



Society of Composers, Inc.

**2021 Online National Student Conference**  
**Concert No. 1**

Saturday August 14, 2021 | 4:30 pm ET

Bracha Bdil

*UrbaNature*

Fixed Media

Dariush Derakhshani

*Pārsa*

Fixed Media

Sofia Jen Ouyang

*Liminality*

Cecilia Caughman, cello

Shuyu Lin

*Feather Mallet*

Shuyu Lin, live electronics

Chris Poovey

*Forged Effervescence*

Fixed Media

Anna-Louise Walton

*Basket of Figs*

flute, clarinet, voice

Kamratōn

Trevor Dean Stewart

*Beam*

Fixed Media

Xuesi Xu

*Three Petal Droplets\**

flute, clarinet

Kamratōn

Drew Smith

*Monophonic Study for*

*Four Oscillators*

Fixed Media

Vahid Jahandari

*...And, I speak to you\**

soprano, flute, clarinet,

violin, cello

Kamratōn

\*Denotes World Premiere Commission

## **Program Notes and Composer Biographies**

**Bracha Bdil** (1988), composer, conductor and pianist, has a Master's degree in Music Education and Composition from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance.

Bracha won the first prize in the Wolf Durmashkin Composition Award, Germany (2018), and the first prize in the Yardena Alotin Composition Competition, Bar-Ilan University, Israel (2016). Her repertoire includes orchestral music, chamber, vocal and electronic music, as well as music for dance and theater.

For her Symphonic Poem Genesis, Bracha was awarded the ACUM Award, Israel (2019-20). Her electronic work UrbaNature won the Lala Awards competition held by Pleroma Records, Poland (2020). With her composition Yizkerem, for a-cappella choir, she was chosen as one of the composers in representing Israel at the Asian Composers League Festival, Taiwan (2018). That same year, Yizkerem was also awarded a prize in

the International Choral Writing Competition named after A.D Kastalsky – Moscow (2018).

Bracha Bdil is a member of the Israel Composers' League and her works are published by the Israel Music Institute. Her compositions are performed in Israel and around the world. Starting from season 2018-9 Bracha is the artistic director and chief conductor of the Zmora Women's Orchestra in Jerusalem. Site and list of works: <http://brachabdil.blogspot.com/p/list-of-compositions.html>

Movement of the Soul

*UrbaNature*

Stuck in traffic jam, movement of many people, automaton-people-, moving mechanically, beeping at you.

In these carts there are souls, working and sensitive, really?

How did the automaton cover the soul, how do the achievements cover the breathing, Measuring all day competition and bravado.

When will we release the cover?

Then we will find  
movement,  
The Soul.

The work *UrbaNature* for stereo sound-track is trying to express the ideal of natural life which is dulled by the forced reality of an urban-technological world.

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**Dariush Derakhshani** is a German-born Iranian composer/performer of concert and electroacoustic music. He has written for numerous acclaimed soloists and ensembles, with whom his works have been performed internationally. He also attended IRCAM Manifeste, where he had the opportunity to work closely with members of Ensemble Intercontemporain, and Altitude Festival where he worked with l'ensemble Multilatérale. Other notable festival appearances include Impuls Academy, the Madeira Residency, Festival DME, Barcelona Mixtur, and Kyiv Contemporary Music Days.

He has studied and participated in masterclasses with the composers Patricia Alessandrini, Raphaël Cendo, Francesco Filidei, Beat Furrer, Philippe Hurel, Helmut Lachenmann, Mauro Lanza, Fabien Lévy, Tristan Murail, Gilbert Nouno, Åke Parmerud, Jaime Reis, Yann Robin and Alexander Schubert. Derakhshani recently completed the one-year course at Koninklijk Conservatorium's Institute of Sonology. Currently he is a Ph.D. candidate in Music Composition at California University of Music, Santa Barbara under the supervision of João Pedro Olivera.

*Pārsa* can be categorized as a programmatic piece. The inspiration of its form and direction came from the history of Persepolis and its demolition by Alexander the Great. The initial section is meant to represent a grand sound which is slowly ravaged as the

piece continues. What remains by the end are broken parts and pieces representing the slow destruction of Persepolis by fire. The final section (A') is a distorted memory of the grand sound heard in the beginning which quickly crumbles into a minuscule sound with a high amount of tension in its core.

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**Sofia Jen Ouyang** is a composer interested in the intersection and collision of various modes of artistic expression, often fusing musical, literary, and philosophical concepts into her compositions. Sofia is currently pursuing her undergraduate degrees in Music and Philosophy at Columbia University, and studies with Andrew Norman at The Juilliard School as part of the Columbia-Juilliard exchange program. She has also studied with David Serkin Ludwig since 2018. Sofia is a fellow of the 2021 Blueprint Fellowship with National Sawdust and the Toulman Foundation, and has received honors from BMI Student Composer Award (2021) Luna Lab (2020), WCSMS (2020) and the National Young Composer Challenge (2019). Sofia is currently working on a commission for New Music On The Point, which will be performed by the JACK Quartet in June 2021.

Liminality, n. (OED)

- A transitional or indeterminate state between culturally defined stages of a person's life. Such a state occupied during a ritual or rite of passage, characterized by a sense of solidarity between participants.

Liminal, adj. (OED)

- That has the lowest amount necessary to produce a particular effect; minimal; insignificant.
- Of or relating to a limen, relating to the point beyond which a sensation becomes too faint to be experienced.

*Liminal/ity*

- The relation to, or quality of, being transitional
  - The morphing between two/multiple states (of temporality, space, or of being)
  - The ambiguification and disintegration of binaries
  - Occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary(s) or threshold(s)
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**Shuyu Lin** is a first year doctoral student and an associate instructor in the composition department at Indiana University, Jacobs school of music.

