

*UCI Department of Music Present:*

# ICIT Student Concert

Featuring ICIT PhD Students

A Gassmann Electronic Music Series Event

**UCI** Claire Trevor | Music  
School of the Arts



Friday, May 20, 2022

Winifred Smith Hall  
University of California, Irvine

## PROGRAM

- 4** (2022) Chieh Huang  
Performed by Chieh Huang and Rebecca Larkin
- Almostness** (2022) James Ilgenfritz
- Place** (2022) Jiryis Ballan and Chieh Huang
- 4'33"** (1952) John Cage  
Performed by Adib Ghorbani
- Untitled Piece** (2022) Steven Lewis  
Performed by Steven Lewis and Isaac Otto
- I am Lost in a Cavern** (2021) Rebecca Larkin
- The Brownstone** (2022) Willie Fastenow  
Performed by Whitney Schmanski (Dance), Langdon Crawford,  
Charlie Morrow, and Steven Lewis

### 4 - Chieh Huang

Four elements of music: pitch, timbre, volume, and time. Four naturalized ideas about listening and sound according to Nina Sun Eidsheim: the privileging of air, the predominant idea that sound's behavior should be understood in linear, visual terms; the presumption that sound is stable and the assumption that music deals only in sound and silence. I will denaturalize these presumptions in this piece.

This piece is "4" you.

### Almostness - James Ilgenfritz

The creation of this piece began in Fall 2021 and is ongoing. I have recently been exploring ways to integrate my vocabulary of extended techniques and use of alternate tunings for the contrabass, with live interactive electronics. In this piece, Mari Kimura's MUGIC sensor tracks the movement of my bow hand, emphasizing the threshold between stillness and motion. The various playing techniques sometimes mean the right hand is moving but the sound is still, or that the sound (and the left hand) are moving, while the right hand is relatively still. The result is that the piece always engages a series of gravitational forces that engage electronic sounds initiated through stillness, and sounds initiated through stasis. In this respect, the work occasions a contemplation of mindfulness, as engaged through stillness or through some force of directional action. There are multiple paths towards mindfulness, and in this piece the performer and experiencer are given an opportunity to be mindful of the threshold between stillness and motion.

### Place - Jiryis Ballan and Chieh Huang

Sound is relational, with numerous dimensions to its origin. The concept of place and origin is more than just a single location from which one begins; several coexisting histories and populations emerge from various points of connectedness. We are experimenting with timber and pitch between the Buzuq and percussion in this co-authored piece.

"The sonorous...outweighs the form. It does not dissolve it, but rather enlarges it; it gives it an amplitude, a density, and a vibration or undulation whose outline never does anything but approach. The visual persists until its disappearance; the sonorous appears and fades away into its permanence."

— Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*

### 4'33" - John Cage

"There is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time. There is always something to see, something to hear. In fact, try as we may to make a silence, we cannot." — John Cage

John Cage was the first composer to point out that silence is an idealized concept that does not exist in reality. He moved silence from an ordinary, negligible factor to an important subject in time-based media. This work is in three movements, and it consists of 4 minutes and 33 seconds of silence. During this piece the performer will play nothing. John Cage creates a time frame in which he removes his own voice and individuality as the creator of the piece and instead draws the attention of the audience to the sounds that are usually supposed to be extraneous noises. By playing nothing, he calls for the audience to awaken our ears to listen to what we assume as silence. The silence of 4' 33" functions like a big mirror on the stage, reflecting the audience and our surroundings, letting us listen to what we take for granted, any ordinary, unplanned and spontaneous sound, which Cage classifies both as noise and silence.

My PhD dissertation was called Silent Music and it was based on the concept of silence. 4'33" was one of my sources for this endeavor, and I rarely see it being performed. I found this to be a great opportunity to perform this piece and share the silence.

### Untitled Piece - Steven Lewis

*Untitled Piece* centers around the concept of Linear Gestural Augmentation. It is a performance-driven system that initially uses transformative response methods to broaden the sonic possibilities of the acoustic drum set. Motion tracking and audio analysis are used as input sources to control the real-time processing, where both the original and manipulated signals are recorded into separate buffers. The drummer is then enabled to further access and incorporate these previous ideas into

their current playing. Through leveraging processed signals into sensor-controlled generative and sequenced material, a repurposing occurs, where one's acoustic solo improvisation is transformed into electro-acoustic musical accompaniment for the same performer. Through Non-Linear Gestural Augmentation, the drummer can disembodiment the timbral and temporal qualities of the instrument's purely acoustic sound from their physical requisites and material dimensions. This performance is the first attempt at expanding the software into a system designed to simultaneously control the processing of a drummer and a non-percussive instrument.

### **I am Lost in a Cavern - Rebecca Larkin**

Lost in a cavern, I shout into the void... and the void shouts back.  
I don't know who I am.

### **The Brownstone - Willie Fastenow**

I've always been drawn to this poem, written by my uncle in 1984 while he was living in New York City. Over the years, I've explored different aspects of it, trying to draw out some of the piece's themes in various performative ways. Several years ago, when I was about the age my uncle was when he wrote this, my longtime friend and collaborator, Langdon Crawford, and I created a version for our band, The Air Band, whereby we played custom-built controllers designed by Langdon, and combined textural sounds, with the words of the poem as read and recorded by my grandfather, triggered back to life and manipulated with the controllers.

In this version, I am picking up where we left off and presenting the piece in an intermedia collaboration with Langdon (custom controller), Steven Michael Lewis (drums), and Whitney Schmanski (dance). I am also working with sound design created by Charlie Morrow, and leveraging the hardware and software innovations of Mari Kimura and her Mugic sensor, which is the basis for Langdon's custom instrument and is being worn by Whitney in a way that lets her sonify her movement. I'm including the text of the poem below, which serves as the underpinning of the piece, which you may find helpful to read either before or after the performative version. With special thanks to **Lisa Naugle**.

## **STAFF & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Directed by: Mari Kimura

House Manager: Shih-Wei Wu

Technical Assistants: Willie Fastenow and Steven Lewis

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