



October 13, 2018

**Works by alumni of the Technology and Applied Composition
program at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music**

The **Technology and Applied Composition** program [TAC] dynamically bridges art and technology — This Alumni Series features collaborations with artists working in other media.

October 13, 2018 at 8 pm

Voyage — by Kyle Randall, performed by the Quartet (see notes*)

Garden of Light — by Daniel De Togni, performed by Daniel De Togni

Fuzzy Logic — by Costas Dafnis, (perf. Jessie Nucho, Chelsea Wong)

I Lost the Thread — by Jim ("Sky") Schuyler, (perf. by the Ensemble* with
Katie Lynn Baker, soprano) — Libretto by Zann Gill

Marsyas — by Costas Dafnis, (perf. Jessie Nucho, Jonathan Szin)

Anglaise — by Kyle Randall, (perf. Chelsea Wong)

Ockeghem's Razor — by Costas Dafnis, (perf. Chelsea Wong, Maria van
der Sloot, Evan Kahn)

— INTERMISSION (about 10 minutes) —

Sarabande — by Kyle Randall (perf. Chelsea Wong)

WinterPlay — by Jim ("Sky") Schuyler (perf. The Quartet*)

Gavotte for string quartet — by Kyle Randall (perf. The Quartet*)

—Please remain in your seat during a short scene change—

Bones — Khala Brannigan, choreographer

Dancers — Khala Brannigan, Claire Fisher, Katie Meyers, Nathaniel
Moore

Music — **Rumors and Evidence** by Jim ("Sky") Schuyler (Ensemble)
Unlikely by Daria Novo (with Anna Aistova, soprano)
Weather Veins by Costas Dafnis (with Evan Kahn, cello)

Program notes

Voyage — Kyle Randall

This standalone piece for string quartet explores a sense of movement across long distances, especially when relating to travel and exploration. Images of travel across landscapes and voyages of discovery at sea came to mind frequently as I wrote it, and hopefully it evokes a little of the wanderlust that lives inside all of us.

Garden of Light — Daniel De Togni

Garden of Light was inspired by Japanese gardens and finding stillness and peace in an otherwise chaotic world. It aims to emulate the beauty of sitting in a beautiful garden in Kyoto, Japan, alone in the music of the trees and one's own mind.

Fuzzy Logic — Costas Dafnis

Wikipedia defines fuzzy logic as a form of many-valued logic in which the truth values of variables may be any real number between 0 and 1, employed to handle the concept of partial truth where the truth value may range between completely true and completely false. Structurally a coloristic sonatina for flute and piano, *Fuzzy Logic* finds degrees of partial truth between harmonic values and melodic repetition.

I Lost the Thread — Jim (“Sky”) Schuyler

Ariadne is a young tech entrepreneur. After meeting Theseus, a VP of Sales who is “on a mission to change the world” they weave a complex fabric of Sex and Money, culminating in a quest to rid the world of the monstrous Minotaur, a half-human beast imprisoned in the Vast Labyrinth. Ariadne suggests to Theseus that he enter the Labyrinth trailing a thread behind him, so that after defeating the Minotaur he will be able to find his way out. (Very much as a programmer might log her steps in finding and defeating a bug in code!) In this song, Ariadne laments that she has lost the thread of her own life.

The theme and words are based on a libretto by Zann Gill entitled *The End of the World as we Know It*. The backdrop, by Seana McNamara Oliver, is a wistful counterpoint to the music, connecting “the end of the world” with Ariadne’s disintegration of self and rebirth when she takes a metaphorical journey on an imagined beast meandering

through old, interlocking tree roots and branches in a mythical world. Trees ignite, and the scene closes in an ashy, fiery forest.

I waited alone
and tried to find
what I came for,
the voice I left behind.

but when I lost the thread,
I dropped the map and
ceased to believe in
where the path led.

I followed the norm.
I tried to conform —

Caught in cliché,
trapped by the tomorrow
that I fashioned yesterday.

Do you think the world could end without our noticing? You might meet your fate and not know. The tragedy is you may know your fate and be unable to avoid it — To know the world will end and you can't do anything at all to prevent it.

