

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE NOBLE SNARE: A COLLECTION OF WORKS EXPOSING AND PROGRESSING THE PERFORMANCE CAPABILITIES OF THE UNACCOMPANIED SNARE DRUM

Curt Joseph Armbruster, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2019

Dissertation directed by: Dr. Thomas DeLio, School of Music

*The Noble Snare* is a collection of solos for unaccompanied snare drum that were commissioned and edited by Sylvia Smith, editor and owner of Smith Publications. Smith Publications is a publishing house that specializes in 20th century American music, with a particular emphasis on music for percussion. Smith released four volumes of solo compositions for the snare drum: Volume I (1988), Volume II (1988), Volume III (1990) and Volume IV (1990). When completed, the collection considerably advanced the size and quality of the genre of the snare drum solo. The solos that emerged from the commissioning project reflect a great deal of experimentation and creativity from leading classical composers. In a few short years the project literally created a repertoire for an important instrument that had received relatively little attention up to that point in the history of music.

Upon initiating this project, Smith's stated goal was to create a collection of significant pieces that would "elevate the snare drum to the status of a solo concert

instrument.”<sup>1</sup> Smith had two criteria for choosing composers for the collection: composers who could bring a new perspective to the snare drum as a serious solo concert instrument and composers who could contribute to the project through stylistic diversity.<sup>2</sup>

In 2014, a second edition of the complete collection was published. At that time, Smith says that a new printing order of the collection was imminent; and since there would be a new printing, she decided it would be nice to “get some new blood” in the collection.<sup>3</sup> The new edition includes the addition of ten new solos and the removal of eight solos from the original edition.

This performance dissertation consists of three recitals comprised entirely of snare drum solos drawn from the second edition of *The Noble Snare* series. The goal of this project is to display the diversity of experimentation and approach to snare drum composition that was revealed by *The Noble Snare* through the work of its participating composers. It is my hope that this dissertation will demonstrate the importance of this collection of solos both from a historical perspective and for the creation of a repertoire for this instrument.

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<sup>1</sup> Sylvia Smith, ed., *The Noble Snare* (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Jason Baker, “The History and Significance of The Noble Snare,” *Percussive Notes* 44, no. 3 (June 2006): 73.

<sup>3</sup> Sylvia Smith, conversation with the author, January 31, 2018.

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by

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Special thanks to my wife, Abby, for her unwavering support, encouragement, and love. Many thanks also to my mom and dad for their support of my education beginning with my early drum lessons, through college and beyond. Finally, I want to thank my mother-in-law, Vicki, for all of her help and literary guidance.

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Recital #1 – April 14, 2018

Program

Doctor of Musical Arts Recital  
Dissertation Recital: *The Noble Snare*  
Curt Joseph Armbruster, Percussion

April 14, 2018

2:00 pm

University of Maryland; Ulrich Recital Hall

<i>The Noble Snare</i> (1987)	STUART SAUNDERS SMITH (b. 1948)
<i>Palindromes</i> (1987)	BEN JOHNSTON (b. 1926)
<i>Dark Wood</i> (2008)	PAUL ELWOOD (b. 1958)
<i>Full Circle</i> (1987)	DAVID MACBRIDE (b. 1950)
<i>Blazer</i> (1987)	BARNEY CHILDS (1926-2000)
<i>Just Seven for Drum</i> (1987)	HERBERT BRÜN (1918-2000)
<i>What the Snare Drum Tells Me</i> (1987)	ALLEN OTTE (b. 1950)
<i>Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum</i> (1987)	JOHN CAGE (1912-1992)
<i>VIVA LA CASSA!</i> (2013)	MARTA PTASZYNSKA (b. 1943)



## Program Notes

### ***The Noble Snare, Stuart Saunders Smith***

Stuart Saunders Smith (b. 1948) is a percussionist, poet, and composer whose music is progressive and often very complex. His music has the influence of free jazz, poetry, and experimental theater and much of it has an emphasis on percussion. Smith studied at the Hartt School and the University of Illinois with composers Edward Diemente, Salvatore Martirano, Herbert Brün, and Ben Johnston.<sup>4</sup> Since retiring from his position as Professor of Composition at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Smith lives in Lent, Vermont with his wife Sylvia, founder and publisher of Smith Publications.

*The Noble Snare* (1987) is found in volume one of *The Noble Snare* collection and is dedicated to Al Lepak, one of Smith's percussion teachers at the Hartt School.<sup>5</sup> Composing for snare drum alone conforms to Smith's philosophy of "doing more with less."<sup>6</sup> Smith argues that percussion pieces with large set-ups of many different instruments inhibit the color and timbral subtleties that are highlighted when only a single instrument is used. The use of a single instrument also allows for the performer to use techniques that are ideal for that specific instrument and not just "an averaging process where the performer chooses strokes and mallets that work fairly

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<sup>4</sup> John P. Welsh, "Stuart Saunders Smith," *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 27, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000047042>.

<sup>5</sup> Stuart Saunders Smith, "The Noble Snare," in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Jason Baker, "The snare drum as a solo concert instrument: An in-depth study of works by Milton Babbitt, John Cage, Dan Senn, and Stuart Saunders Smith, together with three recitals of selected works by Keiko Abe, Daniel Levitan, Askeell Masson, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and others" (DMA diss., University of North Texas, 2004), 12.

well for all the instruments, but lack sufficient subtlety to make each instrument speak with its own potentially rich voice.”<sup>7</sup>

Even though Smith was attracted to the concept of exposing the variations in touch and color by simplifying instrumentation, he found it very difficult to compose for a solo snare drum. He called the task of writing *The Noble Snare* “a lesson in how to handle the most abstract composition commission I have undertaken.”<sup>8</sup> One solution he came up with was repetition. Without repetition, he felt he would lose the listener to chaos. “Chaos can be wonderful if it gives the listener an opportunity to master it,” Smith explains, but, “in snare drum music, one needs a slower rate of ideational change precisely because the material sound of the snare drum is so static and one dimensional.”<sup>9</sup> In *The Noble Snare*, there are motives, ornaments, and techniques that are repeated frequently to create overall cohesion and attempt to avoid incoherent chaos.

At the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival, held at the University of Akron, honoring the publication of *The Noble Snare* series, Smith introduced his work in this way: “The gestural world, the musical contextual placement of my solo, *The Noble Snare*, is located in the free jazz movement from the mid-60s to present.”<sup>10</sup> This influence is evident in the piece’s extreme rhythmic complexity and its often obscuring of the sense of pulse. The opening of the piece is duple and groove-like, however the music moves quickly into a “decidedly non-duple space.”<sup>11</sup> Smith attempts to alternate

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<sup>7</sup> Baker, “The snare drum as a solo concert instrument,” 13.

<sup>8</sup> Stuart Saunders Smith, “Composing for Snare Drum” (paper presented at The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, “Composing for Snare Drum.”

between sections of “groove” and sections of “micro-temporal rhythmic structures,” but he intends for the movement between the two worlds to be subtle.<sup>12</sup> Free jazz also influenced the piece’s use of rudiments as ornaments. As Smith notes, “Most jazz drummers know, love, and use rudiments as part of a historical vocabulary from which to draw.”<sup>13</sup>

When percussionist Jason Baker asked Smith about performance practice considerations concerning *The Noble Snare*, Smith responded:

After *The Noble Snare* is completely part of your being, imagine you are Dave Tough, Chick Webb, Elvin Jones, Philly Joe Jones, Al Dawson, Buddy Rich, or any of your favorites – become him. Then play as if your life depends on it. And, Mr. Baker, your life *does* depend on it every time you make music. The Universe began with a big bang and when you are playing, *you* are that bang. This is why percussionists are the holiest of musicians.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Palindromes*, Ben Johnston**

Ben Johnston’s (b. 1926) compositional output ranges widely in genre and instrumentation, including works for orchestra, chorus, string quartet, theater, fixed media, and solo instruments. He is most well known for his work in microtonality; specifically just intonation. In 1950, he left his studies at the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music to work with composer and instrument builder, Harry Partch, in Gualala, California. At this time, he also enrolled at Mills

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<sup>12</sup> Baker, “The snare drum as a solo concert instrument,” 14.

<sup>13</sup> Smith, “Composing for Snare Drum.”

<sup>14</sup> Baker, “The snare drum as a solo concert instrument,” 22.

College and studied with Darius Milhaud.<sup>15</sup> In 1959-60, Johnston moved to New York to study privately with John Cage.<sup>16</sup> Johnston taught acoustics, composition, and music theory at the University of Illinois; among his students is Stuart Saunders Smith.

Johnston's contribution to the series, *Palindromes*, was composed in 1987 and is part of volume one. Johnston found the request from Sylvia Smith for a snare drum solo appealing and challenging: "I could see right away – this instrument isolates the parameters of duration, tempo, and loudness, plus a small variety of tone colors."<sup>17</sup> In *Palindromes*, the tempo remains constant throughout (a brisk eighth note equal to 340 bpm) and there are no explorations of different timbres or colors of the snare drum, so it's on the parameters of duration and loudness that Johnston would focus in great detail while composing *Palindromes*. Johnston's parametric thinking about the design of music was influenced by S.S. Stephen's "On the Theory of Scales of Measurement," which explains how one has to imagine parameters in different ways, because they are measured in different ways. Johnston explains how pitch, for example, can be measured and related in terms of vibrations and ratios and scales, by the human ear, but loudness cannot. The human ear can only measure loudness as "*this* is louder than *that*." Furthermore, duration (or time) is also measurable by the human ear, though in a very different way than pitch.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Richard Kassel, "Ben Johnston," *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 27, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000014424>.

<sup>16</sup> "Ben Johnston," The Living Composers Project, last modified January 2, 2017, accessed February 27, 2018, <http://composers21.com/compdocs/johnstob.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> Ben Johnston, "Introduction to *Palindromes*" (prepared by Johnston and read by Sylvia Smith at The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Johnston, "Introduction to *Palindromes*."

Johnston uses the parameters of duration and loudness to construct proportion in *Palindromes*. He explains his approach to proportion in composition: “You can get the grand proportion, which is the entire piece; you can get sections; and you can get phrases inside the sections, and how many phrases make up a section and how many sections make up a movement, and how many movements make up the piece.”<sup>19</sup> In *Palindromes*, the grand proportion of the piece can be divided into two large sections. There is a focal point in the middle (between mm. 90 and 91) where the first half of the piece begins to unfold in reverse. On the “sections” level (between the grand proportion and the level of phrases), each half of the piece has three sections, differentiated by the number of measures in each phrase: nine measure in each phrase of the first section, eight measures in each phrase of the second section, and six measures in each phrase of the third section. The phrases are also organized by duration: the duration of their measures. Each phrase is marked with a change in time signature. The phrases are then made clear to the listener by the parameter of loudness; each phrase is assigned a different dynamic marking.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, Johnston explains, these proportions in *Palindromes* on the smallest level are “little patterns” that will break down into combinations of twos and threes.<sup>21</sup> The piece is written entirely in groups of eighth, quarter, and dotted quarter notes, in the form of single notes, rolls, or rests, therefore the simplicity of this language of duration gives more weight to its organization and patterning. His intent and attention to detail in composing these “little patterns” is apparent in the way he

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<sup>19</sup> Johnston, “Introduction to *Palindromes*.”

<sup>20</sup> Ben Johnston, “Palindromes,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>21</sup> Johnston, “Introduction to *Palindromes*.”

describes his approach to them: “Five, for example, well, five is two plus three. You can perfectly well treat it that way but it’s also three plus two, so you do have two possibilities. And since the first part and the second part are quite different, in that grouping are two entirely different rhythms.”<sup>22</sup>

As Johnston explains, “(*Palindromes*) is symmetrical, except in one detail, so it is a slightly imperfect palindrome.”<sup>23</sup> The detail Johnston is referring to is the *crescendi* and *decrescendi*. The dynamics assigned to each phrase are symmetrical, however due to the nature of *crescendi* and *decrescendi* across the phrases and the entire peaks, these swells and peaks are not symmetrical. That is, moving forward through the first half of the composition, each phrase’s dynamic marking is stated at the beginning of the phrase and will *crescendo* or *decrescendo* to the next phrase’s dynamic level. In reverse, however, the same phrase’s assigned dynamic isn’t reached until the end of its phrase. This means that in addition to the rate of change being asymmetrical, the “*fff*” peaks are reached at different points. These peaks are reached at the beginning of their phrases moving forward through the piece, but moving backward from the end, these peaks are at the end of the same phrase.

Finally, Johnston says in reference to *Palindromes*, “It asks for traditional playing at breakneck speed. My life’s work has been about the radical transformation of tradition.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Johnston, “Introduction to *Palindromes*.”

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

### ***Dark Wood*, Paul Elwood**

Paul Elwood (b. 1958) is a percussionist, composer, and five-string banjo player. He is currently Associate Professor of Music Composition at the University of Northern Colorado. Elwood composed *Dark Wood* in 2008 for Sylvia Smith upon her request. Initially, Smith rejected the piece, because it was too long, and in Wood's own opinion, the score doesn't deliver "a good idea of what the piece is about."<sup>25</sup> A few years later, after Wood sent Smith a recording of Patti Cudd (percussion soloist and member of new music ensemble, *Zeitgeist*) performing the piece, Smith decided to include it in the second edition of *The Noble Snare*.<sup>26</sup> The piece is in volume one of that edition.

The title, *Dark Wood*, is a play on the composer's last name and a reference to the opening lines of Dante's *Inferno*: "Midway in life's journey, I went astray; from the straight road and woke to find myself; alone in a dark wood..."<sup>27</sup> Elwood says, "Percussion, percussion writing, and exploration of extended techniques has always been part of what I do."<sup>28</sup> He grew up playing in percussion ensembles and was influenced by the players and composers to whom he was exposed through this experience: ones that were "seeking new sounds and different manners of playing."<sup>29</sup> During his undergraduate studies at Wichita State University, Elwood studied percussion with J.C. Combs and would continue to perform as a percussionist with orchestras for 30 years.

