



Tuesday, February 20, 2024, 8:00 PM
Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Princeton Sound Kitchen presents **TAK**

Chamber ensemble **TAK** performs new works by Princeton University graduate student composers **Aliayta Foon-Dancoes**, **Gemma Peacocke**, **Christian Quiñones**, **Elijah Daniel Smith**, and **Max Vinetz**.

DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC
AT PRINCETON

About the Department of Music

The Department of Music at Princeton University provides its undergraduates—whether they major or minor in Music—the opportunity to learn from a world-renowned faculty of scholars and composers. Performance opportunities include student-led and departmental ensembles like symphony orchestras, multi-genre choruses, jazz, contemporary music, African music, steel band, laptop orchestra, and much more, and students have access to private instrumental and voice lessons from eminent performing artists. The graduate program offers two distinct and prestigious PhD programs in composition or musicology; graduate students receive fully-funded, immersive experiences conducting research, advancing their craft, and collaborating with faculty within Princeton University’s inspiring, interdisciplinary campus.

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PROGRAM

Max Vinetz	<i>of Montrose</i>
Gemma Peacocke	<i>on GHOSTS</i>
Aliayta Foon-Dancoes	<i>YOU WILL GO TO HEAVEN</i>
Elijah Daniel Smith	<i>The Violence of Air</i>
Christian Quiñones	<i>BLACKOUT</i>

PERFORMERS

TAK:

Laura Cocks, flute
Madison Greenstone, clarinet
Charlotte Mundy, voice
Marina Kifferstein, violin
Ellery Trafford, percussion

The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited.
Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.

PROGRAM NOTES

Max Vinetz

of Montrose

elderly oaks lining
north boulevard,
bellies full after
days of sweet rain
wet limbs covered
in resurrected ferns,
scabrous bodies refracting ripe
mandarin bulbs,
electrical understudies
for the moon
while her silver
back is turned
soft orange fever glow
that fights the dark

between these oaks,
I want to ask you:

who turns you on at sundown
who turns you off at breakfast

how many shadows do you turn
around each body as it passes

walking home alone at night
how many moons have you replaced
how does it feel how does it feel

Late night, and another walk back home. The gods are having trouble with their faucets. Your clothes stick to your skin. An overcast sky does not promise true dark. Cranes tower overhead. One or the other and usually both. Fluorescent lights chew away at the night and peel it off like skin from a soft peach.

Mountains used to fill your daily horizon. They watched over you, standing tall and patient, lined up behind suburban mirror houses and glorified luxury sin-monuments. They watched over you. You felt small but you felt safe. They watched as paper houses would appear in neat rows over time. They didn't mind being taken for granted. They didn't protest and neither did you.

Hospitals fill your skyline now. They are not proud in the same quiet way the mountains were. They are colossal and ugly. They are constant noise. They are sirens.

They punish the stars.

Their towering greed fills you with resentment. You turn your back to it and unlock the front door.

Gemma Peacocke

on *GHOSTS*

TRIGGER WARNING: infant death, suicide, miscarriage, drowning.

on *GHOSTS* is the first in a set of songs I am writing based on the life of the novelist Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. It is a setting of an excerpt of her essay, 'On Ghosts.'¹

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley was born in 1797. Her mother, the feminist philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft, died from complications related to childbirth, and she was raised in London by her father. As a teenager she fell in love with the Romantic poet Percy Shelley. Their relationship, complicated by Percy's existing marriage, was shadowed by loss. After eloping at sixteen, Mary became pregnant, but the baby was born two months prematurely and survived only eight days. She subsequently fell into a deep depression, marked by her realization that Percy was having an affair with her step-sister Claire Clairmont.

In January 1816, when Mary was eighteen, she gave birth to her second child, a son whom she named after her father William. That summer, Mary and Percy travelled with the baby and Claire Clairmont to Switzerland, where a creative challenge by their friend Lord Byron inspired Mary to write what would become *Frankenstein*. Tragedy followed their return to England in the autumn. Mary's half-sister Fanny Imlay died by suicide, and Percy's wife, Harriet Shelley, drowned herself in the Serpentine, leaving behind her two children with Percy.

Mary was pregnant five times before the age of twenty-five. Her daughter Clara had just turned one when she died from dysentery in Venice in 1818, and three-year-old William died from malaria in Rome the following year, leaving Mary childless. A few months later, she gave birth to her son Percy Florence, her only child to survive beyond childhood. In 1822, she had a miscarriage and lost so much blood that she almost died. Percy saved her life by preparing ice baths for her to staunch the bleeding.

