the program founder, Philip Lasser. Her works have been performed by Baldwin Wallace Symphonic Orchestra, Hub New Music, 5th House Ensemble, the Cleveland Orchestra trumpeter Jack Sutte, pianist Jihye Chang, and BW faculty Sungeun Kim and Barton Rotberg. The upcoming performances of Daixuan's music include the Baldwin Wallace Symphonic Wind Ensemble playing an excerpt from her new wind ensemble piece, a trio piece commissioned by CityMusic Cleveland, Jack Sutte and Christine Fuoco premiering Sonata for Trumpet and Piano (2020), a lecture recital presenting art song settings of Ross Gay's poems with Andrew Forsythe, bass voice. ***Three Xiangxi Folk Songs*** was originally written for piano and violin and arranged for chamber orchestra. Each movement is based on a folk tune from a Chinese minority ethnic group called Xiangxi Tujia and Miao. The melody of first movement is based on a mountain song which would be sung by people on two mountain tops as a mean of communication. The second movement is a three-voice fugue, and both the subject and countersubject are taken from an existing folk tune. The third movement has two melodies playing simultaneously: one is from the first movement, and the other one is a famous folk song titled "Lampstand on A Mulberry Tree." The song is about two lovers who are separated by war expressing their sadness and promises to each other.

Victoria Belfiglio is a retired federal attorney with a longstanding passion for composing music. Most recently, Victoria has been studying music at Cuyahoga Community College, including composition lessons with Richard Holsworth. Previously, she took composition lessons with Linda Allen at The Music Settlement. Victoria has also studied piano and voice throughout her life. Her work has been played by the Greater Cleveland Flute Society and the Shaker Heights Community Band. Victoria earned her J.D. from Case Western Reserve University, and her B.A. and M.A. from The Ohio State University.

Prelude for Chamber Orchestra - Writing music is generative. I always think of it as being similar to birthing and raising a child. Both start with a wisp of an idea, and grow up to take on lives of their own. Along the way, you nurture them, and try to shape them for the better. You put all that you are into them. But mostly you follow them, and allow them to grow into what they were meant to be.

Ezekiel Paulowski offers a fresh voice in the world of musical composition. He attended Kent State University where he earned his Bachelor of Music in 2020. There he studied composition with Frank Wiley and Adam Roberts. While studying, he composed for various students and professors. He was part of two Catalyst Grant collaboration projects: *Singing Verse* and *I Sing the Body*, the latter of which was performed by the Kent State Orchestra and Choirs. The Kent State University New Music Ensemble also has performed his works including a song cycle that is inspired by a collection of texts about the history of contraception. Beyond composing for school groups, Ezekiel has also been commissioned to write for No Exit New Music Ensemble violist James Rhodes. Ezekiel Paulowski is honored and humbled to be considered one of 2020's Young and Emerging composers in the Northeast Ohio region.

Sonic Splattering takes its inspiration from the visual artistic technique known as "splatter painting." Artists, such as Jackson Pollock, have the advantage through their medium to fling paint onto a canvas. Not so for the musical composer. We spend hours ensuring that our piece is "coherent" and that "all the pieces fit together" perfectly. Musical unity has long been a major characteristic of Western Art Music. This

piece breaks away from that tradition. There are several sections of the piece that all flow into each other. Each piece is in its own sound world, unlike and completely uninspired by the sections that come before and after it.

Jay Westfield is a composer residing in Cleveland, Ohio. His music often explores broad themes of existence and internal conflict, drawing musical inspiration from composers such as Brahms while also exploring modal concepts. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from The University of Akron in December 2019, where he studied composition with James Wilding and Robert Brownlow. Jay is a graduate student at Cleveland State University, studying with Andrew Rindfleisch.

An Answer for Mr. Ives is a commentary on Charles Ives' The Unanswered Question. This piece vainly ponders the meaning of existence, searching for a purpose.

Ka Hei Cheng is pursuing her PhD in Music in the Louisiana State University and she studied in the Education University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Baptist University and the Bowling Green State University. Born and raised in Hong Kong, Cheng approaches a diversified culture and philosophy that extend her musical dimensions and nourish a similarly diverse approach to her music composition by “brush strokes” with sonic palette. She has composed different genres of music, including music jingles, music for animation, tailor-made event music, electroacoustic music and acoustic composition with or without programming. Her work, *The Entangling Turner*, was performed in NIME 2021 and was presented in ICAD 2021. She was also the presenter of her research paper, *Unobtrusive Auditory Display for Weather Reporting*, in ICAD 2021.