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<sup>25</sup> Paul Elwood, email message from author, February 6, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

Elwood had several professors at WSU, including J.C. Combs, that were especially interested in experimental percussion music. In addition to performing as a percussionist, J.C. Combs is a composer who has written several percussion solo and ensemble works. Combs exposed his students to a variety of projects, including works with film, dance, and pinball machines.<sup>30</sup> Walter Mays, one of Elwood's composition teachers, wrote experimental works for percussion, including *Six Invocations to the Svava Mandala* for large percussion ensemble and *War Games* for extended percussion ensemble and wrestlers. Another one of his composition teachers, Art Wolff, organized late-night improvisation sessions in stairwells, tunnels, and atriums where the students were encouraged to explore extended techniques.<sup>31</sup> John Cage visited the WSU campus for a week while Elwood was still a student, which Elwood describes as a "life-changing event."<sup>32</sup> Elwood was able to play Cage's music under his direction and speak with him a lot. After this experience, Elwood "pretty much decided to devote [his] life to this profession."<sup>33</sup> Elwood would go on to further his studies in composition with teachers including Donald Erb, David Felder, Charles Wuorinen, Peter Maxwell Davies, and Gunther Schuller and received his Ph.D. in composition from the State University of New York at Buffalo.<sup>34</sup>

Elwood is also an accomplished five-string banjo player; winning the 1986 Kansas State Bluegrass Banjo Championship. As a banjo player, he has collaborated with a diverse group of musicians and composers, including John Hartford, Christian

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<sup>30</sup> Paul Elwood, email message from author, February 6, 2018..

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> "Composer," Paul Elwood, accessed February 5, 2018, <http://paul-elwood.com/composer/>.



Wolff, Famoudou Don Moyé, and Stephen Drury.<sup>35</sup> Elwood says there are no direct banjo influences in *Dark Wood*; however, he claims, “Some have accused me of always being influenced by banjo playing in terms of forward motion motor rhythm.”<sup>36</sup>

### ***Full Circle*, David Macbride**

David Macbride (b. 1950) is Professor of Composition and Music Theory at the Hartt School, where he has taught since 1984.<sup>37</sup> He has a diverse musical output that includes solo, chamber, and orchestral music as well as music for film, TV, dance, and theater.<sup>38</sup> Though he is not a trained percussionist, much of his writing has an emphasis on percussion. Macbride studied at the Hartt School and Columbia University (D.M.A. 1980). He was a founder and director of GAGEEGO, the New York based new music group that organized the 1988 concert that premiered the first two volumes of *The Noble Snare*.<sup>39</sup>

*Full Circle* was composed in 1987 for *The Noble Snare* series and is included in the first volume. Macbride describes *Full Circle* as being “influenced by traditional Chinese opera, which is inherently a composite performance art.”<sup>40</sup> This influence manifests itself in the composite nature of the piece, which incorporates masks, movements, and sound.

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<sup>35</sup> “Five String Banjo,” Paul Elwood, accessed February, 5, 2018, <http://paul-elwood.com/five-string-banjo/>.

<sup>36</sup> Paul Elwood, email message from author, February 6, 2018.

<sup>37</sup> Tim Page, “David Macbride,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 27, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000042621>.

<sup>38</sup> “David Macbride,” University of Hartford, The Hartt School, accessed February 27, 2018, <https://www.hartford.edu/hartt/about-us/faculty/music/composition/david-macbride.aspx>.

<sup>39</sup> Page, “David Macbride.”

<sup>40</sup> David Macbride, email message from author, December 28, 2017.

There are two masks used in *Full Circle*. One is worn on the back of the performer's head that should have "no expression (i.e. plain white mask)" and another mask is worn over the performer's face with an "animated expression (evil, anger, etc.)."<sup>41</sup>

The physical movements required in the piece include moving around the drum, changing between facing towards and facing away from the audience, and the recurrent use of a motion described in the score as: "raise stick(s) very slowly in preparation for the next downbeat."<sup>42</sup> Macbride described these preparatory motions as "theatrical, visual...movement is 'audible', hands rising slowly create tension and apprehension, as if they are going to strike you, think horror movies."<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, these movements should be "large exaggerated motions as instructed, even for the piano dynamics, so that the attack is completely contradictory to the preparation."<sup>44</sup>

### ***Blazer, Barney Childs***

Barney Childs (1926-2000) was born in Spokane, WA and went on to study English literature at Oxford and Stanford Universities (Ph.D. 1961). His music composition teachers include Leonard G. Ratner, Carlos Chávez, Aaron Copland, and Elliott Carter. Childs taught in both fields; English literature and music.<sup>45</sup> Childs' output includes symphonies, concerti for clarinet and timpani, quintets for wind and brass, string quartets, vocal works, and solo pieces. Some of Childs compositions use

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<sup>41</sup> David Macbride, "Full Circle," in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>42</sup> Macbride, "Full Circle."

<sup>43</sup> David Macbride, email message from author, December 28, 2017.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Richard Swift et al., "Barney Childs," *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 27, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000005586>.

experimental techniques including indeterminacy, improvisation, and “self-generating structures.”<sup>46</sup> Childs described his composition process thusly: “I guess it’s just a process of letting ideas for sounds and gestures grow and interact and proliferate, getting them down in sketch and working with them at the same time as they are growing, and slowly revising and shaping and fixing by a kind of process of successive approximation to what my inside ear wants to have happening.”<sup>47</sup>

*Blazer* was composed in 1987 and is found in volume two of *The Noble Snare*. Eight years before its composition, Childs wrote another piece for solo snare drum, *Out Back of the Drum Shop*, which is a series of seven movements. Like *Blazer*, the score for *Out Back of the Drum Shop* includes descriptive text instructions for the performer. *Blazer*’s score includes sections of “with confident, even arrogant ease,” “steady,” “lyric,” “light, nervous,” “brutal,” and “rowdy.”<sup>48</sup> Both pieces exclusively use traditional snare drum techniques, including playing on the rim and “rim shots.”

Benjamin Toth, professor of percussion at the Hartt School, premiered *Blazer* at the 1988 “GAGEEGO presents *The Noble Snare*” concert in New York and performed it again at *The Noble Snare*’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival at the University of Akron in 2017.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Swift et al., “Barney Childs.”

<sup>47</sup> “Barney Childs,” Composer Profile, accessed February 27, 2018, <http://www3.uakron.edu/ssma/composers/Childs.shtml#top>.

<sup>48</sup> Barney Childs, “Blazer,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>49</sup> Brian Johnson, “The Noble Snare – A Concert of Snare Drum Solos,” *Percussive Notes* 28, no. 1 (Fall 1989): 54.

### ***Just Seven for Drum, Herbert Brün***

Herbert Brün (1918-2000) was a German composer who studied composition and piano at the Jerusalem Conservatory and then Columbia University.<sup>50</sup> In 1962, he began teaching at the University of Illinois, where he would remain on faculty through the mid-1990s (Professor Emeritus 1987).<sup>51</sup> At the University, Brün was able to pursue his interest in electro-acoustics by using the school's electronic studio to research composition with computers, which resulted in pieces for tape and instruments, tape alone, and graphics (some to be performed by interpreters).<sup>52</sup> Among these graphic scores are three important solos for percussion from 1967, composed exclusively with computer graphics: *Plot, Touch and Go*, and *Stalks and Trees and Drops and Clouds*.<sup>53</sup> During his time at the University of Illinois, Brün was able to work with many great percussionists, including Thomas Siwe, Michael Rosen, William Youhass, Benjamin Toth, Gary Kvistad, Michael Udow, and Allen Otte.<sup>54</sup>

*Just Seven for Drum* was written in 1987 and is in volume two of *The Noble Snare*. The piece is made up of seven short movements. As Brün explains in the score, "I thought of seven little studies, each with a different deceptive technical or rhythmical quirk, played separately; and then followed by study eight: all seven pieces played continuously (marked "attaca subito") and constitute a single,

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<sup>50</sup> Arun Chandra, "Biography of Herbert Brün," in *When Music Resists Meaning: The Major Writings of Herbert Brün*, ed. Arun Chandra (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 285.

<sup>51</sup> "Biography," Herbert Brün, last modified July, 2000, accessed February 27, 2018, <http://www.herbertbrun.org/BrunBio.html>.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Joseph Van Hassel, "Audible Traces: Herbert Brün's Works for Percussion Trio and Electronics" (DMA diss., University of Hartford, 2013), 2-3.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 2.

continuous brilliant demonstration of instrumental skill, swift and sudden changes, and playfully incessant drive.”<sup>55</sup>

The piece explores different timbral regions of the drum; specifically nine different playing spots from the bottom of the drum (closest to the player) straight up to the top of the drum (opposite the player). Brün also makes use of other available timbres such as playing on the drum’s rim, dead strokes, and playing with brushes.

Brün loved steel drum bands and this influenced the set up and physical movements of *Just Seven for Drum*. Brün asks the performer to angle the drum at a “steel drum angle” and to approach the piece “as if dealing with a steel-drum of nine pitchfields.”<sup>56</sup> He also asks that the performer play in profile to the audience, so that the “path north to south and back [on the drumhead] would be observed by the listeners” and therefore the visual performance would “reinforce the sonic intent.”<sup>57</sup>

### ***What the Snare Drum Tells Me, Allen Otte***

Allen Otte (b. 1950) was a founding member of the Blackearth Percussion Group (1972-1979) and Percussion Group Cincinnati (1979-present). He taught at the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music from 1977 to 2017. Otte’s percussion teachers include Michael Rosen and Richard Weiner. Through his professional percussion ensembles, Otte has worked closely with composers including John Cage, Herbert Brün, John Luther Adams, and Qu Xiao-Song.

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<sup>55</sup> Herbert Brün, “Just Seven for Drum,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>56</sup> Brün, “Just Seven for Drum.”

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

*What the Snare Drum Tells Me* was composed in 1987 and is dedicated to Herbert Brün for Brün's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.<sup>58</sup> The piece is included in the second volume of *The Noble Snare*. The title has two origins. Since the piece has a quotation from Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 3, it is a play on the titles Mahler gave the movements of that symphony in the original draft (*What the Forest Tells Me*, *What the Twilight Tells Me*, etc.). It is also literally referring to the fact that the piece's content comes from what Otte has learned about the snare drum from the works of great composers past and present and from his own experience playing the instrument.<sup>59</sup>

The piece's compositional process was influenced by Herbert Brün and Brün's "counterintuitive" compositional process. That is, composing music that is not yet known or liked, verses a composition that is entirely the result of one's intuition and preferences. One way Brün did this was through his computer graphic scores. In these works, a "co-conspirator" was required to interpret the score on their respective instrument. Through this process, Brün intended to provide "contexts in which co-conspirators would explore their own questions on the very nature of those things they may have thought they knew and loved best in their own field."<sup>60</sup> For example, in Brün's three early graphic score percussion solos, Otte suggests that Brün is asking:

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<sup>58</sup> Allen Otte, "What the Snare Drum Tells Me," in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>59</sup> Allen Otte, "At Loose Ends with Anticommunication," in *The Modern Percussion Revolution: Journeys of the Progressive Artist*, ed. Kevin Lewis and Gustavo Aguilar (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014), 38.

<sup>60</sup> Otte, "At Loose Ends with Anticommunication," 43.

What does your snare drum (marimba, flower pot, old shoe) tell you? What do your sticks tell you? What does your body tell you when it meets any one of these surfaces, and when you move from one instrument in your collection to another? What if those instruments are very different, or only most subtly so? How might you organize different categories of your own instrumentarium, and how would you move between them? Integrate them? What are you learning about yourself and your instruments and music as you crawl through this? And, what if this were thought to be music?<sup>61</sup>

Learning from his experience with these pieces and with the works of many other composers, Otte then drew upon what he “already knew and liked about what the snare drum tells [him]” and these were the things he wished to “nest in some invented (not yet known or liked) compositional context. These things, in the way I learned them from my instrument, are not going to speak for themselves, and what they might say is surely beyond the mere intuition of my current autobiography.”<sup>62</sup>

The piece requires the performer to hold four sticks; two snare drum sticks and two timpani mallets. To play *What the Snare Drum Tells Me*, the performer must have a technique that allows each implement individual control and touch, an ideal that some four-mallet techniques, such as the “Steven’s” marimba technique, do not allow (a rejection of these restrictive techniques was another motivation behind the

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<sup>61</sup> Allen Otte, “At Loose Ends with Anticommunication,” 41.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 39.

piece's composition).<sup>63</sup> In the piece, the timpani mallets are played at the edge of the drum to create the illusion of distance. This was another reference to Mahler, who used offstage timpani in his symphonies, and also to Edgar Varese who also wrote for snare drum with timpani sticks to create the illusion of distance.<sup>64</sup>

Otte premiered the piece in 1988 at the "GAGEEGO presents *The Noble Snare*" concert in New York.<sup>65</sup>

### ***Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum, John Cage***

John Cage (1912-1992) was an American composer who is considered one of the leaders of 20<sup>th</sup> century avant-garde music. His compositional output is defined by his experimentation with his evolving philosophy of music (sound) and aesthetics. In addition to a diverse catalogue of musical compositions, Cage also has several published collections of writings and lectures. In the late 1930s, after studying composition with Henry Cowell and Arnold Schoenberg, Cage began working as a dance accompanist, which influenced many of his percussion works and his creation of the prepared piano.<sup>66</sup> He has written many important works for percussion ensemble, such as his *Constructions*, *Amores*, and *Credo in US*, as well as for percussion solo, including *27' 10.554" for a Percussionist* and *Child of Tree*.

*Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum* was written in 1987 for *The Noble Snare* series and is part of volume two. Around the same time, Cage also wrote

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<sup>63</sup> Allen Otte, "Introductory remarks to *What the Snare Drum Tells Me*" (performed at *The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years*, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

<sup>64</sup> Otte, "At Loose Ends with Anticommunication," 38.

<sup>65</sup> Johnson, "The Noble Snare – A Concert of Snare Drum Solos," 54.

<sup>66</sup> James Pritchett, Laura Kuhn, and Charles Hiroshi Garrett, "John Cage," *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 28, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002223954>.