Percy Shelley vanished at sea three weeks later, his body later found on the shores of Viareggio on the Italian coast. Left only with his burnt heart, Mary dedicated herself to publishing her own work and that of her dead husband. Her life became a testament to enduring love and to the socialist feminism of her parents.

¹ Wollstonecraft Shelley, Mary. 'On Ghosts.' *The London Magazine*, vol. 9, series 1, 1824.

Excerpted and (very slightly) abridged from
On Ghosts

He had lost a friend he dearly loved,
who for awhile appeared to him
nightly, gently
stroking his cheek and
spreading a serene calm
over his mind.
He did not fear
the appearance, although he was somewhat
awe-stricken as
each night it glided into his chamber, and,
Ponsi del letto insula sponda manca.
[Placed itself on the left side of the bed.]

- Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

Aliayta Foon-Dancoes

YOU WILL GO TO HEAVEN

WARNING: there are flashing lights in this performance.

over the hill you will find a flower with small plastic chairs inside. sit down. everything is purple and infinite. when you jump into the purple, fish will nibble your toes. don't bite, they can't bite back. if you set the table, leggy creatures will give you a porcelain tea set. look closely, you may see something sticky. you were made for this moment of pure joy. sing! be merry! and remember everything is always as perfect as it seems.

in the purple there is always gratitude. gratitude for those that helped make it. Tom Morrison is a high priestess, THIRTYMINUTES is a royal dome, SM, DT, & NJ are photonic, TAK are in heaven, and you: stay golden.

Elijah Daniel Smith

The Violence of Air

The Violence of Air attempts to capture the discomforts of flight anxiety as turbulence constantly interrupts any semblance of calmness.

Christian Quiñones

BLACKOUT

Since 2020, Puerto Rico has been experiencing constant power outages. A combination of a very old power grid, continuous damage caused by natural disasters, and the lack of maintenance by the first private company to take over the power grid, have made these blackouts a part of the everyday life for a lot of people. Power generators have become a necessity and uncertainty a common sentiment.

The friction between LUMA Energy (an American-Canadian company) and Puerto Rico have become a parallel to the current colonial situation. From press conferences where they refuse to speak in Spanish or even have translators, white-savior complex attitude, to a virtual monopoly for what was supposed to create a competitive market, for many LUMA has become a reminder of the status of the country.

This piece explores a lot of my own memories during those constant power outages. The complete blackouts where you could only hear nature outside, the mechanical hum of all the nearby generators, the constant light flickering due to low voltage, and the sudden bursts of light and sounds as the power would come back on momentarily.

All of these memories are examined through two proximity and movement sensors that I made. In the piece, the two sensors translate movement into light and sound. A small rotation or putting your hand in front of it, completely transforming the soundscape into sounds that I associate with those memories. Accompanied and enhanced by the rest of the ensemble, the sensors highlight the idea of proximity (to other people or human-ness) as a light source.

Text:

Blackout

ABOUT

Aliayta Foon-Dancoes is an award-winning Canadian violinist, composer and interdisciplinary collaborator. Until this Fall, she was living in London, England, working with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC, and 12 Ensemble. She has performed at the Musikverein, Wigmore Hall, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Philharmonie de Paris and the BBC Proms. Collaboration is central to Aliayta's practice. She is a co-founder of the commissioning project Orbit Duo and the interdisciplinary collective THIRTYMINUTES. Through these projects, Aliayta has composed for new instruments designed by sound sculptor Marla Hlady, commissioned and performed pieces by Olivia Shortt, Cris Derksen and Robyn Jacob, premiered work at the Canadian Opera Company, and exhibited experimental audiovisual pieces Sub Tei (Berlin) and Espacio Gallery (London). Recently, Aliayta recorded on Esmerine's Juno award-winning album *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More*, and, with her sister, Rebecca Foon, co-wrote the soundtrack for *One & One Other*, a film commissioned by the Baryshnikov Arts Centre. Other work includes a collaboration with Patti Smith and Pathway to Paris, performances alongside Patrick Watson at Live At Lost River, and a tour of *Phases*, a live violin and multi-channel sound performance co-created with London based new media design studio Kai Lab. Aliayta holds a BA from the University of Victoria, a MA from the Royal Academy of Music and has held Chamber Music Fellowships at both the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music (London). This Fall, she will begin a PhD in Composition at Princeton University.