I would like to guide my audiences to the abstract musical narrative and enchanting imagination through a journey of wonder. It describes the sparkles of encounters between the earth and the legendary ***Nibiru***, which conjures thoughts about the origins of Homo sapiens and the historical significance of the Enlightenment period in human evolutionary history. The beginning of the piece starts with mystery and curiosity. By exploring the area between the known and unknown,

it drives us to reason, make hypotheses and innovate to the world we are and will be. What ancient artworks with millennia of history from our ancestors inherited and where will it lead us to? Perhaps, we could think of an answer while we are listening to the Nibiru. In creating this piece for chamber orchestra, I use pointillistic writing, juxtaposition of texture and timbral exploration to portray the space travel of the Nephilim to the planet Earth. Clouds of colors are interwoven together and undergo gradual or sudden transitions between one and another, so as to give more focus to the harmonic content. The combination of extended techniques enriches the timbral exploration by expanding the harmonic colors. The juxtaposition of ascending and descending lines among different instruments contributes to the overall dramatic growth of the piece and forms a spectrum of colors and wonder.

Sam Friedman is a composer and trumpet player from New York City who currently lives in Oberlin, Ohio. He is pursuing a B.M. in composition and trumpet performance at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he studies with Elizabeth Ogonek, Jesse Jones, Stephen Hartke, and Michael Frazier. He has been a composition fellow at Norfolk New Music Workshop, Cortona Sessions for New Music and highSCORE Festival, and was a Northeastern semi-finalist in the Rapido Composition Competition. He has participated in master classes with Kaija Saariaho, Missy Mazzoli, and Billy Childs. His works have been performed by ensembles such as JACK Quartet, Boston Musica Viva, De Capo Chamber Players, Talea Ensemble, PUBLIQuartet, unassisted fold, and the Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble. Friedman is fascinated by artistic translation and the failures thereof, as well as the roles music and sound can play in our relationship to the environment.

Intrusive Thoughts tracks the conception and eventual disintegration of an irrational and unwanted thought. This is first heard in the winds and brass, which starts from a single outburst before letting it fester, eventually taking on a life of its own. Meanwhile, a hazy and continuously morphing sleep state is portrayed by the strings. Over time the strings show greater and greater hostility towards their state of being until they finally break free and unite on a single pitch. The harmony I've employed for this piece is dense with microtones, and the sounds heard often thread the line between cluster chords and

timbral “rub.” I’ve found that the sentiments behind this piece have actually grown more relevant since I finished it in 2020, right at the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic. As the state of the world becomes less and less certain, many of us have internalized a state of panic that creeps up on us, begging to be noticed, and dissuading us from what we need most as human beings.

Sarah Mellinger is a composer and pianist who grew up in Silver Lake, Ohio. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Music from Hiram College, and is now a graduate student studying piano performance under Dr. Donna Lee at Kent State University. Sarah is currently studying composition under Dr. Adam Roberts, and has also studied composition with Dr. Steven Stanziano, Dr. Dawn Sonntag, and Mrs. Mary Ann Griebing. Sarah is the band librarian at Kent State University, and works at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan during the summer.

Elentiya is a word that means, “spirit that cannot be broken.” I was inspired to write this piece by some of my favorite books, all which speak to the tenacity and courage of human nature. I wanted to capture the spirit in all of us that looks at a ruin and sees flowers growing in the rubble. Now that we’ve spent a year and a half living in a global pandemic, I feel like that message is more important now than ever.

Julián Fueyo is a composer from Tampico, Mexico whose music explores ancient aesthetics and their place in our rapid-changing, contemporary culture. His pieces often reference ancient art and literature investigating idealization, historicism, memory, and transcendence. Most recently, his pieces have received honors including the 68th BMI Student Composer Awards (2020), and the 2021 and 2020 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. Fueyo graduated from Interlochen Arts Academy and from the Cleveland Institute of Music (2020) where he studied composition with Keith Fitch. Fueyo is now a graduate student at the Yale School of Music where he studies composition.