“composed improvisations” for bass guitar and for “one-sided drum with or without jangles.” The instructions for all three of these pieces are very similar and each may be performed alone or with any of the other pieces simultaneously.<sup>67</sup>

*Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum* was written very late in Cage’s career and incorporates many of the compositional techniques/philosophies that he used throughout his career, including chance operations, indeterminacy, and improvisation. Cage turned to chance operations in the early 1950s after a period of becoming more and more disciplined in his compositional “methods” of the 1940s. According to William Brooks (Professor of Music, University of York; Associate Professor Emeritus of Composition, University of Illinois), this evolution was due to Cage’s consistent accepting of rejected elements and rejection of the accepted. Cage’s early works were rejecting tonality by using the twelve-tone method. The twelve-tone method was then rejected because it discriminated against certain pitches, as it did not consider the range; so he started treating every pitch independently. But that technique discriminated against noise; so he wrote for percussion. These compositions had to be disciplined, but Cage did not want to discriminate, inadvertently, against any types of sounds due to personal taste, so he created the elaborate aesthetic that structured his music of the 1940s. This aesthetic was based on four elements: material, structure, method, and form. But this music was still not open to all ordering of sounds, which led to his implementation of chance procedures. By the 1960s, these techniques were taken to the extreme with scores that were only instructions for making scores, leaving all aspects of the performance undetermined.

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<sup>67</sup> John Cage, “Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

“In this musical universe only one concept was refused: intention.”<sup>68</sup> And so even later in Cage’s career, continuing further along these lines of accepting the rejected, he was now open to accepting the very sort of intention that it was earlier necessary to reject.<sup>69</sup>

This perspective on Cage’s compositional choices is relevant to the context of the *Composed Improvisations*, not only because the pieces include chance and indeterminacy, but also because they incorporate improvisation, a technique Cage had once accepted and then rejected. In the 1930s, Cage used improvisation at the piano while composing, though most of this music did not survive.<sup>70</sup> As Cage’s music and philosophy evolved, improvisation was rejected because it was personal, it discriminated, and as Cage explains, it “does not lead you into a new experience, but into something with which you’re already familiar.”<sup>71</sup>

In *Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum*, the improvisation is fairly controlled by the chance procedures, however there is some left to the performer. Also, performer intention/taste can be further controlled if the performer chooses unconventional implements of actuation. In doing this, the improvisation becomes like the “music of contingency” in pieces such as *Child of Tree* and *Branches*. In these works, Cage explains, “The instruments are so unknown that as you explore,

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<sup>68</sup> William Brooks, “Choice and Change in Cage’s Recent Music,” in *A John Cage Reader In Celebration of His 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, ed. Peter Gena, Jonathan Brent, and Don C. Gillespie (New York, NY: C.F. Peters, 1982), 97.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 95-97.

<sup>70</sup> Sabine Feisst, “John Cage and Improvisation: An Unresolved Relationship,” in *Musical Improvisation: Art, Education, and Society*, ed. Gabriel P. Solis and Bruno Nettle (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 38.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

say the spines of a cactus, you're not really dealing with your memory or your taste. You're exploring."<sup>72</sup>

The score for *Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum* instructs the performer to execute specific chance operations to produce time brackets for the pieces' three sections, the number of events in each section, the number of icti in each section, the beaters and preparations to be used, whether or not to turn on the snares, and where in the piece will be the one fortissimo rim shot. In addition to the specific instructions, Cage says in the score, "In fact any questions that arise are to be answered by means of chance operations."<sup>73</sup> In addition to the option of performing the piece simultaneously with another *Composed Improvisation*, Cage also suggests preparing one or more 8'00" sections to follow the first if a longer piece is desired.<sup>74</sup>

### **VIVA LA CASSA!, Marta Ptaszynska**

Marta Ptaszynska (b. 1943) is a Polish percussionist and composer. She studied at the music academies of Warsaw and Poznan and worked privately with Witold Lutoslawski. She received a grant to study in Paris with Nadia Boulanger and while she was in Paris, she also attended classes with Olivier Messiaen.<sup>75</sup> In 1972, she moved to the U.S. to study at the Cleveland Institute of Music: percussion with Richard Weiner and Cloyd Duff, and composition with Donald Erb.<sup>76</sup> Ptaszynska is

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<sup>72</sup> Feisst, "John Cage and Improvisation: An Unresolved Relationship," 45.

<sup>73</sup> John Cage, "Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum."

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> "Biography," Marta Ptaszynska, accessed February 28, 2018, <http://www.martaptaszynska.com/biography/bio.html>.

<sup>76</sup> Michael Meckna et al., "Marta Ptaszynska," *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 28, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000042621>.

currently Professor of Music at the University of Chicago, a position she has held since 1998.<sup>77</sup>

Included in her large catalogue of compositions are several works for percussion, including Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra (1985) dedicated to Keiko Abe, *Graffito* (1998) for solo marimba commissioned by Nebojša Živković, and Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra (1999-2002) written for Evelyn Glennie.<sup>78</sup>

*VIVA LA CASSA!* was written for Sylvia Smith in 2013 and is included in volume one of *The Noble Snare*. It incorporates different playing spots around the drum (center of the head, “normal,” on the rim, and on the side of the drum) as well as using sounds around the instruments (two playing spots on the music stand and foot tapping).<sup>79</sup> The playing contains many ornaments, quick changes of playing spots, and very fast, technically demanding rhythms. Ptaszynska describes the piece as “very joyful and virtuosic.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Marta Ptaszynska, “Biography.”

<sup>78</sup> “Catalogue,” Marta Ptaszynska, accessed February 28, 2018, <http://www.martaptaszynska.com/catalogue/cat-orch-works.html>.

<sup>79</sup> Marta Ptaszynska, “VIVA LA CASSA!” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>80</sup> Marta Ptaszynska, email message from author, January 8, 2018.

Recital #2 – November 18, 2018

Program

Doctor of Musical Arts Recital  
Dissertation Recital: *The Noble Snare*  
Curt Joseph Armbruster, Percussion

November 18, 2018

8:00 pm

University of Maryland; Gildenhorn Recital Hall

<i>Jongo</i> (1988)	SIEGFRIED FINK (1928-2006)
<i>Peeping Tom</i> (1988)	DAN SENN (b. 1951)
<i>Transparent Wave</i> (1988)	THOMAS DELIO (b. 1951)
<i>Amazonia Dreaming</i> (1988)	ANNEA LOCKWOOD (b. 1939)
<i>Brushwork</i> (2014)	DREW KRAUSE (b. 1960)
<i>Exercise 26 (Snare Drum Peace March)</i> (1988)	CHRISTIAN WOLFF (b. 1934)
<i>A Head to Rest</i> (2014)	MATTHEW BURKE (b. 1987)
<i>Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective Surfaces</i> (1990)	ALVIN LUCIER (b. 1931)
<i>Non-Contradiction</i> (2014)	JASON BAKER (b. 1976)

## Program Notes

### ***Jongo*, Siegfried Fink**

Siegfried Fink (1928-2006) was a German percussionist, educator, and composer. He has more than 150 published works, most of them for percussion, both solo and ensemble; but he has also composed music for other instrumentations, including chamber music and music for ballet and film. Fink was born in Anhalt-Zerbst, Germany in 1928 and studied percussion and composition at the Franz Liszt Music Academy in Weimar.<sup>81</sup> After teaching percussion and performing with orchestras in Weimar, Magdeburg, Lübeck, and Hanover, in 1965, he began teaching at the music academy in Würzburg, where he would eventually become head of the percussion department.<sup>82</sup>

Fink made many great contributions to percussion pedagogy. In addition to his university position, he taught master classes around the world, adjudicated many international competitions, and published several educational materials, such as his etude books, *Studies for Snare Drum* and *Studies for Timpani*, and also percussion textbooks, such as *I Like Percussion: Percussion Course for Self-Instruction*. Fink's extensive pedagogical experiences influenced his musical output, as his works for percussion have a conservative, etude-like quality.

This style is apparent in Fink's works for solo snare drum. In addition to *Jongo*, Fink wrote several other works for solo snare drum, including *Sonata for Snare Drum* (1970), *Snare Drum Suite* (1979), *Pa Lux* (1992), and *Salut de Geneve*

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<sup>81</sup> Mark Andreas Giesecke, "Siegfried Fink," *Percussive Notes* 41, no. 4 (August 2003): 12.

<sup>82</sup> Siegfried Fink, "Biography," in *Six Pieces for Snare Drum* (Frankfurt: Zimmerman, 1994).

(1996). They display this conservative composition style, utilizing traditional meters, rhythms, and techniques, only sometimes experimenting slightly with playing spots and mallets.

*Jongo* was composed in 1988 and is included in the first edition of volume two of *The Noble Snare*. *Jongo* shares some techniques that Fink first used in his *Snare Drum Suite*, which he composed ten years earlier. One of these is the use of four different playing spots on the drum: center of the head, interval, rim area, and on rim. Another technique of importance to this piece is the indeterminate cadenza. In both works, Fink includes a section he calls “cadenza.” In the scores, there are boxes of various rhythmic figures that are used elsewhere in the solos. Fink instructs the performer to “decide on the tempo – combination and repetition of the pattern – dynamics and tone colours himself through his choice of drumsticks – the place of the drum he beats and the tension of the snares.”<sup>83</sup>

As a performer and educator, Fink traveled extensively around the world, and his compositions were often inspired by his travels. Diverse influences can be seen in pieces such as *Batu Ferringhi* (India), *Darabukka Suite* (North Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East), and *Jongo* (Brazil). *Jongo* is a dance and musical genre whose origins may be traced to African slaves working on coffee plantations in southeast Brazil. It shares qualities with other Afro-Brazilian dances including the use of drums and call-and-response singing.<sup>84</sup> Fink’s reference to the Afro-Brazilian *Jongo*

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<sup>83</sup> Siegfried Fink, “Jongo,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014) and Siegfried Fink, *Snare Drum Suite* (Frankfurt: Zimmermann, 1979).

<sup>84</sup> Gustavo Pacheco, “Jongo,” in *Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History*, ed. Colin A. Palmer, 2nd ed., vol. 3 (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2006), 1195.

may be seen in the piece's dance-like rhythms and its sometimes call-and-response character used between motives.

### ***Peeping Tom, Dan Senn***

Dan Senn (b. 1951) is an American composer who also works with kinetic sound sculptures and film. He studied horn, conducting, and ceramics at the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse and received his D.M.A. in composition from the University of Illinois, where he studied with Salvatore Martirano, Ben Johnston, and Herbert Brün. Senn has taught at the Canberra School of Music in Australia, Ball State University in Indiana, and the University of Illinois. Senn currently lives in both Prague, where he directs the Echofluxx festivals, and Watertown, Wisconsin.<sup>85</sup>

*Peeping Tom* was composed in 1987 and is in the first edition of volume two of *The Noble Snare*. Senn requires the performer to speak and intone text while playing the snare drum. The text was taken from an entry in his personal journal and Senn refers to it as a "life observation."<sup>86</sup> The title came from a lecture that Herbert Brün gave at the University of Illinois in the early 1980s. In describing the lecture, Senn explains:

[Brün] remarked that listening to music intended to send an emotional message about the author, like that of angst, suffering, love, etc., made him feel uncomfortable and like a "Peeping Tom." He was referring specifically to art which was narcissistic by nature and inevitably limited by existing language. Brün was not

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<sup>85</sup> "Biography," Dan Senn, accessed October 16, 2018, <http://newsense-intermedium.com/REZBIO/dsbio.html>.

<sup>86</sup> Baker, "The snare drum as a solo concert instrument," 44.



opposed to evoking emotions in art but was uncomfortable with the restraints imposed by art originating as such.<sup>87</sup>

The text for *Peeping Tom* is as follows:

As a kid I was rapt by one-way mirrors. Not because I was a voyeur. Though indeed I was. But because of an idea. I knew that light bounced off mirrors. So it seemed possible to trap light within a sphere surfaced with this one-way mirror stuff. A cheap source of light! The sphere would collect light until it blew up or some of it was let out.

A friend of mine has a brain like that. And to keep it, his brain, from exploding, he expresses himself. He writes music. And he does this by transcribing the sounds he hears inside his head. He copes this way. And when I hear his music I feel like a voyeur again.<sup>88</sup>

The snare drum part was composed using speech rhythms from the text. A few years before composing this version of the piece, Senn was performing a version of *Peeping Tom* between performances of his sculptural instruments. This earlier version combined the spoken poem with improvised percussion accompaniment on these instruments. The instruments he was using at the time were the Scrapercussion #7, Shmoos Harp, Too Lips, Fayfer Harp, and Too Flutter.<sup>89</sup> Senn explains that by

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<sup>87</sup> Alexandros D. Fragiskatos, program notes (Arizona State University, April 23, 2016).

<sup>88</sup> Dan Senn, "Peeping Tom," in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>89</sup> Dan Senn, e-mail message to author, October 4, 2018.

the time he composed *Peeping Tom*, he had “internalized the speech rhythms of the piece... improvisations tend to become fixed with repetition.”<sup>90</sup>

After assigning rhythmic figures to each phrase of text, Senn composed the snare drum part using a technique he calls “re-setting” the phrase.<sup>91</sup> The text is divided into six smaller sections and each section’s snare drum part uses the speech rhythms of its corresponding text.

On the large scale, the piece is in two sections. There is a long crescendo and accelerando through the first half of the piece. Measure 113 is repeated nine times as the music gradually returns to the original tempo and volume, where it remains for the second half of the piece.<sup>92</sup>

Senn describes his performances of *Peeping Tom* in its original version as having “a strong theatrical edge.”<sup>93</sup> He also considers this version for snare drum and voice to be a theatrical work.<sup>94</sup>

### ***Transparent Wave*, Thomas DeLio**

Thomas DeLio (b. 1951; New York, NY) is a composer and theorist. He studied at the New England Conservatory and Brown University, where he received a Ph.D. in an interdisciplinary studies program that combined mathematics, music, and

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<sup>90</sup> Baker, “The snare drum as a solo concert instrument,” 45.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>92</sup> Senn, “Peeping Tom.”

<sup>93</sup> Dan Senn, e-mail message to author, October 4, 2018.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

visual arts.<sup>95</sup> He is currently Professor of Music Theory and Composition at the University of Maryland.

