

**Old Dominion University**

2018-2019

# **F. Ludwig Diehn Concert Series**



Photo by Barbara Johnson

## **Third Coast Percussion**

**Sean Connors**

**Robert Dillon**

**Peter Martin**

**David Skidmore**

### **“Lyrical Geometry”**

Concert: Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m.

Master Class, Feb. 12, 12:30 p.m.

Wilson G. Chandler Recital Hall

F. Ludwig Diehn Center for the Performing Arts



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# Program

"Niagara" from *Paddle to the Sea* (2016)

Third Coast Percussion

*BEND* (2016)

Peter Martin (b. 1980)

*Resounding Earth, Mvt II. Prayer* (2012)

Augusta Read Thomas (b. 1964)

*Perfectly Voiceless* (2018)

Devonté Hynes (b. 1985)

## INTERMISSION

*Aphasia* (2010)

Mark Applebaum (b. 1967)

*Ordering-instincts* (2014)

Robert Dillon (b. 1980)

"Amazon River" from *Aguas da Amazonia*  
(1993/1999/2016)

Philip Glass (b.1937)  
arr. Third Coast Percussion

*Aliens with Extraordinary Abilities* (2016)

David Skidmore (b. 1982)

Don't Eat Your Young  
Torched and Wrecked



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An endowment established at the Hampton Roads Community Foundation,  
made possible by a generous gift from F. Ludwig Diehn, funds this program.

# Program Notes

The four members of Third Coast Percussion all compose their own music, and in recent years, have worked on projects that involve composing music together as a team. As part of a multi-media performance project, the quartet composed music to perform live with the 1966 film ***Paddle to the Sea***, based on a children's book of the same name written in 1941. The film tells the story of a small wooden figure in a canoe, lovingly carved by a Native Canadian boy and set on a long journey through the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway, out to the Atlantic Ocean and beyond. The people who find "Paddle" along the way must choose, rather than keeping him for themselves, to send him farther along the waterways, perhaps with a fresh coat of paint or a new rudder. Paddle also encounters danger in his journey, as in this passage, when he goes over Niagara Falls.

Third Coast Percussion's album *Paddle to the Sea*, featuring this music, as well as water-themed works that inspired this composition, was released on Cedille Records in February 2018.

*Paddle to the Sea* was commissioned with lead support from the Maxine and Stuart Frankel Foundation. The work was co-commissioned by the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Meany Center for the Performing Arts at University of Washington, ArtsLIVE at University of Dayton, and the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center.

Duration: 4 minutes

Renowned as a soloist, chamber musician and educator, Third Coast Percussion's **Peter Martin** was assistant professor and director of percussion studies at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA, before returning to Chicago in 2013 to pursue TCP full time. Martin has composed music for many of the group's educational and concert projects in recent years.

His quartet **BEND** draws inspiration from the player piano compositions of Bruce Goff, a wonderfully unconventional architect and amateur composer. Many of Goff's piano rolls were highly stylized geometric designs perforated into the scrolls, resulting in music that created very clear sonic "shapes." Whereas these shapes would create the pitch and rhythm in a player piano performance, **BEND** translates these shapes into volume, tone and gesture. The composer's experience with the piano rolls—through a blurry, decades-old video-inspired an unconventional sound palette created with alternative techniques on two marimbas.

Duration: 8 minutes

Grammy-award winner **Augusta Read Thomas** was Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony from 1997 to 2006. She is the 16th ever University Professor (of five current University Professors) at the University of Chicago, and she was named one of the Chicago Tribune's "Chicagoans of the Year" in 2016.

***Resounding Earth*** is scored for four percussionists playing bells (and bell-like instruments) from a wide variety of cultures and historical periods. The piece was conceived as a cultural statement celebrating interdependence and commonality across all cultures; and as a musical statement celebrating the extraordinary beauty and diversity of expression inherent in bell sounds.

# Program Notes

Bells can be used to celebrate grand occasions, hold sacrificial rites, keep a record of events, give the correct time, celebrate births and weddings, mark funerals, caution a community, enhance any number of religious ceremonies, and are even hung around the necks of animals.

*Resounding Earth* was commissioned by the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, with additional funding from the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, Department of Music, and the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program, with generous funding provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Chamber Music America Endowment Fund.