Mariposa de Obsidiana is inspired by the Aztec goddess Itzapálotl. Itzapálotl translates from Nahuatl as the “obsidian butterfly.” She is

considered the archetype of a wise and powerful female. Obsidian by itself has very important connotations in pre-hispanic cultures. Large obsidian rocks were often flattened and polished to serve as mirrors. In ritual, the obsidian mirrors were believed to reflect not the physical world, but rather, the unseen metaphysical world and therefore, the true nature of things. Itzpapalotl is also the governor of Tamoachan, Aztec paradise, and when she died she became a star escorting the Sun.

Neva Derewetzky was born in Washington State but spent most of her life just outside of Houston, Texas. In 2020 she graduated with a Bachelor's of Music in composition from The College of Wooster where she studied with Jack Gallagher and Daniel Knaggs. She is currently pursuing a Masters in composition at Binghamton University where she is studying with Daniel Thomas Davis. She has been commissioned by The College of Wooster, the Symphoria Youth Orchestra, and clarinetist, David Loewus. Neva will be having premiers of her works by the Momenta Quartet of the Hub New Music group. She is a big proponent of cross disciplinary collaboration and is a fellow with the Material Visual Worlds program at Binghamton University. When not composing, Neva enjoys cooking and hiking.

On Cassiopeia's Throne is an exploration of constellations. For this piece, I gathered three themes from three constellations: Cassiopeia, Perseus, and Andromeda. I overlaid the constellations onto sheet music and used the points of the connecting stars to create the three main themes. I also looked at Greek mythology for inspiration while composing. Their stories are intertwined and I wanted the music to represent this. Cassiopeia, Queen of ancient Ethiopia, claimed her daughter, Andromeda, was more beautiful than the nymphs of the sea. The sea-god, Poseidon, grew angry and commanded Andromeda be chained to an ocean rock to become prey for the sea-monster Cetus. The hero, Perseus, saved Andromeda from her fate and they married. As punishment by the gods, Cassiopeia became a constellation. The five points in the sky represent her sitting on her throne clinging to it as she circles the North Celestial Pole. Cassiopeia's theme is the center of this piece, first heard in the oboe as a five note gesture. Her theme shifts and weaves into the other themes,

eventually played in a frenzy of instruments representing Cassiopeia's fate: to always circle the sky.

Adonai Henderson is a Cleveland-native, composer and trumpet player. He studied trumpet performance with a focus on jazz studies at Bowling Green State University, and is pursuing his Master of Music in Composition at Cleveland State University. He teaches general music in the CMSD at Hannah Gibbons-Nottingham, and directs the band and the choir there. Adonai enjoys spending most of his spare time showing his two daughters the joys of music.

Half a Fractured Mind is a revival and expansion of an idea I had at the end of the decade. The use of a repeated pattern, an ostinato, and an identifiable melodic motif allows for the audience to recognize rhythmic anomalies and irregular phrases, and relate it to a fairly consistent rhythmic background. The result is a chaotic expression of aural emotion that remains relatable to the listener.

Since its founding by Dr. Edwin London in 1980, the **Cleveland Chamber Symphony** has served a leading role in the art of contemporary American music through its mission to commission, perform, record and promote musical works by composers of our time. Its history of over 170 world premiere performances and wide range of recordings has been critically acclaimed, and has been recognized by many awards, including a 2007 Grammy Award, numerous ASCAP awards and repeated recognition by the American Music Center. Its recent collaborations with Verb Ballets, the Cleveland School of the Arts and the launching of the annual NEOSonicFest demonstrate CCS's ongoing commitment to contemporary performance and education in Northeast Ohio.

Cleveland Chamber Symphony
October 31st, 2021 musicians:

**concertmaster *principal

Violin 1: **Leah Burtnett, Diana Pepelea
Violin 2: *Maria Andrieni, Andrea Belding
Viola: *Laura Shuster, Alexandra Vago
Cello: *Julie King, Derek Snyder
Bass: *Henry Samuels
Flute: *Sean Gabriel
Oboe: *Martin Neubert
Clarinet: *Louis Gangale
Bassoon: *Mark DeMio
Horn: *Ken Wadenfuhl
Trumpet: *Jack Brndiar
Trombone: *Paul Ferguson
Percussion: *Andrew Pongracz
Harp: *Jody Guinn

Audio Engineering: David Yost
Streaming Video & Audio: William Hartzell
Steven Smith, Music Director and Conductor

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