

SCHOOL of MUSIC

Where PASSION is *heard*

Kennesaw State University Percussion Ensemble

John Lawless, *Director*

Friday, November 06, 2020 | 8:00 PM

Presented virtually from Morgan Concert Hall of the Bailey Performance Center

PROGRAM

AT THE DAWN OF WAR

Kevin Erickson (b. 1971)

ELECTRIC SUNRISE

Plini, arr. Jared Cook (b. 1998)

A GROUP OF OWLS IS CALLED A PARLIAMENT

Riley Hodges (b. 2001)

to wALK Or ruN in wEst harlem

Andy Akiho (b. 1971)

Jesse Cook, *piano*

NORRSKENS DANS

Jacob Remington (b. 1986)



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PROGRAM NOTES

AT THE DAWN OF WAR

The idea for this piece began to manifest itself early 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. Then I 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 the retaliatory efforts following 9/11 or otherwise for that matter. With this in mind, I opted not to make the work programmatic in the traditional, but rather to let listeners conjure up images based on their own experiences. (This work is dedicated to the heroic men and women who gave wholly of themselves for their country on 11 September 2001. Let us never forget their sacrifice.)

- Kevin Erickson

ELECTRIC SUNRISE

The original Electric Sunrise was released by Plini on their studio album “Handmade Cities” on August 26, 2016. The original song was written for guitars and drums in the style of a progressive rock band. In March 2020, I arranged the work for percussion ensemble. At the time of the initial shutdown of the world as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, many people found themselves with an excessive amount of free time. I took advantage of this extra time and began arranging Electric Sunrise for percussion ensemble by transcribing all 9 guitar parts onto percussion instruments and transcribing the drum set. This began as a fun personal project that was never intended to be publicly performed. However, in April, the Kennesaw State University Percussion Ensemble agreed to perform my arrangement. I will be performing with the ensemble tonight. This performance is the world premier of my arrangement of Electric Sunrise.

- Jared Cook



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A GROUP OF OWLS IS CALLED A PARLIAMENT

Often when trying to write a piece, I will sit down at a piano and improvise until I discover something I like. I created the melody for this piece while avoiding practicing for my piano basics class. I quickly realized that this melody would not fit in the standard 4/4 time signature, so instead I wrote the entire piece in 15/8, one eighth-note short of 4/4. The next challenge arrived when I decided the piece needed a name. After many months of the piece being titled "Quartet", a friend of mine shared a trivia question with me about KSU's mascot. I decided an entire fun fact would be a great name for a piece. And thus, the piece became "A Group of Owls is Called a Parliament".

- Riley Hodges

to wALK Or ruN in wEst harlem

"to wALK Or ruN in wEst harlem" was written for the 2008 Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival. It features a modified Pierrot ensemble with a prepared vibraphone.

The original instrumentation was: flute, bass clarinet, violin, cello, piano, vibraphone, and drum set. Andy Akiho re-orchestrated this work for percussion ensemble and piano in 2010. This is the version on tonight's program, and the orchestration is: 2 octaves of crotales, 3 vibraphones, large thundersheet, piano, drum set, 2 large tam tams, 5 octave marimba, 2 glockenspiels, and one big hit on the Mahler stump with a custom hammer. (this was added by Matt Pate!) The re-orchestrated version had it's premier in June of 2010.

- John Lawless

NORRSKENS DANS

I began writing Norrskens Dans (Aurora's Dance) in 2011 when I was living in a small town in northern Sweden called Piteå. Located only 100 kilometers south of the Arctic Circle, this region endures up to 22 hours of darkness during the winter months. However, even without direct sunlight for the majority of the day, the heavy amounts of snow reflect any light, which glistens and illuminates the surroundings with a brilliant white glow. This piece depicts the ethereal, natural beauty of the scenery in this locale as well as the awe-inspiring and powerful celestial wonderment of the northern lights that are a common occurrence and frequently visible in this remote part of the world.

- Jacob Remington



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PERSONNEL

KSU Percussion Ensemble

John Lawless, Director

Anna Abdala

Matt Andrews

Noah Avrett

JT Battles-Garrett

Ben Bouland

Samuel Brooke

Nicholas Bryant

Jared Cook

Jordan Corteau

Alexander Deen

Ethian Dupier

Jason Frey

Anna Gugel

Riley Hodges

Mack Jefferson

Christian Kilgore

Michael Makrides

Bryan Mayo

Vincent Nguyen

Jake Norwood

Matt Pate

Brandon Potolatin

Olivia Reeves

Arsalaan Sayani

Tyrell Smith

Alex Sotka

Malloy Sparling

Alec Yeung

Andrew Yi



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BIOGRAPHY

John Lawless

John 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.

