Percussion Ensemble

Wednesday, November 18, 2026 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

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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

Dire, Dire Docks ..... **Koji Kondo (b. 1961)**
arr. Cadence Philbeck

Ethan's Composition ..... **Ethan Ocken (b. 2006)**

Dynamo ..... **Jared Spears (1936-2025)**

Wishful Thinking ..... **Tracy Thornton**
Logan Keogh, *steel pan solo*

Starting the Project ..... **Kyle Gough (b. 2002)**
World premiere

INTERMISSION

Catching Shadows ..... **Ivan Trevino (b. 1983)**

City of Trees ..... **Benjamin Coats (b. 2004)**
World premiere
Thomas Tafoya, *student conductor*

PLU Percussion Ensemble
Miho Takekawa, *director*

Ben Hegge • Cadence Philbeck • Ethan Ocken • Max Bailey • Jim Harkins • Logan Keogh
Rory Lacy • Wu-Yin Lu • Joey Perez • Garrett Saez • Ronin Schoolcraft • Thomas Tafoya
Aubrie Clark and Kyle Gough, *community members*

Program Notes

Designed to be a fun, fast paced piece, ***Starting the Project***, as arranged by Kyle Gough, depicts the hectic, chaotic mess of a percussion section in the back of an ensemble trying to figure out everything that they need at the start of a new term. Percussionists are often seen moving various instruments around and running around the back of the ensemble trying to figure out what exactly they have to do. *Starting the Project* takes these percussion stereotypes of being goofy people that need to run all over the place to be able to play their part, and creates a fun exciting performance that brings together old and new percussionists into one ensemble. The ending shows just how amazing a group of percussionists can be when they are perfectly synced up playing complicated unison lines.

– program note by Kyle Gough

City of Trees was inspired by Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest. Specifically, the memories of driving through the forest and looking out the window on the way to the Washington coast as a kid. It was my favorite part of almost all of my family's trips. Full of large, beautiful conifer trees, dense foliage, and diverse wildlife. While driving through the forests, I was truly enamored with this place. However, there were parts of the forest that had gone through heavy amounts of clear-cutting, the logging practice that cuts most, if not all, trees in a specific area. Seeing the sections of clear-cut forest, with nothing but dead branches, stumps, and a lack of wildlife, made me sad even as a kid. This piece is both an exploration of my emotions and memories of my childhood through the forest, as well as bringing awareness to deforestation and improper clear-cutting. Compositionally, I tried to keep the themes of "natural" and "man-made" sounds separate. I made the "man-made" sounds static and rigid, while the "natural" sounds flowing and beautiful. The piece is divided into three distinct sections. The first represents driving through the forest and looking out the window. The car is represented by the marimbas, with their constant but static ostinato. The rest of the ensemble represents the trees, foliage, and wildlife. The second section represents the clear-cut sections of the forest as well as deforestation in general. Using a lot of extended techniques, I tried to create the sounds of machinery to the beat of a very slow march. The low marimba parts can be heard as both the marching of the machines and the chopping of the trees. The use of the hammer in this section acts as the trees hitting the ground. The third and final section represents the wildlife carefully stepping back into their habitat after the machines are gone. Each step is further than the last, eventually more and more of nature reclaims their homes and ends triumphantly as an optimistic statement that nature can be restored and preserved. This piece was written as part of my senior capstone project at Pacific Lutheran University and is my first piece for percussion ensemble. This was the first time that, during the compositional process, I knew exactly what I wanted to write and how I was going to write it. I want to thank Dr. Miho Takekawa, Dr. Baldwin Giang, Evan Nakanishi, and the PLU Percussion Ensemble for supporting me through the process of creating this piece.

– program note by Benjamin Coats

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.

