

# FIRST YEAR WINTER JURY CONCERT

Friday, January 21, 2022 - 5:00 p.m.  
Conrad Prebys Concert Hall

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*screens, screams, schemes*

Aaron Mencher

Kosuke Matsuda, percussion

*Repetition Fable*

Marguerite Brown

Grace Talaski, clarinet

*Fission*

Grace Talaski and Robert Bui

Grace Talaski, clarinet  
Robert Bui, cello

*Polifonia*

Jiyoung Ko

Kosuke Matsuda, vibraphone

*Dacning to My Shadow*

Yifan Guo

Yongyun Zhang, percussion

# *screens, screams, schemes*

**Aaron Mencher, composer**  
**Kosuke Matsuda, percussion**

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*screens, screams, schemes* was inspired by my interactions with technology in everyday life. In various situations, our relationship to technology shifts and changes. Throughout the piece, the performer shifts between playing with the electronics, against the electronics, and following the electronics. Additionally, the electronic sounds are dispersed through transducers attached to two of the percussion instruments. Therefore, the acoustic properties of these instruments alter the sounds produced by the transducers further complicating the relationship between the performer and the electronics.

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## **AARON MENCHER**

Aaron Mencher writes “sophisticated and compelling” (Boston New Music Initiative) contemporary classical music, film scores, and incidental music. He recently workshopped his piece *decorative shed* with the Albany Symphony as a part of their American Music Festival. Additionally, Aaron has received recognition from organizations such as ASCAP, The American Modern Ensemble, The Boston New Music Initiative, NAFME, the European-American Musical Alliance, the American Prize, and the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra.

He received funding through Peabody’s LAUNCHPAD grant to expand his work *The Moon* into a song cycle for soprano and string quartet; soprano, Rachel Mink, will premiere the cycle in Australia in Spring 2022. Previously, he has worked with a variety of ensembles including the St. Louis Symphony, Alarm Will Sound, Deviant Septet, Third Coast Percussion, the All-National Concert Band, Drax, violinist Patti Kilroy, clarinetist Wesley Warnhoff, cellists Bjorn Ranheim and Dave Eggar, and many others. In addition, he has worked on a variety of dramatic projects. Aaron scored a documentary directed by Katie Schnell, and the short film *Maggephah* directed by Atlanta-based filmmaker Brad McGaughey. Previously, he worked at the Dancing Goat Theater as the composer and sound designer for many shows including *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Tempest*. Aaron is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of California San Diego. His previous teachers include Oscar Bettison, Carolina Heredia, and Yoshiaki Onishi.



## **KOSUKE MATSUDA**

Kosuke Matsuda is a solo percussionist born in Nagasaki, Japan, who has performed throughout Asia and North America. He began his percussion studies with Yoko Yamagajo and since his first exposure to percussion at a young age, Matsuda has devoted his life to the art of He graduated from Ueno Gakuen University in Tokyo with a Bachelor’s degree in Percussion Performance (2015) where he studied with Masahiro Okada. He studied with Kunihiko Komori and Koji Fukamachi at the Aichi University of Fine Art earning his Master’s degree in Percussion and graduating at the top of his class in the Wind and Percussion instrumental department in 2017. Matsuda performed as a soloist with Lancaster Symphony in 2019 and was also given the honor of certification in the Japanese Arts and Cultural Agency Training Program by the Japanese cultural government. He earned a Master’s degree and Artist Diploma at the Frost School of music, the University of Miami, where he studied with Svet Stoyanov and Matthew Strauss. Matsuda is about to start his first semester as a Doctor of Musical Arts student and Graduate Teaching Assistant under Steven Schick at the University of California San Diego in 2021 Fall.

