

October

26 Piano Students' Recital 7:30 pm

30 Music Therapy Clinical Forum
7:00 pm

November

5 Fall Recital 7:30 pm

19 MUW Jazz Ensemble Showcase Concert
7:30 pm

26 Senior Voice Recital 7:30 pm
Stephen Funderburk, tenor

29 Senior Voice Recital 7:30 pm
Bailey Dupuis and Jake Jones



**Mississippi University
for Women**

A Tradition of Excellence for Women and Men

Department of Music

Presents

Craig Hultgren, cello

Monday, October 15, 2018

7:30 pm

Connie Sills Kossen Auditorium

Poindexter Hall

For more information please visit: www.muw.edu/music
Or follow us on Facebook: MUW Music

Program

Orbital Variations for solo cello (2016) Shawn Crouch

Beat for cello with electronics (2016) David Bohn

Incendiary Rhetoric a politically inspired rant for cello & speaking cellist (2016) Alan Schmitz

Improvisation for amplified cello (2018) Craig Hultgren

INTERMISSION

Ce cE ceLLo for cello & sound file (2000) Joe L. Alexander

Arguments with Myself for solo cello (2009) Todd Gabriel

Turning and Turning in the Widening Gyre for cello & fixed media (2017) Charles Norman Mason

THE PERFORMER

Cellist **Craig Hultgren** remains active in new music, the newly creative arts, and the avant-garde. Recently leaving Birmingham after more than 30 years as a member of the Alabama Symphony, he now resides outside of Decorah, Iowa as the farmer-cellist. *The New York Classical Review* commented that he, "...played with impressive poise and sensitivity..." for Dorothy Hindman's 2016 chamber music retrospective at Carnegie Hall. At this point, almost 300 works have been created for him. A recipient of two Artist Fellowships from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, he was a member for many years of Thámyris, a contemporary chamber music ensemble in Atlanta. He is a founding member of Luna Nova, a new music ensemble with a large repertoire of performances available as podcast downloads on iTunes. Hultgren is featured in three solo CD recordings including *The Electro-Acoustic Cello Book* on Living Artist Recordings. For ten years, he produced the Hultgren Solo Cello Works Biennial, an international competition that highlighted the best new compositions for the instrument. He taught at the University of Alabama at

Birmingham, the Alabama School of Fine Arts, Wartburg College (Iowa) and Birmingham-Southern College where he directed the BSC New Music Ensemble. He is a founding member and former President of the Birmingham Art Music Alliance and was on the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Youth Orchestras of Birmingham and their Scrollworks program. Currently, he is Vice President of the Oneota Valley Community Orchestra Board of Directors in Decorah, and he will become Chair of the Board of Directors for the Iowa Composers Forum in 2019.

THE COMPOSITIONS AND COMPOSERS

Orbital Variations for solo cello is a theme and variations that explores the harmonic gravitational pull towards a center pitch. There are seven themes that are first heard in the opening section and are explored in the preceding six variations. There is an acceleration and deceleration of the musical line throughout the work similar to orbital mechanics where a gravitational slingshot occurs when a spacecraft used the gravity of a planet to accelerate. The work was written for Hultgren.

Gramophone Magazine calls **Shawn Crouch** a "gifted composer," and Anthony Tommasini of *The New York Times* describes his work as music of "gnarling atonal energy." He is the inaugural recipient of the Dale Warland Singers Commissioning Award given by Chorus America and the American Composers Forum. Crouch has studied composition with Martin Bresnick, Ezra Laderman, Lansing McCloskey and Malcolm Peyton and conducting with Marguerite Brooks and Leo Wanenchak. He has been the Wallace-Reader's Digest Composition Fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center as well as a composition fellow at the Norfolk Music Festival where he studied with Michael Gandolfi and Augusta Read Thomas. He has served as Composer-In-Residence with the San Francisco Choral Artists and at Arizona's Arcosanti New Music Festival. Shawn received his B.Mus. in composition from the New England Conservatory with honors and distinction in performance, his M.Mus. in composition from the Yale School of Music, and his D.M.A. in composition from the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. Shawn Crouch is currently Assistant Professor of Practice of Composition and Theory at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music where he is artistic director of the Ensemble Ibis New Music Ensemble.

Beat is the second in a series of pieces for solo instrument and fixed media, all sharing the title "Beat" and using the same stereo playback track; the others (to date) are for flute and alto saxophone. They all grew (rather improbably) from rejected sketches generated while composing a piece for flutist Robert Dick.

A native of Wisconsin, **David Bohn** received degrees in composition from the University of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and the University of Illinois. His primary composition teachers were Joel Naumann,

Yehuda Yannay, and William Brooks. He currently resides in West Allis, Wisconsin, and is organist and choir director St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in West Milwaukee. He is President of the Wisconsin Alliance for Composers.

