

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
**CHARLOTTE**  
COLLEGE OF ARTS + ARCHITECTURE

The Department of Music presents

# Percussion Ensemble

Rick Dior, director

**Machine**

William Bolcom

**The Drummers Heritage**

Traditional

arr. Frederick Fennell/Dior

The Three Camps  
Hell on the Wabash  
The Downfall of Paris  
The Dinner Call

featuring the UNC Charlotte Piccolo Choir:

Jennifer Dior, Emily Cordes, Jeffrey Wang, Sophie Taylor,  
Aileen Enriquez, Ashley Bazzardi, and Alexis Forner

**Away Without Leave**

Bob Becker

**dark waters, beaming skies**

Tripp Haynes

**Promise Music**

Clif Walker

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Anne R. Belk Theater  
Robinson Hall for the Performing Arts  
Monday, April 29, 2024 | 7:30 pm  
[coaa.charlotte.edu](http://coaa.charlotte.edu)



# Program Notes

## **Machine**

Derived from the fourth movement of William Bolcom's *Fifth Symphony*, Machine presents an opportunity for the percussion ensemble to shine both technically and musically. Filled with passages of alternating 16th notes the piece is wildly syncopated. Dynamics and accents play a large part in the relentless drive of the composition. In several sections a large drum set groove is created by several players adding to the bombast. The piece is scored for Timpani, Xylophone, 2 Marimbas, Glockenspiel, Chimes, Crotales and percussion batterie.

**The Drummers Heritage** is a collection of historic pieces organized into a text by the great band master Frederick Fennell who taught at the Eastman School of Music for many years. This is music for Fife's (played here with piccolo's) and Drums that was prominent in military bands from 1775 all the way up to the 20th century. Here we perform several classic pieces that would have announced the daily activities in the military camps including *The Three Camps*, *Hell on the Wabash*, *The Downfall of Paris* and *The Dinner Call*.

**Away Without Leave** is a modern take on the rudimental drumming of the past. It is described by the composer Bob Becker as a drum medley dedicated to his friend, the great drummer Steve Gadd. There are three sections of the composition made up of three separate pieces, *The Army 2/4*, *Duke's Lullaby* and *Crazy Army*. Modern elements and musical styles such as samba drumming and the use of common Latin instruments such as the timbales adds a modern twist to this otherwise traditional rudimental piece.

## **dark waters, beaming skies** (Premiere)

In December of 2022, I began writing the piece *dark waters, beaming skies* as an ode to my high school Fantasy Literature class. In this class, I was tasked with creating and designing my own magical world completely in my image. What was supposed to be a simple school project turned into an obsession as I began designing this world and the people who lived in it, and I found myself emotionally invested in my own work in a way that I had

never been before. Music has always been a central element in my life, and likewise, became a central element in the world I was building. Thus, I knew I needed to compose a piece of music based around this world.

*dark waters, beaming skies* is a work for solo percussion and an accompanying percussion quartet. It focuses on musical color and contrast as primary elements and showcases a variety of percussive timbres such as bowed/scraped metallics and low timpani glissandi, lyrical melodies on vibraphone and marimba, and loud rhythmic drum sections. While the piece is not necessarily programmatic in nature, its contrasting use of both force and reservation establishes a duology that connects to the *ti* upon the Chinese philosophical principles of Yin and Yang (阴阳) that, while opposite, form a balance allowing us to exist in harmony. Yin (阴), represented by the “dark waters” and lyrical sonorous passages of the piece, is characterized by water and winter, night, turbulence, secrecy, and darkness, while Yang (阳), represented by the “beaming skies” and energetic outcries within the piece, is characterized by fire and summer, day, force, openness, and light. The final musical product is one that is irregular and unrefined, but deeply personal, and serves to (hopefully) reflect both the dark waters that keep us grounded, and the beaming skies that give us hope for a better tomorrow.

- Program Note by the Composer

## **Promise Music**

Originally conceived and written by Clif Walker as a marimba solo with small ensemble accompaniment, *Promise Music* was later revised (2007) and expanded to seven, then nine equal parts. It was performed in its final form at the 2007 Percussive Arts Society International Convention by the Florida State University percussion ensemble as a winner of the “call for tapes” competition under the direction of Dr. John W. Parks IV. The work attempts to convey the mood of a promise. A strong, simple melody withstanding an undercurrent of activity, changes and modulations. Intentionally, it was written without the use of any drums/membranophones, leaving all the challenges of energy, aggressiveness, and excitement exclusively to keyboards and various metals (cymbals, gongs, and triangle). The struck *crotales* on timpani effect is in memory of, and was introduced to the composer by, the late Michael Hooley of Northeast Missouri State University.

# Percussion Ensemble Personnel

Jack Applegate

Brady Bittner

Tim Gawert

Drew Gledhill

Tripp Haynes

Conner Oglesby

Charlie Pearsell

Evan Schmit

Ava Weaver

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## About the Director

**Rick Dior** is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music where he studied with renowned timpanist Fred Hinger, jazz composer Bob Mintzer, and famed jazz drummer Joe Morello. Rick has performed as a percussionist and drummer with some of the greatest artists in the music industry including James Taylor, Aretha Franklin, Roberta Flack, Ray Charles, Bobby McFerrin, Al Jarreau, Marvin Hamlisch, BeBe Winans and Martina McBride. He has added his jazz drum set talents to performances with many great jazz artists including Marvin Stamm, Bill Watrous, Clark Terry, Red Rodney, Chris Potter, Russell Malone and Lionel Hampton. He has performed with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra since 1990 as principal percussionist, section percussionist and timpanist. As a first call percussionist in Charlotte, Rick has performed in dozens of Broadway show tours including *Beautiful*, *Wicked*, *The Producers*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Spamalot*, *Hairspray*, *South Pacific*, *West Side Story* and *Mary Poppins*.

Rick has served as the Professor of Percussion at UNC Charlotte since 2001. He also maintains an active private teaching studio and his students have gone on to attend UNC Charlotte as well as many other prestigious music institutions. Many of these students are active as professional musicians and educators.

In 2018 Rick was commissioned to orchestrate his composition *Science Fiction* for a European tour of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, widely considered to be the finest youth orchestra in the world. He is the author of several percussion books including the acclaimed *Advanced Coordination for Drum Set and Hand Percussion*. Rick's books and compositions are published by Tap Space. He is also an artist for Vic Firth Drumsticks, Mike Balter Mallets, Paiste Cymbals, and Doc Sweeney Drums.

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