

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHARLOTTE
COLLEGE OF ARTS + ARCHITECTURE

The Department of Music presents

Percussion Ensemble

Rick Dior, director

Equal Fire

Paul Bissell

Rancho Jubilee (for 3 Cajons)

Andrew Beall

Ryan Comley, John Pickett, and Jon Phipps, Cajons

Minuano 6/8

Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays
arr. Robert Curnow

Jon Phipps, vibraphone solo

Letter From Home

Pat Metheny
arr. Andrew Beall

Dylan Hatley, vibraphone solo

First Circle

Pat Metheny
arr. Andrew Beall

Suite for Solo Drum Set and Percussion Ensemble

David Mancini

John Pickett, solo drum set

Anne R. Belk Theater
Robinson Hall for the Performing Arts
Sunday May 1, 2022 | 2 pm
coaa.charlotte.edu

Program Notes

Equal Fire was the first of a series of “pure energy” percussion ensembles I wrote in the early 1990's. The piece is a reflection of the belief that all rhythms and rhythmic pulses exist at any time. Musicians who acknowledge and understand their presence can tap into these “streams” and use them much as a high-flying plane can use the jet stream. Equal fire begins rooted in the 16th note steam and uses the whip and woodblock in the beginning as a disrupter to force the performers into a separate stream (usually the quarter note triplet). Sometimes the disrupter causes a pattern played between two players to reverse itself. Sometimes, the hole into the new stream only lasts a few seconds before fading, other times it stays open and adds fuel to a different rhythmic stream. It is this alternation of streams which equal fire exploits.

- Paul Bissell, composer

Rancho Jubilee is a trio for three Cajons. A **Cajon** is a box-shaped percussion instrument that originated in Peru and is commonly used in Spanish Flamenco music. The instrument is made from plywood with the front playing area constructed with thinner material while the sides and back are thicker (more plies) and has a rear facing sound hole similar to that of an acoustic guitar. The instrument is usually performed with the player sitting on top of it with the sound hole facing the rear. Sometimes metal snares are employed within the instrument to add a percussive buzzing effect. There are many performance techniques including slaps, knocks, slides, scrapes and palm strokes played with the hands, palms and fingers. The feet (heels) are also used to play the instrument as well as floor stomping and scraping. This composition takes advantages of all of these techniques and features several solo passages for each performer.

Minuano 6/8 was originally recorded on the Pat Metheny Group album *Still Life* (talking). The composition is written in AABA form and moves between 6/8 and $\frac{3}{4}$ meters seamlessly. Minuano floats on a bed of cymbal, and shaker percussion rhythms as many Metheny compositions do. In this arrangement the original wordless vocal lines are reproduced with the vibraphone and the guitar parts are played by several marimbas. There is an improvisation section that is played by the vibraphone and a challenging interlude performed by the entire ensemble.

Letter from Home was originally composed as a solo acoustic guitar piece and is the title track from the Pat Metheny recording of the same name. Here the guitar parts are recreated by solo vibraphone while the keyboard and synthesizer parts are recreated by the marimbas and glockenspiel.

First Circle is the title track from the Grammy Award winning album of the same name released in 1984. The piece alternates between 6/4 and 5/4 meters and features the entire percussion ensemble. It is an extremely rhythmically complex composition and listeners will be hard pressed to find the pulse so it's best to just enjoy the flow. Floating rhythms sit on a bed of handclaps, beautiful harmonies and ostinatos, all prominent features of Metheny's writing. This arrangement was originally written for the Carolina Crown Drum Corps for a DCI percussion ensemble competition, which they won in 2003.

Suite for Solo Drum Set and Percussion Ensemble employs the rhythms of Brazil, Cuba and Africa in a modern Jazz setting. As the title implies it is a feature for a talented drum set performer who is well versed in all of these styles. Each section represents a separate rhythmic style. These include Samba (Brazilian) Nanigo (Afro-Cuban) and Jazz/Funk (America). The piece was composed in 1988 and is dedicated to Ernest Muzquiz and the Syracuse University Percussion Ensemble.

Percussion Ensemble Personnel

Ryan Comley

Caleb Hargrove

Dylan Hatley

Alex Johnson

Matt Magistro

Jonathan Phipps

John Pickett

Trey Snyder

Justin Tharp

About the Director

Rick Dior is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music where he studied with renowned timpanist Fred Hinger and jazz composer Bob Mintzer. He also studied extensively with famed jazz drummer Joe Morello. Rick has performed as a percussionist and drummer with some of the greatest artists in the music industry including James Taylor, Aretha Franklin, Roberta Flack, Ray Charles, Bobby McFerrin, Al Jarreau, Marvin Hamlisch, BeBe Winans and Martina McBride. He has added his jazz drum set talents to performances with many great jazz artists including Marvin Stamm, Bill Watrous, Clark Terry, Red Rodney, Chris Potter, Russell Malone and Lionel Hampton. Some of these performances have taken place with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, which he has performed with since 1990 as principal percussionist, section percussionist and timpanist. Rick's recording credits are extensive and include movie soundtracks, CD releases and commercial radio and television spots. As a first call percussionist in Charlotte, Rick has performed in dozens of Broadway show tours. Some of the most recent are *Beautiful*, *Wicked*, *The Producers*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Spamalot*, *Hairspray*, *South Pacific*, *West Side Story* and *Mary Poppins*.

Rick has served as the Professor of Percussion at UNC Charlotte since 2001. He also maintains an active private teaching studio. His private students have gone on to attend UNC Charlotte as well as many other prestigious music institutions such as The Julliard School of Music, The Manhattan School of Music, The Eastman School of Music, North Texas State University, the Oberlin School of Music and The University of Miami. Many of these students are active as professional musicians and educators.

As a composer Rick has written many compositions and arrangements for Classical, Jazz and Latin ensembles. In 2018 Rick was commissioned to orchestrate his composition *Science Fiction* for a European tour of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, widely considered to be the finest youth orchestra in the world. He is the author of several percussion books including the acclaimed *Advanced Coordination for Drum Set and Hand Percussion*. Rick's books and compositions are published by Tap Space. He is also an artist for Vic Firth Drumsticks, Mike Balter Mallets, Paiste Cymbals, and Doc Sweeney Drums.

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College of Arts + Architecture

Upcoming Events

MAY

University Chorale

Mon May 2 | 7:30 pm
Anne R. Belk Theater

Women's & Men's Choirs

Tue May 3 | 7:30 pm (W) & 8:30 pm (M)
Anne R. Belk Theater