Duration: 9 minutes

**Devonté Hynes** is a British singer, songwriter, composer, producer and author, now residing in New York City. He just released his fourth studio album under the name "Blood Orange," and previously released two albums as "Lightspeed Champion." He has produced for artists such as Solange Knowles, Sky Ferreira, and Carly Rae Jepsen, and has made his own solo appearances on the Pitchfork and Coachella Music Festivals. Hynes plays cello and piano, and recently performed some of Philip Glass's etudes as part of an all-star lineup for Glass concerts at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. Hynes also has a background in dance and has worked with ballet dancer Maria Kochetkova and choreographer Emma Portner in his own music videos.

Hynes composed the music for an entire evening-length program featuring Third Coast Percussion and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, with new choreography created by Emma Portner, Jon Boogz and Lil Buck, which premiered in Chicago in September 2018. To create this 75-minute opus, Hynes composed music with synthesized and sampled sounds, which he then sent to Third Coast Percussion. TCP experimented with instruments to create a live performance version of the music, which the group then recorded and sent back to Hynes for feedback, then eventually to the choreographers to create the dance. Tonight's program features a section of this program, ***Perfectly Voiceless***, that served as a musical interlude between choreographed pieces.

This work was commissioned by the Charles and Joan Gross Family Foundation. The project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Third Coast Percussion New Works Fund, and the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation.

Duration: 11 minutes

**Mark Applebaum** is the Edith and Leland Smith Professor of Composition at Stanford University. Always an "outside the box" thinker, his compositions include a work for three conductors and no players, a concerto for florist with symphony orchestra, and music notated on the face of a wristwatch. His TED Talk, "The Mad Scientist of Music," has been seen by more than 3 million viewers. Applebaum is also an accomplished jazz pianist and builds electroacoustic sound-sculptures out of junk, hardware and found objects. At Stanford, Applebaum is the founding director of [sic]—the Stanford Improvisation Collective.

**Aphasia** is a work for solo vocalist, notable, as the composer says, "for its absence of live singing." Instead, this work (which has gained great popularity among percussionists) consists of a recording of a number of transformed voice samples from baritone Nicholas Isherwood and a series of specifically-prescribed physical gestures to be performed live. These gestures include familiar everyday motions such as turning a key, eating a sandwich or buckling a seatbelt, and are synchronized with the samples, but unrelated in meaning.

Duration: 9 minutes

Third Coast Percussion member **Robert Dillon** has enjoyed a career as an orchestral, solo and chamber musician, as well as an educator for all ages, and since college, has pursued music composition as an additional expressive avenue.

**Ordering-instincts** draws a big sound from a very compact setup of instruments. The four percussionists share eight wooden planks, an octave of loose crotales and two tom-toms, from which they create a variety of different sonic colors in tightly interwoven rhythms. All musical content arises from the composite of all the players together; no one player's part forms a complete voice by itself.

*Ordering-instincts* is dedicated to the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center at the University of Notre Dame, on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.

Duration: 8 minutes

Through his operas, his symphonies, his compositions for his own ensemble, and his wide-ranging collaborations with artists ranging from Twyla Tharp to Allen Ginsberg, Woody Allen to David Bowie, **Philip Glass** has had an extraordinary and unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of his times.

His collection **Agua da Amazonia** has experienced multiple lives on different musical instruments. Glass's *12 Pieces for Ballet*, originally composed for piano, was arranged by Brazilian musical group Uakti for its own gamut of instruments, many of which were custom-made and built by the performers. This new version of the piece was renamed after the Amazon River and its tributaries. Drawing on both the Uakti arrangement and the original piano music, the members of Third Coast Percussion arranged a handful of these pieces as part of its multimedia project *Paddle to the Sea*, utilizing mallet percussion instruments and other unique instrumental colors such as melodica, desk bells and almglocken (tuned Swiss cowbells).

Duration: 7 minutes

# Program Notes

The compositions of Third Coast Percussion member **David Skidmore** are performed regularly in concert halls and universities across the country. In 2011, his multi-movement work *Common Patterns in Uncommon Time* was commissioned by Frank Lloyd Wright scholar Sidney K. Robinson to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Taliesin, home of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. In 2007 his piece, *Unknown Kind*, premiered at Carnegie Hall. He has also received commissions from the Rush Hour Concert Series in Chicago, and a number of leading percussion soloists and pedagogues.