PLU | SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

ALL MUSIC EVENTS ARE IN MARY BAKER RUSSELL MUSIC CENTER, LAGERQUIST CONCERT HALL UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

SEPTEMBER

13 Sunday, 3pm
Faculty Recital: Erik Steighner, Saxophone & Oksana Ejokina, Piano, free admission

20 Sunday, 12pm
Faculty Recital: Vianna & Trindade, Brazilian Jazz Duo. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission

20 Sunday, 3pm
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Christa Rakich, Organist

OCTOBER

4 Sunday, 5pm
Evelina Bozhko, Piano – Forestine Wise Monsen Memorial Scholarship Recital, free admission

7 Wednesday, 7:30pm
Guest Artist Lecture Recital: Alejandro Cremaschi, Piano, free admission

11 Sunday, 3pm
University Wind Ensemble

15 Thursday, 1:45pm
Jessica Dodge-Overstreet Saxophone Masterclass. Mary Baker Russell Music Center Room 334, free admission

15 Thursday, 7:30pm
Guest Artist Recital: Jessica Dodge-Overstreet, Saxophone, free admission

18 Sunday, 3pm
South Sound Saxophone Ensemble, free admission

19 Monday, 7:30pm
University Jazz Ensemble: Miles Davis Centennial. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center

20 Tuesday, 7:30pm
Fall Festival of Choirs

25 Sunday, 2pm
Choir of the West Centennial Celebration

27 Tuesday, 7:30pm
University Symphony Orchestra

29 Thursday, 1:30pm
Emely Phelps Piano Masterclass, free admission

29 Thursday, 7:30pm
Guest Artist Recital: Emely Phelps, Piano, free admission

30 Friday, 12pm
Orchestra Festival concert, free admission

NOVEMBER

1 Sunday, 3pm
Angela Meade Vocal Competition, free admission

3 Tuesday, 7:30pm
Keyboard Students Recital, free admission

8 Sunday, 3pm
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Justin J. Murphy-Mancini and Friends

11 Wednesday, 7:30pm
Early Music Concert, free admission

14 Saturday, 3pm
Woodwind Students Recital, free admission

14 Saturday, 4:30pm
Brass Students Recital, free admission

15 Sunday, 3pm
University Wind Ensemble

15 Sunday, 5:45pm
Tracy Doyle Flute Masterclass. Mary Baker Russell Music Center Room 334, free admission

17 Tuesday, 7:30pm
University Concert Band

18 Wednesday, 7:30pm
Percussion Ensemble, free admission

NOVEMBER, Cont.

20-21 Friday-Saturday, 7:30pm
Opera Scenes. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center

21 Saturday, 3pm
Steel Band, free admission

22 Sunday, 3pm
Choral Union

22 Sunday, 7:30pm
Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission

23 Monday, 7:30pm
University Jazz Ensemble. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center

24 Tuesday, 7:30pm
Mariachi del Pacifico. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center, free admission

DECEMBER

***Light Beyond Shadow*, A PLU Christmas Concert**
Tickets go on sale Wednesday, November 4

Friday, December 4, at 7:30pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall
Saturday, December 5, at 2pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall
Saturday, December 5, at 7:30pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall
Sunday, December 6, at 2pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall
Monday, December 7, at 7:30pm - Benaroya Hall, Seattle

1 Tuesday, 6pm
Saxophone Quartets & Jazz Combos. The Cave, Anderson University Center, free admission

2 Wednesday, 7:30pm
Piano Ensemble, free admission

8 Tuesday, 6pm
Chamber Music Kaleidoscope, free admission

8 Tuesday, 7:30pm
String Kaleidoscope, free admission

9 Wednesday, 7:30pm
Let Your Heart Be Light, featuring University Singers, Knights Chorus, and PLU Ringers

10 Thursday, 7:30pm
Sølvvinden Flute Ensemble, free admission

13 Sunday, 3pm
Composers Forum, free admission

JANUARY

9 Saturday, 4:30 and 6:30pm
Northwest High School Honor Band, free admission

12 Tuesday, 12:30pm
TBDetermined!, free admission

17 Sunday, 6pm
PLU Honor Orchestra for Strings, free admission

28-30 Thursday-Saturday, 7:30pm and 31 Sunday, 2pm
The Magic Flute by W. A. Mozart. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center

To view more detailed event information, please visit:
www.plu.edu/music/calendar (Updated October 22, 2026)