

I/O FEST 2024
SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 7:30 PM
'62 CENTER FOR THEATRE AND DANCE

Presented by the Williams College Department of Music
Featuring Transient Canvas and New Music Williams
Duration: approx. 60 minutes, no intermission

PROGRAM

Yaz Lancaster	<i>tl;dr</i> (2022)
Crystal Pascucci	<i>resonance imaging</i> (2016)
Mikhail Johnson	<i>Ton yo han mek fashan</i> (2020/21)

Transient Canvas
Amy Advocat, *bass clarinet*; Matt Sharrock, *marimba*

Francesca Hellerman '23	<i>Glimpses of Verse</i> (2023) ➔ for high voice and 20-button anglo concertina
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Sara Stebbins '24, *voice*; Francesca Hellerman '23, *concertina*

Lucy Luo '27	<i>Dandling Buzz</i> (2023) ➔ for brass quintet
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Arden Caldicott '26, *french horn*; Artie Carpenter '25, *trumpet*; Paul Kim '24, *trumpet*; Alan Burns, *trombone*; Gwyn Chilcoat '24, *tuba*; Lucy Luo '27, *conductor*

Yi-Ting Lu	<i>A Sudden Gust of Wind</i> (2021) for large ensemble
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New Music Williams

Alex Moon '27, *flute*; Charles Huang, *oboe*; Susanna Boberg '27, *clarinet*; Amy Advocat, *bass clarinet*; Mawusi Sefogbe '27, *horn*; Artie Carpenter '25, *trumpet*; Alan Burns, *trombone*; Gwyn Chilcoat '24, *tuba*; Mali Rauch '26, *percussion*; Lucy Luo '27, *piano*; Isabella Haydn '26, *violin I*; Lisa Ji '27, *violin II*; Chad Topaz, *viola*; Seohyeon Lee '27, *cello*; Lachlan Canavan '26, *double bass*
Matthew Gold, *conductor*

➔ Denotes World Premiere

This concert is presented in memory of Steven Dennis Bodner (1975-2011).

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

YAZ LANCASTER: *tl;dr*

"tl;dr," or "too long; didn't read" is a phrase used on the internet to signify when something is too long or dense to comprehend, and is often followed with a shortened, concise recount of the original text or content. While it's hard to pinpoint the phrase's origin usage (as with most internet vernaculars), it's likely to have come about in online forums and discussion boards.

– Yaz Lancaster

Yaz Lancaster (they/them) is a Black transdisciplinary artist. They are most interested in practices aligned with relational aesthetics & the everyday; fragments & collage; and liberatory politics.

Yaz performs as a violinist, vocalist & steel-pannist in a wide variety of settings; and their work is presented in many mediums & collaborative projects. It often reckons with specific influences ranging from politics of liberation and identity to natural phenomena and poetics. Their ongoing independent studies navigates prison-industrial-complex abolition, Marxist theory, and internet/social media cultures. Their writing appears in various online & in-print publications including I CARE IF YOU LISTEN, Afternoon Visitor, the tiny, and Underblong, where their poem "Ratios" was awarded the 2021 Blongprize, as well as a Pushcart nomination.

Yaz has had the privilege & opportunity to build community & create with artists like A Far Cry, Andy Akiho, ContaQt (with Evan Ziporyn), Contemporaneous, Freddie June, George Lewis, Hypercube, JACK Quartet, Leilehua Lanzilotti, Skiffle Steel Orchestra, and Wadada Leo Smith. Most recently, they have been developing the post-genre duo laydawn with Canadian guitarist-producer Andrew Noseworthy; and working on new music for Beth Morrison Projects, BRKFST Dance Company (with Minnesota Symphony Orchestra), and Bearthoven. Yaz has recording credits on recent/upcoming projects with AIYYER, Massa Nera, Miss Grit & Nyokabi Kariuki. Their debut album of commissioned music for violin/voice & electronics with video AmethYst is forthcoming on people | places | records in summer 2022.

Yaz holds degrees in violin and poetry from New York University where they studied with Cyrus Beroukhim, Robert Honstein, Joan La Barbara & Terrance Hayes (among others). They currently live in Lenapehoking (Harlem, NYC) with their bassador puppy Nori.