Marsyas — Costas Dafnis

The aulos was a double-reeded ancient Greek wind instrument famously played in mythology by the satyr Marsyas. There are two stories, the first that Marsyas came across an aulos which Athena had discarded after the Olympians mocked her embouchure, and the other recounting a competition of musical mastery which pit his aulos against Apollo's lute. Most stories agree and end in Marsyas' death, with more colorful accounts detailing his skin being nailed to the same pine trees from which his instrument was fashioned.

Though both linear and melodic, the piece is a short experiment in challenging symmetry. The winds simultaneously recount individual versions of Marsyas' story. To this end they are spaced to enhance both their points of narrative agreement and disagreement.

Anglaise — Kyle Randall

Anglaise is a short piece for piano that takes its name and rhythm from one of the less common and more stately Baroque dances. Lately, I have enjoyed looking at these old Baroque dance forms and seeing what they can turn into when written with an openness to our updated musical vocabularies for harmony and phrasing. Each dance form has a definite but malleable character, and it is a lot of fun to see where that character takes the compositional process when freed from the tradition it came from.

Ockeghem's Razor — Costas Dafnis

In 2015 I wrote for an experimental film project that paired over an hour of early Franco-Flemish choral music with disturbing visuals. On a strict deadline and often writing late into the night, I began to associate Burgundian cadential loops and fragments of 15th Century chansons with dark imagery of knives, fire and archaic torture devices.

The musical sinew for *Ockeghem's Razor* is an original slow three-part motet that bears heavy sonic resemblance to those confluents. Fluid voice-leading is reassembled into angular leaps and spread wide across the instrumental colors obscuring but not obliterating the organic framework. Material, stretched and slashed from one section to another, is bound by larger structure more than immediate line. Lavish melodies are sheared to their own thin ghosts, but violence is never allowed to dominate the tonality. Instead, the final harmonies float pensively, often beautiful: quiet sanctuaries assuaging otherwise panoramic brutality.

Bones — Khala Brannigan

Bones reflects nature itself, accessing the innate wisdom and feminine intuition that lives within our bodies. This new work aims to identify the inner battles that prevent us from experiencing our wild selves. For me, bones are a symbol of death and rebirth - a research of the soul. Though we may not share the same personal histories in society, bones could symbolize the truth of equality - once we dig deeper, we find that we all share the same matter.

Rumors and Evidence — Jim ("Sky") Schuyler

Written for Zann Gill's libretto *The End of the World*, in this music the Sons of Procrustes play out the dance of id and superego. They represent driving primordial forces of nature as well as the shadowy social realm of hearsay and rumor. As used here in *Bones*, this music advances the narrative of inner battle.

Unlikely — Daria Novo

"It's unlikely you'll understand what I am talking about. Unlikely.

You will sit at the piano -
I will hide behind my books.
In every very note that you play -
My silence is hidden.
I don't want to ruin

The incomprehensible magic
Of your music.
With my breathing

Somewhere very far
It's easy for someone to not think about anybody,
You play the piano so hard that your fingers are bleeding.

Black key, white key;
My heart is growing into the piano.
There is no space for love in that varnished black body (piano)

Slowly, by a narrow margin
My loneliness is bribing and stalking me
With your music."

Weather Veins — Costas Dafnis

"You who travel with the wind..." — Khalil Gibran

While the bulk of the melodic material in *Weather Veins* is handled by the cello, the electronic component was generated in several stages. The most fun of these was recording aleatoric gestures performed on ukulele and upright bass by San Francisco-based Cynthia Lin and Colin Williams. The recurring weather vane "creak" is a rhythm-forced series of processed extended techniques on the bass.

Sarabande — Kyle Randall

Another short piece for piano based on a Baroque dance. The Sarabande is also slow and stately, but unlike the Anglaise it has a natural lilt and a certain mystery to its rhythm.

Gavotte — Kyle Randall

This piece for string quartet was originally written for piano, as another modern take on old dance forms. As one of the more sprightly Baroque dances, the Gavotte jumps and moves around with a light touch, and it loves to turn the rhythm inside out on itself.

WinterPlay — Jim ("Sky") Schuyler

This particular wintery reflection was written among the snowy peaks of the Sierra Nevada mountains, where weather changes quickly from sunny clear skies to blizzard conditions. Listen for sustained snowfall as well as daytime wintry fun.

