

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents

All the World's a Stage

Ian Zook, *horn*

with

**Student artists from the
College of Visual and Performing Arts**

Monday, September 18, 2023

8 pm

Concert Hall



There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Program

Om for French Horn and Electronics (2012) Leilei Tian
(b. 1971)

Kareena Solanki, *artist*

Shadow Dancer (1993) Annette LeSiege
(1947-2012)

Jules Manion, Caroline Salopek, *dancers*

*Variazioni concertanti un motivi favoriti
dell'opera La Sonnambula* for Soprano, Horn, and Piano Otto Nicolai
(1810-1859)

Meghan Willey, *soprano*

Esther Nyberg, *piano*

Intermission

Cyrano de Bergerac for Horn and Piano (1912) Robert Herberigs
(1886-1974)

Alexsandra Velgosha, *piano*

Alexia Van Slyke, Becca Stehle, *directors*

JMU Theater Ensemble:

Lucy Sherrier, *stage manager*

Haiku Burgiel, Hannah Easton, Caroline Gravely,
Kerri Hewett, Hope King, Aamirah McDonald,
Sydney Pecore, Atlas Richardson, Amanda Wallace

Patrons are reminded to turn off all pagers, cell phones,
personal computers, and any other electronic devices.

The unauthorized videotaping or any other recording
of this production is strictly prohibited
in adherence with Federal copyright laws.

Program Notes

This evening's program is a brave experiment: to unite many burgeoning student artists from the JMU College of Visual Performing Arts together on a concert setting of creative and eclectic music. Each work on the program was collaboratively designed and rehearsed, with an emphasis placed on the freedom for each performer to create their own interpretations guided by their inspiration from the music. Without question these works will highlight the wonderful talent and vision of each these performers. As such this concert's title comes from a monologue in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

Chinese composer Leilei Tian studied composition at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and the Conservatory of Music in Gothenburg, Sweden. She had professional training in electro-acoustic music in Paris at IRCAM (Institute for Music/Acoustic Research and Coordination), was awarded the prestigious Prix de Rome, and has been a resident composer for the Contemporary Music Center in Sweden. Of her style, she states: "musical creation is not just a composition of sounds with various techniques, nor a mere esthetical product of a particular culture, but far beyond is the intuitive manifestation of one's inner experience and content, namely one's profound philosophical expression that is universal and timeless in nature."

OM for French horn and electronics was written for and premiered by Swedish hornist Sören Hermansson in 2012. This work combines live performance with a soundscape of processed sounds including throat singing, gongs, chimes, percussion, wind, vocalizations, and pre-recorded horn effects. According to Tian, "Om is a mystical Sanskrit sound of Hindu origin. The syllable consists of three phonemes, a, u and m, which symbolize the beginning, duration, and dissolution of the universe. Hindus believe that as creation began, the divine, all-encompassing consciousness took the form of the first and original vibration manifesting as sound "OM". Before creation began it was the emptiness or the void. The vibration of "OM" symbolizes the manifestation of God in form. "OM" is the reflection of the absolute reality, which is without beginning or the end and embracing all that exists."

Artist Kareena Solanki designed this performance as an exploration of the creation of self through balancing the seven chakras in the body. With the intent of restoration and healing, the artist traces circular pathways in a meditative state while depositing sand, alta, turmeric, dried flowers and leaves from handmade pots onto a cotton cloth. The vessels are reminiscent of the artist's home, molded from her childhood memories. This ritual symbolizes a search for the true self and a yearning for spiritual oneness with the universe.

Program Notes *continued*

Shadow Dancer, by American composer Annette LeSiege, is a work for unaccompanied horn. LeSeige earned a doctorate in Composition from the Eastman School of Music and was a professor of music at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, and New Jersey City University. With a classical catalog of over 70 works, LeSiege also enjoyed writing background music for theater productions as well as music for ballet and contemporary dance.

One can hear the music of *Shadow Dancer* as having two very distinct characters. The basic form is slow-fast-slow-fast-slow. The opening music, which reprises in the middle and is used at the close of the piece, is plaintive, questioning, and slightly rhapsodic. The fast sections are driving, quirky, and full of life. Eventually the music breaks down into little spastic fragments of melody that are very syncopated and disjointed. The piece then closes with music from the opening, imbedded with greater space and more improvisatory in nature. Original choreography for this performance of *Shadow Dancer* has been designed by Jules Manion and Caroline Salopek. About their performance they note that “we wanted to mirror this narrative of dual characters through our movement vocabulary, focusing on creating a visual representation of the sounds and exploring that juxtaposition.”