In his compositions, DeLio often uses percussion or electronics because of his interest in “expressing the entire world of sound, not just that of pitch.”<sup>96</sup> He sees pitch as one manifestation of sound on the pitch/noise continuum (“which ranges from pure tones to noise bands”), and percussion allows the composer to reach the entire spectrum.<sup>97</sup> DeLio does not use percussion as secondary to pitched instruments in his music; because, as he explains, this denies the truth that “pitch and noise are part of the same sonic universe.”<sup>98</sup>

*Transparent Wave*, which is included in the first edition of volume two of *The Noble Snare*, is the first in a series of pieces written by DeLio using the same title; with the numbers II to X attached respectively to the subsequent titles. Each of the now ten solos is a short, etude-like piece. The title, he explains, refers to sound waves and is about how we experience these waves.<sup>99</sup>

In *Transparent Wave*, DeLio is exploring the white noise sound band of the snare drum through the use of sustained rolls at varying dynamics, lengths, and implements of actuation. DeLio refers to this sound band as a “very densely packed wave with infinitely many frequencies,” noting that “as the snare gets louder, the white noise band gets higher! If you looked at the piece under a spectrograph you

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<sup>95</sup> “Thomas DeLio,” Composer Profile, University of Akron: Sylvia Smith Archives of Smith Publications and Sonic Art Editions, last modified October 12, 1998, accessed September 17, 2018, <http://www3.uakron.edu/ssma/composers/DeLio.shtml>.

<sup>96</sup> Tracy Wiggins, “A Conversation with Thomas DeLio,” in *Essays on the Music and Theoretical Writings of Thomas DeLio*, ed. Thomas Licata (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 208.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

<sup>99</sup> Thomas DeLio, e-mail message to author, September 19, 2018.

would see the rise and fall of the sound band.”<sup>100</sup> DeLio shapes this rise and fall into “a series of waves of differing dimension, all evolving toward a goal.”<sup>101</sup>

In between these series of waves, there are periods of silence. DeLio’s sensitivity to the use of silence is characteristic of his music. DeLio measures the durations of sound and silences in his music to create a certain quality of pacing.<sup>102</sup> The silences are also used to isolate and frame the sound events, “allowing sounds to be experienced fully, not so much as part of a process but as each unique sonic experience.”<sup>103</sup>

### ***Amazonia Dreaming, Annea Lockwood***

Annea Lockwood (b. 1939) was born in Christchurch, New Zealand. In New Zealand, she studied at the Canterbury University before moving to Europe, where she continued her studies at the Royal College of Music in London, the Darmstadt Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, and the Musikhochschule in Cologne and Holland.<sup>104</sup>

Lockwood’s music exemplifies her interest in the exploration of natural acoustic sounds and environments.<sup>105</sup> She describes growing up in parts of New Zealand that were “rich in environmental sound” and states that even though she wasn’t thinking about how to work with these sounds as a kid, “those sounds were beloved sounds.”<sup>106</sup> This passion for natural sounds was combined with her interest

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<sup>100</sup> Thomas DeLio, e-mail message to author, September 19, 2018.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Tara Rodgers, *Pink Noises: Women on Electronic Music and Sound* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 114.

<sup>105</sup> “Biography,” Annea Lockwood, accessed September 4, 2018, <http://www.annealockwood.com/biography/>.

<sup>106</sup> Rodgers, *Pink Noises*, 115.

in creating music that went in a “different direction.” She explains; “I didn’t see the point in replicating other people’s music, at all. Why do that? So I wanted to strike out in a different direction, not necessarily new – one hopes for new, but that may or may not happen – but in a different direction, a fresh direction.”<sup>107</sup> This led to a musical output that is very experimental and diverse, including pieces for burning pianos (*Piano Transplant*), works for shards of industrial glass (*The Glass Concert*), several installations that incorporate field recordings or recorded interviews, and a performance piece with the Sound Ball designed for her by Robert Bielecki (*Three Short Stories and an Apotheosis*).<sup>108</sup>

In the mid-1980s, around the time of the commission for *Amazonia Dreaming*, Lockwood was returning to composing music for traditional instruments and voices.<sup>109</sup> Lockwood had turned away from instruments in the 1960s, as she considered them constricting. Lockwood describes her return to instrumental music:

I began to look at my work and wonder if I wasn’t on the verge of repeating myself, which I didn’t want to do. And also, I noticed that I was thinking of instrumental and acoustic writing as taboo, and that seemed in itself a limitation. Why would one put a whole major area of sound work aside? That seemed absurd. So, much to my pleasure, I’ve been doing both electroacoustic and instrumental music ever since the late 80s.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Rodgers, *Pink Noises*, 115.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>109</sup> J. Michele Edwards, “Anne Lockwood,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed October 19, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000040892>.

<sup>110</sup> Rodgers, *Pink Noises*, 123.

*Amazonia Dreaming* is found in volume three of the first edition of *The Noble Snare*. Even though it is an instrumental work, *Amazonia Dreaming*, with its use of an extra-musical program, exemplifies Lockwood's interest in natural acoustic sounds and environments. Lockwood describes *Amazonia Dreaming* as "a nocturnal piece, evocative of the rich soundscapes of the Amazon forests."<sup>111</sup> During its composition, Lockwood borrowed a drum and experimented with the different sounds available. She explains how, through this process, she "became aware of sonorities available from almost every part of the instrument, a much wider range than I'd associated with it previously. They suggested delicacy, close focus, a sensual world reminiscent of certain vocal sounds, thus, a duet for hands and voice."<sup>112</sup>

Lockwood used a graphic notation with images that correspond to certain techniques or sounds. These images are placed in boxes in the score, which are drawn to scale over a running timeline. The durations of the timeline's units are left open; it is only important that the proportions are maintained.<sup>113</sup>

### ***Brushwork, Drew Krause***

Drew Krause (b. 1960) composes music for instruments and electronics, including some works that combine the two media. His compositional output includes solo, chamber, large ensemble, and choral music. Krause studied at

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<sup>111</sup> "Amazonia Dreaming," Program Note, Annea Lockwood, accessed September 4, 2018, <http://www.annealockwood.com/compositions/amazonia-dreaming/>.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Annea Lockwood, "Amazonia Dreaming," in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

Hamilton College, Juilliard, and the University of Illinois. He now teaches at New York University.<sup>114</sup>

*Brushwork* is included in the second edition of volume two of *The Noble Snare*. Krause has had a long relationship with Stuart Saunders Smith, including studying composition with him and performing his piano music.<sup>115</sup>

Like many of Krause's works, *Brushwork* was composed with computer-assisted algorithms. In discussing these algorithms, Krause says, "What I mean by algorithm is any well-defined repeatable method... like a recipe."<sup>116</sup> For Krause, the use of these "recipes" is to generate variations on his musical ideas. Unlike some algorithmic composers, Krause is not using the mathematics so that the listener can hear and follow the process. He explains, "The transparency of the method doesn't really interest me... I turn to computers when I get a more complex musical idea that would be really horribly repetitive and awful to do by hand."<sup>117</sup>

Krause used four different methods for composing the four sections of *Brushwork*. Each method creates a pattern of numbers that are then realized by their assigned musical meaning. With each of these compositional methods, Krause explains, "The processes are all deterministic, but the initial conditions/materials are either arbitrarily or randomly chosen."<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> "About," Drew Krause, accessed August 28, 2018, <http://www.drew-krause.com/about/>.

<sup>115</sup> Drew Krause, e-mail message to author, August 28, 2018.

<sup>116</sup> Drew Krause, "Some Compositional Algorithms" (presented at *The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years*, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

<sup>117</sup> Krause, "Some Compositional Algorithms."

<sup>118</sup> Drew Krause, e-mail message to author, September 1, 2018.

For example, in the opening section of the solo, Krause chose six patterns of 0's and 1's. Krause decided that each digit would receive the duration of a sixteenth note, and their musical function would be 0 = "rest" and 1 = "hit."

Other sections are much more complex. Krause uses various rewriting systems or equations that will generate variations on a sequence of numbers. As in the first section, the numbers are each assigned a musical function. These sequences are then translated accordingly into the score.

The final section of the piece is the most complex. The method used to generate numbers in this section is the Morse-Thue sequence; a binary sequence that will continue to generate using the rules  $0 = (0,1)$  and  $1 = (1,0)$ . In this section, 0 is assigned to "brush" and 1 to "rim." He then used a different and unrelated algorithm to generate the rhythms. To further complicate this section, Krause takes various results from the different generations and begins "piling them up on top of one another."<sup>119</sup>

### ***Exercise 26 (Snare Drum Peace March), Christian Wolff***

Christian Wolff (b. 1934) was born in Nice, France, but moved to the U.S. in 1941, where he would spend most of his life. He briefly studied piano with Grete Sultan and composition with John Cage, but he is mostly self-taught as a composer. Wolff studied Classics at the University of Florence and at Harvard University (Ph.D.). He would later teach Classics at both Harvard and Dartmouth College, where he would eventually also teach music. Wolff is considered part of the "New York School," a name referring to the group of composers in 1950's New York that

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<sup>119</sup> Krause, "Some Compositional Algorithms."



included John Cage, Morton Feldman, Earle Brown, and David Tudor. Wolff was also influenced by and associated with composers Frederic Rzewski and Cornelius Cardew.<sup>120</sup>

Much of Wolff's music incorporates indeterminacy in its performance, though not always with respect to its compositional process.<sup>121</sup> His interest is in creating musical scores that are means to creating performance situations that are flexible and dependent upon the occasion of their performance.<sup>122</sup> As Wolff explains, this openness allows space for "unpredictable successions, combinations, superpositions and overlaps which may surprise you, innocently and impersonally. That your work is not finished until performed, that it cannot but exist socially."<sup>123</sup>

The third volume of the first edition of *The Noble Snare* includes two works by Wolff: *Exercise 26 (Snare Drum Peace March)* and *Exercise 27 (Second Snare Drum Peace March)*. This program will only include the first piece, *Exercise 26*.

Wolff has included percussion in most of his compositions, however, prior to *Exercise 26*, Wolff had only composed two other works for percussion solo: *Sticks* (1960) and *Stones* (1970), which are part of a collection titled *Prose Collection*, where each piece is a page of instructions, guiding the performer in various sound explorations. He cites his reasoning for not composing more percussion solos as "perhaps a certain diffidence after the work of Varese and Cage, and the practical consideration that the musicians I tended to work with were not primarily

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<sup>120</sup> William Bland, David Patterson, and Sabine Feisst, "Christian George Wolff," *Grove Music Online*, accessed August 29, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002259415>.

<sup>121</sup> Frederic Rzewski, "Profile: Christian Wolff," *Tempo* 68, no. 268 (2014): 124.

<sup>122</sup> Michael Parsons, foreword to *Changing the System: The Music of Christian Wolff*, ed. Stephen Chase and Philip Thomas (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), xviii.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

percussionists.”<sup>124</sup> Wolff describes his snare drum *Exercises* as “professional, virtuosic versions of a piece like *Sticks* where the exploration of the sound material as such is a basic ingredient.”<sup>125</sup> In *Exercise 26*, the rhythmic notation is written conventionally and precisely, while other aspects are left to the performer’s discretion; such as dynamics, use of snares, and optional variations. The piece has two sections, which are each repeated, with different performance instructions to be used for the repetitions. There are “optional additional” variations provided as well.

*Exercise 26* and *Exercise 27* combine two personal genres in which Wolff had previously composed: “Exercises” and “Peace Marches.” Wolff composed his first set of *Exercises* (1-14) in 1973-4. These pieces are for two or more players; and even though they have fixed melodic material, they incorporate a great amount of indeterminacy, such as their unspecified instrumentation, dynamics, tempo, articulations, etc.<sup>126</sup>

Wolff began composing his series of peace marches with his *Peace March 1* in 1983-4 for solo flute. This was composed after Wolff and his family members had marched against the buildup of nuclear arms.<sup>127</sup> He began composing political works in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, because of “the United States war in Vietnam, various personal experiences, and closeness to other musicians similarly affected.”

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<sup>124</sup> Christian Wolff, “Floating Rhythm and Experimental Percussion (1990),” in *Occasional Pieces: Writings and Interviews, 1952-2013*, ed. Christian Wolff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 136.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>126</sup> Christian Asplund et al., “Improvisation, Heterophony, Politics, Composition,” *Perspectives of New Music* 45, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 141.

<sup>127</sup> Michael Hicks and Christian Asplund, *Christian Wolff* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 76.

His first political works were *Accompaniments* (1972) and *Changing the System* (1972-3).<sup>128</sup>

Many of his political works are not overtly political, though he does have some songs with “fairly strong texts,” but rather they have a political connection in some more subtle way. Wolff explains how, if music is not going to be completely abstract, but connected to something, then he would prefer to connect it to politics rather than common musical subjects like mysticism or religion. He calls this subtle political influence “more of a question of general orientation, which at some level has some effect.”<sup>129</sup> He describes in more detail:

If you have music that reminds people that there are political issues there, or somehow buried in this piece there is a song about something political... it’s a small thing, it’s not going to change the world, but it’s different, it just creates, or might create, a different kind of association and climate than a kind of music that simply says, you must meditate.<sup>130</sup>

Political associations present in these two solos include the genre of “peace march,” the military associations of the snare drum, and what Wolff refers to as “politics by analogy.” This is how Wolff describes this “analogy:”

In one’s behavior involving music (composing, performing, organizing, rehearsing, etc.) one can model something decent for political behavior, e.g. doing, or making it possible for things to be

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<sup>128</sup> Christian Wolff, “Sketch of a Statement (1993)” in *Occasional Pieces, 1952-2013*, ed. Christian Wolff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 198.

<sup>129</sup> Christian Wolff, “Interview with Markus Trunk (1992),” in *Occasional Pieces: Writings and Interviews, 1952-2013* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 175.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

done, in ways that involve everyone (“democracy”), minimum hierarchy of authority (though some guidance and instruction based on experience may be helpful), and also allow individual initiative (musically, to the performer, and listeners – active not passive listening).<sup>131</sup>

Wolff notes that *Exercise 26* is the first of his peace marches to use an instrument so closely associated with marches. However, he intended to use it “in such a way as to cancel any military associations – as a solo, partly a private event, with some feeling of quiet and turning inward, though also with its sense of direction and purpose.”<sup>132</sup> The majority of the solo is played with fingers.