# *Repetition Fable*

**Marguerite Brown, composer**  
**Grace Talaski, clarinet**

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*Repetition Fable* explores economy of material within a repeating prime number (surface) beat structure. The structure expands over the course of the piece, while simultaneously accumulating manipulations, which may be perceived as a fictitious narrative. I worked closely with clarinetist Grace Talaski to unearth the minimal number of gestures used in *Repetition Fable*. Once the gestures had revealed themselves, we collaborated on excavating manipulations. Once the manipulations had revealed themselves, I transferred the sounds into notation.

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## **MARGUERITE BROWN**

Marguerite Brown (b.1990) is an American composer and multi-instrumentalist who explores new mediums, forms, and performance practices. In her compositions, algorithms often provide a framework for indeterminate parameters to unfold, where performer control and composer control play an equal role in realizing the vision. Marguerite's work for fretted guitars was recently published in the microtonal journal *Edition Zalzal*, as well as presented at the 2021 21st Century Guitar Conference and the Pacific Pythagorean Music Festival. She was also recently awarded the Mivos/Kanter Prize (2021) for her string quartet in just intonation titled *chroai:tetrachords*, which will be performed in New York City during Mivos Quartet's 2022-23 season. Marguerite holds a BM in music composition from Cornish College of the Arts (2013), a M.A. from the University of California, Santa Cruz (2019), and is currently a Ph.D. student in music composition at the University of California San Diego.



## **GRACE TALASKI**

Grace Talaski is a clarinetist and composer originally from Caro, Michigan. Grace specializes in twentieth and twenty-first century clarinet repertoire, especially pieces involving electronics and extended playing techniques. She enjoys free improvisation and creating clarinet based electronic music sound worlds based on her recorded improvisations. Grace also composes music for solo clarinet that focuses on exploring the vast sonic possibilities that the clarinet has to offer, especially through experimentation with multiphonics. Grace received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Performance and Chemistry from Albion College in Albion, Michigan in 2017. Grace received a Master of Music in Performance from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale in 2021. She is currently pursuing a D.M.A. in Contemporary Performance at UC San Diego.

# *Fission*

**Grace Talaski, clarinet**

**Robert Bui, cello**

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Fission is a type of nuclear reaction where a large atom's nucleus splits into smaller and more stable nuclei. Fission may begin spontaneously or be induced by firing particles at the nucleus or by exposing the nucleus to radiation. Fission produces great amounts of energy, radioactive products, and neutrons. The neutrons produced during the fission reaction activate new fission reactions in nuclei nearby. Hence, the reaction is a self-sustaining chain reaction which becomes increasingly rapid and violent as it continues. Fission's explosive capabilities led to the development of nuclear weapons; however, when properly controlled, fission is also used to produce electricity in nuclear power plants.

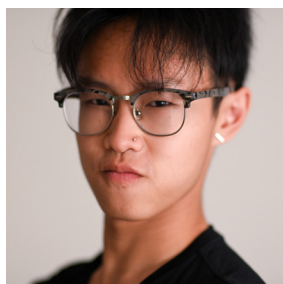
The process and development of our through-composed piece *Fission* undergoes the same journey as the nuclear reaction for which it is named. "I. Activation" begins at stasis with a gradual increase in energy as the two instruments collide and mutually react. In "II. Chain Reaction," the energy explodes into a wild cacophony of rapid gestures and overpowering loudness. In "III. Equilibrium," the clarinet and cello are transformed into muted and more benign versions of their previously monstrous selves. The piece enters a soft and shimmering sound world as its previously explosive energy dissipates into a stable resting state, gently radiating a faint remnant of its original form.

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## **ROBERT BUI**

Robert Bui, with equal merit as a composer and performer, creates and challenges new music at both the level of conceptualization and physical embodiment. He yields musical products that mend multiple media, full of varied, diverse ranges of subject material. He graduated with a Bachelor's in Composition from the New England Conservatory as a Presser Scholar and the Class of 2021 Commencement Speaker, studying with composer Stratis Minakakis and cellist Mickey Katz. Between 2018-2021, he served as the leading director of Tuesday Night New Music, a monthly series of student-composed new music concerts hosted at the conservatory.

