



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Monday, November 4, 2024 • 8:00 PM

DEPAUL

ENSEMBLE 20+

Michael Lewanski, conductor

Mary Patricia Gannon Concert Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

Monday, November 4, 2024 • 8:00 PM
Gannon Concert Hall

DEPAUL ENSEMBLE 20+

Michael Lewanski, conductor

PROGRAM

Justin Torzala (b. 2002)
Silent Reckoning (2024, world premiere)

George Lewis (b. 1952)
Artificial Life 2007

Katinka Kleijn (b. 1970)
Forward Echo (2019)

Chen Yi (b. 1953)
Sparkle (1992)

As a courtesy to those around you, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Flash photography is not permitted.

BIOGRAPHIES

Conductor, curator, educator, and writer **Michael Lewanski** is a champion of new and old musics. He seeks to create engaged connections between audiences, musicians, composers, and the music that is part of their culture, society, and history. His work hopes to be part of collective, systemic change in the classical music industry. He is conductor of Ensemble Dal Niente and Associate Professor of instrumental ensembles at the DePaul University School of Music, where his work focuses on helping the next generation of musicians become thoughtful artistic citizens.

Michael was Curatorial Director of Ear Taxi Festival 2021, a festival of 21st century Chicago music. He was resident conductor of the 2017 and 2019 SoundSCAPE Festivals in Italy. His guest conducting engagements have been wide-ranging and stylistically diverse, working with organizations such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW Series, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, the State Symphony Orchestra of Turkmenistan, Ensemble CEPROMUSIC (Mexico City), the Seattle Modern Orchestra, and many others. He has led hundreds of world premieres. He was the Conducting Assistant for the Civic Orchestra of Chicago from 2010 to 2014. At the 2012 Darmstadt Summer Courses, Ensemble Dal Niente won the prestigious Kranichstein Music Prize under his direction. Michael has an extensive discography as both a conductor and a producer on US- and Europe-based labels.

A native of Savannah, Georgia, he studied piano and violin in his youth; he made his conducting debut at age 13, leading his own composition. At 16, he was the youngest student ever accepted into the conducting class of the legendary Ilya Musin at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Michael attended Yale University. His post-Yale education included conducting study with Cliff Colnot and Lucas Vis. He is based in Chicago, and respectfully acknowledges the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Odawa, Ho-Chunk, Myaaamia, Menominee, Peoria, and Illinois Confederacy among other tribal nations as custodians of the traditional Native land on which he lives and works.

PROGRAM NOTES

Justin Torzala (b. 2002)

Silent Reckoning (2024, world premiere)

Duration: 7 minutes

Content warning: this piece contains depictions of gun violence and death.

Silent Reckoning was conceived as a multimedia experience, blending music and live theatrical components. In collaboration with incredible students at The Theatre School at DePaul, we sought to evoke the atmosphere of a silent film brought to life on stage. Through muted, exaggerated gestural movement and expressive acting, the performers tell the story of a turbulent and violent night within a family-owned silent movie theater. Ensemble 20+ underscores the scene, as if asserting the role of the silent theater's live orchestra.

While composing the music, I constructed the narrative alongside, ensuring every component—from the lighting and intertitle projections to the onstage action—was meticulously crafted to enhance the storytelling. The narrative unfolds without spoken dialogue, relying instead on the powerful synergy between music, movement, and visual elements.

Musically, the score is built around evolving ostinato figures, a technique often used in film scoring to maintain tension and unity. These figures transform throughout the piece, adapting to shifts in the narrative, engaging with both the tension and emotional depth of the unfolding drama. Additionally, the structure of the piece is influenced by proportions inspired by Debussy, particularly to affect the pacing and flow. These proportions, initially applied to the ending section, gradually impose themselves on other parts of the work, even shaping the overall form.

Silent Reckoning has been one of the most fulfilling projects I've worked on during my time at DePaul, and I'm deeply grateful to Ensemble 20+ and everyone who contributed to bringing this vision to life.

