

GRIFFIN CONCERT HALL / UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

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C L A S S I C A L  
**CONVERGENCE**

MARCH 1, 7:30 P.M.

**THIRD COAST**  
PERCUSSION



the LINCOLN center

Colorado State University  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE AND DANCE

# THIRD COAST PERCUSSION

Sean Connors   Robert Dillon   Peter Martin   David Skidmore

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## TONIGHT'S PROGRAM: Lyrical Geometry

*Wild Sound, part 4* (2014) / GLENN KOTCHE (b.1970)

*Table Music* (1987) / THIERRY DE MEY (b. 1956)

*Resounding Earth, Mvt II. Prayer* (2012) / AUGUSTA READ THOMAS (b. 1964)

*Mallet Quartet* (2009) / STEVE REICH (b. 1936)

## INTERMISSION

*BEND* (2016) / PETER MARTIN (b. 1980)

*Ordering-instincts* (2014) / ROBERT DILLON (b. 1980)

*Blindnesses* (2012) / ISAAC SCHANKLER (b. 1979)

*Aliens with Extraordinary Abilities* (2016) / DAVID SKIDMORE (b. 1982)

Don't Eat Your Young

Take Anything You Want

Torched and Wrecked

## PROGRAM NOTES

Chicago-based percussionist and composer Glenn Kotche has written pieces for world-renowned ensembles including Kronos Quartet and Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, and has released six albums of his own compositions. Since 2001, Kotche has also been the drummer and percussionist of the groundbreaking rock band Wilco.

**Wild Sound** is a massive multi-media project developed by Glenn Kotche and Third Coast Percussion that utilizes custom instruments, many of which are created on stage during the performance. Tonight's concert features the final section of the piece, arranged for more standard pitched percussion instruments.

*Wild Sound* was commissioned by the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center and the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program, with generous funding provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Chamber Music America Endowment Fund. Additional support provided by The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra's Liquid Music Series and the National Forum of Music Wroclaw.

**Duration: 7 minutes**

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**Musique de Tables (Table Music)** clearly displays Belgian composer and filmmaker Thierry De Mey's interest in merging the visual and audio aspects of music into a performance art that engages multiple senses. *Musique de Tables* is scored for 3 amplified "table surfaces" to be constructed by the performers and notated in a manner entirely unique to this composition. Every sound made by the performers is inseparable from a specific physical motion, and De Mey instructs the performers to create sounds/motions with such colorful names as "castanets," "the stone," "wind-shield wipers," and "the fan." This unique work of chamber music/choreography has become standard repertoire for percussion ensembles and other new music groups.

**Duration: 8 minutes**

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Grammy-award winner Augusta Read Thomas was Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony from 1997-2006. She is the 16th ever University Professor (of five current University Professors) at The University of Chicago, and she was named one of the Chicago Tribune's "Chicagoans of the Year" in 2016.

**Resounding Earth** is scored for four percussionists playing bells (and bell-like instruments) from a wide variety of cultures and historical periods. The piece was conceived as a cultural statement celebrating interdependence and commonality across all cultures; and as a musical statement celebrating the extraordinary beauty and diversity of expression inherent in bell sounds.

Bells can be used to celebrate grand occasions, hold sacrificial rites, keep a record of events, give the correct time, celebrate births and weddings, mark funerals, caution a community, enhance any number of religious ceremonies, and are even hung around the necks of animals.

*Resounding Earth* was commissioned by The University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, with additional funding from The Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, Department of Music, and the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program, with generous funding provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Chamber Music America Endowment Fund.

**Duration: 9 minutes**

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American composer Steve Reich is widely viewed as one of the most influential composers of the last hundred years. His music is known for steady pulse, repetition, and a fascination with canons, and embraces harmonies and rhythmic concepts from non-Western and American vernacular music (especially jazz). While his early works are often categorized as "minimalist," **Mallet Quartet** presents a more melodic style. The work is scored for two marimbas and two vibraphones, and divided into three movements. In the fast outer movements, the marimbas weave an interlocking motor rhythm over which the vibraphones play melodies, solo and in canon, while the slower middle movement utilizes the resonance of these instruments to create a more homogeneous, lyrical texture less typical of Reich's style.

To celebrate Reich's 80th birthday in 2016, Third Coast Percussion released an album of Reich's works, *Third Coast Percussion | Steve Reich* on Cedille Records, which was nominated for a Grammy for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance, and a free mobile app exploring Reich's music.

