

## Ensemble and Guest Artist Concert:

2022-12-04 – Center for New Music and James Ogburn, guest composer



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# IOWA

School of Music



## **CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC**

Season 57, Concert 9

David Gompper, *director*

### **Center for New Music Concert II**

James Ogburn, *guest composer*

Sunday, December 4, 2022 at 7:30pm  
Voxman Music Building Concert Hall

**Season 57, Concert 9**  
The Center for New Music Concert II

**PROGRAM**

In Between (2022)

Eric NATHAN  
(b. 1983)

Grand Rounds (2018)

Shulamit RAN  
(b. 1949)

Tâmila Freitas de Souza, *flute*  
Lisa Ryoo, *oboe*  
Sayyod Mirzomurodov, *clarinets*  
Eugene Ryoo, *saxophones*  
Kristen Ronning, *horn*  
McKenna Blenk and Gabe Albertus, *percussion*  
Pam Weest-Carrasco, *harp*  
Craig Jordan, *piano*  
Junhong Zhou, *violin I*  
Michael Klyce, *violin II (Nathan)*  
ShengHo Wang, *violin II (Ran)*  
Fatima Gassama, *viola*  
Hanna Rumora, *violoncello*  
David Gompper, *conductor*

**INTERMISSION**

Ambidexterity (2016), for cello duet

James OGBURN  
(b. 1974)

Hanna Rumora & Josh DeVries, *violoncello*

Ambas (2022), for large ensemble

Sam YOUNG  
(b. 1975)

Tâmila Freitas de Souza, *flute*  
Lisa Ryoo, *oboe*  
Sayyod Mirzomurodov, *clarinet/bass clarinet*  
Carlos Manuel Lopez Soria, *bassoon*  
Kristen Ronning, *horn*  
Anna Kelly, *trumpet*  
Ethan Sherer, *trombone*  
McKenna Blenk and Peter Grubisich, *percussion*  
Junhong Zhou, *violin I*  
Ramel Price, *violin II*  
Fatima Gassama, *viola*  
Hanna Rumora, *violoncello*  
Natalia Terra, *double bass*  
David Gompper, *conductor*

# PROGRAM NOTES AND BIOGRAPHIES

## *In Between* (2022)

*In Between* (2022) for ensemble was born out of the unique collaborative and explorative workshop experience afforded by composing for the Grossman Ensemble at the University of Chicago Center for Contemporary Composition. The players invent rustling, feathery sounds, the conductor “paints” gesturally through the ensemble in a music filled with chorale-like singing, meditative stillness and intricately vibrant musical textures woven through it all.

The emotional inspiration for the work came from my standing in a forest near my house this fall on a late afternoon. As I stood there amidst the trees – these magisterial, quiet, monumental, and seemingly wise beings – I felt their imposing yet comforting presence, and listened to all the motion and movement that seemed to inhabit the “quiet” that surrounded me. It reminded me of a visit I made to my friend’s property in Vermont a few years prior, on an invitation to come and “meet” the trees that are so dear to him. He told me how at his age he now speaks with them and hoped they might speak to me. This has all been a starting point that unlocked my imagination in surprising ways, creating within and between spaces of stillness and activity and listening and singing.

*In Between* for ensemble was commissioned by the Chicago Center for Contemporary Composition for the Grossman Ensemble, and is dedicated to the Grossman Ensemble, conductor Timothy Weiss, and director and founder Augusta Read Thomas, with admiration and gratitude. – *Eric Nathan*



**Eric Nathan’s** (b. 1983) music has been called “as diverse as it is arresting” with a “constant vein of ingenuity and expressive depth” (San Francisco Chronicle), and “thoughtful and inventive” (The New Yorker). A 2013 Rome Prize Fellow and 2014 Guggenheim Fellow, Nathan has garnered acclaim internationally through performances by Andris Nelsons and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Scharoun Ensemble Berlin, Dawn Upshaw, Jennifer Koh, Stefan Jackiw, and Gloria Cheng. His music has been featured at the New

York Philharmonic’s 2014 and 2016 Biennials, Carnegie Hall, and the Aldeburgh, Tanglewood, and Aspen festivals.

Recent projects include three commissions from the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Opening (2021), co-commissioned by the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation at the Library of Congress, was premiered by the MSO and broadcast nationally on PBS. He has received commissions from the New York Philharmonic, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Barlow Endowment, Fromm Music Foundation, Tanglewood Music Center, and Aspen Music Festival, and has been honored with a Goddard Lieberson Fellowship and Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Nathan has completed residencies at Yellow Barn, Copland House, and American Academy in Rome, and is a 2022 Civitella Ranieri Foundation fellow.

