



Poster by Bella Scotti

Faculty Recital

Lee Hinkle, percussion

“Haunt of Last Nightfall”

Wednesday, October 30, 2024

7:30 pm

Recital Hall

Joseph Modestine (b. 2005)

Katydid (2024)

Lee Hinkle, snare drum

Edgard Varese (1883 – 1965)

Ionisation (1931)

Percussion @ Penn State

Lee Hinkle, conductor

Lee Hinkle (b. 1982)

Fear of Music: Bow Bells (2014)

Lee Hinkle, orchestra chimes

<<<Intermission 10’>>>

David T. Little (b. 1978)

Haunt of Last Nightfall: A Ghost Play in Two Acts (2010)

I.

II.

Jack Kerness, Mako Robeson, Bella Scotti, & Michael Valente; percussion

Percussion @ Penn State Members:

Andrew Andrade

Josh Bazala

Elijah Bradley

Izzy Gaspar'raj

Jack Kerness

Charles McCall

Joseph Modestine

Alex Mummert

Jack Nedrow

Thomas Pelesky

Mako Robeson

Bella Scotti

Michael Valente

Special thank you to Dr. Baljinder Sekhon and the Music Technology Department for their assistance with the extensive electronics for this recital.

Program Notes:

Tonight's recital is entitled "Haunt of Last Nightfall" both because of David T. Little's composition of the same name that forms the second half of the program, and as a theme for All Hallows Eve. Finding its origins in the Celtic festival Samhain, the participants would dress in costumes to try and avoid being recognized by the spirits who they believed emerged during this transitional time of the year. Whatever we manage to conjure this evening, we hope you find this spooky and fear-filled collection of music will inspire you in the spirit of the season.

For this recital, I am not "performing" on every piece. I will conduct Varese's *Ionisation* and have been coaching and will run the live sound for Little's *Haunt of Last Nightfall*. This was on purpose, both to give my students an additional performance opportunity, and also to highlight some of the work I do as a percussion faculty member that is not playing my instrument. Sometimes my job is to perform, other times it is to conduct or coach/listen/provide feedback to my students on their playing. It has been thrilling to work with the graduate student percussion quartet on the Little and observe as they have learned this exceptionally difficult percussion chamber music composition. Little's *Haunt of Last Nightfall* is one of my favorite percussion chamber music pieces. To "gift" this experience to them was the goal.

I am extremely proud of all of my student co-collaborators for their exceptional work and artistry for this faculty recital. I hope you enjoy the show!

-Dr. Lee Hinkle

Joseph Modestine composed his solo piece *Katydid* in 2024 and provides us with the following notes in the score:

“Katydid” is a piece meant to highlight the flam accent and its similarity to the sound of a katydid. Katydids or sometimes called bush crickets, are a grasshopper relative that generally live around the eastern region of America. They make a very distinctive sound at night when the temperature is around mid 70 degrees Fahrenheit, and their sound can be used to determine the temperature as they will chirp slower in colder weather. I wrote this piece in early autumn, when the katydids make the sound they are named after; the three distinctive chirps are sometimes heard as if they are saying, “Ka-ty-did” and a flam accent can be played with them to mimic their distinctive call.

This piece is played with a track that I recorded in my backyard. This track includes cicadas, crickets, and the aforementioned katydid. The track has louder katydid sounds which can be seen in the full score of the song which you play along too. Both sections of snare drum playing start with two distinctive chirps from a katydid, there is then a bar of rest before you play snare drum. The snare drum should not be seen as the soloist by the performer, but rather a part in the bigger whole of the nightscape. You should be louder than the track but not so loud as to take an audience member out of the peaceful night you set up within the rests. The larger numbers on the score refer to the time in the track which the intro plays.

Within the larger rests of the piece, you should improvise general night sounds. Some ideas could include soft tambourine roles for cicada sounds, small bug clickers, or cricket calls. Keep these sounds quiet and a part of the track.



Edgard Varèse’s (1883-1965) seminal work *Ionisation* (1931) for percussion ensemble is probably the best known and most performed work for percussion ensemble. It is considered by many to be one of the first pieces ever written for percussion ensemble alone. At its premiere performance in New York City’s Steinway Hall on March 6, 1933, Nicolas Slonimsky led the thirteen percussionists in a performance that was so

powerful to the audience that one critic famously described it as “a sock in the jaw.”

While the piece adheres to a strict sonata form, the form is obscured to the listener through Varèse’s sonorous use of timbral colors from the percussion. The large battery of percussion instruments employed include many standard percussion instruments such as snare drums, tom-toms, cymbals, woodblocks, cowbells, bongos, guiros, and gongs as well as some unusual instruments such as hand-cranked air raid sirens and a lion’s roar. The piece features pitched percussion instruments in the closing Coda section that include chimes, glockenspiel, and a piano that is thunderously played with the forearms.

