



## Kennesaw State University School of Music

Monday, December 8, 2014 at 8:00 pm

Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Family Performance Center, Morgan Hall

Fifty-fifth Concert of the 2014-15 Concert Season

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## Percussion Ensemble Fall Concert

John Lawless, director

KEVIN ERICKSON (b. 1971)

**At The Dawn Of War**

MITCH GILLIS (b. 1996)

**Promises**

MICHAEL BURRITT (b. 1962)

**Fandango 13**

BLAKE TYSON (b. 1969)

**Vertical River**

GEORGE HAMILTON GREEN (1893-1970)

arr. Bob Becker

**Chromatic Fox-Trot**

Brooks Payne, xylophone

IVAN TREVINO (b. 1983)

**Catching Shadows**

DAVE HALL (b. 1983)

**Doors**

# percussion ensemble

Michael Berry

Josh Bouland

Joe Donohue

Mitch Gillis

Sydney Hunter

Mary Madison Jones

Caty Mae Loomis

Brandon Lopez

Levi Lyman

Michael Ollman

Brooks Payne

Eric Ramos

Selena Sanchez

Jada Taylor

Clay Wilderman

## program notes

### **At The Dawn of War** | Kevin Erickson

The idea for this piece began to manifest itself in the fall of 2000, with the original sketches following soon thereafter. I had intended to create a work that would depict different episodes in a day of war. By spring of 2001, the project had been moved to the back burner, with no definite plan for completion. The following fall, I was able to revisit my sketches. Work had resumed for only a couple of weeks when our nation was struck by the tragic events of September 11, 2001. The flood of emotions that followed fueled my desire to see this project come to fruition. Focusing the direction of the project became increasingly difficult as the piece began to morph into something completely different than what had been originally intended. I had considered changing the title to *An Act Of War* and, subsequently, new sketches were composed to depict the actual events of 9/11. As I grew increasingly frustrated with the progress of the work, I found that I did not want to glorify the attack on our homeland. I then looked back at the original ideas for the piece, realizing that the images in my head were of American offensive efforts in war. This could be any war, be it retaliatory efforts following 9/11 or otherwise for that matter. With this in mind, I opted not to make this work programmatic in the traditional, but rather to let listeners conjure up images based on their own experiences.

- Kevin Erickson

### **Promises** | Mitch Gillis

The world is made of promises. All of our relationships with others rely on promises. Every moment promises a moment to come, just as every part of our lives impacts what will happen in another. From this connectivity we build our

trust, expectations, and motivations. *Promises* is written for percussion ensemble with traditional Indonesian instruments. With this combination, I hope to create a connection across time and space through music - my own trust, expectations, and motivations.

- Mitch Gillis

### **Fandango 13** | Michael Burritt

The percussion sextet *Fandango 13* is a re-working of an earlier piece for keyboard percussion quartet and from a larger work commissioned by the West Point Academy titled *Four Points West*. I had thought for some time that expanding the instrumentation to include several additional keyboards, hand drums and tom toms would make for a more dynamic piece and could stand alone outside the context of its original place within a three-movement work. I think of *Fandango 13* as a virtuosic burst of energy from beginning to end. It was premiered by the Eastman Percussion Ensemble at PASIC 2013 and dedicated to those players who brought it to life so brilliantly.

- Michael Burritt

### **Vertical River** | Blake Tyson

A few years ago, John Parks and I were rafting on the Boise River in Idaho. We had a great time and, despite a few close calls, escaped with our lives. When John asked me to write a piece for him the following year, I thought that those memories would be a good place to start. I took them as my inspiration and wrote a short piece that depicts the beauty, excitement, and the occasional feeling of losing control that we experienced in the raft that day. John and I premiered *Vertical River* on November 6th, 2003 at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida.

- Blake Tyson

### **Chromatic Fox-Trot** | George Hamilton Green | arr. Bob Becker

Chromatic Fox-Trot was published by George Hamilton Green as a xylophone solo with piano accompaniment in 1924, one in a series of six novelty fox-trots grouped under the title *George Hamilton Green's Jazz Classics for the Xylophone*. My original arrangement was done in 1973 and was among the first of George Green's compositions that I arranged for Nexus using the four marimba/xylophone solo format. As with most of these early arrangements, my aim was to simply translate the piano part to the marimba idiom in a way that would sound clear and

strong. The present publication is a revision of the original arrangement, but the basic idea is still the same. The xylophone solo part in this arrangement remains almost identical to Green's original published version. For the most part, the only changes are the additions of dynamics, slurs and accents.