The Composers

Costas Dafnis

Costas Dafnis — is a composer, conductor and sound artist based in Pacifica, CA. His published works are available through Walton/Hal Leonard and Noisi Paintr Music. For more information visit www.CostasDafnis.com

Daniel De Togni

Daniel De Togni — Born in St. Louis and raised an Arkansas native, Daniel De Togni is currently a composer living in the San Francisco Bay Area. His works have been performed in Japan, at the Hot Air Music Festival in San Francisco, New Music on the Point, as well as being performed throughout the United States.

Daniel's music cross-pollinates genres and styles, exploring sonic environments and the musical organisms that dwell in them. He creates moving listening experiences, constructed with rich, compelling musical architectures.

Daria Novo

Daria Novo earned her master's degree in choral conducting from the Saint Petersburg State Conservatory named after N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov in 2010. While studying at the Conservatory, she worked as a singer and arranger for the Saint-Petersburg Concert Choir conducted by Vladimir Begletsov, where she composed her first program of arrangements entitled *Forbidden Songs* (2008). Since 2013 Novo has held the position of orchestrator in residence for the St. Petersburg Theater of Musical Comedy. Daria Novo is the laureate of the Youth prize of St. Petersburg in the field of Art (2013).

She has worked as an orchestrator alongside many famous Russian film composers including Ivan Burlyaev (*Prizrak, Attraction*), Maksim Koshevarov (*Young Guard*), Dmitry Noskov (*Quackerz*), Michail Chertischev (*Barboskiny, Luntik*).

She completed the SFCM TAC Professional Studies Diploma in 2017 and currently is a TAC faculty member and pre-college teacher at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. She works and is a co-composer and sound designer with Dren McDonald on mobile games and

independent projects such as Cooking Dash, Gordon Ramsey Dash, Brainquake, and others.

Kyle Randall

Kyle C. Randall — Born and raised in the forests of New Hampshire, Kyle Randall is a composer, orchestrator, and sound artist who currently lives in San Francisco. His work often revolves around strong notions of color, motion, and landscape.

After completing a Masters in composition at the conservatory and a PSD in the TAC program, he went on to develop his career in many directions at once, from concert hall commissions to major video games to sound and music for podcasts. He recently held the composer-in-residence position for the Empire City Men's chorus, and won the American Prize for the Kyrie of his New Gothic Mass. He also sings in and co-conducts the Renaissance choral group, Tactus. More can be found online at www.KyleRandall.com

Jim ("Sky") Schuyler

James A. Schuyler, but call me "Sky" is a pianist turned computer scientist turned composer. At age 18 he had to decide between conservatory study with his teacher Kurt Wanieck (American Conservatory of Music, Chicago) and a career in engineering. His PhD from Northwestern University was one of the earliest granted by its first department of computer science. He has founded several software companies. He recently returned to music, earning a Professional Studies Diploma in Technology and Applied Composition at SFCM in 2016.

Collaborators & Performers

(in order of appearance)

The Quartet

Maria van der Sloot, violin

Canadian violinist Maria van der Sloot enjoys a diverse career as a chamber musician, orchestral player, and educator. She received her

Bachelor of Music from the New England Conservatory and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in chamber music at SFCM.

Sam Weiser, violin

Samuel Weiser is a student currently pursuing a masters degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in Chamber Music performance, studying with Ian Swensen. He graduated from Tufts University with a degree in Computer Science and the New England Conservatory with a degree in Violin Performance. His past teachers include Patinka Kopec, James Buswell, and Lucy Chapman.

Justine Preston, viola

Justine Preston is a violist, arranger, and educator based in San Francisco. Justine's passion for performance and education motivates her to perform regularly with local and touring ensembles as well as maintaining a studio of over 40 violin and viola students.

Evan Kahn, cello

A native of Los Angeles, cellist Evan Kahn has been praised as "a cellist deserved of serious listening" for bringing his "electrifying ... nuanced and colorful" style to all of his collaborations, from concerti to chamber music to contemporary performances. Evan holds principal positions in four orchestras — principal cello in Symphony Silicon Valley, acting principal cello in Opera San Jose, and assistant principal cello in San Jose Chamber Orchestra and West Bay Opera. He received a Master's in Chamber Music at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying with Jennifer Culp, and graduated with college and university honors from Carnegie Mellon University, studying with David Premo. His cello was made by Italian luthier Carlo Carletti, c. 1900, with a Belgian bow by Pierre Guillaume.

