



SŌ PERCUSSION

WORLD PREMIERE // ANNEBERG CENTER DEBUT

Sō Percussion

Eric Cha-Beach

Josh Quillen

Adam Sliwinski

Jason Treuting

There will be an intermission.

Saturday, April 18 @ 7:30 PM

Prince Theatre

This performance is co-presented with the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Music.

PROGRAM NOTES

gone (2018) by Angélica Negron

gone is a short piece inspired by things and people that have left us. It explores the visceral physical feeling of emptiness and absence, while at the same time searching for connections and meaning in those things and people that are left. It is written for the quartet accompanied by four solenoid-powered noise makers in which different inanimate objects are placed on top of surface poppers to create fast, erratic and incisive rhythms. Built by Nick Yulman, these four modular music devices operate as a ghost-like presence sometimes interacting with the members of Sō and sometimes having a mind of their own. *gone* is a part of a larger scale work that I'm composing for Sō Percussion inspired by things I deeply care about but which I'm sometimes afraid to confront. — Angélica Negron

Commissioned for Sō Percussion.

World Premieres of University of Pennsylvania Student Compositions - To Be Announced

Third Construction (1942) by John Cage

Third Construction is the pinnacle of Cage's innovative percussion ensemble writing. It is perhaps his most complex and mature piece in this medium. Many Mexican, Central American and Native Indian instruments are called for in this piece including Quijadas, cricket callers, conch shell and rattles. Other unusual instruments, such as graduated tin cans, play a prominent role in the work. Both the rhythmic shape and the overall structure of the piece are related to Cage's "square root theory", in which components of various relationships within a piece reflect the numeric proportions of the square root. In *Third Construction* there are twenty-four bars. In addition, there is a twenty-four bar introduction. This proportional writing is extended to Cage's elaborate use of cross-rhythmic relationships among the individual parts. This builds toward the end of the sections where up to four sub-divisional flows of 3, 5, 7, and 9 are played simultaneously. — NEXUS Percussion

INTERMISSION

a diamond in the square (2019) by Suzanne Farrin

a diamond in the square is a quilting pattern consisting of two objects. The inner square is rotated 45 degrees to become a diamond while the other forms its border. In Amish communities, the colors are usually bold and solid, giving way to intricate, nearly invisible stitching patterns that loop and connect the entire piece. The thread seems to create an invisible language whose contrasts are created through subtle changes in texture rather than color or pattern. You must adjust your eyes to see them. Diamonds in the square are found all over American folk art quilting. Probably like many of you, I recognized the image before I knew how to name it.

And perhaps also like you, I was raised in the atmospheres of women's work. The body hunched over a piece, the collecting and discussion of fabrics, yarn and needles, the meditation of the mind over repetitive tasks. I loved to participate in these projects, though I did not have nearly the skills of the women in my family. They could mend, create and transform objects, and people, through interwoven fibers. In this work, the fibers are given sound. A collection of strings from yarns to lobster cord move through the piano as if on a loom. The workers are hunched over their art and slowly separating from their physical bodies which is exactly what I saw my grandmothers do as they sat in the evenings with their crochet, their knitting, their quilting, their... — Suzanne Farrin

Co-commissioned by University of Colorado-Colorado Springs, The National Gallery, and The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Music for Wood and Strings (2013) by Bryce Dessner

For several years, I have been experimenting with simple chorales in my music that utilize triadic chord inversions that are aligned in complex rhythm patterns to create a kaleidoscopic effect of harmony. These feature heavily in my work for orchestra and two guitars, *St. Carolyn by the Sea* (2011), and the writing for my song cycle, *The Long Count* (2009).

While I have used this technique on guitars and strings, I have not had the opportunity to apply it to percussion instruments. For this Sō Percussion piece, I have been working with instrument builder Aron Sanchez (Blue Man Group, Buke and Gase) to design four dulcimer-like instruments to be played by the quartet. These are simply designed, double course string instruments which are played like a dulcimer, but which are specifically built and tuned to implement a more evolved hybrid of the chorale hoquet. Each instrument is amplified using piezo pickups and will have eight double-course strings tuned to two harmonies. With the use of dulcimer mallets, the quartet players can easily sound either harmony, or play individual strings, melodies and drone tremolos. There are alto, two tenors and a bass instrument which can play fretted chromatic bass lines. — Bryce Dessner

Commissioned by Carnegie Hall.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Sō Percussion

With innovative multi-genre original productions, sensational interpretations of modern classics and an “exhilarating blend of precision and anarchy, rigor and bedlam,” (*The New Yorker*) Sō Percussion has redefined the scope and role of the modern percussion ensemble, placing it at the leading edge of 21st century music.

Sō’s repertoire ranges from “classics” of the 20th century by John Cage, Steve Reich, Iannis Xenakis, and others; to commissioning and advocating works by contemporary composers such as David Lang, Julia Wolfe, Steven Mackey and Caroline Shaw; to distinctively modern collaborations with artists who work outside the classical concert hall, including Shara Nova, the choreographer Susan Marshall, Wilco’s Glenn Kotche, The National, Bryce Dessner and many others.

In the 19/20 season, Sō Percussion returns to Carnegie Hall for *A Percussion Century*, a sprawling exploration of works by John Cage, David Lang, Johanna Beyer and others, and featuring the New York premiere of Sō’s newest commission, *Forbidden Love*, a string quartet by Julia Wolfe. Other season highlights include a Miller Theatre Composer Portrait of frequent Sō collaborator, Caroline Shaw (with whom Sō has a new album due this season); and David Lang’s *man made* and Lully’s *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* with Louis Langrée and the Cincinnati Symphony. Sō also celebrates its sixth year as the Edward T. Cone Performers-in-Residence at Princeton University, and welcomes the release of album collaborations with Dan Trueman and the JACK Quartet, and with indie pop duo Buke and Gase.

Sō has recorded more than 20 albums; appeared at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Walt Disney Hall, the Barbican, the Eaux Claires Festival, MassMoCA and TED 2016; and performed with Jad Abumrad, JACK Quartet, the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra and the LA Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel, among others. sopercussion.com

Sō Percussion’s 2019-2020 season is supported in part by awards from The National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; the Aaron Copland Fund for Music; the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University; the Amphion Foundation; the Brookby Foundation; the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation; the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation; the Howard Gilman Foundation; the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation; the Trust for Mutual Understanding and the ASCAP Foundation Raymond Hubbell Fund.

Sō Percussion uses Vic Firth sticks, Zildjian cymbals, Remo drumheads, Estey Organs, and Pearl/Adams instruments. Sō Percussion would like to thank these companies for their generous support and donations.