

## **New Scores: The Cone Composition Institute Concert**

### **ONE-MINUTE NOTES**

**Leigha Amick:** *Cascade*

*Cascade* is loosely inspired by a piece by Carl Stone for electronics, bagpipes and organ called Mae Yao. Over the course of Stone's piece, the sounds gradually and seamlessly transform from disjunct, percussive material to smooth, lyrical material. *Cascade* is an orchestral response to that transformation. The primary material for the piece is a passacaglia in which a high voice is removed, and a low voice is added with each iteration of the chord progression. As the harmony gradually changes, so does the character with which the orchestra realizes each harmonic cycle.

**Santiago Beis:** *Spletna*

*Spletna* is a symphonic composition that delves into the profound concept of entanglement between the present moment and the fading memories of immediate events, as encapsulated by the Czech term coined by composer Leoš Janáček. This complex interplay of the immediate and the vanishing past, which Janáček perceived as a chaotic moment, serves as the central theme of the piece, resulting in a multifaceted exploration of memory's intricate dance with the present.

This composition exemplifies how the intricate nuances of rhythm and memory can come together in a symphonic narrative, challenging conventional boundaries and offering a fresh perspective on the interplay of memory and the present. The purpose of this study is to encourage a reevaluation of the role of memory within the context of formal musical structures. By weaving together moments of memory within the musical composition, Beis seeks to test and expand upon Janáček's theory of entanglement, ultimately contributing to the field by offering a unique perspective on the intricate relationship between memory and immediate experience.

*Spletna* is a bold and innovative exploration of memory's role in shaping the present moment. As Beis intricately orchestrates the interplay of memory and immediacy, this composition challenges conventional boundaries and opens doors for cross-disciplinary dialogue. Performances of *Spletna* invite the listener to engage with the eternal dance between the present and the vanishing past, transcending the boundaries of music and memory.

**Paul Cosme: *A Stranger in a Festival of Spirits***

Back home in the Philippines and many other Asian countries, we tell stories of unknowingly enter the world of spirits—often waking up suddenly in a familiar yet strange place. And after a period, they return to the land of the living, often forgetting details or even the entire experience. Taking inspiration from these tales, this work is about that stranger who finds themselves suddenly transported to another world in a time when the spirits are preparing for a joyful festival. Initially frightened of the unknown, this stranger is welcomed by the kindred spirits as they share their festivities with them. Being an outsider, the stranger crosses boundaries and navigates this other world through their own eyes.

The idea came to be when I was visiting the Honolulu Museum of Art in the fall of 2022, and I experienced an installation by British artist Rebecca Louise Law called “Awakening,” which comprises of endless hanging strings of flora and fauna of Hawai’i—both endemic and otherwise. Her work reminded me of the richness of the sounds in the islands and the various sounds that make up my sonic worlds. Like Law’s visual work, I experience music through various gradations and shocks of colors which I owe to the sounds I heard in places I have called home.

Thus, *A Stranger in a Festival of Spirits* takes inspiration from various folk music and festival traditions from Pacific Asia: pista, kulintang, and folk songs in the Philippines, Javanese and Balinese gamelan from Indonesia, matsuri from Japan and various gut from Korea, among others. The reason for amalgamating these traditions is not simply my interest in these traditions and my time practicing this music, but because of friends and dear ones from these places who invited me to their homes and shared their celebrations with me. They taught me fragments of their music that now stay with me and inform parts of my work. In many ways, I am that stranger who entered this festival of spirits, and the most crucial task is to honor and take care of the generosity and hospitality that they offered to me.

**Jessie Leov:** *Speculations on a Rainbow*

Celebrating the work of internationally acclaimed Aotearoa, New Zealand artist Judy Millar, *Speculations on a Rainbow* is a response to Millar’s “The Rainbow Loop.” Millar’s large-scale gestural work, a long looping painting on wood and canvas, forms a twisted coil that seeks to ‘interrupt and invade’ the space it occupies. Drawing on the duality of Millar’s sweeping strokes of vibrant color, offset by stark monochromatic landscapes, *Speculations on a Rainbow* offers continuity and flow disrupted by dancing, rolling, shifts of perception. The piece weaves its way through a shifting canvas of stability and turbulence, stillness and motion, offering the audience a brief glimpse into the ‘temporary twisted world’ of “The Rainbow Loop.”

**Steven Mackey:** *Urban Ocean*

When I was first asked to compose a piece of music considering the notion of *Urban Ocean* I confess that I only heard ocean and thought of the scores of scores inspired by the sea. As I thought more about the governing metaphor—“the convergence of wildlife, industry, recreation and nature that takes place off the coast of Southern California”—I realized that this was actually more in tune with my musical prediction. The assignment gave me an opportunity to embrace a big world, merge contrasts and celebrate the glorious cacophony, all notions that in one form or another, have pre-occupied me previously.

*Urban Ocean* is 11 minutes long and casts the sea as mysterious, deep, vast, powerful and teeming with life which we can usually only perceive the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. The land is bright and bustling with bittersweet humanity. The two worlds are represented in their own distinct sections then listen to, retreat into, emerge from and overwhelm one another. The end strikes a delicate balance between both.

I want to thank Dennis Poulsen, Jerry Schubel and the Aquarium of the Pacific for the opportunity to compose *Urban Ocean*.

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