- *Bob Becker*

### **Catching Shadows** | Ivan Trevino

Michael Burritt and I have become good friends and collaborators over the years, and on a recent road trip to a gig he said, "I'm in charge of the tunes!" Honestly, I didn't know what to expect! He plugged in his iPod, and the first thing to play: Radiohead, then Dave Matthews, then *Earth Wind and Fire*. That's when I discovered something cool about Mike: he's as much rock musician as classical musician. It just so happens he plays marimba. Sometimes I feel the same way. With *Catching Shadows* I thought about our road trip and decided to write a rock tune inspired by Mike's playlist.

- *Ivan Trevino*

### **Doors** | Dave Hall

I began to compose the piece by imagining a singular door opening in my mind (this can be heard in the first moments of the piece). This door led to a room with more doors, at which point I would pick one and move to another room with more doors still. I imagine each room as being affected by the previous rooms and reflective of the journey to that point. As motives from each room travel with the piece, the sound of slamming doors can be heard leaving the piece no option but to continue forward into more complex and sometimes disturbing realms. In this way the piece moves from light to dark, from innocence to experience. Instead of returning to simpler material, it continues to gather weight.

A reverent chorale appears in the middle and again at the end that is a harmonic summary of the entire piece. The chorale and the piece as a whole were composed as a requiem for my late father-in-law John Ruppel, who passed away unexpectedly in early 2010 as I had just begun to compose the piece. In an abstract way, *Doors* reflects the idea of appreciating and understanding a deeper form of beauty that can come only with experience, even though experience often comes at the price of such tragic events. As the piece progresses, its own increasing darkness and complexity produce what I hope are the most clear and beautiful moments for the listener. The doors that continue to slam behind yield new doors ahead, illuminating the only direction we can go-forward.

- *Dave Hall*

## special thanks

I would like to personally thank Mrs. Annabelle Postier for her incredibly generous gift of traditional Indonesian Gamelan instruments to the KSU Percussion Studio. Her vision was to have these beautiful instruments around young people who could learn about the styles of music and culture of the Indonesian people. Little did she know at that time, that we would premier a new work using all of her instruments composed by a KSU freshman. What a wonderful gift, thank you Annabelle!

- John Lawless

## biography

### Senior Lecturer of Percussion Studies

**J**ohn Lawless, Senior Lecturer, joined the music faculty of Kennesaw State University in 1998, and became the Director of Percussion Studies in 2004. Principal Timpanist of the Atlanta Opera orchestra since 1979, John held the same position with the Chattanooga Symphony for 21 years. Since 1978, Mr. Lawless has performed, toured, and recorded with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra while maintaining a thriving freelance career as a studio and pit percussionist.



A founding member of the Atlanta Percussion Trio, Mr. Lawless performs hundreds of school concerts a year for thousands of children throughout the Southeastern United States. Along with Scott Douglas and Karen Hunt, the trio has been a performing group for 32 years, bringing educational programs to children of all ages.

As a soloist, Mr. Lawless played several concertos with the Chattanooga Symphony, including: *The Olympian for 8 Timpani and Orchestra* as well as *The Messenger for Multiple Percussion and Orchestra*, both written by James Oliverio. In 2009, Mr. Lawless performed Joseph Schwantner's *Concerto for Percussion* with the Cobb Symphony Orchestra. In 2014, he performed the Southeastern premier of Christopher Theofinidis' *Marimba Concerto* with the KSU Wind Ensemble for the Festival of New Music.

A graduate of Georgia State University, Mr. Lawless' teachers include Tom Float, Jack Bell, Cloyd Duff, Paul Yancich, Bill Wilder, and Mark Yancich. Previous faculty appointments include those at Georgia State University, Clark Atlanta University, and West Georgia State University.

# about the school of music

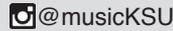
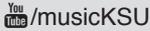
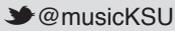
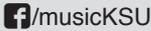
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Michael Alexander  
Interim Director, KSU School of Music

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## upcoming events

*Unless otherwise noted, all events are held in Morgan Concert Hall and begin at 8 p.m.*

Thursday, January 8  
**Von Grey with KSU Orchestra**

Monday, January 12  
**Helen Kim, violin with  
Sakiko Ohashi, piano**

Tuesday, January 13  
**Faculty Recital: David Watkins, piano**

Friday, January 16  
**Atlanta Symphony Orchestra:  
Marin Alsop, conductor and  
Julian Rachlin, violin**

Thursday, January 22  
**Yakov and Aleksandra Kasman, piano**

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