

Steel Band

Sunday, November 16, 2025 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*
with guest artist Marcel E.C. Augustin, *tenor saxophone*

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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 Steel Band

Janelle Chin, Ben Coats, Kyle Gough, Allison Howes, Cadence Philbeck,
Courtney Stark, Anna Tangedahl, and Courtney Lazzarini
Ben Hegge, *drumset* • Jacob Shaffer, *percussion*

Caribbean Connection..... **Merchant (1943-1999)**
arr. Darek Solomon

Afro Blue..... **Mongo Santamaria (1917-2003)**
arr. Matt Duback

A Night in Tunisia..... **Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1993)**
arr. Sune Borregaard

Steel Rain

Donovan Klega, Darek Solomon, Jessa Delos Reyes, Rui-An Tseng,
Ashley Neufeld, Claire Calderon, and Ashton Allen
Ben Hegge and Kyle Gough, *drumset* • Jacob Shaffer, *bass guitar*

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

Partita No. 1..... **Gary Gibson (b. 1960)**
Donovan Klega, *tenor pan soloist*

Bazodee **Ray Holman (b. 1944)**
arr. Eugene Novotney

PLU Steel Band and Steel Rain

Lè-m retounen **Izly (b. 1972)**

Program Notes

Konpa, a French Creole translation of “compass” (meaning “rhythm” in Spanish), is a style of Haitian music that was derived from merengue de salon in the 1950s. At its origins, bands who played in konpa relied heavily on brass sections and percussion like the tanbou. In the 1970s, Haitian bands toured the Lesser Antilles, popularizing the style in other countries and evolving into other styles such as Zouk.

Over the decades the style evolved to konpa direk. The use of horns was diminished and replaced by additional electric guitars. The tanbou and traditional percussion was replaced by drum set, congas, timbales, and cowbells. Konpa musicians added synthesizers and drum machines – characteristics of hip hop, reggae, R&B, and rock all influenced the music.

Lè-m Retounen, French Creole for “my return”, is a popular konpa direk tune by Izly with the Zic Band released in 2001. In the recording, a heavy use of a brass section recalls konpa’s origins while its production is grounded in konpa’s influence of ‘90s-‘00s R&B. This arrangement for steel pan and tenor sax adapts the vocal line (sax) and the backing vocal and horn section (tenor pan and double seconds) while also simplifying strumming patterns for the lower pans from the accompanying synth and guitars heard in the recording.

J’ouvert Barrio, which can also be written and pronounced as “Juve” or “Juv’e”, is a broken-down version of the French *jour ouvert*, the morning time referred to as “opening of the day” or “daybreak”. In Trinidad, J’ouvert – also known as Jouvay – originated with the festivities of Canboulay, a time when sugarcane fields would catch on fire and slaves were still forced to harvest the remaining crops before destruction. That event was reenacted, and male slaves were mocked by their masters. However, after emancipation the slaves mocked the masters. Traditionally, the festival begins before dawn and proceeds a little past sunups. J’ouvert a very colorful event where paint and powder contribute color in addition to costumes.

About the Director

Miho Takekawa is originally from Tokyo, Japan. She teaches at Pacific Lutheran University, where she is head of the percussion studio and directs the school’s Percussion Ensemble and Steel Band. Previously, she was an interim professor of percussion at the University of Washington School of Music from 2011 to 2012. Miho began piano at age three and took up percussion at age thirteen, ultimately graduating from Tokyo’s prestigious Kunitachi School of Music. She earned both her masters 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. Takekawa is a sought-after performer in many styles of music including classical, steel pan, and West African drumming. She performs with Vashon Opera, Pan Duo, and many other groups. She is also 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 Rainbow Steel Pan Group. In 2023, the Miho & Diego Duo traveled to Namibia, Africa to teach marimba at Sunshine Private School and performed with the Ongama Drum Cafe Group. They have also received an invitation to perform with the Hirosaki University Tsugaru Shamisen Group, which is a concert supported by the Agency of Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan. Miho’s other significant activities include serving as Vice President of the Washington Chapter of Percussive Arts Society, directing the PLU Alumni Steel Band, and working with the Folk & Traditional Arts Program of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. Additionally, she is a contributing coauthor of *A Composer’s Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band* published by Meredith Music. Miho has worked to foster cultural exchange between Japanese and American youth music groups. Many of Miho’s past activities can be found at www.tymusicexchange.com.

About the Guest Artist

Marcel E.C. (Emmanuel Christopher) Augustin is a saxophonist, music producer, and content creator from Tacoma, Washington. Marcel enjoys creating music around genres like R&B, gospel, neo soul, and jazz. His tone has been influenced by saxophonists like John Coltrane, Yuseff Lateef, Erik Alexander, and Kamasi Washington. Marcel has completed an Associate of Music degree at Tacoma Community College and a Bachelor of Music in saxophone performance at Pacific Lutheran University. Marcel’s music career started in 2017 when he performed *Lift Every Voice and Sing* for the City of Tacoma’s 29th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. Marcel has a strong passion for music and shows this commitment through his musical flexibility in his community. Some musical opportunities that he has accomplished from 2017-2022 include composing and directing music for *The Chinese Question: The Tacoma Method* (2017), writing and filming his two-part short film *S.O.S.*, producing music for the short film *Alice To The Moon* (2022), performing in two series of Music from Home at the

Lakewold Gardens, producing music for The Walk Home Podcast for KNKX Public Radio and *The Seattle Times* (2022) and most recently Marcel has appeared on *Good Morning America*'s we social platforms. Marcel is currently coordinating with local musicians called The M.E.C.A. Collective, which is a group determined to share the stage with various talented musicians. His main focus is to bring people together through music and create a space for joy, fun, and expression of self.

History of Steel Pan

The steel pan evolved out of earlier musical practices of Trinidad's African descendants. Drumming was used as a form of communication among the enslaved Africans and was subsequently outlawed by the British colonial government in 1883. While many instruments have experienced some degree of evolution in recent years, the steel pan has the distinction of being the only instrument to be truly 'invented' in the 20th century. The first instruments developed in the evolution of steel pan were "Tamboo Bamboo", tunable sticks made of bamboo wood. These were hit onto the ground with other sticks in order to produce sound. "Tamboo Bamboo" bands also included percussion using biscuit tins, oil drums, and bottle-and-spoon.

By the mid-1930s metal percussion was being used in the "Tamboo Bamboo" bands, the first probably being either the automobile brake hub 'iron' or the biscuit drum 'boom'. The former replaced the bottle-and-spoon, and then later the 'bass' bamboo that was pounded on the ground. By the late 1930s the occasional all-steel bands were seen at Carnival and by 1940 it had become the preferred Carnival accompaniment of young underprivileged men. The 55-gallon oil drum was used to make lead steel pans from around 1947.

– from Carnival Music & Arts-CultureMix Arts

INSTRUMENT LAYOUT EXAMPLES