The Ensemble (includes The Quartet, above)

Chelsea Wong, piano

An active advocate of contemporary music, Hong Kong native Tin Yi Wong (Chelsea) premiered composer Ilya Demutsky's "Skomoroshina", a work commissioned through the SFCM Hoefer Prize and choreographed and performed at SF Ballet; she is also one of the original members of Mouthscape Choir from SFCM. Locally, she has worked with such notable pianists as Leon Fleisher, Jerome Lowenthal, and Garrick Ohlsson. A versatile pianist, she is fluent in "free

improvisation," has hosted an Airbnb concert "Piano Parlor", and invented the Harmonic Capo to expand the instrument's potential on extended technique.

Jessie Nucho, flute

San Francisco-based flutist Jessie Nucho is passionate about sharing both traditional and contemporary music as a chamber musician, soloist, and educator. She performs regularly with Wild Rumpus, Ensemble Mik Nawooj, and the After Everything new music collective, and she is a founding member of Siroko Duo, a flute duo dedicated to commissioning and performing new works in creative spaces. Jessie holds an MM from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Tim Day. Previous instructors include Alberto Almarza and Jeanne Baxtresser at Carnegie Mellon University.

Jonathan Szin, clarinet

Bay Area clarinetist Jonathan Szin has performed with the Monterey Symphony, Santa Cruz Symphony, Merced Symphony, Symphony Napa Valley, Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Magik*Magik Orchestra, Opera Parallèle, Mercury Soul, Amaranth Quartet and Elevate Ensemble, in addition to performing as an active chamber musician. Most recently, Jonathan is also a co-director/clarinetist of Nomad Session, the Bay Area's first wind and brass octet. He holds a Master of Music degree in clarinet performance from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Jeffrey Anderle and was awarded Departmental Honors in clarinet and orchestral studies. Previous teachers include Luis Baez of the San Francisco Symphony and Dr. Margaret Thornhill.

Katie Lynn Baker, soprano

Soprano and music educator Katie Lynn Baker has performed and worked with Philharmonia Baroque, Musica Pacifica, New Esterhazy Quartet, Napa Valley Symphony, Berkeley Community Chamber Chorus, Vallejo Choral Society and Berkeley Symphony. Katie can be heard singing regularly with the Grammy Award-Winning San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Sunset Youth Orchestra and conducting the Star Valley and New Vision Children's Choirs..

Anna Aistova, soprano

Singer and vocal teacher Anna Aistova graduated from Rimsky Korsakov College of Music in 2016. Currently, she studies at SFCM and works in the field of music education. Anna is passionate about the synthesis of traditional classical music and the works of modern composers, and loves working on new projects.

Artistic Collaborators

Zann Gill, Book and Libretto for *The End of the World*

Zann Gill (M. Arch. Harvard) is the Founder of earthDECKS [Distributed Evolving Collaborative Knowledge Systems], which will soon launch, under fiscal sponsorship of The Ocean Foundation, its web and mobile app on ocean plastic.

Synopsis: *The End of the World* is an allegory of perverse consumption (sex & money), the military-industrial complex (engineers and puppeteers), and a mythic journey to the Minotaur – a wake-up call.

As Theseus and Ariadne taste the high life of "Sex" and "Money," dark forces are brewing. The Bed is the problem. Too much sex has been going on there. No one can sleep. But the Bed has been making lots of money for its inventor, Procrustes, who claims that one size fits all. Everyone seeks a scapegoat. The Sons of Procrustes arrive to stage a trial by fire. Actors resolve to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. At "the end of the world" they discard their disguise, throw their costumes into the flames and testify.

In the segment you'll see this evening, Ariadne has lost the thread that (in the myth) she gives to Theseus so he can slay the Minotaur and find his way back out of the labyrinth.

The music entitled *Rumors and Evidence*, used in the *Bones* dance tonight, is the theme for the Sons of Procrustes.

