



THE COLLEGE  
MUSIC SOCIETY

SIXTY-FOURTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**SHOWCASE CONCERT I:  
CMS PERFORMERS  
& COMPOSERS**

Shawn Okpebholo • Concert Manager

Thursday, October 7, 2021  
1:30 p.m.

Riverside Convention Center  
Grand Lilac Ballroom South  
Rochester, New York

# PROGRAM

## ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS:

### *Together While Apart* ..... Keane Southard (Eastman School of Music)

TBA, Bb clarinet; TBA, violin;  
TBA, viola; TBA, cello

*Together While Apart* for Clarinet and String Trio was written in June 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic and deals with physical separation and how the pandemic can be turned into an opportunity to feel more connected with each other in non-physical ways.

At the beginning, the four instruments are caught up in the hectic pre-pandemic world and the pressure to do everything and be everywhere at the same time. While they are connected in what they play, it is a fraught and fragile connection. Clearly, this way of being is unsustainable, and soon the instruments are forced to quarantine themselves and the players physically move themselves to different parts of the stage while the music reaches a breaking point.

Following the first silence of the piece, the instruments are now quarantined both physically and in musical space, with each limited to a different octave of pitch-space. After raging against these limits, they then resigned themselves to their circumstances and finally have a chance to reflect and breathe, enabling them to see that, while they are separated, they can still play together. In fact, the instruments decide to limit themselves beyond what was imposed upon them, using just four pitch-classes (E, F#, A#, B) but each in their own quarantined octave. As they connect their musical material, the music becomes more joyful as it brings them ever closer together despite still being physically apart, ending with the melodic idea in unison, representing the closest they can get while still quarantined.

### *Nocturne* ..... Krista Vázquez-Connelly (Lincoln, Nebraska)

Oscar Vázquez Medrano, piano

*Nocturne* was written for my then-fiancé, Oscar Vázquez Medrano, for inclusion in a recital that included a short cycle of nocturnes as a way of encapsulating the evolution of the genre. The other nocturnes, by John Field, Maria Szymanovska, and Chopin, were full of beautiful melodic lines and momentous harmonic movements. I took elements from these pieces—the use of the Neapolitan chord, modulation intervals, and so on—to craft a work that both connected with them while standing apart in its use of the Phrygian-Dorian scale and hybrid of melodic and rhythmic importance. Finally, there are Spanish influences in the beginning's dramatic build to the *moto perpetuo* and the mode, a nod to Oscar's love of performing Spanish music, which comprised part of the second half of his program. We jokingly call this the "city nocturne" because of its contrast with traditionally beautiful and slow nocturnes and how it gives the impression of a bustling night life.

## SHOWCASE PERFORMANCE:

#*tinycollections2020* ..... Alice JonesShadowboxing  
Starwater Taffy  
Sunshower  
The people could fly

David Cook (Millikin University), clarinet

Alice Jones is a flutist, composer, teacher, and administrator currently working as the Assistant Dean of Community Engagement and Career Services at the Juilliard School. Jones wrote *#tinycollections2020*, a set of four pieces for open instrumentation, in June 2020 to stay in touch with the musical community during the coronavirus pandemic, elevate BIPOC artists in the wake of George Floyd's murder, and support others through musical and financial means by making the scores available for free online and using her stimulus check and donations from anonymous sources to financially compensate anyone, especially BIPOC artists, that recorded one or more of these pieces.

"Shadowboxing", the most concise of the four pieces, draws its name from a training exercise used in boxing and other combat sports. Jones's marking "angry and gestural" implies her frustration and grief with the social condition of the United States in 2020. In "Starwater Taffy", flowing musical lines the markings of "husky and hazy" and "reluctant and languid" bring to mind the physical and mental fatigue associated with quarantining in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. In "Sunshower", Jones alternates lyrical music with driving rhythmic passages: the former conjures images of sunshine, while the latter suggests the playful falling of raindrops. "The people could fly" shares its title with a 1985 collection of American Black folktales retold by Virginia Hamilton. The titular tale tells the story of slaves in possession of magic words that enabled them to fly out of slavery and into freedom.

## ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS:

*Night Songs* ..... Jason A. Heald (Umpqua Community College)Ruth Ginelle Heald, mezzo-soprano  
Peter Argondizza, guitar

*Night Songs* is a setting of three poems by Korean poet Hwang Chin-i for mezzo-soprano and guitar. Hwang Chin-i (1520–1560), is the most legendary gisaeng of the Joseon Dynasty. She was noted for her exceptional beauty, charming quick wit, and extraordinary intellect. Due to her renowned assertive and independent nature, she has become a modern popular cultural icon of Korea.

*In Memoriam* ..... Mark Dal Porto (Eastern New Mexico University)Duo Encantada:  
Tracy Carr, oboe  
Mark Dal Porto, piano

*In Memoriam* for oboe and piano is a reflective, somber, yet hopeful piece in response to so many of the world's recent changes. The plaintive oboe line depicts the individual and the challenges so many of us have experienced. As the piece continues, there are more optimistic, heart-felt, and reflective moments. The conclusion is similar to the introspective opening and represents a nostalgic looking back and forward-looking hope, desire, and expectation that life and we will continue.

# PROGRAM

## *Through the Refining Fire* ..... Dominic Dousa (University of Texas at El Paso)

### II. Baptism

The Litany of the Dark People

Brian Downen, tenor  
James Logan, clarinet  
Stephen Nordstrom, viola  
Dominic Dousa, piano

*Through the Refining Fire* is a musical setting of works from the 1920's by three African American poets, two of whom are closely associated with the Harlem Renaissance. A tone of defiant confidence pervades the second song, a setting of Claude McKay's "Baptism," as the poet boldly proclaims in vivid language that he will emerge strong from the harsh struggles that face him. Countee Cullen's "The Litany of the Dark People" concludes the set of three songs with a reflection on the travails of the past and a noble, serene vision of victory for an oppressed people, poignantly marked with a spirit of honor and reconciliation. In its journey from steely conviction in the face of strife to the bliss of a heavenly conclusion, the set reflects the passage through a "refining fire" that yields shining gold.

## **Argondizza, Peter**

Guitarist Peter Argondizza earned a DMA from the Yale School of Music. He also studied classical guitar with Jerry Willard at Stonybrook University in New York and North Indian Classical Music at the Alam School of Indian Classical Music. At the University of Strathclyde, he was the Director of the B.A. in Applied Music Course and served as Artistic Director of the first annual guitar festival in Glasgow. He served at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland as the Acting Head of Creative and Contextual Studies. Peter has performed throughout the UK, Canada, and the United States, and has premiered works by Sally Beamish, Edward McGuire and Steven Davismoon.

## **Cook, David**

David Cook is Principal Clarinet of the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra and clarinetist for the Appian Duo and the Greyline Duo. Previously a member of the Wichita Symphony Orchestra, the Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra, Fiati Five, and the Lieurance Woodwind Quintet, David has also performed with the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, Heartland Festival Orchestra, Oklahoma City Philharmonic, Norman Philharmonic, and the Texas Music Festival Orchestra. David has commissioned and premiered new works from composers including David Maslanka, Pierre Jalbert, David Biedenbender, Whitney E. George, Cody W. Forrest, Cody Criswell, Garrett Gillingham, and Andy Francis.

Past performances include ClarinetFest®, The College Music Society's National Conference, the NACWPI Conference, the American Single Reed Summit, the Clarinet Colloquium at Texas A&M University-Commerce, and the KNOB New Music Festival. His research has been published in *The Clarinet*, the *NACWPI Journal*, and *The Instrumentalist*.

David is currently Assistant Professor of Clarinet and chair of instrumental performance studies at Millikin University and a clarinet faculty member at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. He holds degrees from Central Michigan University (BM performance, BME), the University of Michigan (MM performance, MM chamber music), and the University of Oklahoma (DMA performance, MM music theory). David's principal teachers include Suzanne Tirk, Chad Burrow, Theodore Oien, and Kennen White. David is a Buffet Crampon USA Performing Artist and a member of the Silverstein Works PRO Team. Today's appearance is supported in part by Buffet Crampon USA and Millikin University.