### ***A Head to Rest*, Matthew Burke**

Matthew Burke (b. 1987) is a freelance composer, guitarist, and community organizer living in Baltimore, Maryland. He studied music composition at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County with Stuart Saunders Smith. Burke is currently a community fellow with the Open Society Institute, which funds him to direct the program Food Rescue; a network of weekly giveaways of unsold food in struggling communities throughout Baltimore City.<sup>133</sup>

Sylvia Smith commissioned *A Head to Rest* after another composer had dropped out shortly before the publishing deadline of the second edition of *The Noble*

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<sup>131</sup> Christian Wolff, e-mail message to author, October 19, 2018.

<sup>132</sup> Wolff, “Floating Rhythm and Experimental Percussion (1990),” 136.

<sup>133</sup> Matthew Burke, e-mail message to author, October 2, 2018.

*Snare*.<sup>134</sup> Burke's solo is included in the second edition of volume two of *The Noble Snare*.

*A Head to Rest* was Burke's first composition for non-pitched instruments; so in writing for the snare drum, he decided to use the piece's three distinct timbres (head, rim, and sticks) "in a manner that would feel melodic."<sup>135</sup> Even though Burke is not a percussionist, he worked out every line of the piece slowly on the drum, gradually working it up to tempo.<sup>136</sup>

The rhythmic complexity used in *A Head to Rest* is characteristic of Burke's music. Burke describes the rhythmic language of the piece as "rhythmic clusters that quickly change pace to give the piece a more kinetic feel that was inspired by human speech."<sup>137</sup> These clusters are then separated by silences of varying duration "to create a thematic juxtaposition between space and perspective."<sup>138</sup>

### ***Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective***

#### ***Surfaces, Alvin Lucier***

Alvin Lucier (b. 1931) was born in Nashua, New Hampshire and studied at Yale and Brandeis Universities. He taught at Brandeis and Wesleyan University, where he retired from his position of Professor of Music in 2011.<sup>139</sup>

*Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective Surfaces* is included in volume three of the first edition of *The Noble Snare*. Like

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<sup>134</sup> Matthew Burke, e-mail message to author, October 2, 2018.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> "Biography," Alvin Lucier, accessed September 20, 2018, <http://alucier.web.wesleyan.edu/bio.html>.

most of Lucier's music, his snare drum solo focuses on a specific acoustic phenomenon. Similar to John Cage's use of techniques such as indeterminacy and chance operations in order to remove intention and personal taste from his compositions, Lucier wanted to remove the constraints that have been put on sound in order to present sound in a natural state; free from metaphor, personal taste, or traditional forms. In describing this philosophy, Lucier states:

I try to compose as little as possible, but that means that I have to think about each piece a lot, to avoid any kind of preexisting musical structures that would take away from the perception and focus of the sonic phenomenon in which I'm interested. So by expressive I mean that quality which shows something about its nature but which is unintentionally produced. Ripples in a stream, wind through grass, sunlight reflecting off water tell us something about themselves without intending to do so. All natural sounds are unintentional but nonetheless press out (express) from themselves messages with no meaning other than what they are or how they are produced.<sup>140</sup>

Many of Lucier's works use some form of electronic technology. His pieces, *Music on a Long Thin Wire*, *Directions of Sounds from the Bridge*, and *Music for Pure Waves*, *Bass Drums and Acoustic Pendulums*, all use a pure sound source in order to stimulate instruments, similar to its use in *Music for Snare Drum*, *Pure Wave Oscillator* and *One or More Reflective Surfaces*. Lucier is attracted to the use of

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<sup>140</sup> Arne Deforce, interview with Alvin Lucier, May 13, 2003, published online at [https://issuu.com/arnedeforce/docs/alvin\\_lucier\\_interview](https://issuu.com/arnedeforce/docs/alvin_lucier_interview).

acoustical test equipment in his works, because it is, “by its very nature, free of content. What goes into a material or environment to be tested must be neutral so that the results are unbiased. And as the process of testing, probing, or exploring often forms the basis of compositional structure and performance activity in my work, these devices are perfect tools for me to use.”<sup>141</sup>

With its use of “one or more reflective surfaces,” *Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective Surfaces* also displays Lucier’s interest in the acoustic characteristics of natural and architectural spaces.<sup>142</sup> Between 1968 and 1972, Lucier composed several works that explored these phenomena. These works included *Chambers* (1968) and *I Am Sitting in a Room* (1970).

Most of his scores, including *Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective Surfaces*, are in prose.<sup>143</sup> Lucier found this was the only way to describe the specific tasks for the performer. These instructions are simply means to “reveal the acoustic phenomenon which is at the core of the piece.”<sup>144</sup>

Lucier is very adamant about his directions being followed explicitly, as he says, “I don’t expect the performer to use the score as a point of departure or as a do-it-yourself kit with which to devise a different piece... personal choices, based on what a player feels to be musical, have no place in these works.”<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Alvin Lucier, “Testing, Testing, Probing, Exploring: The Tools of My Trade,” in *Reflections: Interviews, Scores, Writings* (Köln: MusikTexte, 1995), 456.

<sup>142</sup> Lucier, “Testing, Testing, Probing, Exploring,” 444.

<sup>143</sup> James Tenny, “The Eloquent Voice of Nature,” in *Reflections: Interviews, Scores, Writings* (Köln: MusikTexte, 1995), 16.

<sup>144</sup> Deforce, interview with Alvin Lucier.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

### ***Non-Contradiction, Jason Baker***

Jason Baker (b. 1976) studied percussion at the University of Connecticut, New England Conservatory, and University of North Texas, and is currently Associate Professor of Music at Mississippi State University.<sup>146</sup> Baker has composed and published several works for percussion and snare drum specifically, including a collection of snare drum solos from 2010 (*15 Progressive Snare Drum Solos: A Pedagogical Approach to Repertoire*). His solos have been featured at the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Snare Drum Competition, Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention.<sup>147</sup>

At the University of North Texas, Baker's doctoral dissertation, *The Snare Drum as a Solo Concert Instrument: An In-Depth Study of Works by Milton Babbitt, John Cage, Dan Senn, and Stuart Saunders Smith, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works by Keiko Abe, Daniel Levitan, Askeell Masson, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Others*, focused on *The Noble Snare* series, particularly the creation of the first edition and the four solos referenced in its title. In 2005, the year following its completion, Baker would record several other pieces from the series on an album titled *The Noble Snare*, which was released in 2009.<sup>148</sup>

*Non-Contradiction* is found in the second edition of volume three of *The Noble Snare*. The title, *Non-Contradiction*, is a reference to the conflict between the concert and marching snare drum traditions. Baker notes that, as percussion students, we are taught that these two worlds are always "at odds," but Baker has not ever felt

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<sup>146</sup> "Dr. Jason Baker," Faculty Biography, Mississippi State University Department of Music, accessed September 6, 2018, <https://www.music.msstate.edu/faculty/bio/jasonbaker/>.

<sup>147</sup> Faculty Biography, Mississippi State University Department of Music, "Dr. Jason Baker."

<sup>148</sup> Jason Baker, *The Noble Snare*, Smith Publications 5637215862, 2009, CD.



this to be true. Rather, he prefers marching snare drum music that was influenced by concert snare drum music, and vice versa.<sup>149</sup>

Baker's percussion education includes both the concert and drum corps traditions. In addition to his formal classical music studies at the universities and the conservatory mentioned above, Baker continues to perform with orchestras. He is the Principal Timpanist of the North Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and also performs with the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra.<sup>150</sup> His marching background includes being a performing member of the Glassmen, Boston Crusaders, and Connecticut Hurricanes Drum and Bugle Corps.<sup>151</sup>

*Non-Contradiction* incorporates rudiments and fast technical playing from the marching tradition, while also incorporating the classical tradition with its use of light dynamics, articulation subtleties, and closed rolls.

The solo is in a rounded binary form and makes use of recurring rhythmic motives. The use of recurring motives is typical of Baker's compositions, he says that he views them as "characters in a play or a film where they appear and they maybe appear a little bit later slightly embellished."<sup>152</sup>

Baker did not compose this piece at the instrument. He learned it for the first time in 2017, when he performed it at the University of Akron's festival, "The Noble Snare – 25 Years."<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Jason Baker, "Introductory remarks to *Non-Contradiction*" (presented at The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

<sup>150</sup> Faculty Biography, Mississippi State University Department of Music, "Dr. Jason Baker."

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Baker, "Introductory remarks to *Non-Contradiction*."

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

Recital #3 – March 4, 2019

Program

Doctor of Musical Arts Recital  
Dissertation Recital: *The Noble Snare*  
Curt Joseph Armbruster, Percussion

March 4, 2019

5:00 pm

University of Maryland; Gildenhorn Recital Hall

<i>2 for 1</i> (1988) I. II.	RALPH SHAPEY (1921-2002)
<i>Scrape Rim Skin</i> (1990)	SALVATORE MARTIRANO (1927-1995)
<i>Exercise 27 (Second Snare Drum     Peace March)</i> (1988)	CHRISTIAN WOLFF (b. 1934)
<i>Kerberos</i> (1990)	SYDNEY HODKINSON (b. 1934)
<i>tapping points</i> (2010)	ROGER ZAHAB (b. 1957)
<i>Different Strokes</i> (1988)	JOHN BERGAMO (1940-2013)
<i>“scraps of echos...”</i> (1988)	JOHN WELSH (1955-2012)
<i>A Minute of News</i> (1990)	EUGENE NOVOTNEY (b. 1960)
<i>Lo</i> (2014)	GUSTAVO AGUILAR (b. 1962)
<i>why not patterns?</i> (2014)	BRETT WILLIAM DIETZ (b. 1972)

## Program Notes

### ***2 for 1, Ralph Shapey***

Ralph Shapey (1921-2002) was born in Philadelphia where he studied violin with Emmanuel Zetlin and composition with Stefan Wolpe. However, he received no formal education after high school.<sup>154</sup> After World War II, during which time Shapey had been drafted into the U.S. Army, he moved to New York and taught at a school founded by Wolpe. While working in New York, Shapey organized and conducted performances of contemporary music that received the attention of many New York musicians as well as leading figures of the “New York School” of painting and modern dance.<sup>155</sup> In 1964, Shapey moved to Chicago to teach at the University of Chicago and direct the newly formed Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Chicago, a position he would hold for the next 30 years.<sup>156</sup>

Shapey considered himself a “radical traditionalist.” He said, “The twelve-tone composers have wanted nothing to do with me. Nor did the neoclassicists, and certainly not the minimalists. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms are my gods... I use traditional forms. Also, I am a romantic, but romanticism is a dirty word. It seems every composer has to fit into a cubbyhole, and it was Leonard Meyer and later

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<sup>154</sup> Steven Johnson, “Ralph Shapey,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 7, 2019, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000025587>.

<sup>155</sup> Henry Weinberg, “Ralph Shapey: Major American Composer,” *Sonus: A Journal of Investigations into Global Musical Possibilities* 21, no. 1 (Fall 2000): 43-44.

<sup>156</sup> Robert Cogan, “Graven Images: An Interview with Robert Cogan,” *Sonus: A Journal of Investigations into Global Musical Possibilities* 21, no. 1 (Fall 2000): 36-37.

the critic Bernard Jacobson who called me what I really am: a radical traditionalist.”<sup>157</sup>

*2 for 1* was written in 1988 and is in the first edition of volume four of *The Noble Snare*. The solo fits with Shapey’s description of himself as “radical traditionalist,” as it is traditional in form and rhythmic language, yet experimental in its instrumentation and exploration of the sound palette of the instrument.

One traditional aspect of Shapey’s compositional style is his use of development on a theme. Shapey often composed with motives, which he called “graven images.”<sup>158</sup> *2 for 1*’s “graven image” appears in the first measure of the piece. This motive can be seen in various forms and variations throughout both movements. Each of the piece’s sections begins with a version of this theme; and within these sections, the theme can be found fragmented and further varied.

Shapey explores various sound colors by the use of regular and moleskin covered sticks, playing on the center and edge of the drum, and playing on the rim and shell of the drum. As Shapey noted in the score, these playing techniques were the result of “suggestions thanks to my percussionist Doug Waddell.”<sup>159</sup> Waddell worked with Shapey as a percussionist in the Contemporary Chamber Players from 1981-91 and is currently a percussionist in the Lyric Opera of Chicago.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Patrick Finely, “A Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Shapey” (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1997), 16.

<sup>158</sup> Barry Wiener, “Ralph Shapey and the Search for a New Concept of Musical Continuity, 1939-66” (PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2014), 203.

<sup>159</sup> Ralph Shapey, “2 for 1,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>160</sup> Doug Waddell, Facebook message from author, January 22, 2019.

### ***Scrape Rim Skin, Salvatore Martirano***

Salvatore Martirano (1927-1995) was an American composer who composed works in a wide range of styles and media, often with or for electronics. He studied with Herbert Elwell at the Oberlin College Conservatory (B.M. 1951) and with Bernard Rogers at the Eastman School of Music (M.M. 1952). Martirano also studied with Luigi Dallapiccola in Florence from 1952-4.<sup>161</sup>

From 1963-1995, Martirano was Professor of Composition at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.<sup>162</sup> When he joined the faculty, the University had recently created its Experimental Music Studio, which was founded in 1958 by Lejaren Hiller with the assistance of a grant from the Graduate College of the University and became one of the world's first electro-acoustic music studios.<sup>163</sup> This studio is where Martirano would invent his electronic music systems: the Sal-Mar Construction and later the YahaSALmaMac.<sup>164</sup>

Martirano composed using a variety of styles and media. In the 1950s, he composed works in traditional genres using twelve-tone techniques. After arriving at the University of Illinois in the 1960s, he began composing his first works with computers: *123-456* (1964) and *Underworld* (1964-5).<sup>165</sup> Martirano's best-known work is the mixed-media piece, *L's G.A.* (1967) (the abbreviation meaning Lincoln's

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<sup>161</sup> Gilbert Chase and Jean Geil, "Salvatore Martirano," *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 7, 2019, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000017944>.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> John Melby, "Sal's G.A.," *Perspectives of New Music* 34, no. 1 (Winter 1996): 193 and Adriana P. Cuervo, "Preserving the Electroacoustic Music Legacy: A Case Study of the Sal-Mar Construction at the University of Illinois," *Notes* 68, no. 1 (September 2011): 36.