Nathan's most recent album, *Missing Words*, was released in 2022 on New Focus Records. He serves as Associate Professor of Music at Brown University and is currently the New England Philharmonic's Composer-in-Residence. He received his doctorate from Cornell.

### *Grand Rounds* (2018)

At the beginning there is the blank page, the start of a compositional journey into the unknown. My first step as composer is to ask myself what are some of the "givens" to be confronted, usually pre-determined by the artist or group for whom the work is intended, and what are some parameters - you can call them "limits", or "rules of the game" - I will be setting for myself as the work's governing principles.

In the case of *Grand Rounds* the "givens" were, first and most significantly, a fixed sized mini-orchestra of 14 instrumentalists, as well as an approximate length of some 15 minutes (I think of it as the size of canvas I am to use).

Next, as I began composing, what gradually evolved (my "rules of the game") was an idea of a series of recurring musical organisms of diverse character and function that would be subjected to continuing variation as they appear at various junctures of the piece, gradually building into an organic whole.

Most prominent among these are: the opening - a simple, two-note motif that gently bounces between the piano and vibraphone as it expands gradually - this idea returns in a modified form to round off the work's loosely structured arch-form; a lyrical solo oboe line that reappears, modified, at several points of demarcation of the piece; and finally a colorful, extravagantly shaped 7-note descending figure that loops upon itself as it climbs back up, played by the piano in a series of flamboyant flourishes and surrounded by a battery of percussion instruments, with mallet instruments (such as vibraphone, xylophone, and crotales) dominant. This idea, permeating a significant portion of the work's important center section, repeats in a variety of forms numerous times at the most local level, returning in larger blocks as well. Moreover, it is this idea that creates further "orbits" that form their own "rounds" that peak independently, yet eventually cohere into a totality before bringing the work full circle and trailing off into the distance. -*Shulamit Ran*



**Shulamit Ran**, a native of Israel, began setting Hebrew poetry to music at the age of seven. By nine she was studying composition and piano with some of Israel's most noted musicians, including composers Alexander Boskovich and Paul Ben-Haim, and within a few years she was having her works performed by professional musicians and orchestras. As the recipient of scholarships from both the Mannes College of Music in New York and the America Israel Cultural Foundation, Ran continued her composition studies in the United States with Norman Dello-Joio. In 1973 she joined the faculty of University of Chicago, where she is now the Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professor in the

Department of Music. She lists her late colleague and friend Ralph Shapey, with whom she also studied in 1977, as an important mentor.

In addition to receiving the Pulitzer Prize in 1991, Ran has been awarded most major honors given to composers in the U.S., including two fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, grants and commissions from the Koussevitzky Foundation at the Library of Congress, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fromm Music Foundation, Chamber Music America, the American Academy and Institute for Arts and Letters, first prize in the Kennedy Center-Friedheim Awards competition for orchestral music, and many more.

Her music has been played by leading performing organizations including the Chicago Symphony under both Daniel Barenboim and Pierre Boulez, the Cleveland Orchestra under Christoph Von Dohnanyi in two U.S. tours, the Philadelphia Orchestra under Gary Bertini, the Israel Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta and Gustavo Dudamel, the New York Philharmonic, the American Composers Orchestra, The Orchestra of St. Luke's under Yehudi Menuhin, the Baltimore Symphony, the National Symphony (in Washington D.C.), Contempo (the Contemporary Chamber Players) at the University of Chicago under both Ralph Shapey and Cliff Colnot, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Jerusalem Orchestra, the vocal ensemble Chanticleer, and various others. Chamber and solo works are regularly performed by leading ensembles in the U.S. and elsewhere, and recent vocal and choral ensemble works have been receiving performances internationally.

Between 1990 and 1997 she was Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, having been appointed for that position by Maestro Daniel Barenboim as part of the Meet-The-Composer Orchestra Residencies Program. Between 1994 and 1997 she was also the fifth Brena and Lee Freeman Sr. Composer-in-Residence with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, where her residency culminated in the performance of her first opera, *Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk)*. She was the Paul Fromm Composer in Residence at the American Academy in Rome, September-December 2011.

Ran served as Music Director of "Tempus Fugit," the International Biennial for Contemporary Music in Israel in 1996, 1998 and 2000. Since 2002 she is Artistic Director of Contempo (Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Chicago). In 2010 she was the Howard Hanson Visiting Professor of Composition at Eastman School of Music. Shulamit Ran is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, where she was Vice President for Music for a 3-year term, and of the American Academy of Arts and Science. The recipient of five honorary doctorates, her works are published by Theodore Presser Company and by the Israeli Music Institute and recorded on more than a dozen different labels.