Currently, he is a D.M.A. student in Contemporary Cello Performance at the University of California San Diego.

Bui has been dedicated over a dozen new pieces, and been a frequent performer in the Tuesday Night New Music Series, nec[shivaree], NEC Contemporary Ensemble, and concerts curated by his modern music ensemble, of which he is a founder, Alinéa.

As a composer, he has won New England Conservatory's Honors Ensemble Competition 2018, Orchestral Composition Competition 2019, and Contemporary Ensemble Competition 2020. Prior works have led to awards and performances in venues such as the Musical Instrument Museum, the Orpheum Theatre, and the American String Teacher Association's National Orchestra Festival.

# *Polifonia*

## **Jiyoung Ko, composer** **Kosuke Matsuda, vibraphone**

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The title of this piece, *Polifonia*, means polyphony in Italian. I create clusters, one pitch set consist of 6 notes, where melodies come out through skillful accent playing. This idea is created for the vibraphone which allow polyphony of tones. A series of accents will overlap in a continuous rhythmic flow. As a result, it will sound out of temporality.

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### **JIYOUNG KO**

Born in Korea, Jiyoung Ko is a composer of orchestral, chamber, and vocal music. Her music is poetic and full of vibrant passages and picturesque images. Her compositions encompass a wide range of styles - from cutting edge to traditional - which are relatable to both the ordinary and professional listener. One of her pieces was described as a “brilliant study in timbre, tone, and color...a haunting piece.” (AB Newswire)

Her work has been performed in the United States, South Korea, Japan, and Germany by various ensembles and orchestras, including the Grand Rapids Symphony, Dal Niente, Del Sol String Quartet, New York New Music Ensemble, Contemporary Music Ensemble Korea, NEC Honors Ensemble and KNUA Chamber Ensemble.

Most recently, Ko was a finalist of the League of American Orchestras’ Women Composers Readings and Commissions Program supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation in 2019. Her orchestral work, Remembrances, was selected by the American Composers Orchestra’s EarShot New Music Readings for a performance by the Grand Rapids Symphony in 2018, and she was the ArtPrize 10 Public Vote winner for her entry. She was also selected for the 2018 Civic Orchestra of Chicago New Music Workshop with coaching by the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) at Chicago’s Symphony Center.

Ko has been a fellow at the June In Buffalo Music Festival, Pacific Rim Music Festival, and NONG Music Festival, and participated in master classes with Unsuik Chin, John Harbison, Krzysztof Penderecki. She received her master’s degree from The New England Conservatory and her bachelor’s degree from Korea National University of Arts where she studied with Michael Gandolfi and Geonyoung Lee. She is currently a Ph.D. student in music composition at UC San Diego.



### **KOSUKE MATSUDA**

Kosuke Matsuda is a solo percussionist born in Nagasaki, Japan, who has performed throughout Asia and North America. He began his percussion studies with Yoko Yamagajo and since his first exposure to percussion at a young age, Matsuda has devoted his life to the art of He graduated from Ueno Gakuen University in Tokyo with a Bachelor’s degree in Percussion Performance (2015) where he studied with Masahiro Okada. He studied with Kunihiko Komori and Koji Fukamachi at the Aichi University of Fine Art earning his Master’s degree in Percussion and graduating at the top of his class in the Wind and Percussion instrumental department in 2017. Matsuda performed as a soloist with Lancaster Symphony in 2019 and was also given the honor of certification in the Japanese Arts and Cultural Agency Training Program by the Japanese cultural government. He earned a Master’s degree and Artist Diploma at the Frost School of music, the University of Miami, where he studied with Svet Stoyanov and Matthew Strauss. Matsuda is about to start his first semester as a Doctor of Musical Arts student and Graduate Teaching Assistant under Steven Schick at the University of California San Diego in 2021 Fall.

