

IOWA

School of Music



CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC

COMPOSERS WORKSHOP IV

Sunday, April 26, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Concert Hall, Voxman Music Building

PROGRAM

SUSPENSE

Florence He-Yu (2006)

Liv Leman, *clarinet*

DANCE OF THE MAIDENS FOR TWO PERCUSSIONISTS

Innocent Okechukwu (b. 1988)

Shaun A. Everson, *percussion 1*

Avia R. Chopskie, *percussion 2*

PRELUDE (ROCKS SPARKLE BECAUSE THEY BREAK THE LIGHT)

Lucy Shirley (b. 1997)

Canlin Qiu, *piano and electronics*

**HALLOWED GROUND I & II FOR
HORN AND TROMBONE**

Innocent Okechukwu

Matheus Silva De Souza, *horn*
Omar H. Elmusa, *trombone*

**“FRAGMENT 18 (POLYTEMPIC
CANON 5:3; LASSUS MORPHING
INTO TREBOR)”**

Kyle Quarles (b. 1989)

Kyle Quarles, *baritone*
Lucy Shirley, *soprano*

ZIG-ZAG FOR CELLO & PIANO

Innocent Okechukwu

Chris Mendez, *cello*
Thomas T. Morris, *piano*

CONCERTO FOR BASS TROMBONE

Brett Tomkins (b. 2006)

I. Lento

II. Adagio

III. Allegro Moderato

Xiaoyu Lui, *bass trombone*

Ana Yam, *piano*

DANCE OF THE MAIDENS FOR TWO PERCUSSIONISTS

Dance of the Maidens is my first work written exclusively for percussion. In composing it, I became fascinated by percussionists' ability to move between many instruments while maintaining rhythmic precision and musical continuity. The piece explores this interplay of timing, coordination, and timbral contrast, allowing the performers to navigate a wide palette of sounds—from the resonance of the marimba to the sharp articulations of drums and metallic percussion. The title reflects my African roots, where percussion and dance are deeply interconnected. In many African traditions, rhythm is inseparable from movement, guiding dancers' gestures and shaping communal expression. Inspired by this connection, the work unfolds as an imagined dance, where shifting rhythms and colors evoke motion, ritual, and celebration.

PRELUDE (ROCKS SPARKLE BECAUSE THEY BREAK THE LIGHT)

A precious stone is only considered valuable

due to imperfections created by pressure and time. So much meaning is given to expensive rocks in the context of relationships when the rocks themselves only sparkle because of the way they refract, or seemingly “break,” light. Prelude (Rocks Sparkle Because They Break the Light) explores the idea of precious stones and the fragile crystallization of a relationship in the form of shattered slivers of sound. Short fragments introduced by the piano are deconstructed through granular synthesis until they become so numerous as to meld into a melodic interlude. This togetherness doesn’t last long, and the fragments begin to break off again until they finally shatter apart under pressure

HALLOWED GROUND I & II FOR HORN AND TROMBONE

Hallowed Ground is a two-movement work for horn and trombone that reflects on space as both a physical and symbolic site—one shaped by memory, presence, and quiet reverence. The pairing of these two brass instruments allows for a rich exploration of resonance, blending, and contrast, as their voices move between unity and individuality.

Across its two movements, the piece unfolds through a careful balance of sustained sonorities and more articulated gestures. The horn and trombone engage in a dialogue that alternates between moments of stillness and passages of increased intensity, creating a sense of breath and expansion. Their combined timbral depth evokes a grounded, almost ritualistic atmosphere, while subtle shifts in harmony and texture suggest transformation over time.

“FRAGMENT 18 (POLYTEMPIC CANON 5:3; LASSUS MORPHING INTO TREBOR)”

This piece begins with an incipit which recalls the style of the *Cantiones Duum Vocum* by Orlando de Lassus, and then morphs into something more reminiscent of Trebor, specifically his ballade “*Helas pitié envers moy dort si fort*”. The baritone melody is an exact copy of the soprano, but slower by three-fifths, hence ‘polytempic’. Like other compositions from the Renaissance and Medieval periods, this piece is polytextual. The soprano’s text is from Lassus, and the baritone’s is from Trebor. I tried to capture the languid

freedom and strikingly hollow cadences of Trebor, while retaining some of the structural features of a typical Lassus duo. The contrapuntal style sticks close to late medieval practice, with some extensions, or jokes, depending on your ear.

Lassus text:

Sicut rosa inter spinas illas adit speciem, sic renustat suam Virgo Maria progeniem, genuit enim florem, qui vitalem dat odorem.

Translation:

As the rose among thorns adds beauty to them, so the Virgin Mary reveals her offspring, for she has sprouted the flower that gives the fragrance of life.

Trebor text:

Helas! pitié envers moy dort si fort
que je ne stay se je sui mort ou vis.
Dangier, Refus, Desdaing sont d'un acort.
encontre moy pour me grever tourdis.

Translation:

Alas! Pity for me sleeps so strongly
that I know not whether I am dead or alive.
Resistance, Refusal, Disdain are of one accord

against me in order to torment me

ZIG-ZAG FOR CELLO & PIANO

I wrote this viola romance for my cat Zig-zag when he turned one year old, but I was not able to find a violist to perform it, and so I had to arrange it for the cello. Zig-Zag is a unique, happy, cheerful, spontaneous, healthy cat. I thought about an instrument of exceptional quality to express my inner feelings which I have for my cat, and I finally settled for the viola. The viola is unique because it uses Alto clef, while most other instruments settle for Treble and Bass. The viola has a well-rounded timbre that does not distract but compels the listener. Recently, I have grown to love the sound of the cello even more, it is warm and comforting. This piece is in the Rondo form of (ABACA). The B and C take the listener to another world and leave them there, only for the listener to find their way back at the recap of A.

CONCERTO FOR BASS TROMBONE

This concerto, written for Xiaoyu Liu in February of 2026, takes a listener through all aspects of the bass trombone as a solo instrument. With a heavy and harsh first movement, a beautiful flowing middle movement, and a rather humor-

ous finale, this piece attempts to add to the rather new and underappreciated repertoire for the bass trombone.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For the most current listing of concerts, recitals, and other School of Music events, visit the events calendar.

EVENTS CALENDAR 