The recently completed *Glitter, Doom, Shards, Memory, String Quartet No. 3*, was commissioned by Music Accord, a consortium of concert presenters in the U.S. and abroad, for Pacifica Quartet, and will receive its first performance in June 2014 in Tokyo.

### *Ambidexterity* (2016)

I believe the most difficult thing to write is a solo piece. More difficult than this most difficult thing – a duo for two like instruments. Few have succeeded (I'm thinking of Ravel's sonata for violin and cello, as well as Kodaly's duo for the same instruments) but I love a challenge. Written for Wendy Warner and Dave Eggar, this work is meant to challenge and reward them but, also, to stay with them through an enjoyable musical experience.

The piece is really about their mismatch as virtuoso players who conjure two very different sounds. I toyed with the notion of contrasting colors by controlling successive intervals slightly differently, when each player takes the melody. The result is distinct affects, akin to “modality,” between the parts. Although the piece follows a clear, conversational trajectory, it is not meant to be one of conflict. In the end, one voice does not dominate. Rather, they coexist like two hands on an ambidextrous child. –James Ogburn



**James J. Ogburn** (b. 1974) is a US-born composer, conductor, author, and teacher whose works have been featured at over two-dozen festivals and season concert programs in Thailand, the People’s Republic of China, Indonesia, Great Britain, the Czech Republic, Spain, Poland, Germany, Italy, and throughout the U.S. He has been Resident Artist at festivals and organizations, including the “International Opera Course – Giacomo Puccini,” “Del Mar College Music Symposium,” Wichita State University, University of Kansas, Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra, and many others. Dr.

Ogburn received Composition & Theory degrees from Central Washington University (B.M., 2004), and the University of Pittsburgh (M.A., 2006 & Ph.D., 2009). From 2009-2015, he was Chair of Composition and Theory at Mahidol University College of Music (Bangkok, Thailand), as well as Director of Enclave Ensemble, Program Manager of the Thailand International Composition Festival, Director of the Young Thai Artist Award, and Researcher for the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra (TPO). Currently, he is Associate Professor of Composition and Theory at the Schwob School of Music of Columbus State University.

### *Ambas* (2022)

*Ambas* for chamber ensemble, was written as an exploration of the frenetic energy of the flora, fauna, and climate here in Iowa. Having lived most of my life in the western U.S., I am often struck by the vibrance and relentless energy of the natural environment of the Midwest—the raucous drone of cicadas and crickets on summer evenings, the bursts of color and rustling leaves in the fall, the flocks of migrating birds and the austere, serene landscape in the winter. *Ambas* is comprised of three scenes, each inspired by the sights and sounds of Iowa: a restless and energetic opening that depicts wildlife—birds and insects, rabbits and foxes—rushing about their daily errands; an introspective interior middle section set in the stillness of winter; a closing paean to evenings on the porch, taking in the warmth, beauty, and mystery of summer nights. –Sam Young





**Sam Young** (b. 1975) is a composer, percussionist, and educator from Boulder, Colorado. His work explores the soundscapes of both natural and urban environments, and ranges from music for wind ensemble and chamber groups, to experimental electronic music and synth pop. He has been a featured composer at festivals such as the Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, California Summer Music, and the International Summer Academy of Music in Germany, and his music has been performed by artists such as Jose Menor, Wild Up, and the Adelaide Wind Ensemble. An avid collaborator, Young enjoys working across disciplines with choreographers and filmmakers to create compelling multimedia experiences.

Recent projects include a score combining environmental sounds and synthesis for Los Angeles choreographer Marianna Varviani's work for dance, *Phoenix: Rising from the Ashes*, a score for an animated short film by Katherine Roche, and a collection of orchestrations for the National Children's Chorus featured on their 2019 tour of Korea and Japan. Before he began composing, Sam enjoyed a career as a professional drummer, performing and recording with national touring bands Devotchka and the Samples. Drawing on this experience, he often creates music that is rhythmically driven and spacious in texture, finding intersections between popular music and classical performance traditions. He holds degrees from Metropolitan State University of Denver (B.M.), Mannes School of Music (M.M.), and received his Ph.D. in music composition from UCLA in 2018.



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## DECEMBER 2022

5	7:30pm	Quintantō Chamber Concert	Stark Opera
5	7:30pm	University Band & Concert Band 	Concert Hall
6	1:30pm	UI Lab Ensemble	Concert Hall
6	7:30pm	Composers' Workshop II 	Concert Hall
6	7:30pm	Faculty/Guest Recital: UNCSCA and UIOWA Double Reed Faculty	Stark Opera
7	7:30pm	Faculty Chamber Recital: Oboe, Bass, and Piano Trio Recital	Concert Hall
8	4:00pm	Opera Workshop Performance	Stark Opera