Gemma Peacocke is a New Jersey-based composer from Aotearoa New Zealand. She writes avant-pop music for chamber ensembles, soloists, and orchestras, and she also writes a lot of music with electronics. Part of the Kinds of Kings composer collective, she lives in Princeton with her family and her most intense fan, a smallish standard poodle called Mila.

Christian Quiñones is a Puerto Rican composer who explores personal and vulnerable stories through the lens of cultural identity. From sampling to auto-tune, and to interactive multimedia, Christian is interested in interacting with existing music to create intertextual narratives. Recently Christian was selected as a composer in residence at the Copland House, and as a fellow for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra Workshop, Cabrillo Festival, and the Bang on a Can Summer Festival. In 2020 he was selected for the Earshot Underwood Orchestra Readings where he worked with the American Composers Orchestra. He has received commissions from the New York Youth Symphony, Albany Symphony's Dogs of Desire, Transient Canvas, the icarus Quartet, the Bergamot String Quartet, Chromic Duo, and the Victory Players where Christian was the 2018 – 2019 composer in residence. His music has been performed by Alarm Will Sound, Dal Niente, Hub New Music, Yarn/Wire, Loadbang, Unheard-of Ensemble, Victory Players, the American Composers Orchestra, and René Izquierdo. Christian graduated from the Conservatorio de Música de Puerto Rico (BM) and the University of Illinois (MM), where he was the recipient of the Graduate College Master's Fellowship. Currently, Christian is a PhD President's fellow at Princeton University.

Praised by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as a “rising star”, composer **Elijah Daniel Smith** is quickly establishing himself as one of today’s leading young composers. His music, which has been described as “gnashing and relentless” (*Chicago Tribune*), and as “an ingenious study in clarity and distortion” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), ranges from orchestral compositions to multimedia and interdisciplinary collaborations. Elijah’s affinity for dense and complex textures, rhythmic ambiguity and fluidity, and rich gravitational harmonies shines through in all of his creations. His music has been premiered and performed by world renowned ensembles including The Chicago Symphony Orchestra for MusicNOW, the American Composers Orchestra, the New England Philharmonic, the Peabody Symphony Orchestra, Alarm Will Sound, Contemporaneous, JACK Quartet, Mivos Quartet, Bergamot Quartet, Sō Percussion, Sandbox Percussion, Yarn/Wire, ~Nois, DITHER, Copland House, Ensemble Linea, Ecce Ensemble, Fuse Quartet, the Lea Mattson Collective, and Earspace. Elijah is currently pursuing his PhD in Music Composition at Princeton University as a President’s Fellow, and he is the Composition Studies Associate at the Curtis Institute of Music. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Music Composition from the Boston Conservatory in 2017, and a Master of Music degree in Music Composition from the Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University in 2020. Elijah’s music is published by Project Schott New York.

Regarded as “one of the most prominent ensembles in the United States practicing truly experimental music” (*I CARE IF YOU LISTEN*), **TAK** is dedicated to the commissioning of new works and direct collaboration with composers and other artists. TAK delivers energetic performances “that combine crystalline clarity with the disorienting turbulence of a sonic vortex” (*The WIRE*), and flow from their core values of curiosity, change, and caring communication. 2022 – 2023 marked TAK’s 10th anniversary season, celebrating a decade of cultivating creative programming at the highest level. TAK premiered *For jaimie branch* by Tyshawn Sorey at Lincoln Center, premiered commissions from Michelle Lou and DM R with Joy Guidry on TAK’s new festival, SWOONFEST, and continued long development processes with composers Eric Wubbels, Seth Cluett, Natacha Diels, Bryan Jacobs, Elaine Mitchener, Ann Cleare, Weston Olencki, and Jessie Cox. The quintet has released seven albums to critical acclaim; recent records have been described as “sublime art... a masterpiece,” (*AnEarful*), and as fostering a “deep sense of connection and communication” (*Bandcamp Daily*). These include collaborations with Mario Diaz de Leon, Taylor Brook, Erin Gee, Brandon López, Ann Cleare, Tyshawn Sorey, Natacha Diels, Scott L. Miller, David Bird, and Ashkan Behzadi. Their most recent release, *Love, Crystal and Stone* brought together composer Ashkan Behzadi, scholar Saharnaz Samaienejad, painter Mehrdad Jafari, and design-house Sonnenzimmer to fuse poetry, visual art, original essays, and music into an experience-based hybrid publication. The ensemble’s 2019 album *Oor* launched their in-house media label, TAK editions, that aims to support recorded musical endeavors from across the experimental music communities, highlighting direct conversations with artists through the TAK editions Podcast. Recent TAK editions releases have included those of Ensemble Interactivo de La Habana, Ensemble Pamplemousse, Nina Dante + Bethany Younge, and several of TAK’s own recordings. Deeply committed to educational collaborations, TAK has conducted residencies at institutions such as Harvard University, Stanford University, Columbia University, Oberlin Conservatory, Cornell University, Wesleyan University, New York University, The Delian