Seana McNamara Oliver, Art and Animation

Artist Seana McNamara Oliver is a native of both the Bay Area and Sydney Australia. She works across media, typically first via small pen and ink drawings that she collages into large digital works. She has a B.A. in Studio Art (Pomona College), received a Rembrandt Traveling Fellowship to study the works of Hieronymus Bosch, and the Mary Dew Art prize for best show (2010). In 2011, she exhibited at the Headquarters of the British Computer Society, London, the Peju Gallery, and later was a NASA Ames Research Center Visiting Artist.

Khala Brannigan, choreographer

Khala Brannigan, a native of Santa Fe, New Mexico began her training with Moving People Dance Theatre under the direction of Ronn Stewart and Layla Amis. Brannigan is a LINES Ballet Training Program alumna of 2011-2013 and since graduating, she founded Brannigan Dance Works. As a choreographer, Brannigan has formerly

collaborated with local opera singers, musicians, visual artists, video designers and more. Her work has been included in West Wave Dance Festival, Summer Performance Festival, San Francisco Dance Film Festival and SF International Arts Festival. She is currently on staff at Lines Ballet as a lead teaching artist for the outreach program and teens program, a GYROTONIC specialist, and yoga instructor. As a dancer, Brannigan has been working with Robert Moses' Kin since 2017.

Founded by Khala Brannigan in 2013, **Brannigan Dance Works** provides exhilarating live performance art that empowers emerging artists to share their cultural wisdom through their bodies. Fiscally sponsored by Intersection For The Arts, Brannigan Dance Works has made an appearance in over six different dance festivals presented at ODC Theatre, Z Space, Cowell Theatre, Joe Goode Annex, SAFEhouse Arts and San Francisco International Film Festival amongst emerging and established choreographers. In 2017, Brannigan Dance Works commissioned New York City choreographer Sidra Bell to set a new work on the company that culminated into a shared evening with a five piece jazz band. This year, Brannigan Dance Works is thrilled to be working with David Harvey, presenting work with the DanceWright Project, and honored to share this evening with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music

Christian Zamora, video

Christian Zamora is an inspiring creative who enjoys working with music and art — taking common things in life and give them new perspective. Christian also collaborates with small businesses to help tell their story to reach new audiences and help them grow through social media. "For this piece I felt there were two themes and wanted to convey them with natural and industrial imagery. Even though there are two different environments, there still is a commonality between them."

Dancers

Katie Meyers

Katie Meyers is a freelance dance artist based in the Bay Area. She is currently working with Brannigan Dance Works, Alex Ketley's The Foundry, and Katie Florez's Fullstop Dance. She received her training from the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance under the direction of Summer Lee Rhatigan. She has also had the great pleasure of performing in Israel, Germany, Portland, Oregon, Seattle, Washington,

Salt Lake City, Utah, Chicago, Illinois, and Los Angeles, California.
Katie joined Brannigan Dance Works in 2017.

Claire Fisher

Claire Fisher grew up in Tracy, California. She received a majority of her training from Alonzo King LINES Ballet, San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, & Northwest Dance Project. Residing in San Francisco, Claire is currently a freelance dancer and has appeared with dazaun.dance, TWObigsteps and The MoveMessenger(s). Claire joined Brannigan Dance Works in 2013.

Nathaniel Moore

Nathaniel Moore grew up in Corpus Christi, Texas where he began dancing at age 17. He received training at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and The San Francisco Conservatory of Dance. Nathaniel has performed professionally in the United States, Canada, and Germany. He's performed most recently with Keith Hennessy/Circo Zero(SF) , Shannon Gillen/Vim Vigor(NY), and Khala Brannigan of Brannigan Dance Works. Nathaniel also creates his own work presenting material at Levy dance, Safehouse, and next year the Joe Goode Annex.



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You may help financially support tonight's performance at WritingMusic.org — all donations go directly to fund the performers.

skyHi Digital: Tonight's works-in-progress event was produced by skyHi Digital, Inc. Online at www.skyhi.digital

Daria Novo coordinated logistics, sound, recording and engineering for tonight's performance, and is our conductor for several numbers.

Evan D. Kahn was our musician coordinator for the event.

Costas Dafnis serves as music director.