***Aliens with Extraordinary Abilities*** is a cycle of works exploring a common idea: that the same piece of music can move at several different speeds at the same time. An electronic audio track—David's most intensive work with electronic composition to date—expands and reinforces the live percussion in many of these works, and video artist Xuan was commissioned to create accompanying video. Many of the individual pieces take their cryptic names from memorable Third Coast Percussion touring experiences or inside jokes.

Duration: 10 minutes

## Biography

Third Coast Percussion is a Grammy Award-winning, artist-run quartet of classically trained percussionists hailing from the great city of Chicago. For over 10 years, the ensemble has forged a unique path in the musical landscape with virtuosic, energetic performances that celebrate the extraordinary depth and breadth of musical possibilities in the world of percussion. The ensemble has been praised for “commandingly elegant” (New York Times) performances, the “rare power” (Washington Post) of their recordings, and “an inspirational sense of fun and curiosity” (Minnesota Star-Tribune). The four members of Third Coast are also accomplished teachers, and since 2013, have served as ensemble-in-residence at the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center.

A direct connection with the audience is at the core of all of Third Coast Percussion's work, whether the musicians are speaking from the stage about a new piece of music, inviting the audience to play along in a concert or educational performance, or inviting their fans around the world to create new music using one of their free mobile apps.

Third Coast Percussion maintains a busy touring schedule, with past performances in 33 of the 50 states plus Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland, and venues ranging from concert halls at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and De Doelen to clubs and alternative performance spaces such as New York's Le Poisson Rouge and the National Gallery's West Garden Court.

The quartet's curiosity and eclectic taste have led to a series of unlikely collaborations that have produced exciting new art. The ensemble has worked with engineers at the University of Notre Dame, architects at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, dancers at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and musicians from traditions ranging from the mbira music of Zimbabwe's Shona people, to indie rockers, to some of the world's leading concert musicians.

A commission for a new work from composer Augusta Read Thomas in 2012 led to the realization that commissioning new musical works can be – and should be – as collaborative as any other artistic partnership. Through extensive workshopping and close contact with composers, Third Coast Percussion has commissioned and premiered new works from Philip Glass, Devonté Hynes, Donnacha Dennehy, Glenn Kotche, Lei Liang, Gavin Bryars, Christopher Cerrone, Marcos Balter, and today's leading up-and-coming composers from their Emerging Composers Partnership Program. These works have become part of the ensemble's core repertoire and been performed hundreds of times across North America and throughout Europe.

Third Coast Percussion's recordings include five full-length albums, three EPs, and a number of appearances on other releases. The quartet has put its stamp on iconic percussion works by John Cage, Steve Reich and Philippe Manoury, and Third Coast has also created first recordings of commissioned works by Augusta Read Thomas, David T. Little and Ted Hearne, in addition to recordings of the ensemble's own compositions. In 2017 the ensemble won the Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble performance for their recording of Steve Reich's works for percussion.

Third Coast Percussion has always maintained strong ties to the vibrant artistic community in its hometown of Chicago. The group has collaborated with Chicago institutions such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, the Chicago Philharmonic and the Adler Planetarium; performed at the grand opening of Maggie Daley Children's Park; conducted residencies at the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago; created multiyear collaborative projects with Chicago-based composers Augusta Read Thomas, Glenn Kotche and chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird; and taught tens of thousands of students through partnerships with The People's Music School, Urban Gateways, the Chicago Park District, Rush Hour Concerts and others.

The four members of Third Coast Percussion met while studying percussion music at Northwestern University. Members of Third Coast also hold degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Rutgers University, the New England Conservatory and the Yale School of Music. Stay up-to-date and go behind-the-scenes by following Third Coast on Twitter (@ThirdCoastPerc), Facebook (@Third Coast Percussion), and Instagram (@ThirdCoastPercussion).

\*Third Coast Percussion is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.



# F. Ludwig Diehn Concert Series

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**Third Coast Percussion**

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