CRYSTAL PASCUCCI: *resonance imaging*

resonance imaging for bass clarinet and marimba, is a piece of reflection. timbres and rhythms within the piece mimic those heard while undergoing an MRI test. the phrases unfold as a testimony to claustrophobia; claustrophobia caused by being held in that type of medical machine, and the captive feeling caused by illness. illness is unyielding; it has no sense of reasoning or rationality. illness is something i've struggled with all my life. i was diagnosed with Lupus sixteen years ago and it has profoundly shaped my life, personality and perspective. my experiences in MRI machines have been musical ones. i wanted to share some of the many complex rhythms, sounds, feelings and parallels inspired by those experiences. "resonance imaging" was written for Transient Canvas and premiered on January 29, 2016 in San Francisco, CA.

– Crystal Pascucci

Crystal Pascucci is a cellist, composer and improviser. She began playing her instrument at age nine and has always had a strong connection to music. While studying chamber music, she was assigned to play, "December 1952" by Earle Brown. This was an introduction to graphic notation and the start of an intense interest in the relationship of notation and improvisation.

Crystal's approach to improvisation and composition are influenced greatly by her training in chamber music. Her music utilizes delicate communication amongst performing musicians, draws clear phrase lines, and uses orchestration found in small ensemble compositions. There is no one traditional tone or sound found at the aim — there is only musical intention, regardless of timbre or technique. In this way, statements are presented through a large palette — through an unconventional lens.

Music that is improvised has a certain life, character, and attentiveness that is unattainable through fixed notation. The performers are engaged in a totally different type of musical experience when improvising, one where the future is unknown and musical decisions are that of the performer. In Crystal's compositions, she aims to create a particular musical space with fixed notation, in order to provide a musical setting for the improvising sections, or independent improvising lines.

An active performer in the Bay Area, she has recently performed the work of Roscoe Mitchell at Yoshi's Jazz Club in Oakland, as a featured solo performer at both the NextNow Music Series and the Light A Fire Music Series, at the SIMM Series (duo with Eric Glick Rieman), the graphic-score work of Christina Stanley at the 11th Annual Outsound Summit New Music Festival, and at the 11th Annual Transbay Skronathon with Matt Davignon — performances with Aaron Bennett's Electro-Magnetic Trans-Personal Orchestra, Oakland Active Orchestra, the work of Polly Moller at the Soundwave Festival, with Opera Wolf as guest artists for the New Music Works: CAGE 950, John Cage 100th Birthday Celebration and more. Crystal is a Co-founding member of the Oakland Composer's Union and performing with renowned clarinetist, Rachel Condry, in the improv duo, Chocolate for Breakfast.

Crystal holds a Bachelor's of Music Performance from SUNY Fredonia, a graduate professional degree from The Hartt School of Music at the University of Hartford and has attended Mills College. Her past teachers include, Fred Frith, Roscoe Mitchell, Zeena Parkins, Joan Jeanrenaud, Robert Black, Marion Feldman, Mihai Tetel, Bryan Eckenrode and David Rudge. Some of her musical influences include Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Dvorak, Barber, Ginestera, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, Osvaldo Golijov, Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, Thelonius Monk, Dorothy Ashby, Anthony Braxton, Cecil Taylor, Pauline Oliveros, John Zorn, Erik Friedlander, KRONOS String Quartet, Frances-Marie Uitti, Bjork, RZA, Air, Alva Noto, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Andrew Bird, The Flaming Lips, Sonic Youth, Radiohead, David Bowie, Lightning Bolt, Black Dice, Fuck Buttons, and Deerhoof.

MIKHAIL JOHNSON: *Ton yo han mek fashan*

This piece is inspired by two instruments in the Jamaican Mento Band. The first is the rumba box or in other countries called the marimbula. It is like a large thumb piano, and it provides the "bassline" of the band. This instrument has only five to six fixed pitches tuned like a scale, so the bass is implied as it will not always be in tune with the other instruments. It however, adds great rhythmic effect. The second instrument is the clarinet. Although a familiar Western instrument, in this context, the sounds produced are very bold, honky, reedy, earthy, unrefined, as the instrumentalists are self-taught. Nevertheless, they produce highly virtuosic improvisatory themes, or improvisations on folk songs; full of character and life congruent to the moment in which this mento music is being played.