**Duration: 15 minutes**

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Renowned as a soloist, chamber musician, and educator, Third Coast Percussion's Peter Martin was Assistant Professor and Director of Percussion Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA before returning to Chicago in 2013 to pursue TCP full time. Peter has composed music for many of the group's educational and concert projects in recent years.

His quartet **BEND** draws inspiration from the player piano compositions of Bruce Goff, a wonderfully unconventional architect and amateur composer. Many of Goff's piano rolls were highly stylized geometric designs perforated into the scrolls, resulting in music that created very clear sonic "shapes." Whereas these shapes would create the pitch and rhythm in a player piano performance, **BEND** translates these shapes into volume, tone, and gesture. The composer's experience with the piano rolls- through a blurry, decades-old video- inspired an unconventional sound palette created with alternative techniques on 2 marimbas.

**Duration: 8 minutes**

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Third Coast Percussion member Robert Dillon has enjoyed a career as an orchestral, solo and chamber musician, as well as an educator for all ages, and since college, has pursued music composition as an additional expressive avenue. **Ordering-instincts** draws a big sound from a very compact setup of instruments. The four percussionists share eight wooden planks, an octave of loose crotales and two tom-toms, from which they create a variety of different sonic colors

in tightly interwoven rhythms. All musical content arises from the composite of all the players together; no one player's part forms a complete voice by itself.

*Ordering-instincts* is dedicated to the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center at the University of Notre Dame, on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.

**Duration: 8 minutes**

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Isaac Schankler is a composer, pianist, accordionist and electronic musician based in Los Angeles. He writes music inspired by improvisation, indeterminacy, repetition, language, narrative, and puzzles, creating work that is 'experimental' while still engaging with the foundational elements of music: harmony, melody, time, timbre; music that is 'beautiful' while still allowing space for more unsettling experiences: uncertainty, anxiety, humor, horror.

"Being close to someone can mean agreeing not to see parts of them, and in some sense **Blindnesses** is about the absences that this mutual understanding contains."

— Isaac Schankler

*Blindnesses* is scored for four percussionists— sharing one vibraphone— and electronic sound processing. The electronic component of the piece at times adds a cavernous artificial resonance to the sound, while at other times, it plays back distorted fragments of music performed by the live musicians earlier in the piece. The four percussionists- whose movements must be meticulously choreographed to perform together on a single instrument- create their own stark sonic contrasts with a variety of mallets and acoustic pitch bending effects.

**Duration: 9 minutes**

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The compositions of Third Coast Percussion member David Skidmore are performed regularly in concert halls and universities across the country. In 2011, his multi-movement work *Common Patterns in Uncommon Time* was commissioned by Frank Lloyd Wright scholar Sidney K. Robinson to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Taliesin, home of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. In 2007 his piece, *Unknown Kind*, was premiered at Carnegie Hall. He has also received commissions from the Rush Hour Concert Series in Chicago, and a number of leading percussion soloists and pedagogues.

*Aliens with Extraordinary Abilities* is a cycle of works exploring a common idea, that the same piece of music can move at several different speeds at the same time. An electronic audio track- David's most intensive work with electronic composition to date- expands and reinforces the live percussion in many of these works, and video artist Xuan was commissioned to create accompanying video. Many of the individual pieces take their cryptic names from memorable Third Coast Percussion touring experiences or inside jokes.

**Duration: 15 minutes**

## **ABOUT THIRD COAST PERCUSSION**

Third Coast Percussion is a Grammy-nominated, artist-run quartet of classically-trained percussionists hailing from the great city of Chicago. For over ten years, the ensemble has forged a unique path in the musical landscape with virtuosic, energetic performances that celebrate the extraordinary depth and breadth of musical possibilities in the world of percussion. The ensemble has been praised for “commandingly elegant” (*New York Times*) performances, and the “rare power” (*Washington Post*) of their recordings. The four members of Third Coast are also accomplished teachers, and since 2012, have served as ensemble-in-residence at the University of Notre Dame’s DeBartolo Performing Arts Center.

A direct connection with the audience is at the core of all of Third Coast Percussion’s work. Percussion instruments are perhaps the oldest musical instruments, and any object on the planet that produces sound can be a percussion instrument. Perhaps this is why audiences seem to have an innate attraction to percussion instruments. A spirit of inclusivity inspires all that Third Coast Percussion does, whether the musicians are speaking from the stage about a new piece of music, inviting the audience to play along in a concert or educational performance, or inviting their fans around the world to create new music using one of their free mobile apps.