Vincenzo Bellini’s *La sonnambula* (The Sleepwalker) is a two-act opera that premiered in 1831. The plot centers on a the betrothal of the young woman Amina to her fiancé Elvino . Scandal erupts when villagers find Amina asleep in the room of a stranger, but the opera ends happily as Elvino discovers that sleepwalking - not infidelity - was the culprit. Amina sings the florid aria *Ah! non giunge uman pensiero al contento ond'io son piena* ("Human thought cannot conceive of the happiness that fills me") to bring the opera to its joyous close.

In Otto Nicolai’s variations on Amina’s aria for Soprano, Horn, and Piano, soloistic passages and florid technique abound for both horn and voice. They frequently dovetail to portray the two protagonists Amina and Elviro. Soprano Meghan Willey adds, “Bel canto translated means “beautiful singing.” Pioneers of this style include Rossini, Donizetti, and Bellini. Arias of the bel canto period are characterized by ample rubato as well as cadenzas. There is plenty of freedom for the singer to explore and create infinite interpretations of a piece. Each variation of *Ah, non giunge* allows the singer to showcase a different aspect of the voice, making it quite thrilling to sing.”

French dramatist and poet wrote his play *Cyrano de Bergerac* in 1897. This enduring drama has had numerous stage and film versions over the last century, most recently in a 2021 musical version with actor Peter Dinklage in the title role.

Rostrand's play tells the story of Cyrano de Bergerac, a poetic and cultured Gascon soldier whose wit and swordplay are as legendary as his unavoidably prominent nose. He pines for the enchanting Roxanne, but learns that she is smitten instead with the dashing new cadet Christian. Clumsy with poetry and romantic sentiments, Christian entreats Cyrano to help him woo Roxanne. After writing many heart felt letters expressing his undying love (and impersonating Christian by his request), an evening rendezvous is set. Christian, tongue-tied and oafish, has Cyrano speak on his behalf from the darkness and in so doing deceives Roxanne that he is indeed everything she wishes for – a gallant soldier and renaissance soul. Roxanne and Christian are quickly married, but he is suddenly sent into the battle front against Spain and is shot and killed. Cyrano, a friend and confidant to Roxanne across the ensuing years, keeps his love for her secret and thus protects the falsified image of her beloved Christian.

Tonight's theatrical adaptation of *Cyrano de Bergerac* was created by theater majors Becca Stehle and Alexia van Slyke. All of the script design, casting, rehearsals, and other necessities to bring this concept to fruition are attributed to them. The music comes from a concerto entitled *Cyrano de Bergerac for Horn and Orchestra* by Flemish composer Robert Herberigs dating from 1912. Tonight, instead of performing the piece uninterrupted, this version with piano reduction has been meticulously fashioned into a suite of incidental music to compliment and heighten the stage drama. This evening's performance of *Cyrano de Bergerac* is the first ever staging of this play adaptation with music.

Acknowledgements:

A production with this level of involvement could not have been possible without the enthusiasm and professionalism of each and every one of the student performers. My sincerest thanks to all of them for joining me in this imaginative journey of collaboration! I'm indebted to my supportive CVPA colleagues Lori Pitz, Ben Lambert, Carrie Stevens, and Ryan Corriston who were instrumental in helping to pair my program concepts with these student artists. And lastly a very sincere thank you to the ever-supportive Forbes production staff members Shawn Tucker, Chloe Waters, and Tom Carr, as well as Executive Director Regan Byrne and CVPA Dean Rubén Graciani.

Biographies

Ian Zook is Professor of Horn at James Madison University and is an active orchestral and solo performer, appearing in concerts throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. He is also a frequent substitute musician with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra, as well as many regional orchestra across the east coast. He holds degrees from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill and the University of Michigan, and has performed at the Staunton, Verbier, Pacific, Sarasota, AIMS in Graz, and Aspen Music Festivals, as well as the National Orchestral Institute. He currently writes *Horn on Record* for the International Horn Society newsletter *Horn & More*. Learn more at ianzook.com.

Kareena Solanki (artist) is originally from Mumbai, India and is undertaking her MFA in Studio Art at James Madison University. Her work is synonymous with her Buddhist practice of self-reflection, awareness, and the oneness of self and environment. She uses her body to trace invisible spaces within the subconscious and meditate on the materiality of the senses through rituals. Her work traverses time, transience and transformation through film, photography and performance.