# Dancing to My Shadow

Yifan Guo, composer

Yongyun Zhang, percussion

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In the ancient Chinese poetic literature, the combination of “moon,” “shadow” or “drunkenness” is usually metaphors for inner hysteries when one is experiencing an extreme loneliness and longing for the unreachable person or place. Some examples found in poetries include: “I raise my cup to invite the moon who blends, her light with my shadow and we are three friends...my shadow’s a mess while I dance along...” by Li Bo, or “...where shall I be found at day’s early break from wine awake? Moored by a riverbank planted with willow trees, beneath the waning moon and in the morning breeze...” by Liu Yong, and “...don’t lean alone on rails when the bright moon appears! Wine in sad bowels would turn to nostalgic tears...” by Fang Zhongyan and so on. My composition *Dancing to My Shadow* is also inspired by such poetry: “how rare the moon, so round and clear...dancing to my shadow, I feel no longer the mortal tie.” The piece, however, is not a description or reinterpretation of the poem, rather it holds personal meaning and resonance; Su Shi’s text deeply affected me when a series of changes happened in my life. Thus I borrow it to sublimate my emotional expression in my music.

Within this music, “shadow” and “drunken dance” are the two keywords. Worthy of mentioning, multidimensional conveyance and perception by spreading out and exposing the core concept(s) in various time units and sonic perspectives are something I have explored time and time again in recent years. After having read Bell Yung’s article, *Choreographic and Kinesthetic Elements in Performance on the Chinese Seven-String Zither*, I have expended my exploration by including kinesthetic and visual components within the performance practice apart of this work’s conception.

*Dancing to My Shadow* is dedicated to percussionist Yongyun Zhang.

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## YIFAN GUO

The Chinese composer and conductor Yifan Guo was born in Guangzhou in 1995. His compositional language is inspired by humanity, society, nature, architecture, literature, and western classical music. Guo holds a bachelor’s degree from Mannes School of Music where he was offered a full scholarship for both composition and conducting and a master’s degree from the New England Conservatory of Music. He is currently a visiting scholar at UC San Diego. His primary composition mentors include Huang Ruo, Stratis Minakakis and John Maillia, and conducting mentors include Daye Lin, David Hayes and Bill Drury. He also has studied with Lei Liang, Marcos Balter, Chaya Czernowin and Jean-Baptiste Barrière. Mr. Guo has performed and collaborated with JACK Quartet, Arditti Quartet, Quatuor Diotima, Ensemble l’Itinéraire, PinkNoise Ensemble, Alinéa Ensemble, Ensemble Paramaribo, Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra, International Chamber Orchestra of America and many others. He has performed at venues such as David Geffen Hall of Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, National Sawdust, Jordan Hall, Château de Fontainebleau, Le Domaine Forget de Charlevoix, Xinghai Concert Hall, and the Guangzhou Opera House. As a contemporary music advocator and music theorist, Mr. Guo has given lectures and workshops at Sichuan Conservatory, South China Normal University, Xinghai Conservatory, Guangzhou Opera House and Guangzhou DaoHe Institute.



## YONGYUN ZHANG

Yongyun Zhang has a dedicated interest in performing and premiering works of living composers, especially pieces incorporating the spoken voice. She considers the role of Chinese language in modern percussion repertoire through her commissions, as well as through adaptations and translations of existing works. Her ongoing collaborations include new pieces with composers Yifan Guo, Philipp Henkel, Luis Salguero, Feiyang Xu, and Rachel C. Walker. She received a residency at the Britten-Pears Foundation for 2022, and has had recent performances across China (Shandong University, Central Conservatory), the US (Women Composers Festival of Hartford, Chosen Vale, PASIC New Music/ Research Presents: Music for Percussion and Voice, a concert with the Harry Partch instruments in Seattle, et al), and in Europe (soundSCAPE).

Yongyun studied with the members of Percussion Group Cincinnati at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (BM), receiving First Prize in the Baur Competition. She graduated with her MM from the University of Washington with Bonnie Whiting, and is pursuing a DMA with Steven Schick at the University of California San Diego.