Incendiary Rhetoric was inspired by the unprecedented political rhetoric and techniques of one of the candidates for the presidency of the United States during 2016. The piece is for solo cello with verbal interjections (quotes from the candidate) placed here and there throughout. The climax of the piece occurs when the performer loudly interjects the words “Nasty Woman” a number of times while playing a musical quote from Jimi Hendrix’s Foxy Lady. The piece is intended to be both humorous and seriously relevant.

Alan Schmitz is Professor Emeritus of the School of Music, University of Northern Iowa. He received bachelor and master of music degrees from the University of New Mexico and the Ph.D. in music theory and composition from Rutgers University. Schmitz’s music is widely performed in the United States and has also been presented in Western Europe, Romania, and Russia. He has received awards, commissions, and grants for composition from several agencies including the Alaska Council of the Arts, the Iowa Arts Council, the University of Northern Iowa, and the Lila Wallace/Readers Digest Foundation. Schmitz has also published articles on composing for guitar. Capstone/PARMA Records has released two CDs of music by Alan Schmitz: *90s Timeflow* (chamber pieces) and *Lyric Images* (guitar music of Alan Schmitz performed by Todd Seeley). Another PARMA CD, which features works by Alan and two of his sons, Christopher and Eric, was released in 2016.

Free improvisation has as many different explanations as there are improvisers who care to talk about it. For **Craig Hultgren**, improvisation is an artistic style that affords the opportunity for uniquely individual expression. Some of this is achieved through nontraditional or unusual ways of playing the instrument. Chaotic playing is another element of the style, yet somehow a pattern always emerges.

Ce ce ceLLO was commissioned by Craig Hultgren, and premiered on November 14, 2000, at the Birmingham Art Music Alliance’s Electroacoustic concert held at Birmingham-Southern College. The electronic part consists of prerecorded cello sounds which were manipulated using the Sound Forge software program. The composition was made possible through a generous Technical Assistance Grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

Composer, theorist, and tuba player, **Joe L. Alexander** joined the faculty of Mississippi University for Women’s Department of Music in the Fall of 2016. He was previously on the faculties of Louisiana Tech University, Birmingham-Southern College, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Samford University, Judson College, the University of Montevallo, Lamar University, East Central University (Ada, Oklahoma) and James Madison

University. He holds degrees from East Carolina University (B.M. in Music Education), James Madison University (M.M. in Theory/Composition), and the University of North Texas (D.M.A. in Composition, with extensive theory minor). He studied composition with Newel Kay Brown, Douglas Knehans, Martin Mailman, Cindy McTee, and James Riley; and tuba with Bruce Mosier, Ken Meisinger and James Michael Dunn.

Arguments with Myself takes the psychological tenants of an internal mental debate as the basis for developing sophisticated chromatic counterpoint on a bowed string instrument. Characterization and emotional outburst flavor the nature of different musical lines in dialogue with each other. The work was written for Hultgren.

Centenary College Professor Emeritus, **Todd Gabriel** has had an accomplished career as a symphonic violist, pedagogue and composer. A graduate of The Juilliard School, he has been a tenured member of the Phoenix, Alabama and Queensland (Australia) Symphony Orchestras. His composition teachers were Dan Asia, George Tsontakis, Robert Ward and David Diamond. A New York debut of his music came in 2006 with Haim Avitsur’s performance of *Dreams, Memories and Musical Reactions* for trombone and piano at the Mannes College, the New School of Music. His European debut was in 2008 at the Royal Northern College of Music with Trio Llano performing *Party Piece* for flute, clarinet and bassoon. Major artists have performed Gabriel’s music including the Geneva Viola Competition winner, Hong-mei Xiao; the Millennium Grand Prize winners at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition; the Fry Street Quartet; and Living Artist Recordings’ cellist, Craig Hultgren.

Turning and Turning in the Widening Gyre for cello and fixed media was written for Hultgren in January 2017. The title is from a Yates poem. The composition is not meant to depict the poem. Instead, the first line of Yates’ poem is used as a description of the sense of spinning out of control, of a zeitgeist that harks back to times that were dark and prone to hatred, the sense of history cycling back to darker days. The work was written for Hultgren.

Charles Norman Mason has been recognized for his originality and attention to color. Steve Smith of *The New York Times* said, “Additions offered a nearly seamless integration of electronic and acoustic sounds...” Peter Burwasser of *Fanfare* wrote that Mason’s music speaks in a, “boldly, original voice.” *High Performance Review* states the music is “full of invention... funky and colorful... consistently ingenious.” Among his awards are the 2006 Prix de Rome, a Dale Warland Prize, an American Composers Orchestra “Playing it Unsafe” prize and the FETA Cellotronics audience favorite prize. His music has been performed throughout the world including the FORO INTERNACIONAL DE MUSICA NUEVA, Quirinale in Rome, the Aspen Summer Music Festival, and Nuova Musica Consonante. His music has been featured several times on Performance Today on NPR. Mason is chair and professor of composition at the University of Miami Frost School of Music.