Jules Manion (dance)

is a senior dance major who began their training at age 11. In recent years, their interest has been in choreography and performance, which they have developed as a member of the JMU Contemporary Dance Ensemble. They have also worked with guest artists such as Tiffany Carson and Jess Hendricks in collaboration with DanceWorks Chicago. They recently trained with Eisenhower Dance Detroit and are planning to continue their dance studies through graduate education.

Caroline Salopek (dance) is a senior at James Madison University majoring in Dance with a minor in Art, concentrating in photography. She grew up in Clarksville, Maryland, where she trained in various styles at a local studio and at her high school. While at JMU, Salopek has had the pleasure of being a part of the Virginia Repertory Dance Company and the Contemporary Dance Ensemble. This will be her second time working with live musicians on stage.

Meghan Willey (soprano) is a native of Fairfax, Virginia. She is a senior pursuing a bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance at JMU studying with Dr. Carrie Stevens. While at JMU, Meghan has sung roles in several opera productions including Anne Trulove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. This year, Meghan won 1st place in the NATS Classical Division. Meghan also works as the Director of Music at Manor Memorial United Methodist Church in New Market, VA.

Esther Nyberg (piano) has performed as a soloist with the Chicago College of Performing Arts Symphony, the Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra, and Portugal's *Orquestra de Camara de Cascais e Oeiras* and received the Outstanding Lieder Collaborative Pianist Award at the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. Ms. Nyberg earned her BM from The Catholic University of America and MM from Roosevelt University. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at James Madison University. Her teachers include Dr. Ivo Kaltchev, Dr. Ludmila Lazar, and Dr. Gabriel Dobner.

Aleksandra Velgosha (piano) was born in Moscow, Russia. Aleksandra's achievements include first and second prizes in competitions like E. R. Davis Piano Competition, Crescendo Competition (Carnegie Hall, NY), and many others. Aleksandra received her BM in Piano Performance with honors from Washington Adventist University with Dr. Mark Di Pinto, and completed her Master's degree at the University of Maryland under Larissa Dedova. Aleksandra is in her second year of DMA, studying with Dr. Gabriel Dobner, and has taught at such institutions as University of Maryland (Class Piano Coordinator), Richardson School of Music, Takoma Academy, and Chanson Music School.

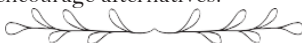
Alexia Van Slyke (director) is a junior theatre major with a concentration in theatre education. Her directing credits include *Going on A Bear Hunt* at the State Theatre of Georgia, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Antigone* at Auburn High School. *Cyrano de Bergerac* is her first directing credit while attending JMU. Alexia thanks Ian Zook and her professor, Ben Lambert, for this opportunity. She has thoroughly enjoyed this process and is eager for many more.

Becca Stehle (director) is a senior theatre major with a concentration in theatre studies (directing). Recent productions at JMU include *R.U.R.*, *The House on Linardi Street*, *Once*, *The Potato Project*, and *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. She would like to thank Ian Zook and the School of Music for spearheading this collaboration, the School of Theatre and Dance, her amazing cast of performers, and especially her wonderful co-director, Alexia, for taking on this project together.

JMU School of Music Diversity Statement

Difference in identity enriches our community, fosters artistic and intellectual growth, and is vital to creating thriving venues for expression in a global world. In addition to welcoming all individuals and perspectives regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socio-economic status, or citizenship status, we wish to make the following acknowledgements and affirmations, adapted from Americans for the Arts:

- In the United States, there are systems of power that grant privilege and access unequally such that inequity and injustice result. We resolve to educate ourselves, keep vigilant watch, and act to bring an end to systemic oppression.
- Cultural equity—which embodies values, practices, and policies that ensure all people have access to, and are represented in, the arts—is critical to the sustained engagement of music in society.
- Acknowledging and challenging our inequities and working in partnership is how we will make change happen.
- Everyone deserves equal access to a full, vibrant creative life, which is essential to a healthy and democratic society.
- The prominent presence of musicians in society can challenge inequities and encourage alternatives.



Music and You

How you can make a difference!

Dear Patron,

Thank you for attending today's performance. The JMU School of Music educates the most talented students from around the world to shape the fabric of society. We are ecstatic to return to our stages to showcase the talent and hard work of our students and faculty.

Scholarship contributions help young musicians blossom into mature artists. With your support, we will be able to offer our talented students more financial help in pursuing their goals. If you are interested in supporting our students' passion and dedication, please consider contributing to the Music Scholarship Fund at James Madison University.

Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Amount: \$ _____

I would like to support the following foundation account:

Music General Scholarship Fund #15600

Make checks payable to JMU Foundation and send to:
Advancement Gifts and Records, James Madison University
220 University Boulevard, MSC 3603
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

www.jmu.edu/give