<sup>164</sup> "About Salvatore Martirano," University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, accessed January 7, 2019, <https://music.illinois.edu/about-salvatore-martirano>.

<sup>165</sup> Chase and Geil, "Salvatore Martirano."

Gettysburg Address), written for gassed-masked politico, helium bomb, three 16mm movie projectors, and two channel tape recorder.<sup>166</sup> After the 1960s, Martirano would continue to compose works for electronics and mixed-media, but would also compose several instrumental and electro-acoustic works.

*Scrape Rim Skin* (1990) appears in the first edition of volume four of *The Noble Snare*. Martirano uses a mostly standard notation for this solo. This was uncommon for Martirano's music ever since he began working with computers in the 1960s, but occasionally he returned to traditional notation with several other late works as well: *Stuck on Stella* (1979), *THROWN* (1984), *LON/dons* (1989), and *Isabela* (1993).<sup>167</sup>

The performance instructions for *Scrape Rim Skin* are few and concise. The piece is written on two lines; the top line for the right hand and the bottom line for the left. The instruction for whether to play a scrape, rim, or skin is defined for the performer by the appearance of its corresponding note head underneath the words of the title at the top of the page. The sticks and the tempo are left open to the performer. Martirano writes that “sticks and/or brushes” may be used, and the quarter note is simply defined as “steady.”<sup>168</sup>

### ***Exercise 27 (Second Snare Drum Peace March), Christian Wolff***

Christian Wolff (b. 1934) was born in Nice, France, but moved to the U.S. in 1941, where he would spend most of his life. He briefly studied piano with Grete

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<sup>166</sup> University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, “About Salvatore Martirano.”

<sup>167</sup> Chase and Geil, “Salvatore Martirano.”

<sup>168</sup> Salvatore Martirano, “Scrape Rim Skin,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

Sultan and composition with John Cage, but he is mostly self-taught as a composer. Wolff studied Classics at the University of Florence and at Harvard University (Ph.D.). He would later teach Classics at both Harvard and Dartmouth College, where he would eventually also teach music. Wolff is considered part of the “New York School,” a name referring to the group of composers in 1950’s New York that included John Cage, Morton Feldman, Earle Brown, and David Tudor. Wolff was also influenced by and associated with composers Frederic Rzewski and Cornelius Cardew.<sup>169</sup>

Much of Wolff’s music incorporates indeterminacy in its performance, though not always with respect to its compositional process.<sup>170</sup> His interest is in creating musical scores that are means to creating performance situations that are flexible and dependent upon the occasion of their performance.<sup>171</sup> As Wolff explains, this openness allows space for “unpredictable successions, combinations, superpositions and overlaps which may surprise you, innocently and impersonally. That your work is not finished until performed, that it cannot but exist socially.”<sup>172</sup>

The third volume of the first edition of *The Noble Snare* includes two works by Wolff: *Exercise 26 (Snare Drum Peace March)* and *Exercise 27 (Second Snare Drum Peace March)*. This program will only include the second piece, *Exercise 27*.

Wolff has included percussion in most of his compositions; however, prior to *Exercise 26*, Wolff had only composed two other works for percussion solo: *Sticks* (1960) and *Stones* (1970), which are part of a collection titled *Prose Collection*,

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<sup>169</sup> Bland, Patterson, and Feisst, “Christian George Wolff.”

<sup>170</sup> Rzewski, “Profile: Christian Wolff,” 124.

<sup>171</sup> Parsons, foreword to *Changing the System: The Music of Christian Wolff*, xviii.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

where each piece is a page of instructions, guiding the performer in various sound explorations. He cites his reasoning for not composing more percussion solos as “perhaps a certain diffidence after the work of Varese and Cage, and the practical consideration that the musicians I tended to work with were not primarily percussionists.”<sup>173</sup> Wolff describes his snare drum *Exercises* as “professional, virtuosic versions of a piece like *Sticks* where the exploration of the sound material as such is a basic ingredient.”<sup>174</sup> In *Exercise 27*, the rhythmic notation is written conventionally and precisely, while other aspects are left to the performer’s discretion; such as dynamics, use of snares, tempo, and which sounds to use for each rhythm.

*Exercise 26* and *Exercise 27* combine two personal genres in which Wolff had previously composed: *Exercises* and *Peace Marches*. Wolff composed his first set of *Exercises* (1-14) in 1973-4. These pieces are for two or more players; and even though they have fixed melodic material, they incorporate a great amount of indeterminacy, such as their unspecified instrumentation, dynamics, tempo, articulations, etc.<sup>175</sup>

Wolff began composing his series of peace marches with his *Peace March 1* in 1983-4 for solo flute. This was composed after Wolff and his family members had marched against the buildup of nuclear arms.<sup>176</sup> He began composing political works in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, because of “the United States war in Vietnam, various personal experiences, and closeness to other musicians similarly affected.”

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<sup>173</sup> Wolff, “Floating Rhythm and Experimental Percussion (1990),” 136.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>175</sup> Asplund et al., “Improvisation, Heterophony, Politics, Composition,” 141.

<sup>176</sup> Hicks and Asplund, *Christian Wolff*, 76.



His first political works were *Accompaniments* (1972) and *Changing the System* (1972-3).<sup>177</sup>

Many of his political works are not overtly political, though he does have some songs with “fairly strong texts,” but rather they have a political connection in some more subtle way. Wolff explains how, if music is not going to be completely abstract, but connected to something, then he would prefer to connect it to politics rather than common musical subjects like mysticism or religion. He calls this subtle political influence “more of a question of general orientation, which at some level has some effect.”<sup>178</sup> He describes in more detail:

If you have music that reminds people that there are political issues there, or somehow buried in this piece there is a song about something political... it’s a small thing, it’s not going to change the world, but it’s different, it just creates, or might create, a different kind of association and climate than a kind of music that simply says, you must meditate.<sup>179</sup>

Political associations present in these two solos include the genre of “peace march,” the military associations of the snare drum, and what Wolff refers to as “politics by analogy.” This is how Wolff describes this “analogy:”

In one’s behavior involving music (composing, performing, organizing, rehearsing, etc.) one can model something decent for political behavior, e.g. doing, or making it possible for things to be done, in ways that involve everyone (“democracy”), minimum

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<sup>177</sup> Wolff, “Sketch of a Statement (1993),” 198.

<sup>178</sup> Wolff, “Interview with Markus Trunk (1992),” 175.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

hierarchy of authority (though some guidance and instruction based on experience may be helpful), and also allow individual initiative (musically, to the performer, and listeners – active not passive listening).<sup>180</sup>

Wolff notes that *Exercise 26* is the first of his peace marches to use an instrument so closely associated with marches. However, he intended to use it “in such a way as to cancel any military associations – as a solo, partly a private event, with some feeling of quiet and turning inward, though also with its sense of direction and purpose.”<sup>181</sup> The majority of the solo is played with fingers. In *Exercise 27*, the playing techniques are left largely indeterminate, but Wolff suggests several non-traditional means of realizing the rhythms of the score.<sup>182</sup>

### ***Kerberos*, Sydney Hodkinson**

Sydney Hodkinson (b. 1934) is a Canadian composer who studied at the Eastman School of Music (B.M. 1957, M.M. 1958), Princeton University (1960), and the University of Michigan (D.M.A. 1968). His composition teachers include Louis Mennini, Bernard Rogers, Elliott Carter, Milton Babbitt, Benjamin Britten, and Luigi Dallapiccola, among others.<sup>183</sup> He has taught at several universities, including the Universities of Virginia, Ohio, and Michigan; the Eastman School of Music; Southern Methodist University; and the University of Western Ontario. Hodkinson returned to

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<sup>180</sup> Christian Wolff, e-mail message to author, October 19, 2018.

<sup>181</sup> Wolff, “Floating Rhythm and Experimental Percussion (1990),” 136.

<sup>182</sup> Christian Wolff, “Exercise 27 (Second Snare Drum Peace March),” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>183</sup> James G. Roy Jr. and Jonathan Kuuskoski, “Sydney Hodkinson,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 8, 2019, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002283213>.

Eastman in 1995, where he taught composition until his retirement in 1999. After retiring from Eastman, Hodkinson has continued to conduct and teach around the U.S. He currently teaches at Stetson University in DeLand, Florida and at the Aspen Music Festival and School. As a composer, Hodkinson has written over 250 works in genres spanning from solo, chamber, and vocal works to large works for chorus, orchestra, or wind ensemble.<sup>184</sup>

*Kerberos* is in the first edition of volume three of *The Noble Snare*. The title page in the score reads “for Stuart Saunders Smith with thanks to Wm. Cahn and J. Tiller.”<sup>185</sup> William Cahn and Jim Tiller were both, at the time, percussionists in the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Hodkinson explains, “As a good composer often and should do, I seeked [sic] out pro performers” and after a lot of discussion with William Cahn, “I created the concept of using ‘marimba’ techniques on the snare... I don’t think it’s ever been done before and I simply liked the idea.”<sup>186</sup> Though Hodkinson was unaware, this technique had been used before, at least by Allen Otte in his piece from volume two of *The Noble Snare: What the Snare Drum Tells Me* (1988). After Hodkinson had decided he was going to use this technique, he says, “From then on it was just a matter of writing ‘interesting music.’”<sup>187</sup>

Hodkinson provides this program note in the score:

Kerberos, in Greek mythology, was the three-headed, snake-encumbered dog who guarded the entrance to Hades. The short,

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<sup>184</sup> “Biography,” Sydney Hodkinson, accessed January 8, 2019, <http://www.sydhodkinson.com/Biography.html>.

<sup>185</sup> Sydney Hodkinson, “Kerberos,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>186</sup> Sydney Hodkinson, email message from author, January 14, 2019.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

five-minute etude, with this ‘beast’ in mind, exploits some of the sound potential of the contemporary snare drum in a small, modified rondo design (ABACBA) with coda. The work was written on February 9, 1990 in Fairport, New York.<sup>188</sup>

There are brief vocalizations used throughout the piece. The text that is spoken is the Italian pronunciation of an E. M. Forster version of the Dantean original “all ye who enter here: do so at the risk of your very life.”<sup>189</sup> Hodkinson did not start composing with this program in mind; rather it developed, as mentioned above, while he was attempting to create “interesting music” utilizing the technique-based idea with which he started the compositional process. He explains that he “heard the use of vocals as ‘evil’” and then “few things seemed to me more evil than a three-headed snakes-encumbered huge dog.”<sup>190</sup> In the score, Hodkinson instructs the performer that the “vocal production should be macabre and extroverted, whether spoken or whispered (*forte*), as an evil undercurrent to the drumming.”<sup>191</sup>

*Kerberos* calls for the use of snare drum sticks (one light pair and one heavy pair), wire brushes, and medium hard MPI mallets.<sup>192</sup> Hodkinson combines these sound color options by, at different moments in the piece, using one of them in each hand or requiring a four-mallet technique to hold two different pairs.

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<sup>188</sup> Hodkinson, “Kerberos.”

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Sydney Hodkinson, email message from author, January 14, 2019.

<sup>191</sup> Hodkinson, “Kerberos.”

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

### ***tapping points*, Roger Zahab**

Roger Zahab is a violinist, conductor, and composer born in Akron, Ohio in 1957. He studied violin at the University of Akron (1978 B.M. in Violin Performance) and the State University of New York at Stony Brook (1980 M.M. in Violin Performance).<sup>193</sup> Zahab is currently Senior Lecturer and Director of the Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra at the University of Pittsburgh and founding core faculty member of the M.F.A. in Music Composition at the Vermont College of Fine Arts.<sup>194</sup>

In 2009, Sylvia Smith, who Zahab had known since the 1990s, contacted him with the request for a piece for snare drum.<sup>195</sup> On composing new works, Zahab explains: “I have always started with thinking about who [sic] and what reasons and occasions I'm writing for. There are already thousands of works for every conceivable combination of performer and I'm (increasingly) unwilling to add to the pile unless there is a very good and personal reason.”<sup>196</sup> Zahab says Smith's request for a new piece inspired him “to think about relationships: between thought and action, text and interpretation, and also how the passage of time changes understanding.”<sup>197</sup> In elaborating on this reaction and why he thought this way in approaching a snare drum solo, Zahab explains, “I feel that musicians reveal their innermost thinking and being through their instruments, and that even the seeming

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<sup>193</sup> “Resume,” Roger Zahab, accessed January 14, 2019, [http://www.rogerzahab.net/roger\\_zahab\\_resume.pdf](http://www.rogerzahab.net/roger_zahab_resume.pdf).

<sup>194</sup> “Biography,” Roger Zahab, accessed January 14, 2019, <http://www.rogerzahab.net>.

<sup>195</sup> Roger Zahab, email message from author, January 20, 2019.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Roger Zahab, “Introduction to *tapping points*” (prepared by Zahab and read by Robert Falvo at The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

humblest or simplest object can draw us into deep and complex relationships with others.”<sup>198</sup>

Zahab composed *tapping points* in March of 2009, and it is found in the second edition of volume four of *The Noble Snare*. In 1998, Zahab composed a solo for snare drum and three toms (*a spunky twenty-eight*), which he wrote for percussionist Jeff Gram. While composing *tapping points*, Zahab would return to Gram for input from a percussionist’s perspective. In discussing his collaboration with Gram on *tapping points*, Zahab says that “Jeff and I discussed what is important to him in his approach to the snare drum, and I went from there, sending him sketches and listening to his sounds and reactions both.”<sup>199</sup>

In *tapping points*, Zahab has the performer orient the snares so that “they run from 9 to 3 o’clock.”<sup>200</sup> With the drum set up this way, there will be greater variance in the amount of snare response in correspondence to the performer’s playing spot on the head. The piece specifies three different playing spots on the drum with this phenomenon in mind: “the very edge (no snare sound), area between edge and center (fairly ensnared), dead center (mostly ensnared).”<sup>201</sup>

*tapping points* was premiered at *The Noble Snare*’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival at the University of Akron on September 25, 2011 by percussionist Matt Dudack. In his program note to the solo, Zahab thanks Dudack, Gram, and Sylvia Smith for “all the care and imagination they bring to some of the ways a snare drum can be touched.”<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Roger Zahab, email message from author, January 20, 2019.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Roger Zahab, “tapping points,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Zahab, “Introduction to *tapping points*.”