[[davidcookclarinet.com](http://davidcookclarinet.com)]

## **Dal Porto, Mark**

Dr. Mark Dal Porto has received numerous commissions with his works receiving hundreds of performances by many instrumental and vocal ensembles throughout the US and abroad. In 2019, he released *Peace, Nature & Renewal*, a CD featuring some of his orchestral, choral, and chamber works. In the most recent CODA (College Orchestra Director's Association) International Composition Contest, he was awarded first prize for his orchestral work *Song of Eternity*. He has also been given certificates of excellence in band, choral, orchestral, and chamber music composition from The American Prize organization.

Dal Porto serves on the faculty of Eastern New Mexico University as Professor of Music and Coordinator of Music Theory and Composition. In 2012, he received the ENMU Presidential Award in Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities. A former student of Donald Grantham, Dal Porto received degrees from California State University, Sacramento, and the University of Texas at Austin. He frequently serves as a guest composer, conductor, and pianist. [[markdalporto.com](http://markdalporto.com)]

# COMPOSERS & PERFORMERS

## **Dousa, Dominic**

Dominic Dousa, a native of Rochester, Minnesota, has been a member of the faculty at the University of Texas at El Paso Department of Music since 2004. He holds degrees in music from Ball State University (DA), Central Michigan University (MM), and Harvard University (AB summa cum laude), and in statistics from Iowa State University (MS), and has also studied composition in Prague. His primary composition teachers include Jody Nagel, David Gillingham, Craig Weston, and Milan Slavick .

Dousa's compositions have received performances at recitals, festivals, and conferences in the U.S. and in 11 countries worldwide. He has works published by TRN Music, Dorn Publications, Grand Mesa Music, and Leading-Tones Music. Blue Griffin Recording has released two CDs of Dousa's chamber music, including *A Musical Portrait of the American Southwest*, which features UTEP faculty Stephen Nordstrom on viola and Dousa at the piano. This recording has received critical acclaim in Gramophone Magazine and American Record Guide. [www.bluegriffin.com]

Dousa has remained active as an accompanist and chamber musician, performing in numerous recitals with faculty, guest artists, and students, including presentations with his fellow UTEP faculty member, world renowned cellist and 2017 Grammy-award winner Zuill Bailey.

## **Downen, Brian**

Tenor Brian Downen, clarinetist James Logan, and violinist/violist Stephen Nordstrom are members of the faculty at the Department of Music at the University of Texas at El Paso who have performed extensively on the national and international stage. Highlights include Prof. Downen's performances at the Metropolitan Opera and opera companies throughout the world; Dr. Logan's service as Associate Principal Clarinetist in the US Navy Band, with numerous appearances as soloist around the world; and Dr. Nordstrom's recording of chamber music for viola and piano *A Musical Portrait of the American Southwest*, which has received critical acclaim in *Gramophone* magazine and a Critics Choice award from the *American Record Guide*. Professors Downen, Logan, and Nordstrom maintain a full schedule of performance and teaching, and are active in professional organizations such as the National Association for Teachers of Singing, the International Clarinet Association, the American String Teachers Association, and The College Music Society.

## **Duo Encantada**

BIO PENDING

## **Heald, Jason A.**

Jason A. Heald currently serves as Director of Music at Umpqua Community College, and is an active composer, performer, educator, and clinician in the Pacific Northwest. He holds a PhD in composition from University of Oregon, a master's degree from University of Portland, and a bachelor's degree from Lewis and Clark College. Dr. Heald is a prolific composer, with works published by Augsburg Fortress, ChoralWeb, UNC Jazz Press, Plymouth Music, Sound Music Publishing, and Call of the Wild Publishing. Recent premiers and commissions include performances by the Oregon Musical Theatre Festival, Shreveport Opera, Vanguard Voices, Delgani Quartet, Consonare, Kantorei, The Singers—Minnesota Choral Artists, the Willamette Singers, and Halcyon Trio Oregon.

## **Heald, Ruth Ginelle**

Mezzo-soprano Ruth Ginelle Heald completed her undergraduate studies in vocal performance and music education at Willamette University and earned a Master of Music at Chicago College of Performing Arts. Operatic credits include Mrs. Soames in Ned Rorem's *Our Town* (Willamette Dramatic Vocal Arts), Featured Soloist in Purcell's *King Arthur* (CCPA), and the title role in *Carmen* (Willamette Dramatic Vocal Arts).