Notes by Justin Torzala

George Lewis (b. 1952)

Artificial Life 2007

Duration: indeterminate, 10 minutes or more

Artificial Life 2007 is designed to realize a model of group improvisation as an emergent phenomenon based on negotiation and local intelligence. The moment of execution and the kind of sounds and silences produced are chosen according to the improvisors' considered judgment unless an instruction indicates otherwise; structural components and sonic gestures are designed to proceed from the use of intuition and snap judgment, obviating any need on the part of the performers to articulate or impose global form or spurious teleologies. As with all improvisations, including our everyday-life human efforts, the performance is achieved through negotiation and consensus, and its success will be less a question of individual freedom than of the assumption of personal responsibility for the sonic environment. The work was created for the Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra under a commission from the Scottish Arts Council, and received its premiere in December 2007 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Glasgow.

Notes by George Lewis

Katinka Kleijn (b. 1970)

Forward Echo (2019)

Duration: indeterminate, approximately 15 minutes

Forward Echo was written for 11 improvisers at The Instigation Festival in Chicago. Situation-based and site-specific, the work acts as a generative score that makes itself. Inspired by civil war drum commands, sent far over the battlefields by under aged drummer boys for each respective army, it researches sound as means of communication and instigation, providing in-real-time observation of how information is received and processed. It explores how humans react, imagine and act, as individuals and in groups—often posing a fantastic challenge, requiring individual time-based choices. The piece intends to serve as the 12th member of the ensemble.

Notes by Katinka Kleijn

Chen Yi (b. 1953)

Sparkle (1992)

Duration: 10 minutes

I express my feelings through my music, which combines Chinese and Western musical materials and media.[...] In *Sparkle*, I want to express my impressions of sparks—everlasting flashes of wit, so bright, nimble and passionate. The material of pitch, rhythm and form in the piece are drawn from the tune and the structural method of traditional Chinese *baban* (eight beats) rules of the grouping of notes.

Sparkle was commissioned by the New Music Consort with funds provided by the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust. Claire Heldrich conducted the premiere on October 21, 1992, at the Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music. The piece is dedicated to professor Mario Davidovsky, who enthusiastically encouraged me to share my experience with audiences in America and abroad.

Notes by Chen Yi

PERSONNEL

FLUTE

Elena Rubin

CLARINET

Rachel Beil

HORN

Eli Hoffmann

TROMBONE

Ryan Saladin

TUBA

Caden Morton

PIANO

Amarin Wexler

PERCUSSION

Lydea King

Milo Paperman

VIOLIN

Joanne Lin

VIOLA

David Phetmanysay

CELLO

Julianna Bray

BASS

Anthony D'Agostino

Walker Dean

CHOREOGRAPHERS

Ryen Jones

Katherine Shuert

DANCERS/ACTORS

Gracie Everett

Donio Hinsley

Andalyn Honselaar

Kaylah Janssen

Gabriela Santiago

LIGHTING DESIGN & OPERATION

Nathan Lesperance

PROJECTION DESIGN

Justin Torzala

PROJECTION OPERATION

Sam Kudra

TICKETS AND PATRON SERVICES

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Concert Dress: At any given concert, you will observe some concertgoers dressed up and others dressed more casually. Many patrons wear business attire or casual business attire. We encourage you to wear whatever makes you feel most comfortable.

Food and Beverage: While drinks, with lids, are allowed in performance spaces, food is never allowed.

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Late Seating: Late seating breaks usually occur after the first piece on the program or at intermission in order to minimize disturbances to other audience members and those performing on stage. Late patrons will be seated at appropriate breaks at the discretion of the house management staff.

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July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS
DEPAUL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

November 5 • 7:00 P.M.
Dempsey Corboy Jazz Hall
DePaul Jazz Combos II

November 5 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Concert Orchestra

November 6 • 7:00 P.M.
Dempsey Corboy Jazz Hall
DePaul Jazz Workshop

November 7 • 7:00 P.M.
Dempsey Corboy Jazz Hall
DePaul Jazz Combos III

November 7 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Wind/Mixed Chamber Showcase II

November 8 • 7:00 P.M.
Dempsey Corboy Jazz Hall
DePaul Vocal Jazz Ensemble

November 8 • 7:30 P.M.
Jarvis Opera Hall
DePaul Opera Theatre

November 9 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
DePaul Trombone Choir

November 10 • 2:00 P.M.
Jarvis Opera Hall
DePaul Opera Theatre

November 11 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Wind Symphony

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

November 15 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Jeremy Ruthrauff, saxophone

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