Concert no. 2, Thursday, November 2, 2023
Recital Hall, 7:00 pm.

PROGRAM

Can’t
Mark Snyder (b. 1970)
Chris Scanlon, trumpet
Fixed media and video

Savino
Derek Tywoniuk (b. 1988)
Rhiannon Robinson, marimba
Fixed media

I am Yeast
Brian Penkrot (b. 1978)
Thomas Snydacker, baritone saxophone
Fixed media and video

A retrospective on the 80th birthday of American composer Morten Lauridsen
Amor, Io Sento L’alma from Six Fire Songs on Italian Renaissance Poems
Sa Nuit d’Ete from Nocturnes
Mediocritie in Love Rejected from Four Madrigals on Renaissance Texts

My Dearest Ruth
Stacey Garrop (b. 1969)
Thomas Snydacker, alto saxophone
David Maki, piano

Mouths of Deceit
Joseph Beribak (b. 1987)
Silas Huff, conductor
Joe Beribak, percussion
Gianna Capobianco, flute
Eduardo Zamudio, clarinet
Anna Lantz, bass clarinet
Nathan Stade, guitar
Rebecca Ting-Yun Wu, electric keyboard
Reilly Farrell, violin
Elianna Nielsen, viola
Christopher Mendez, cello
NIU Chamber Choir
Yuchen Lin, accompanist

Soprano
Emma Gawaran
Olivia Lesniewski
Grace Pagliaro
Allison Wilson

Alto
Sarah Calgaro
Cameron Grey
Maggie Kanapilly

Tenor
Jonnie Kullens
Sam Lynas
Gunnar Magnuson
Joseph Quaynor

Bass
Georgi Dimitrov
Boone Elledge
Ryan Jensen
Ryan Nelson
Trent Starzynski

About our featured Composers (in order of appearance):

Mark Snyder is a Musician, Video Artist, Writer, Engineer, Producer & Teacher living in Illinois. Mark’s multimedia compositions have been described as “expansive, expressive, and extremely human. As a producer, writer, engineer, and performer, his discography includes world, electroacoustic, pop, rock, classical, and country records. A quarterfinalist for the Grammy Music Educator of the Year Award, Mark has guided his students to success in music, including a Morton Gould Young Composer Award winner, a capstone paper published in the journal Metamorphis, and three students taking second place at the Nashville AES Mix Competition. Mark earned the DMA from the University of Memphis, MM from Ohio University and a BA from Mary Washington College. He currently is an Instructor at Northern Illinois University. marksnyder.org

Brian Penkrot is an American composer and guitarist from Chicago. He teaches composition, theory, and computer music at Northern Illinois University. Brian's music has been performed at festivals and institutions in the US, Europe, and Asia. He has attended numerous festivals and conferences, including June in Buffalo, soundSCAPE, and the N.E.O.N. festival. Ensembles including ICE, JACK Quartet, ECCE, and Enid Trio have performed his works. His duo/trip BCJsPs is wild and performs at concert venues and museums. Brian’s background also includes theater and dance. He has performed and written countless productions, including The Roof is on Fiddler and SpaceFuture. Brian has performed in many Chicago’s theaters and trained at the Second City Conservatory, iO (formerly ImprovOlympic), the Annoyance Theater, Act One Studios, Gus Giordano Dance Studio, and the University of Wisconsin. Brian received his PhD from the University of Iowa. He is the treasurer for Ensemble Dal Niente and is the former business manager for Melos Music. More information can be found at www.brianpenkrot.com.

Joe Beribak was born in Elgin, IL, and makes his home in DeKalb, IL. He received a Bachelor of Percussion Performance in 2009 from DePaul University and an Artists Diploma from The Colburn Conservatory in 2013. Joe studied Gregorian Chant at the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Chicago from 2018-2020, where he was a novice. Since deciding not to take vows, he has rededicated himself to teaching and composing. Joe’s work as a percussionist can be heard on all streaming platforms under his own name and with Smoke & Mirrors Percussion Ensemble, which he founded during his graduate studies. Joe currently directs percussion ensemble at Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestras and has begun studies for a master’s in music composition at Northern Illinois University.
Program Notes

"Savino", by Derek Tywoniuk, is a piece for solo marimba and tape, co-commissioned by Brandon Ilaw and the Zeltsman Marimba Festival. It was premiered at ZMF in 2015 at Rutgers University in Brandon Ilaw's joint solo recital with Emmanuel Séjourné. "Savino" uses NY State Senator Diane Savino's speech on Marriage Equality from the Senate Floor in Albany, NY on December 2, 2009. The piece itself was premiered right after the Supreme Court made its decision to legalize marriage equality nationwide (June 26, 2015). - Brandon Ilaw

I Am Yeast (2023) comes from realizing several facts about both myself and yeast.
- I prefer temperatures between 55 and 75 degrees
- I can remain dormant for extended periods of time
- I require vitamins and minerals to function to the best of my abilities
- I am not a huge fan of sulfur
- I will eat as much sugar as you are willing to give me
- I can thrive with alcohol solutions of about 5%
- I am in serious danger with solutions of 15% alcohol or higher
- I will eventually turn into sediment

The letter on which My Dearest Ruth is based was my father’s last written statement. My parents celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary in my father’s room at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore on Wednesday, June 23, 2010. The following day, my mother called to say Dad had taken a turn for the worse. I flew to Baltimore the next morning (Friday) and met Mom at Dad’s room. The doctors came in and told us there was nothing more they could do — the cancer had progressed too far. All this time, Dad kept repeating one word: “Home.” So we made arrangements to bring him back to our apartment in Washington, D.C. While collecting his belongings from the hospital room, Mom pulled open the drawer next to Dad’s bed and discovered a yellow legal pad on which Dad had written this a week earlier:

6/17/10
My Dearest Ruth –
You are the only person I have loved in my life, setting aside, a bit, parents and kids and their kids, and I have admired and loved you almost since the day we first met at Cornell some 56 years ago.
What a treat it has been to watch you progress to the very top of the legal world!!
I will be in JH Medical Center until Friday, June 25, I believe, and between then and now I shall think hard on my remaining health and life, and whether on balance the time has come for me to tough it out or to take leave of life because the loss of quality now simply overwhelms. I hope you will support where I come out, but I understand you may not. I will not love you a jot less.
-Marty

I should note one factual error: my parents met 59 years before the date of this letter, not 56. Obviously, Dad had their 56th anniversary in mind. We chose to keep the number 56 in the song.
My sister, Jane, and I commissioned Stacy Garrop to adapt the letter and set it to music as one of three songs by different women composers to be presented in 2013 as an 80th birthday tribute to our mother, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Soprano Patrice Michaels sang the premiere at the Supreme Court with pianist Dana Brown on Saturday, April 6, 2013. - James Ginsberg
Mouths of Deceit

“O God, whom I praise, do not be silent, for the mouths of deceit and wickedness are opened against me.” (Ps. 108 (109))

This Psalm, filled with gruesome curses, left me in shock when I first read it. I began the composition of this piece by setting the Clementine Vulgate translation of this Psalm. As the piece transformed into a percussion solo with mixed ensemble, I needed to find within me those curses expressed by the Psalm. Only in this space could I find distance and flexibility sufficient to stand before this text. In this space, the shocking ideas of the Psalm can be puzzled beneath their linguistic veneer.