Ms. Heald has appeared as a soloist with Chicago Choral Artists (Vaughan Williams *Mass in G minor*), Portland Symphonic Choir (Rachmaninoff *All Night Vigil*), Umpqua Chamber Orchestra (Purcell *Dido and Aeneas*), and Willamette Master Chorus (Handel *Messiah*). Ms. Heald was the mezzo-soprano soloist in *New now next: 21st century music for voice and piano*, presented at the 2019 Central Region Conference of the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

**Logan, James**

see Downen, Brian

**Nordstrom, Stephen**

see Downen, Brian

**Southard, Keane**

Described as “a hugely prolific musician with a wide variety of skill sets” ([www.newmusicbuff.com](http://www.newmusicbuff.com)), Keane Southard (b. 1987) is a composer and pianist who believes deeply in the power of music to change how people think, feel, and act, and that it can be a catalyst for positive change in the world. His music has been described as “a terrific discovery” (*Bandworld Magazine*) and “highly-professional and well-orchestrated” (*Portland Press Herald*) and his works reflect his many diverse musical tastes, from medieval chant to 70’s rock, Bach to the Blues, and 19<sup>th</sup> century romanticism to Latin dance forms. He has been a recipient of many awards, most recently winning the Yale Glee Club’s Emerging Composers Competition and Capital Hearings Young Composers Competition, and has been a fellow at the Intimacy of Creativity (Hong Kong) and the Bennington Chamber Music Conference. Keane earned his MM at the University of Colorado-Boulder in composition and is currently a PhD student in composition at the Eastman School of Music. His composition teachers include Kenneth Girard, Loris Chobanian, Daniel Kellogg, Jeffrey Nytech, Carter Pann, Richard Toensing, Allen Shawn, Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, and David Liptak. Keane spent 2013 in Brazil as a Fulbright scholar studying music education.

**Vázquez-Connelly, Krista**

Krista Vázquez-Connelly is a composer of contemporary art music whose work canvasses solo, chamber, orchestra, wind band, chorus, jazz ensemble, and electronic media. She frequently takes inspiration from other art forms in her music and considers collaboration to be one of her primary aims in her creative work. Aside from compositional work, she currently works in audio editing and mixing for Arts Laureate and is the Director of Music Ministry at St. Michael Catholic Parish in Lincoln, Nebraska. Her career has also included teaching elementary music and at the collegiate level, teaching private lessons, arts management, and trumpet performance.

An avid traveler, she was a featured composer at Electronic Music Midwest 2019 and the 2019 SCI National Conference in Albuquerque. She was also a composer participant in Screen Music Program 2020, Sävellyspaja 2018, the Oregon Bach Festival Composers’ Symposium 2016, and Quatuor Bozzini Lab 2016. Her music has been played on Nebraska Public Media’s “Friday Live” and as part of soundtrack for their “What If…” documentary series.

Vázquez-Connelly holds a DMA in composition from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln with a secondary area of orchestral conducting. Raised in western Kansas, she attended Fort Hays State University for her undergraduate degrees in music education and trumpet performance and earned her MM in composition from Central Washington University.

**Vázquez Medrano, Oscar**

Oscar Vázquez Medrano was born in Mexico City, Mexico. At age 9, he began piano lessons with Gabriel Sierra Finke at Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (INBA, National Institute of Fine Arts) in Mexico City. At age 12, he began studies at the Musical Initiation Center (CIM) that belongs to The National Autonomous University of Mexico, and in 2007, he formally entered The National Autonomous University of Mexico, where he studied with acclaimed Mexican pianist Jesus Ma Figueroa. During this period, he not only performed throughout Mexico, but he also had his international debut with a series of concerts dedicated to Mexican and Spanish Music in the United States.

In 2016, Oscar moved to the USA to study at Kansas State University with the renowned Polish pianist Dr. Slawomir Dobrzanski. In 2018, he was awarded the 2018 Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Small Grant to travel to Hungary to conduct research about Franz Liszt. In the same year, Oscar gave his European debut in Bratislava, Slovakia by playing Mexican music. He is currently finishing his doctoral studies at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.



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