Steel Band

Friday, April 26, 2024 at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
The College of Professional Studies and School of Music, Theatre & Dance present

Steel Band

Miho Takekawa, *director*

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Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

PLU Alumni Steel Band

Ashley Neufeld • Claire Calderon • Darek Solomon • Donovan Klega
Felicity Waldron • Rui-Ann Tseng • TJ Wheeler
Sonja Gundersen, *community member*
Jacob Shaffer, *bass* • Cole Strichertz, *drum set*

Forged from the Love of Liberty ..... **Patrick S. Castagne (1916-2000)**

Pan in A Minor ..... **Lord Kitchener (1922-2000)**

You Can't Hurry Love ..... **Brian Holland (b. 1941), Lamont Dozier (1941-2022) & Edward Holland (b. 1939)**
arr. Donovan Klega

J'Ouvert Barrio ..... **Roaring Lion (1908-1999)**
arr. Josh Quillen

Savannah Grass ..... **KES & Jelani "Pops" Shaw**
arr. Alex Fragiskatos

PLU Steel Band

Ashton Allen • Nathaniel Bratcher • Jessa Delos Reyes • Lennon Green • Joy Han • Matthew Helmer • Aidan Hille
Elizabeth Oie • Piero Ramirez • Quinn Rasmussen • Courtney Stark • Cole Strichertz • Gabriela Vera-Kavanaugh

Descarga Cubana ..... **Cuban Traditional**
arr. Sune Borregaard

Pavane pour une infante défunte ..... **Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)**
trans. Yuko Asada

Superstition ..... **Stevie Wonder (b. 1950)**
arr. Akini Gill and Josh Guuillen

Batty Mamselle ..... **Lord Kitchener**
arr. Gary Gibson

About the Director

Miho Takekawa was raised in Tokyo and currently resides in Seattle. She teaches at PLU, where she heads the percussion studio and directs the school's Percussion Ensemble and Steel Band. During the 2010-2011 school year, she was an interim professor of percussion at the University of Washington School of Music. Miho began piano at age three and took up percussion at thirteen, ultimately graduating from Tokyo's prestigious Kunitachi School of Music. She earned both master's and doctoral degrees in percussion performance from the University of Washington School of Music in Seattle, where she was awarded the coveted Boeing Scholarship, among other honors. She is a sought-after performer in many styles of music, working with groups ranging from classical music (such as the Seattle Modern Orchestra) to Mexican banda music, to steel band, and West African drumming. She performs with Diego Coy Musica Colombiana, Pan Duo, and many other groups, and is a founding member of the Miho & Diego Duo (www.mihodiego.com). Significant awards include a Washington State Arts Commission Fellowship and grants from King County 4Culture. In addition to her own performance career, Miho directed the North Rainbow Steel Drum Group (Sapporo, Japan) and served as an arranger for the Hirosaki University Steel Pan Group. Inspired to share her passion for music with others, and especially younger musicians, Miho served as a board member of Steel Magic Orchestra Northwest, a consultant for the Washington State Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society, an annual guest speaker for the University of Washington Percussion Lab, and was the vice-president of the Percussion Arts Society Washington Chapter. She has shared her music in many parts of the world, including Japan, Chile, Namibia, Mexico, and in February 2024 she traveled to Trinidad and Tobago to conduct research on steel pan, steel band, and Asian-Trinidadian culture, which was sponsored by the Washington State Arts Commission. She has worked to foster cultural exchange between Japanese and American youth groups, leading or coordinating tours by the University of Washington Husky Marching Band and the University of Washington Wind Ensemble (Seattle), Musica Grato Himi (Toyama, Japan), the Tamana Girls High School Band (Japan), the Graham-Kapowsin High School Band (Washington State), the Left Coast Brass Quintet (Seattle), and Seattle percussionist Tom Collier. Many of Miho's past activities can be found at www.tymusicexchange.com.

From Oil Drum to Steel Band Instrument

Step 1: Find your drum
Steel pans start life as a standard 55-gallon oil drum, made from 17 or 18 gauge steel. These drums are cleaned and checked for faults before the best are chosen for use.

Step 2: Sinking
The flat bottom of the oil drum is robustly hammered into a concave shape using a heavy hammer. In some part of the Caribbean a shot-put or a 5kg heavy cast iron ball (cannon balls!) is used instead, which is bounced onto the surface. This process, known as sinking, stretches the steel and creates the surface for the notes. This surface is now completely below the rim of the oil drum.

Step 3: Cutting
The lower section of the drum is cut off. How much is cut off determines the pitch of the steel pan. If you leave more 'skirt' in the drum, it has a lower pitch. Less skirt, the higher the individual pan voices can be. (This can also be done after the grooving process in Step 7.)

Step 4: Smoothing
The hammer comes out again, to smooth out the concave surface in a process rather like taking dents out of car doors (panel beating). This second round of hammering further strengthens the drum.

Step 5: Etching
The individual notes need to be etched onto the playing surface so each one can be pitched. This is done using a punch tool, some pre-cut shapes as according to which note is being created, and a template of where each note should be positioned. Each pitch of pan (tenor, baritone, etc.) has its own template. These can be simple or complex.

Step 6: Countersinking
The area between each note is carefully flattened using (you guessed it) precision hammers. The result is that each note protrudes slightly as a 'bulge', making it easier to hit when playing.

Step 7: Grooving
Using a nail punch, indentations are gently hammered around each note to create an outline. The idea is that this outline separates each note from one another, and stops them from blending together. However, given that we're still dealing with one big piece of steel, some steel pan tuners think this process just makes the pan look nicer!

Step 8: Firing and tempering
The steel in the drum still needs to be tempered. It is heated rapidly and then cooled by pouring water over it or leaving it to cool in a gentle Caribbean breeze. This process removes what is known as 'local' tensions, where some steel sections are stretched more than other sections. This process 'evens out' the stresses, making the pan much easier to tune.

Step 9: Tuning
Turning a dented oil drum into a finely tuned instrument is an art form in itself. Small hammers (natch) are used to shape each note from above and below to achieve the correct pitch.

Step 10: Cleaning and polishing
Once in tune, each steel drum is cleaned and polished. It can also be painted, chrome-plated, or powder coated to give it a protective layer and attractive finish.

Step 11: Final tuning
A final tune is required to ensure every note is perfect. It's a process not to be rushed, as each time one note is tweaked, it will inevitably affect the others around it.

Step 12: Blending
If you're playing in a steel band, you'll want all the steel pans to blend together for a mellow vibe and sympathetic harmonics. Blending and tuning is not a one-off, as any steel pan drum needs retuning and blending over its lifespan.

Steel Pan Layout Examples