

Student Recital

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GRADUATE RECITAL

Yoshio Yamashita, composer

7:30pm, Saturday, December 2, 2023

Jim & Joyce Faulkner Performing Arts Center

University of Arkansas

PROGRAM

Trio Sonata No. 4 in E Minor, BWV 528 (c.1730)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Transc. Yamashita

I. Adagio-Vivace

II. Andante

Trio Sonata No.1 in E-Flat major, BWV 525 (c.1730)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Transc. Yamashita

III. Allegro

Abigail Tanner/Abigail Lawson, clarinet

Yoshio Yamashita, cello

WORLD PREMIERE

As this world implodes (2022)

Yoshio Yamashita (b.2000)

I. Opening

II. Rondo

III. fuga e finale

Yoshio Yamashita/Brett Myers, percussion

INTERMISSION

WORLD PREMIERE

Temporal Cycles (2023)

Yoshio Yamashita (b.2000)

IV. ...for a life in the past cannot be shared with the present

Yoshio Yamashita/Allison Young, marimba

WORLD PREMIERE

The Waste Land (2023)

Yoshio Yamashita (b.2000)

I. The Burial of the Dead

V. What the Thunder Said

Yoshio Yamashita, percussionist-speaker

PROGRAM NOTES

TRIO SONATA NO.1 and NO.3

Bach's organ sonatas, also referred to as the trio sonatas, are often considered among his most difficult works for the instrument due to the clarity and independence demanded by their three voice counterpoint. Collected around 1730 in Leipzig—though the actual dates of composition are somewhat contested—each of the six sonatas consists of three movements, all of which feature three highly independent parts for the two manuals and pedals of the organ. All the sonatas, with the exception of the sixth sonata (BWV 530) contain material repurposed from earlier Bach works—for example, the first movement of the fourth sonata is a recast version of a trio from Cantata 76.

Rather than the four-movement sonata form, Bach favors the form of the Baroque concerto (fast-slow-fast). The Sonatas are of particular note within Bach's oeuvre due to their three-voice texture—a feature seldom found in many of Bach's other works for organ. With this comes a contrapuntal clarity that is not readily present in some of his organ works, some of which feature 5 or more independent voices operating at once. Some of the movements also show signs of the later popular style galant, such as the final movement of the E minor sonata.

As mentioned, the first movement of the fourth sonata is a transcription of the opening sinfonia from the second part of the cantata Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes, BWV 76. Of particular note is the slow introduction leading into the Vivace—perhaps a subtle nod to the form of the French overture (which began with a slow, stately introduction before transitioning into a faster tempo for the

bulk of the piece).

The second movement is centered around the idea of the two-bar phrase, with the two manual lines often trading off material with each repetition. This cycle continues throughout the development in the movement, eventually breaking pattern near the end. This movement, as transcribed for piano by August Stradal, has gained recent popularity in recent years after being featured on pianist Víkingur Ólafsson's 2018 album *Johann Sebastian Bach*. This transcription is based upon Bach's original sonata, splitting the two manual lines between the clarinets to imitate the delicate interplay between the two manual registers of the organ. It may be of significant notice that I have transposed the clarinet parts into the key of concert E-flat minor for the transcription of BWV 528, while the cello part remains in E minor. The intention of this transposition is to allow the cellist to tune their instrument to approximately A=415 Hz (Baroque pitch) without the need for the clarinetists to reconfigure their instruments or play on instruments tuned to A=415 Hz.

The third selection is from the first trio sonata, BWV 525, in E-flat major. Unlike the previous transcription of the E minor sonata, the transcription retains the original key, joining with the previous two movements to form a collection of pieces in the key of E-flat.

AS THE WORLD IMPODES (2022)

as this world implodes is a multi-percussion piece for two players, based around the Bach chorale "Es ist genug" from the cantata *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort*, BWV 60, which serves as the central theme of the piece, as well as an important countersubject to the fugue heard in the third movement.

The first movement is set in a quasi-sonata form bearing several episodes—a central theme which is set in C-sharp minor, and three interjecting episodes: one in the bright, hopeful key of C major; one contemplative, in A minor; and a third, questioning moment that loses sight of tonality before returning to the opening theme for a final time.

The second movement, played *attacca*, is a duet featuring exclusively unpitched percussion and, as the name suggests, is set in a rondo form. The recurring theme in the rondo is orchestrated differently each time it is played but is rhythmically the same each time. The movement ends with an aleatoric "conversation" between the two players, leading to a brief recap of the rondo theme and improvised cadenzas for both players.

The third movement, the finale of the work, has a fierce, driving character to it and is set in several episodes—an opening fugue, several "conversations" between the drums and keyboards, a second contrapuntal passage which introduces the chorale melody, and a furious coda which closes the work. The piece itself, especially

the third movement, was particularly inspired by reflections of the time in which it was composed and the seemingly never-ending cycle of trials that we have all faced—the title draws from the sense of helplessness we feel as life overwhelms us, leaving us to feel as if the world itself is imploding.

The third movement of *As This World Implodes* received its world premiere on April 10, 2022; the first two movements received their world premiere at the University of Arkansas Percussion Studio Recital on November 7, 2022. This performance marks the world premiere of the work in its entirety.

TEMPORAL CYCLES

The finale [of this work] takes its title from a passage in Alan Lightman's book *Einstein's Dreams*, and the movement itself is overarchingly cast as a theme and variations based on a theme from a previous composition, entitled *Tragedy of this World* (2022). However, the finale also reflects on the previous three movements by using their likenesses as integral parts of the variations, eventually culminating in a double fugue which includes the theme as a notable countersubject.

THE WASTE LAND (2023)

The genesis of *The Waste Land* coincides with that of the *Speaking-Pieces* (2022)—the first movement, fractured, to be precise. While *fractured* did set a portion of text from the fifth section of Eliot's poem, it seemed unjust to allow the rest of the poem to remain untouched. This setting of *The Waste Land* was conceived in a near-identical vein to the *Speaking-Pieces*; it is a response to the text rather than music trying to force an interpretation upon the poem (and the listener). The movements of *The Waste Land* are not pieces which have some sort of musical form or meter—rather, they are soundscapes which are meant to provide a musical enhancement of the text; another lens to view the poetry through. The work is written for percussionist-speaker; meaning that the speaking and playing must be done by the same performer. The organic nature of the pieces relies on the flexibility and control that can only be achieved by a single individual being responsible for the pacing of both the music and the text simultaneously.

Yoshio Yamashita is student of Dr. Robert Muller

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the Master of Music in Instrumental conducting.