The quartet’s curiosity and eclectic taste have led to a series of unlikely collaborations that have produced exciting new art. The ensemble has worked with engineers at the University of Notre Dame, architects at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, dancers at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and musicians from traditions ranging from the mbira music of Zimbabwe’s Shona people, to indie rockers, to some of the world’s leading concert musicians.

A commission for a new work from Augusta Read Thomas in 2012 led to the realization that commissioning new musical works can be – and should be – as collaborative as any other artistic partnership. Through extensive workshopping and close contact with composers, Third Coast Percussion has commissioned and premiered new works from Donacha Dennehy, Glenn Kotche, Lei Liang, Gavin Bryars, Christopher Cerrone, Timo Andres, Marcos Balter, Ted Hearne, and today’s leading up-and-coming composers through their Emerging Composers Partnership Program. These works have become part of the ensemble’s core repertoire and seen hundreds of performances across North America and throughout Europe.

Third Coast Percussion maintains a busy touring schedule, with past performances in 32 of the 50 states plus Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland, and venues

ranging from concert halls at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and De Doelen to clubs and alternative performance spaces such as New York's Le Poisson Rouge and the National Gallery's West Garden Court.

Third Coast Percussion's recordings include three full-length albums, three EPs, and a number of appearances on other releases. The quartet has put its stamp on iconic percussion works by John Cage and Steve Reich, and Third Coast has also created first recordings of commissioned works by Augusta Read Thomas, David T. Little, and Ted Hearne, in addition to recordings of the ensemble's own compositions. In 2017 the ensemble was nominated for a Grammy for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble performance for its recording of Steve Reich's works for percussion.

Third Coast Percussion has always maintained strong ties to the vibrant artistic community in their hometown of Chicago. The quartet has collaborated with Chicago institutions such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and the Adler Planetarium, performed at the grand opening of Maggie Daley Children's Park, conducted residencies at the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, created multi-year collaborative projects with Chicago-based composers Augusta Read Thomas, Glenn Kotche, and chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird, and taught tens of thousands of students through partnerships with Urban Gateways, the People's Music School, the Chicago Park District, Rush Hour Concerts, and others.

The four members of Third Coast Percussion met while studying music at Northwestern University. Members of Third Coast also hold degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Rutgers University, the New England Conservatory, and the Yale School of Music. Stay up-to-date and go behind-the-scenes by following Third Coast on Twitter (@ThirdCoastPerc), Facebook (@Third Coast Percussion), and Instagram (@ThirdCoastPercussion).

\*Third Coast Percussion is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

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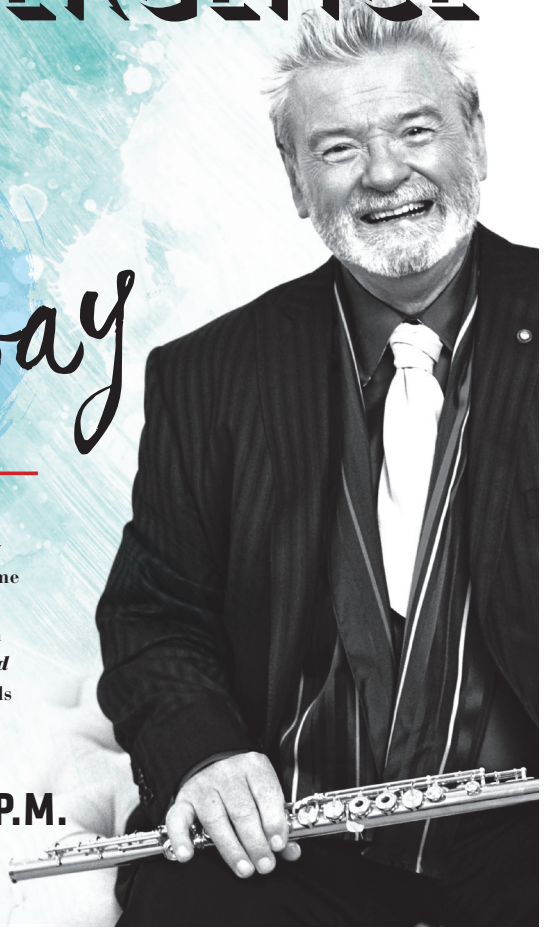
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