The marimba mimics the rumba box very well, and the bass clarinet is already of the clarinet family. The advantage of these two instruments lie in their extended upper/lower ranges, making it possible to play with the dynamic of their interaction. Starting from the traditional role of melody-accompaniment, I reverse, warp, or even abandon these roles so these instruments can even represent other instruments found in the mento band (i.e. the guitar, banjo, or drums). The result is somewhat a set of variations on the theme of a two-man band.

The title *Ton yo han mek fashan* (literally translated: turn your hand [and] make fashion) is a proverb with two meanings: To make of what could be deemed useless, fashionable. It also means to make the most of an unfortunate situation. I originally wrote the piece making the most of two instruments to create elements of a full mento band. Ironically, this piece was written in the year that endured a global pandemic, in which I was creatively paralyzed for eight months. Now, had to make use of an unfortunate situation (the pandemic), break through my darkest times, and create a work that I always wanted to be highly optimistic and full of joy.

– Mikhail Johnson

Mikhail Johnson (b. 1989) born in the rural hills of Maroon Town in the parish of St. James, Jamaica, is one of the country's most promising pianists and composers. He was winner of the Jamaica Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition for Young Musicians Senior Division in 2009, and in the same year, won the piano section of the Jamaica Music Teachers' Association Music Competition. He has won numerous gold medals and national awards in the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) Festival of the Performing Arts, and he was also a finalist in the 2017 American Prize Music Competition for Piano (collegiate division). In 2021 he was two-time First Prize winner of the Charleston International Music Competition and the first Jamaican to enter the competition.

As a composer Johnson's compositional style merges traditional European classical music and the avant-garde with traditional Jamaican cultural idiosyncrasies. His compositional output is being published on his publishing label Johnno Muzik, and comprises of: sacred and patriotic choral works, African American Spiritual arrangements, song cycles and instrumental works. Johnson's many commissions from universities and music organizations, and his wins and finalist placements in several competitions and score calls, has resulted in his works being performed by several ensembles. This includes: The Cleveland Chamber Symphony, The Cantus Ensemble of London, The North/South Consonance Ensemble, The Concordia Ensemble of the University of Notre Dame, the Departure Duo and Transient Canvas.

Johnson has also been invited as chief adjudicator for several international music competitions in the categories of piano and composition.

Johnson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Science and a minor in music from Northern Caribbean University; Double Masters of Music degree in piano performance and composition from Bowling Green State University, and a Doctor of Music in piano performance from Texas Tech University.

FRANCESCA HELLERMAN '23: *Glimpses of Verse*

The text for *Glimpses of Verse* is adapted from six translations of the very beginning of Virgil's *Aeneid* ("arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris / Italiam fato profugus Laviniaequae venit / litora"), by

Christopher Pearse Cranch (1914), H. R. Fairclough (1916), J. W. Mackail (1885), Joseph Davidson (1873), Theodore C. Williams (1910), and William Morris (1876). This famous opening is laden with deeply meaningful yet un-translatable nuance: word order, ambiguous grammatical functions, meter, and even echoes of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. *Glimpses of Verse* examines how each translator arrives at a slightly different rendering of Virgil's text, using music to amplify minute differences in rhythm or word choice. It also reveals how, when read at such a small scale, much of these texts is the same — while the act of translation is a highly creative one, the specter of Virgil's words and meanings permeates each translator's work. Writing for the concertina, which accompanies the sung text, is also an exercise in creativity within a limited range of expression. My instrument is diatonic, with limited pitches available on the push and the pull. Even fewer notes allow for timbral trills, where two buttons play the same pitch, albeit with noticeably different colors. This delicate effect, which I placed where possible in the piece, is another instance of an idea expressed in multiple ways, a musical depiction of the fragility of a symbol as it is translated from one medium to another.