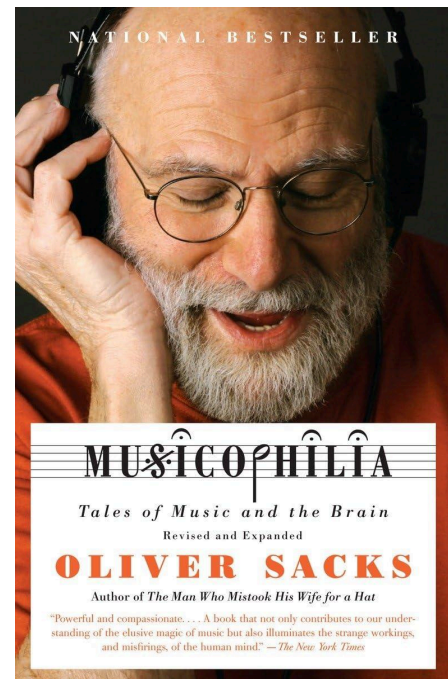
Edgard Varèse is probably best known for his redefining of western music philosophy and as the father of electronic music. He coined the term “organized sound” which means that certain timbres and rhythms can be grouped together. *Ionisation* is a precursor to his later fascination with electronic music and electronic instruments. Listening to *Ionisation*, it is no wonder that he would later explore this genre as his implementation of the percussion instruments is characterized by great attention to color and timbre rather than regular rhythms.

Fear of Music: Bow Bells for solo orchestra chimes and soundscape was composed by Dr. Lee Hinkle in 2014. The following program notes are provided in the performance score.

I have always been fascinated by the power of music; and more specifically the power music can have over the brain. I had the idea for this piece when I read Dr. Oliver Sacks’ book *Musicophilia*. In the book, Dr. Sacks describes case studies of patients who suffer from strange medical afflictions related to music. One set of stories stuck with me when he described an affliction some of his patients had suffered from called “Fear of Music.”

One of the patients who suffered from Fear of Music was an elderly gentleman. Every evening at exactly the same time he suffered from a serious uncontrollable seizure. It took doctors quite some time to figure out what was causing the seizure, but they soon figured out that he had been listening to the BBC news broadcast every evening at the time of his seizure, and the sounds of that broadcast had been causing his seizure.

The broadcast began with a recording of the famous “Bow Bells” from the church St Mary le-Bow in London, England. (The term “Cockney” actually refers specifically to the group of people who live in London within earshot of the Bow Bells.) Upon realizing what was causing his affliction, his doctors took him to the church St Mary le-Bow to see if they could recreate the situation that was causing his seizure, however, the sound of the bells in real life did not cause a seizure: it was only the pre-recorded sound of the Bow Bells that caused his affliction.



I was so flabbergasted by this story that I took to writing this piece *Fear of Music: Bow Bells* for solo orchestra chimes and soundscape. *Fear of Music: Bow Bells* explores the orchestra chimes in an unusual fashion. Aside from the fact that orchestra chimes are seldom considered a solo instrument, I thought it would be interesting to see what I could do with them that would not only showcase the instrument but also find some new sounds that the chimes could produce. This exploration of sounds concludes at the end of the piece as I recreate as best as possible the sound of the Bow Bells on the orchestra chimes. My live playing is then slowly taken over by the pre-recorded sound of the Bow Bells to close the piece

-Lee Hinkle, College Park, MD, 2014

Composer David T. Little provides us with the following program notes for his epic, thirty-two minute long work, *Haunt of Last Nightfall: A Ghost Play in Two Acts*.

Composer David. T. Little, pictured to the right.

I think a lot about ghosts. Not so much in the literal sense of sheet-wearing specters, but rather, of things ghostly in function. That is, things that remain behind as the fleeting evidence of what once was. For some reason—perhaps for the same reason as the monk of old’s *memento mori*—I have always felt the need to surround myself with these kinds of ghosts.



The studio where I compose, for example, is full of mementos: objects from past projects, trinkets from past travel, and most notably, old photographs. I have collected these antique photos for about ten years, not for the photographic quality—I know little about photographic history—but for the mysterious stories they may tell of the people whose images they hold. They are, in a sense, my ghosts.

They lived full lives once upon a time, these people. They had husbands, wives, children, joy and pain. They were no different, really, than you or me. And yet here they are, preserved in a single moment—perhaps the only evidence of their existence—itself gradually fading. I have no idea who any of them are, specifically, but it doesn’t seem to matter. In a certain sense, they each are all of us.

Although this peculiar passion of mine is at the core of this composition, it’s not really what the piece is *about*. Rather, the “ghost” here is an atrocity that happened long ago, the memory of which I just can’t seem to shake. Specifically, it is the massacre at El Mozote, El Salvador, December 10th through 12th 1981, in which an entire village was erased by US Military-trained Salvadoran government forces, with American-made and provided arms.

Now, I have no interest in getting on a soapbox about El Mozote, or related issues; that is, in fact, the last thing that I want. It’s just that since reading about the massacre—first in Bob Ostertag’s *Creative Life*, and later in Mark Danner’s *The Truth About El Mozote*—I have been plagued by two questions: First, how did

I never know that this had happened? (The answer to this is fascinating and upsetting.) And second, why am I completely unable to get it out of my mind; to move on? It haunts me. It has been, for the last 15 months, my ghost.

I cannot forget the story of the young boy—now known only as “No. 59,”—who was lucky enough to have a toy, though it could not protect him from the bayonet. I cannot forget the separation of families that happened on the morning of the second day—men to the right, women and children to the left—reminiscent of another atrocity, forty years earlier. I cannot forget the girl on La Cruz, a local hill, who is said to have sung a hymn as soldiers repeatedly raped her. Legend holds that even after they murdered her, her body kept singing, stopping only when they cut off her heard. I cannot forget that this village, innocent by virtually every account, was slaughtered, caught in the crossfire of a stupid ideological battle.

I would never say something so boldly reductive as “their blood is on our hands.” We all know that scenarios like these are neither that simple, nor all that unique. But I know that I have been unable to shake this ghost, and consequently felt that I had no choice but to write this piece.

What we know shapes us, and whether I like it or not, I now know this.