Academy for New Music, and many others. The ensemble has also collaborated with the New York Philharmonic's Very Young Composers Program and Juilliard's Music Advancement Program. TAK served as the Long-term Visiting Ensemble in Residence at University of Pennsylvania from 2022 – 2023.

Max Vinetz's music draws inspiration from various intersections between improvisatory, popular, and traditional forms and aesthetics. His work centers the perception of rhythmic and timbral events and is concerned with the relationships between narrative, musical objects, and sonic artifacts as they relate to music and other forms of media. Max is a recipient of a Fromm Foundation Commission, ASCAP's Morton Gould Award (2018, 2020), the Paul and Christiane Cooper Prize, and the Gardner Prize from the American Viola Society. He has received additional recognition and awards from Voices of Ascension, the Doug Davis Composition and Performance Endowment, Musiq, Copland House, and the Mizzou International Composers Festival. As a Yale undergraduate, Max won the Beekman Cannon Friends Prize, awarded for a "musical composition exhibiting unusual originality and promise," the Abraham Beekman Cox Prize awarded to the "most promising and gifted composer" in the junior class, and was also awarded the Lewis P. Curtis Fellowship, the Tristan Perloth Prize, and the R.J.R. Cohen Fellowship for Musical Performance (2017, 2018). Upcoming projects include an evening length staged electroacoustic song cycle for panSonus, titled *The New Manilla Envelope* and an EP written in collaboration with Anson Jones. A graduate of both Yale and Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, Max is currently pursuing his PhD in Composition at Princeton University as a Naumburg Doctoral Fellow.



What is PSK?

A lab for Princeton University composers to collaborate with today's finest performers and ensembles, Princeton Sound Kitchen is a vital forum for the creation of new music. Serving the graduate student and faculty composers of the renowned composition program at the Department of Music at Princeton University, PSK presents a wide variety of concerts and events throughout the year.

Upcoming Princeton Sound Kitchen events

Tuesday, February 27, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Gallicantus

Vocal ensemble Gallicantus performs new works by Princeton University graduate student composers Ellie Cherry, Francisco del Pino, Hannah Ishizaki, Travis Laplante, Hope Littwin, Isaac Santos, Connor Elias Way, and Justin Wright.

Tuesday, March 19, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Hub New Music

Flute, clarinet, violin, and cello ensemble Hub New Music perform new works by Princeton University faculty composer Donnacha Dennehy, and graduate student composers Francisco del Pino, Aliayta Foon-Dancoes, Hope Littwin, Elijah Daniel Smith, and Max Vinetz.

Tuesday, April 16, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Generals Concert

Princeton University second-year graduate student composers, Ellie Cherry, Kennedy Taylor Dixon, Bobby Ge, Travis Laplante, and Nathan Schram, in partial fulfillment of the General Examination, create new works in response to the work of other, established artists. Various guest artists and ensembles perform the works.

Tuesday, May 14, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Wednesday, May 15, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Sō Percussion

Princeton University's Edward T. Cone Performers-in-Residence, Sō Percussion, perform two concerts—each with a different program—over two consecutive nights featuring new works by Princeton University graduate student composers Ellie Cherry, Francisco del Pino, Gladstone Deluxe, Kennedy Taylor Dixon, Liam Elliot, Aliayta Foon-Dancoes, Bobby Ge, Hannah Ishizaki, Travis Laplante, Lucy McKnight, Christian Quiñones, Isaac Santos, Nathan Schram, Max Vinetz, and Justin Wright.

**Keep up to date about Princeton Sound Kitchen events
on the Current Season page of our website princeton_soundkitchen.org**