– Francesca Hellerman

Francesca Hellerman is a composer whose works joyfully uncover the tactile richness of gestures and sounds made by instruments, electronics, and found objects alike. Her work has been performed by the PRISM Quartet, members of the International Contemporary Ensemble, the Walden School Players, and TAK Ensemble. She has also collaborated with the Williams Percussion Ensemble as well as the Williams Chamber and Concert Choirs, as a composer, conductor, and performer. Her music has been heard in a variety of spaces, from concert halls or museum galleries (at the Williams College Museum of Art) to outdoor stages (at Mostly Mozart Festival), a cabin on a lake (at New Music on the Point), or a patch of grass under a tree (at the Clark Art Institute).

As a creative musician, Francesca values making and engaging with music in many forms, all of which enrich her compositional practice. As a pianist, she has performed music ranging from Bach Partitas to Cage's Amores for prepared piano. She has sung in numerous choral ensembles including the Williams Chamber and Concert Choirs and Peabody Camerata. During the summers, she is Assistant Director of Composers Forums and on faculty at The Walden School's Young Musicians Program, a camp she herself attended, whose warm community was where she first fell in love with composition and choral singing.

Francesca is currently pursuing a M.M. in composition from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, where she studies with Sky Macklay. She obtained her B.A. in music from Williams College, where she studied composition with Ileana Perez Velazquez, Brad Wells, and Zachary Wadsworth.

LUCY LUO '27: *Dandling Buzz*

"Dandling - move (something) lightly up and down." When people think of a Brass Quintet, they always associate it with loud or marching band music. But a Brass Quintet is more than its volume. The unique metallic and buzzing characters and also the wide range of dynamics, timbres, and pitches of the instruments make this ensemble flexible and creative. In this piece, *Dandling Buzz*, I want to show the fun and playful side of brass music while also filling the music with powerful brass energy.

– Lucy Luo

Chuyi Lucy Luo is a composer, conductor, and pianist born in July 2005. She is currently a freshman at Williams College with a potential major in chemistry. She studied at Juilliard Pre-College with a major in composition and a minor in piano. Her teachers include Eric Ewazen, Andrew Thomas, David Ludwig,

John McDonald, and Stratis Minakakis. Lucy participated as a composition and conducting fellow in the New York Youth Symphony 2020-2022, and has also participated in the MSM Composition Program, Curtis YASP, European American Musical Alliance, Atlantic Music Festival, and Boston University Tanglewood Institute YCAP. Her music has also been recognized by the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers Award, Juilliard Pre-College Composition Competition, Luna Composition Lab, From The Top, etc. She has composed for a variety of instrumentations, and her music is playful, colorful, and full of humor.

YI-TING LU: *A Sudden Gust of Wind*

A Sudden Gust of Wind presents the composer's continuing compositional interest in exploring the experience of timelessness evoked through fragmented musical experiences.

The wind implies and resonates with the radical shifts that we are facing in our present time. It disperses each musical parameter, creating a sense of vivid movement but also raising the impression of unpredictability, uncertainty, and a sense of anxiety. The piece attempts to capture this precipitous moment by arranging a platform in which musical figures are frozen with the use of repetition and eventually convergence as a response to the title.

– Yi-Ting Lu

Taiwanese composer Yi-Ting Lu, currently based in Chicago, composes music that focuses on exploring the experience of timelessness evoked through fragmented musical experiences. Serving as a Transient Canvas Composition Fellow (2021), Yi-Ting is also the nominated exchange composer of the Académie Voix Nouvelles (2019) and a representative composer of Taiwan in the 66th International Rostrum of Composers in San Carlos de Bariloche, Province of Rio Negro, Argentina (2019).

Her works have received multiple prizes, awards, grants, and commissions, including 2021 William T. Faricy Award for Creative Music, 2021 Nief-Norf International Call for Scores, 2020 Thailand New Music and Arts Symposium Call for Scores, 2017 the Carl Kanter prize for orchestral music, a finalist of 2020 Talea Ensemble Emerging Composer Commissioning Program, 2017 National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra Competition, and 2017 the Young Composers' Competition of Annual Rudolph Award. Her work has also been the 2019 Il-suono Contemporary Music Academy's Choice to be published by AltrEdizioni Casa Editrice.

