

The University of Vermont
School of the Arts
Program in Music

Thursday, November 17, 2022, 7:30 p.m.
Music Building Recital Hall

UVM Percussion Ensemble
D. Thomas Toner, *conductor*

Program

Overture for Percussion Ensemble (1977)	John Beck
Gending Bali (1978, rev. 2014)	Richard Kvistad
Scherzo for Percussion (1959)	William Schinstine
Spiraling Light (2009)	Nathan Daughtrey
Machacar (rev. 2013)	D. Thomas Toner
Les Echanges (1964)	Rolf Liebermann/Fink

Please silence all electronic devices and refrain from the use of flash photography
during the performance. Thank you!

Program Notes

The **Overture for Percussion Ensemble** begins with the sound of a solitary drum and builds to the entrance of the timpani and mallet instruments. The timpani are the first to state the theme, a rhythmic arpeggiation of a F7 chord with a suspended fourth (F - Bb - C - Eb). This theme is then heard in a two-voice rhythmic canon between the timpani and chimes. The snare drum announces the second large section of the work, in 4/4 time but with an unusual grouping of eighth notes (3+3+2). The theme is again heard in two voice canon, here between the tom-toms and the bells, over which the xylophone plays an obbligato in the 3+3+2 sub-division. A short section in half speed leads to a slightly altered return of the opening, with all the keyboard instruments stating the theme in unison. John Beck was the percussion teacher at the Eastman School of Music from 1959 - 2008.

The Indonesian island of Bali is famous for its music of the gamelan - an orchestra of metal keyboard percussion instruments. As the name implies, American percussionist/composer Richard Kvistad's original composition **Gending Bali** is written in the Balinese style Gamelan Batel, an ensemble made of four keyboard instruments that accompany gender wayang (shadow puppetry), gongs, and drums. In our performance a small, muted gong takes the place of the small pot gong (ketuk) that keeps the beat and a south Indian mridangam takes the place of a similar two-headed Balinese drum. This music is cyclic in nature, with the large gong marking the beginning of each cycle of beats. Melodically, the two vibraphones and two marimbas employ a technique called kotekan in which instruments play rhythmically interlocking parts to create a single melody.

Scherzo for Percussion is one of several pieces for standard orchestral percussion instruments that were written by percussionists in the 1950's. The opening motive, first heard in the timpani, is the genetic material from which the rest of the piece is crafted. This motive employs strong beat rests that create a sense of metric ambiguity. This motive is the basis of the first section of the piece and is developed in the second section. After a repeat of the opening section, the coda begins with a four-

measure statement of the theme presented in an overlapping, imitative style. The piece ends with fast notes that drive to the finish.

Spiraling Light is a dark, driving percussion octet inspired by an event in Norway in December of 2009, when a blue mysterious beam of light with a grayish spiral emanating from it appeared in the night sky. Initial speculations suggested it was a fireball meteor, a rare never-before-seen Northern Lights variant, or even a wormhole opening up. Unfortunately, it turned out to be much less exciting than any of those things – a failed Russian missile test. **Spiraling Light** attempts to capture this brief moment of mystery, uncertainty, and intensity. - Nathan Daughtrey

I wrote **Machacar** for a combined concert of the UVM and Burlington High School Percussion Ensembles, both of which I directed at the time. The piece is based on the semi-improvisational style of percussion music from Latin America. In **Machacar**, the players improvise a two-measure repeated rhythm, the entrances of which are staggered. A group crescendo and diminuendo, followed by four measures of interlocking rhythms, leads to a second section in which players may take solos. The return of the crescendo/diminuendo signals a further return of the opening material. The name of the piece comes from a Spanish word meaning "to strike."

Les Echanges was composed in 1964 by Rolf Liebermann for the Banking Pavilion at the Swiss national exposition. The piece was written for 16 typewriters, 18 calculators, 10 cash registers, 12 punch card machines, 8 telexes, 16 telephones, 2 metronomes, 2 entrance door gongs, 10 claxons, and 1 forklift – a total of 156 machines in all. These machines (all of which were on display at the Pavilion) were coordinated by an early computer. The music was recorded and played on speakers placed throughout the space. This arrangement, by German percussionist Siegfried Fink, is a direct transcription of the rhythm and structure of the original with the purpose of allowing the music to be more easily performed. To emulate the mechanical sound of the original, three players cover the top heads of their drums with small pieces of plywood. - DTT

Personnel

Evan Barberis, '26, *Whitefish, MT*

Kidron Kollin, '23, *Union, NJ*

Luke Nawrocki, '24, *Andover, MA*

Michael O'Leary, '23, *Medfield, MA*

Josh Overton, '23, *Derry, NH*

Sarah Pettineo, '25, *Hatboro, PA*

Sophie Powell, '24, *Duvall, WA*

Lang Robinson, '26, *Warrington, PA*

D. Thomas Toner is a Professor in the Department of Music at the University of Vermont, where he teaches percussion and conducts the Concert Band, Percussion Ensemble, and Vermont Wind Ensemble. Dr. Toner was awarded both the Doctor of Musical Arts degree and the Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, a Master of Music degree and Artist Diploma from the Yale School of Music, and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst. An active guest conductor, he has conducted wind groups at the District level throughout Vermont (he is one of the few people to have conducted the Wind Ensemble in each of Vermont's six District Music Festivals), New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, as well as the Vermont All-State Band, Vermont All-State Orchestra, and the New Hampshire All-State Percussion Ensemble (three times). He has appeared as guest conductor of the Yale Concert Band, the SUNY-Fredonia Percussion Ensemble, and the Green Mountain Mahler Festival Orchestra. As a percussionist, Dr. Toner's eclectic career has included performances with the Clifford Ball Orchestra (for the rock band Phish), before Princess Grace and Princess Caroline of Monaco, at a world music festival in Bali, Indonesia, and with a native troupe in a torrential lightning storm in Ghana, West Africa. Dr. Toner joined the Vermont Symphony Orchestra at the age of 18 and became Principal Percussionist a few years later. In addition to appearing as a soloist with the VSO, he has traveled to China three times, presenting recitals and masterclasses at the Inner Mongolian Arts College in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. He is a featured percussionist on numerous recordings by the vocal group Counterpoint, conducted by the late Robert DeCormier. Dr. Toner is an endorser of Grover Pro Percussion, Sabian cymbals, and Vic Firth.