### ***Different Strokes, John Bergamo***

John Bergamo (1940-2013) was a percussionist and composer whose diverse musical career was influenced by his training in the Western classical and jazz traditions as well as in African, Indian, and Javanese music. His wide range of musical interests and training led to a career that included working alongside a varied range of artists, such as Frank Zappa, John McLaughlin, Ali Akbar Khan, Morton Feldman, Herb Albert, Ringo Starr, Charles Wourinen, and Lou Harrison.<sup>203</sup> Characteristic of many of Bergamo's compositions is an integration of aspects from this diverse set of musical styles.

Bergamo studied percussion at the Manhattan School of Music with Fred Albright and Paul Price and at the Lenox School of Jazz with Max Roach.<sup>204</sup> He also studied tabla at the Ali Akbar College of Music. In 1968-9, Bergamo's first university teaching position was at the University of Washington, where he taught for a year before joining the faculty at the California School of the Arts in 1969.<sup>205</sup> While teaching at the California School of the Arts, Bergamo also studied several different musical instruments and styles, including kanjira, ghatam, solkattu, African drumming, tabla, and Javanese gamelan. Bergamo began to combine aspects from these different musical traditions with Western influences when composing new works. For example, Bergamo explains his openness to combining musical traditions; "You don't always have to play the djembe like they do in Senegal. You

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<sup>203</sup> Tim Patterson, "Like Style, Dig? The Music of John Bergamo" (DMA diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2014), 8.

<sup>204</sup> Michael B. Williams, "John Bergamo: Percussive Renaissance Man," *Percussive Notes* 50, no. 6 (November 2012): 9.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

can actually play it with your fingers, you can play harmonics, you can play it with a Superball, you can do all of this stuff.”<sup>206</sup>

*Different Strokes* was written in 1988 and is included in the first edition of volume three of *The Noble Snare*. The piece was dedicated to Jeff Brenner, who was a student of Bergamo’s in the 1980s and also a close friend.<sup>207</sup> In the piece, Bergamo utilizes a hand drumming technique that he developed after being bedridden by a bad car accident in 1982.<sup>208</sup> Bergamo recalls having to stay home in bed and in a body cast for 15 weeks after the accident, and while lying in bed, he would play as much as he could on a dumbek that was given to him by his friend Ron Snider, percussionist with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.<sup>209</sup> Brenner explains, “Only having use of his fingers, he developed a technique that was derived from Indian drumming techniques and applied them to both hands and all fingers.”<sup>210</sup> In *Different Strokes*, Bergamo uses a number system, outlined on the first page of the score, where a number above each note in the piece corresponds to a specific hand drumming technique.

The piece’s lack of rhythmic or dynamic variation allows the majority of the musical interest to lay in the sound quality of the different stroke techniques. The rhythm is a perpetual motion that accelerates incrementally at three different moments in the piece where the subdivisions of the beat are slightly increased. After the last change, there is written “poco a poco accelerando e crescendo al fine.”<sup>211</sup> In between the three changes in speed, there are, however, changes in note groupings.

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<sup>206</sup> N. Scott Robinson, “John Bergamo: Percussive World View,” *Percussive Notes* 39, no. 1 (February 2001): 19.

<sup>207</sup> Jeffrey Brenner, Facebook message from author, January 13, 2019.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Robinson, “John Bergamo,” 15.

<sup>210</sup> Jeffrey Brenner, Facebook message from author, January 13, 2019.

<sup>211</sup> John Bergamo, “Different Strokes,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).



This is another influence from Indian music, as Bergamo notes: “In both North and South, rhythm is considered in two parts, speed and grouping.”<sup>212</sup>

There are several musical aspects left open to the performer. For example, other than the indication for the final crescendo, there are no other dynamic markings in the score. The tempo is also left open to the performer. Bergamo writes in the score “mm = whatever is comfortable.”<sup>213</sup> There is no indication of whether or not the piece should be performed with the snares engaged. Jeff Brenner performs the piece with the snares off and has even performed it on a frame drum in a snare drum stand. He says, “The beauty of it is you can use any drum or color that you like, and play as fast as you can accurately.”<sup>214</sup>

### **“scraps of echos...,” John Welsh**

John Welsh (1955-2012) was a composer, theorist, and pianist from Baltimore, MD. He studied composition at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County, Rutgers University, and received his D.M.A. in 1987 from the University of Maryland.<sup>215</sup> As a theorist, he “invented new analytic modalities for explaining chance music, improvisation, [and] new complexity in the last 30 years.”<sup>216</sup> Welsh wrote articles for *Perspectives of New Music*, *Percussive Notes Research Edition*, *Interface: Journal of New Music Research*, *Ear Magazine*, and *ex tempore*, and

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<sup>212</sup> John Bergamo, “Indian Music in America,” *Percussionist* 19, no. 1 (November 1981): 6.

<sup>213</sup> Bergamo, “Different Strokes.”

<sup>214</sup> Jeffrey Brenner, Facebook message from author, January 13, 2019.

<sup>215</sup> John P. Welsh, “Viewing Mobile Minds: Stuart Smith’s *Gifts*,” *Interface: Journal of New Music Research* 16, no. 4 (1987): 245.

<sup>216</sup> Stuart Saunders Smith, “Introductory remarks to ‘scraps of echos...’” (presented at The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

authored the book *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*.<sup>217</sup> His musical compositions reflect his interest in experimental music.

“*scaps of echos...*” was written in 1987 and is a part of the first edition of volume four of *The Noble Snare*. In the score, Welsh includes a program note that describes the piece as “a tribute to the Futurists.”<sup>218</sup> The Futurist movement to which Welsh is referring began in Italy in 1909 with the publication of Italian poet F.T. Marinetti’s controversial manifesto, *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism*. Marinetti explains the Futurist’s ideals in regards to literature, but his ideas were embraced by visual and musical artists as well.<sup>219</sup> Italian composer and painter, Luigi Russolo, wrote his own manifesto on Futurist music in 1913, *The Art of Noises*, where he notes: “Ancient life was all silence. In the nineteenth century, with the invention of machines, noise was born.”<sup>220</sup> Russolo proceeds to advocate for the use of noise in music.

Futurist music was attempting to “alleviate all boundaries set by traditional tonalities and to strike all common instrumentation, melodies, harmonies, and rhythmic stability from music.”<sup>221</sup> Russolo composed many pieces for instruments made from industrial machinery and even created a noise orchestra, which he divided into sections, imitating the division of a traditional orchestra into string, wind, brass,

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<sup>217</sup> Welsh, “Viewing Mobile Minds,” 245.

<sup>218</sup> John Welsh, ““scaps of echos...,”” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>219</sup> Wesley Park, “Marinetti and Russolo: the Futurists’ Impact on Percussion in the Early 20th Century,” *Percussive Notes* 51, no. 4 (July 2013): 46.

<sup>220</sup> Luigi Russolo, *The Art of Noises*, trans. Barclay Brown (New York, NY: Pendragon Press, 1986), 23 quoted in John P. Welsh, “Music in the Air: *Here and There*,” in *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, ed. John P. Welsh (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995): 39.

<sup>221</sup> Park, “Marinetti and Russolo,” 46.

and percussion sections.<sup>222</sup> Even though Futurist music and Russolo's noise orchestras did not become the musical standard as Russolo had imagined, the impacts of the use of noise in music were significant to 20<sup>th</sup> century music. As Welsh notes, "many composers and performers, especially percussionists, regard noise as simply another available musical sound to be given shape and meaning."<sup>223</sup> This profound legacy from the Italian Futurists is why Welsh composed "*scraps of echos...*" as a "tribute to the Futurists."<sup>224</sup>

Welsh's program note also explains that the title is a quotation from Futurist F.T. Marinetti's words-in-freedom poem, *Zang Tumb Tuuum*. Written in 1914, this poem was the result of Marinetti's work as a poet-war correspondent for the Parisian daily, *Gil Blas*.<sup>225</sup> He was tasked with combining poetics and reporting from the 1912 battlefield in the Balkans. His final product, the ten short chapters of *Zang Tumb Tuuum*, has been called "a wholesale demolition of existing literary culture in the act of giving birth to a poetics consonant with the era of industry, wireless telegraphic networks, and mechanized mass warfare."<sup>226</sup> The quote in Welsh's program note is from the final chapter of the poem, *Bombardmento*, and is also quoted by Russolo in his manifesto.<sup>227</sup>

Additionally, the title refers to the structure with which Welsh composed "*scraps of echos...*" The piece's five sections are separated with silent pauses for a

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<sup>222</sup> Park, "Marinetti and Russolo," 46.

<sup>223</sup> Welsh, "Music in the Air: *Here and There*," 39.

<sup>224</sup> Welsh, "'scraps of echos...'"

<sup>225</sup> Jeffrey T. Schnapp, "On *Zang Tumb Tuuum*," in *Italian Futurism 1909-1944: Reconstructing the Universe*, ed. Vivien Greene (New York, NY: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 2014): 157.

<sup>226</sup> Schnapp, "On *Zang Tumb Tuuum*," 157.

<sup>227</sup> Russolo, *The Art of Noises*, 26-27.

specified number of seconds. Each subsequent section “echoes” material from previous sections, but progressively less so and gradually fading to nothing.

### ***A Minute of News, Eugene Novotney***

Eugene Novotney (b. 1960) is a percussionist, composer, and ethnomusicologist. He studied percussion at the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music (B.M. 1982) and percussion, composition, and ethnomusicology at the University of Illinois (M.M. 1984, D.M.A. 1998).<sup>228</sup> In addition to his formal Western training, Novotney has studied percussion in various different traditions around the world, including in Ghana, Brazil, and Cuba.<sup>229</sup> He is currently Professor of Music and the Director of Percussion Studies at California State University-Humboldt in Arcata, California. Novotney has also composed several works for percussion, including *Intentions* (1983), *A Minute of News* (1990), *Alone or Together* (1995), *Cross* (1997), *Scratch* (1998), and *Fanfare, Juliana became Lillian* (2000).

Novotney composed *A Minute of News* in a single weekend in May of 1990 at his home in Arcata, California.<sup>230</sup> The solo is included in the first edition of volume four of *The Noble Snare*. It has been used as a test piece in several snare drum competitions around the world, including the Concours International de Caisse Claire – Conservatoire National de Region de Paris (2004 and 2007; Paris, France), the VIII Jornadas Internacionales de Percussion de Ribarroja del Turia (2006; Valencia,

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<sup>228</sup> Eugene Novotney, email message from author, January 12, 2019.

<sup>229</sup> “Eugene Novotney,” Remo, accessed January 11, 2019, <https://remo.com/team/member/eugene-novotney/bio/>.

<sup>230</sup> Eugene Novotney, “The Roots of Clave Based Composition” (presented at The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

Spain), the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Modern Snare Drum Competition (2008; Atlanta, Georgia), and the Concorso Internazionale per Strumenti a Percussione e Batteria (2009; Fermo, Italy).<sup>231</sup>

*A Minute of News* was influenced by an experience Novotney had in 1989 while travelling in Baja, Mexico with his friend and partner at the time, Mino Saeed-Vafa, for whom the piece is dedicated.<sup>232</sup> They were in the city of Ensenada, looking for live music. They heard several bands but could not find much percussion music. Eventually, they came across a group walking down the road, which they began to follow because the drummer was carrying a snare drum over his shoulder “that just looked awful, and I had to see what he was going to do with it.”<sup>233</sup> Novotney remembers expecting the worst from this drummer because of the condition of his instrument and how he did not seem to have even a single pair of matched sticks. But to Novotney’s surprise, the drummer “used everything about the situation to his advantage. He turned that broken drum and those mismatched sticks into an entire trap-set.”<sup>234</sup> He made use of his different beaters to create lead and accompanying voices; he used the broken strainer as a sound effect; and used a clave-based ostinato throughout.<sup>235</sup> All of these influences can be found in Novotney’s solo.

The title originates from an expression often used by a musician friend of Novotney’s. “That guy just read me the news,” is what he would say whenever he

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<sup>231</sup> “Eugene Novotney,” Humboldt State University, accessed on January 11, 2019, <https://music.humboldt.edu/people/eugene-novotney>.

<sup>232</sup> Eugene Novotney, email message from author, January 11, 2019.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

would hear a great musical performance.<sup>236</sup> Novotney claims that that drummer in Ensenada “read him the news that very day.”<sup>237</sup>

When Novotney received the call from Sylvia Smith in 1990 that requested a snare drum solo, he recalls feeling challenged since he had already seen the first two volumes of the collection and felt that all of the solos were so different. Smith had mentioned some limitations (such as page length) and Novotney decided that he would start his creative process by putting more limitations on himself.<sup>238</sup> Novotney explains that Herbert Brün, one of his composition teachers at the University of Illinois, “was a big influence on coming up with a concept based on restrictions, and going with it even if I did not know what the results would sound like.”<sup>239</sup> These are the two limits Novotney set on his snare drum solo:

- 1) Use no standard snare drum techniques or rudiments: no traditional two-handed rolls; no flams; no ruffs; no paradiddles; etc...
- 2) Never hold a pair of matched beaters (sticks/mallets/brushes/etc.) in both hands at the same time.<sup>240</sup>

Novotney also decided that the “guiding principle that informs all rhythmic and structural material in this piece is 2:3 *son* clave.”<sup>241</sup> Clave is “an Afro-Cuban timeline pattern used in Cuban folkloric and popular music.”<sup>242</sup> *Son* clave refers to

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<sup>236</sup> Eugene Novotney, “Introductory remarks to *A Minute of News*” (presented at The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

<sup>237</sup> Eugene Novotney, email message from author, January 11, 2019.