Her music has been featured at concerts and festivals throughout Asia, Europe, and the United States, including Voix Nouvelles Academy in Royaumont (FR), Musiikin Aiko (FI), Musikinstitut Darmstadt (GR), Il-suono Academy (IT), Sound of Wander (IT), Art Incubator (KR), the Young Composer Meeting (NL), Yarn Wire Academy in Stony Brook (USA), Sforzando New Music (USA), and has been performed, and/or commissioned by the Arditti Quartet, Ensemble Suono Giallo, Ensemble vocal Les Métaboles, Ensemble Mise-en, Mdi Ensemble, Mivos Quartet, Orkest De Ereprijs, PushBack Collective, Quatuor Tana, Yarn/Wire, 3 People Music, Clarinetist Vasko Dukovski, MSM Orchestra (under the baton of George Manahan), National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra, among others.

Yi-Ting is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in composition and music technology at Northwestern University under the tutelage of Hans Thomalla, Jay Alan Yim, and Alex Mincek. She completed a Master's degree in Music Composition at Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Reiko Fütting and Susan Botti. Prior to her graduate studies in the United States, she studied with Tsung-Hsien Yang and Wan-Jen

Huang and received her Bachelor's degree in Music Composition and Theory at Taipei National University of the Arts.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

For over a decade Boston-based contemporary duo Transient Canvas has been thrilling audiences with their "engaging musicality and easy sense of ensemble" (Cleveland Classical) and "superb" performances (Boston Globe). Bass clarinetist Amy Advocat (she/her) and marimbist Matt Sharrock (they/them) relish the creative potential of working with living composers, with the San Francisco Chronicle lauding "the versatile imagination they both display and inspire in others" and a commissioned repertoire of over 90 works. Since 2017, they have hosted their annual paid Composer Fellowship Program that is free and open to composers of all ages. They maintain an active touring schedule with recent performances at the Alba Music Festival, Festival of New American Music, Music on the Edge, New Music Miami, and Red Note New Music Festival, among others. Recent educational residencies include the University of Southern California, University of Miami, New York University, and Longy's Divergent Studio. They have three albums - Right now, in a second; Sift; and Wired - released on New Focus Recordings. Transient Canvas proudly endorses Henri Selmer Paris and Marimba One. For more information, visit www.transientcanvas.com.

ABOUT I/O FEST

I/O Fest, the Williams College Department of Music's annual immersion in the music of today, is a multi-day exploration of adventurous music featuring new voices, fresh perspectives, and creative modes of musical expression. Performances, talks, and workshops are held in the '62 Center for Theatre & Dance and The Clark Art Institute, with a special interest in unconventional spaces and modes of performance. Featuring renowned guest artists and performances by the I/O Ensemble, New Music Williams, faculty, and students, I/O Fest seeks to present innovative and visceral programs that invite listeners to experience music in new ways.

2024 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (All events are free, no reservation required, unless otherwise noted)

FRIDAY 1/12

7:30 PM | '62 Center

Bent Duo, New Music Williams, and quacktrioquack

Music by Sarah Hennies and Julius Eastman

SATURDAY 1/13

7:30 PM | '62 Center

Transient Canvas and New Music Williams

Music by Yaz Lancaster, Crystal Pascucci, Mikhail Johnson, and Yi-Ting Lu

SUNDAY 1/14

3:00 PM | The Clark*

RAWdance, I/O Ensemble, and Ephemera (directed by Anna Lenti)

*Reserve your seat at Clarkart.edu

THURSDAY 1/18

6:00 PM | The Clark*

The Lodger

Live music for a classic Hitchcock film performed by Matthew Gold and Paul de Jong

I/O FEST STAFF

Matthew Gold, Artistic Director; Sara Stebbins '24, Student Director; Jeffrey Miller, Stage and Orchestra Manager, Williams College Department of Music; Jonathan Myers, Concert and Event Coordinator, Williams College Department of Music

Acknowledgements

Ed Gollin, Music Dept. Chair; Nathaniel Wiessner, '62 Center Operations Manager; John Burrow, Sound and Media Manager; Daniel O'Connell, Production Technician; Corissa L. Bryant, Patron and Visiting Artist Services Manager; Ileana Perez Velázquez, Zachary Wadsworth, Composition Faculty; Will Schmenner, Clark Art Institute; Jeff Bentley, Piano Technician; Daniel Czernecki, Recording Engineer