



EUGENE SYMPHONY

Composition Master Class Angélica Negrón, Composer-in-Residence Thursday, February 16, 2023

Faculty Mentor: Jeffrey Stolet, Professor of Music, Director of Music Technology

Program Notes

Mei-Ling Lee, *Golden Slumbers*

For four-channel audio, voice, custom sensor-based performance interface, and custom software created using Max, and Kyma.

Written for voice, a custom-made data-driven instrument, and Electronic Music, *Golden Slumbers* is dedicated to the memory of the victims of Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting that occurred on December 12, 2012, in Newton, Connecticut. During this incident, 20 children between the ages of six and seven years old, along with six adult staff and faculty, were killed.

The piece has three sections. In the first section, the names of the victims are heard suspended in the air, accompanied by bell sounds floating around in the same space. The second section's lyric is based on the Renaissance poem "Cradle Song", a lullaby from the 17th century dramatist Thomas Dekker's 1603 play *Patient Grissel*, written with Henry Chettle and William Haughton. The original poem contains two stanzas. Only the first stanza is used in this composition. Though 400 years old, this poem is memorably used by the Beatles as the lyrics for their song of the same name on their album *Abbey Road*.

Golden Slumbers (first stanza)- by Thomas Dekker

Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,
Smiles awake you when you rise;
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby,
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

The third and final section is a traditional Taiwanese lullaby that describes a mother rocking her baby to sleep.

搖嬰仔歌 The Lullaby (Cradle Songs)

嬰仔嬰嬰睏，一暝大一寸； Sleepy baby, growing one inch a night;
嬰仔嬰嬰惜，一暝大一尺， Sweet baby, growing one foot a night;
搖子日落山，抱子金看， Rock the baby until sunset, staring at the baby in my arms,
你是我心肝，驚你受風寒。 You are my sweetheart, worry you will get cold.

With a custom made data-driven instrument, this composition also uses the dataset from the Gun Violence Archive database, incorporating a technique of data sonification. In the third movement, a low bass drum sound is heard, each drum beat representing a mass shooting occurrence from 1986 until today.

Sunhuimei Xia, *Vanishing in Winds*

for Gametrak controller, Max, and Kyma

Vanishing in Winds is dedicated to Wuhan in the year 2020. The reading of the first half of the poem Yellow Crane Tower formed the primary musical material, together with the sound of ancient musical instruments, the bianzhong, and guqin, which are the perfect representatives of the sounds of Wuhan with their historical meanings. The prototypes and deformations of these sounds create a majestic scene as if one is on the Yellow Crane Tower overlooking the endless Yangtze River with the mountains, along with the visual scene of the three towns in Wuhan. The Gametrak controller is used as the performance interface for the composition.

Zachary Boyt, *Virtualability*

for Oculus Quest VR System, Unity, Max, and Kyma

Virtualability strives to cross the inherent internal/external boundaries of a virtual reality environment. The experience of a virtual reality device can often be inspiring and provocative, but is frequently limited to an audience of one, and shared only with others utilizing a similar device. This piece is an attempt to shift this experience into the context of a staged musical performance, providing a shared experience between the performer and audience in the visual and auditory domains.

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