<sup>238</sup> Novotney, “The Roots of Clave Based Composition.”

<sup>239</sup> Eugene Novotney, email message from author, January 12, 2019.

<sup>240</sup> Novotney, “The Roots of Clave Based Composition.”

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ronaldo A. Perez Fernandez, “Clave,” in *Encyclopedia of Latin American Popular Music*, ed. George Torres (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2013), 97.

the clave pattern that originated in the Cuban musical genre of *son* and is the most widespread and universally known pattern of clave. This pattern is made up of two parts: a grouping of two and a grouping of three. In 2:3 *son* clave, the grouping of two is at the beginning of the pattern.

Novotney's use of 2:3 *son* clave was an influence from the drummer in Ensenada but was also already a great interest of Novotney's. His doctoral dissertation, *3:2 Relationship as the Foundation of Timelines in West African Musics*, in part explores the roots of clave as it "examines the 3:2 relationship as the foundation of musics of the African diaspora: namely, as it manifests itself through the concept of 'clave.'"<sup>243</sup>

Novotney then created the clave-based structure of the piece. He decided on using an arch form since the word clave means "code" or "key," coming from the idea of a "keystone."<sup>244</sup> He also gathered numbers that he derived from the clave rhythm and used these numbers to determine the lengths and number of occurrences of each of the piece's sections.<sup>245</sup>

The piece is constructed of two different recurring thematic sections, which are interspersed with transitional material. All of this material began with 2:3 *son* clave. The first theme was created by "filling in the spaces" of the clave rhythm. The second theme was derived from the first theme, specifically its second measure.

The transitional material was also derived from 2:3 *son* clave. Novotney began with 2:3 clave and then overlapped it with 3:2 clave, creating the composite

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<sup>243</sup> Eugene Novotney, "The 3:2 Relationship as the Foundation of Timelines in West African Musics" (DMA diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1998), 3.

<sup>244</sup> Novotney, "The Roots of Clave Based Composition."

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

rhythm that was used in the first and second transitional sections (mm 21-24 and mm 33-36). Partial statements of this material were used in other transitions. The piece opens with the first two beats of the 2:3 *son* clave rhythm, and the final two beats of the piece are the remaining two beats of the rhythm.<sup>246</sup>

Novotney uses a notation consisting of 11 different notes across three lines of staff and provides an instructional key to its interpretation in the score. The notes indicate which specific implement, technique, and hand should be used. The terms “strong hand” and “weak hand” are used for hand designations. This, Novotney says, is an influence from West African drumming, where the dominant and non-dominant hands are used to play to the individual’s strengths.<sup>247</sup>

### ***Lo, Gustavo Aguilar***

Gustavo Aguilar (b. 1962) is a percussionist, composer, and improviser from Brownsville, Texas. Aguilar studied at Corpus Christi State University, the California Institute of the Arts with John Bergamo, and the University of California, San Diego with Steven Schick and Anthony Davis.<sup>248</sup> Aguilar is currently Assistant Professor of Experimental Performance in the Department of Sound, Performance, and Visual Inquiry at the University of Maine at Farmington; Music Director of GroundWorks DanceTheater of Cleveland, Ohio; and Co-Artistic Director of *Tug*, an

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<sup>246</sup> Eugene Novotney, “A Minute of News,” in *The Noble Snare*, ed. Sylvia Smith (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 2014).

<sup>247</sup> Novotney, “The Roots of Clave Based Composition.”

<sup>248</sup> Eldonna L. May, "Gustavo Aguilar," *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 12, 2019, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002226934>.



“interdisciplinary arts collective that creates contact zones where people can generate insights about and produce actions around contemporary social issues.”<sup>249</sup>

*Lo* was composed in 2014 and is published in the second edition of volume four of *The Noble Snare*. The piece is in two parts. In Section 1, the player performs a pre-composed part and records their performance into a recording device. In Section 2, the recorded performance is played back while the player performs additional instructions and improvisations.

Aguilar describes the solo as coming from different continuums: sound art, philosophy, and theater. As sound art, the piece explores ideas through the medium of sound. Specifically, it is one of three works by Aguilar that explores the ideas of philosopher Henri Bergson (alongside *the visible and the invisible* and *Wendell's History*).<sup>250</sup>

The philosophical idea that Aguilar is exploring in *Lo* is Bergson’s idea of multiplicity that “attempts to unify in a consistent way two contradictory features: heterogeneity and continuity.”<sup>251</sup> To this end, Aguilar says that the piece is “a study of past, present, and future histories.”<sup>252</sup> This exploration is carried out in a few different ways in *Lo*. Aguilar intentionally uses items from the past: the snare drum (one of the earliest mechanical instruments) and the tape recorder (one of the earliest electronics available to the public).<sup>253</sup> With these items from the past, Aguilar creates a work in the present that is experimental and defying traditional musical expectations

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<sup>249</sup> “About,” Tug Collective, accessed January 12, 2019, <https://www.tugcollective.org/about>.

<sup>250</sup> Gustavo Aguilar, email message from author, January 25, 2019.

<sup>251</sup> Leonard Lawlor and Valentine Moulard Leonard, “Henri Bergson,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2016 Edition) <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2016/entries/bergson/>.

<sup>252</sup> Gustavo Aguilar, email message from author, January 25, 2019.

<sup>253</sup> Gustavo Aguilar, “Discussion of *Lo*” (presented at *The Noble Snare: Twenty-Five Years*, Akron, Ohio, September 24-25, 2017).

and therefore looking to the future. The solo also combines the past with the present by the use of the recorded past of Section 1 during the performance of Section 2. All three histories are explored “through the use of improvisation (present compose) with the composed score (past compose) to have a ‘past-present-future happenstance’ event.”<sup>254</sup>

As theater, Aguilar says that *Lo* “propositions the listener/viewer to perform with the work.”<sup>255</sup> The use of two parts requires the audience to remember back to Section 1 as the piece is being performed. “So, we might say that like theater and/or film, the listener/viewer has to do a ‘remembrance’ of the past in an effort to truly understand (if this is ever possible) the whole work.”<sup>256</sup>

*Lo* is part of an evening-length multi-media work that Aguilar composed around the same time: *The Saddest Noise, the Sweetest Noise* for video, moving snare drum, performer, and narrator/stage hand. The text is from the Emily Dickinson poem with the same title. The work is in five Acts and each consists of a different snare drum solo, not all of which were composed by Aguilar. Section 1 of *Lo* is performed in Act One and Section 2 is performed in Act Five. There are two other snare drum solos from *The Noble Snare* that are included in the work: John Bergamo’s *Different Strokes* in Act Three and Alvin Lucier’s *Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective Surfaces* in Act Four.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> Gustavo Aguilar, email message from author, January 28, 2019.

<sup>255</sup> Gustavo Aguilar, email message from author, January 25, 2019.

<sup>256</sup> Gustavo Aguilar, email message from author, January 28, 2019.

<sup>257</sup> Gustavo Aguilar, email message from author, January 25, 2019.

***why not patterns?*, Brett William Dietz**

Brett William Dietz (b. 1972) is a percussionist and composer who is currently Associate Professor of Percussion at the Louisiana State University School of Music. He studied at Duquesne University, where he earned the degrees of B.M. in Percussion and M.M. in Composition/Theory. He received his D.M.A. from Northwestern University in 2004. He studied percussion with Jack DiIanni, Andrew Reamer, Stanley Leonard, and Michael Burritt, and composition with Joseph W. Jenkins, David Stock, and Jay Alan Yim.<sup>258</sup>

Dietz travels internationally as an active performer and clinician. He performs both as a soloist and with his percussion ensemble, Tempus Fugit Percussion Ensemble.<sup>259</sup> As a composer, he has written music in a variety of genres, including orchestra, wind ensemble, chamber ensembles of various configuration, solo, and electronic music. In 2006, Dietz published a set of twelve snare drum solos in a collection titled *Spin Cycle: 12 Pieces for Solo Snare Drum*. In referring to this collection, Dietz says, “These twelve pieces are a written commitment to my first instrument – the snare drum. For many years, I felt that solo pieces for the snare drum were too limited. After writing works for orchestra and wind ensemble, as well as smaller chamber pieces and solos for other instruments, I came to a point that I felt confident enough to compose something for single rhythmic lines – appropriate for snare drum.”<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> “Biography,” Brett William Dietz, accessed January 14, 2019, <http://www.brettwilliamdietz.net/bio.html>.

<sup>259</sup> Brett William Dietz, “Biography.”

<sup>260</sup> “Books,” Brett William Dietz, accessed January 14, 2019, <http://www.brettwilliamdietz.net/books.html>.

*why not patterns?* was composed in 2014 for the second edition of volume three of *The Noble Snare* series. The piece is made up of patterns of constant eighth and sixteenth notes that are grouped into phrases which are each repeated once. Dietz says that, in writing the piece, he first created patterns of time signatures and rhythms. They were composed independently of one another, though related in their style and strict use of eighth and sixteenth notes. After the rhythmic patterns were established, Dietz added ornaments (buzz strokes with one hand, diddles, and rim shots) and dynamics (a single dynamic marking for each repeated phrase).<sup>261</sup>

The title, *why not patterns?*, comes from the piece's use of repeated patterns and is a play on the title of Morton Feldman's 1978 trio for flute, glockenspiel, and piano, *Why Patterns?* Dietz says that he loves Feldman's music, "so it seems an appropriate title, but besides that it has nothing to do with his piece."<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Brett William Dietz, email message from author, January 18, 2019.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

## CD Recordings of Recitals

### Recital #1 – Track Listings

1.	Introduction to <i>The Noble Snare</i> .....	1:54
2.	<i>The Noble Snare</i> (1987)..... STUART SAUNDERS SMITH (b. 1948)	4:02
3.	Introduction to <i>Palindromes</i> .....	1:27
4.	<i>Palindromes</i> (1987) .....	3:39
	BEN JOHNSTON (b. 1926)	
5.	<i>Dark Wood</i> (2008) .....	4:34
	PAUL ELWOOD (b. 1958)	
6.	Introduction to <i>Full Circle</i> .....	0:46
7.	<i>Full Circle</i> (1987) .....	3:52
	DAVID MACBRIDE (1950-2018)	
8.	<i>Blazer</i> (1987) .....	3:37
	BARNEY CHILDS (1926-2000)	
9.	Introduction to <i>Just Seven for Drum and What the Snare Drum Tells Me</i> .....	2:53
10.	<i>Just Seven for Drum</i> (1987) .....	4:27
	HERBERT BRÜN (1918-2000)	
11.	<i>What the Snare Drum Tells Me</i> (1987).....	2:23
	ALLEN OTTE (b. 1950)	
12.	Introduction to <i>Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum</i> .....	2:45
13.	<i>Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum</i> (1987) .....	8:16
	JOHN CAGE (1912-1992)	
14.	<i>VIVA LA CASSA!</i> (2013).....	3:08
	MARTA PTASZYNSKA (b. 1943)	

## Recital #2 – Track Listings

1.	<i>Jongo</i> (1988)..... SIEGFRIED FINK (1928-2006)	2:51
2.	Introduction to <i>Peeping Tom</i> .....	1:14
3.	<i>Peeping Tom</i> (1988)..... DAN SENN (b. 1951)	4:52
4.	<i>Transparent Wave</i> (1988) .....	2:26
	THOMAS DELIO (b. 1951)	
5.	Introduction to <i>Amazonia Dreaming</i> .....	0:43
6.	<i>Amazonia Dreaming</i> (1988)..... ANNEA LOCKWOOD (b. 1939)	5:14
7.	<i>Brushwork</i> (2014) .....	2:27
	DREW KRAUSE (b. 1960)	
8.	Introduction to <i>Exercise 26 (Snare Drum Peace March)</i> .....	1:16
9.	<i>Exercise 26 (Snare Drum Peace March)</i> (1988) .....	4:22
	CHRISTIAN WOLFF (b. 1934)	
10.	<i>A Head to Rest</i> (2014)..... MATTHEW BURKE (b. 1987)	2:09
11.	Introduction to <i>Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective Surfaces</i> .....	1:16
12.	<i>Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and One or More Reflective Surfaces</i> (1990) .....	7:07
	ALVIN LUCIER (b. 1931)	
13.	Introduction to <i>Non-Contradiction</i> .....	0:23
14.	<i>Non-Contradiction</i> (2014) .....	2:30
	JASON BAKER (b. 1976)	

## Recital #3 – Track Listings

1.	Introduction to <i>2 for 1</i> .....	1:54
2.	<i>2 for 1</i> (1988) .....	4:36
	RALPH SHAPEY (1921-2002)	
	I.	
	II.	
3.	<i>Scrape Rim Skin</i> (1990) .....	2:24
	SALVATORE MARTIRANO (1927-1995)	
4.	Introduction to <i>Exercise 27 (Second Snare Drum Peace March)</i> .....	1:23
5.	<i>Exercise 27 (Second Snare Drum Peace March)</i> (1988).....	4:38
	CHRISTIAN WOLFF (b. 1934)	
6.	Introduction to <i>Kerberos</i> .....	0:23
7.	<i>Kerberos</i> (1990).....	5:35
	SYDNEY HODKINSON (b. 1934)	
8.	<i>tapping points</i> (2010).....	1:24
	ROGER ZAHAB (b. 1957)	
9.	<i>Different Strokes</i> (1988).....	1:23
	JOHN BERGAMO (1940-2013)	
10.	Introduction to “ <i>scraps of echos...</i> ” .....	0:42
11.	“ <i>scraps of echos...</i> ” (1988) .....	4:41
	JOHN WELSH (1955-2012)	
12.	Introduction to <i>A Minute of News</i> .....	1:23
13.	<i>A Minute of News</i> (1990) .....	2:53
	EUGENE NOVOTNEY (b. 1960)	
14.	Introduction to <i>Lo</i> .....	0:53
15.	<i>Lo</i> (2014).....	6:13
	GUSTAVO AGUILAR (b. 1962)	
16.	<i>why not patterns?</i> (2014) .....	4:53
	BRETT WILLIAM DIETZ (b. 1972)	

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