She earned a B.M. in Composition from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 2018, studying with Daqun Jia and Deqing Wen. She later earned an M.M. in Composition from the Indiana University, Jacobs school of music. in 2020. Her teachers there is included David Dzubay, Aaron Travers, Eugene O'Brien, Jeffery Hass, and John Gibson.

Her music has been featured in venues and festivals in China, the United States, Europe and has been performed by groups, such as Shanghai Kun Opera, Shanghai

Philharmonic Orchestra, Ukraine Philharmonic Orchestra, Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble, and IU New Music Ensemble, etc.

*Feather Mallet* (Wii Remote, Max, Kyma)

I started with audio of a tuned wine glass struck by drumsticks. By applying multiple sound synthesis/resynthesis algorithms programmed in Kyma, I manipulated and developed the sound materials in real time. The performer uses a “feather mallet” — a feather attached to a Wii Remote game controller — to trigger and shape the sounds. The performer’s “touching” and “rubbing” of the wine glass with mallet gestures, juxtaposed with the sounds of drumsticks hitting the wine glass, creates an audiovisual illusion and establishes the timing relationship between the two. The musical journey of turning a single wine glass sample into a live audiovisual experience is offered to the audience during the performance.

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**Christopher Poovey** (b. 1993) is a composer and creative coder based in Dallas Texas who creates music and software which produce rich and colorful sound and encourages interactive structures. Christopher’s music has been played by members of Ensemble Mise-en, the University of North Texas Nova Ensemble, Indiana University's New Music Ensemble, and Indiana University Brass Choir. Christopher’s pieces have been presented at conferences such as the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States, the International Computer Music Association, the New York City Electronic Music Festival, the Soul International Computer Music Festival, Inner SoundScapes, and the National Student Electronic Music Event. He is currently pursuing a PhD in music composition from University of North Texas with a focus in computer music.

*Forged Effervescence* is an exploration of synthesized metals created to showcase my modal synthesis VST Bellforge. The piece develops on the ideas of envelope shape, resonance, and inharmonic timbre through the transformation and juxtaposition of a large pool of sound sources created entirely through modal synthesis.

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**Anna-Louise Walton** is an American composer of chamber and electronic music. In her music, she explores concepts of limited development, the notation of improvisatory rhythms, and utilization of found objects. She draws inspiration from natural spaces as well as the sounds and rhythms of everyday life.

Her works have been performed by ensembles such as TAK Ensemble, the Bergamot Quartet, Talea Ensemble, Trio Catch, Fonema Consort, Quatuor Diotima, Mivos Quartet, Surplus Ensemble, Ecce Ensemble, Switch~ Ensemble, and Versipel Collective. Her music has also been featured at MATA Festival, IRCAM’s ManiFeste, Darmstadt International Summer Course, Heidelberger Frühling Festival, Schloss Summer Academy, impuls Festival, VIPA Festival, Electric LaTex Festival, New Music on the Bayou, and highSCORE Festival. In 2019, she was awarded a BMI Student Composer Award. In 2020, she served as a mentor for young composers in MATA Jr. Current

projects include a new piece for Ekmeles and a commission from [Switch~ Ensemble] with a grant awarded from New Music USA.

Though Walton did not start composing formally until her junior year at Scripps College, where she received a B.A. in music studying under Tom Flaherty, she grew up playing the piano and singing from a young age. She then went on to study composition at Kunstuniversität Graz with Beat Furrer. Walton received an M.A. in music composition from Tulane University in 2018, where she studied with Maxwell Dulaney and Rick Snow. She then went on to study Sonology at The Royal Conservatory in The Hague. She is currently pursuing a DMA in composition at Columbia University.

*Basket of Figs* explores the use of wind instruments as an extension of the human voice. The piece fluctuates between moments of synchronicity and counterpoint, with sparse instrumentation which highlights natural aspects of speech. The thin texture and higher register of the piece reflect the intimate nature of the text.

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**Trevor Dean Stewart** is a composer from Garland, Texas and is currently pursuing a Bachelor's of Music degree in Composition and Production at Columbia College Chicago. He has composed and recorded music for various theatrical productions, musicals, podcasts, and high school plays. In his last two years at Columbia, he hopes to hone his skills as a composer and create a diverse body of work that embodies both electronic and acoustic elements.

This is my third piece for the New Music Ensemble at Columbia College Chicago. I explored the use of electronic instruments blended with the acoustic instruments played by members of the ensemble. The blend of these elements creates an ambient soundscape where ideas slowly develop and change to take on new colors like a beam of light traveling through a prism.

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Born in Shanghai, China, **Xuesi Xu** holds a B.M. from Shanghai Conservatory of Music, and a M.M from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he studied composition with Heinrich Taube, Reynold Tharp, and Stephen Taylor, and electronic music with Eli Fieldsteel. His music has been performed by the Arditti Quartet, the Eppes Quartet, the University of Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Shanghai Opera House Orchestra. He has received numerous awards, including the 2018-19 American Prize Finalist Honorable mention, the 2013 Chinese Instruments Composition Competition in Music Universities and Colleges, and the 3rd Rivers Awards Composition Competition. He is currently pursuing a D.M. in composition at Florida State University, studying composition with Mark Wingate, and Liliya Ugay.

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**Drew Smith** (b. 1999, they/she) is a composer, improviser, and intermedia artist with roots in the midwest and the south. Since 2012, Smith has worked on a wide variety of solo and collaborative musical projects, releasing albums and playing shows that vary in

style from noise to ambient to psychedelic rock. Their earlier musical experiences as a guitar/synthesizer player involved with local and online DIY collectives encouraged their love for experimentation with sound and improvisation that has continued to impact the identity of their work. Since starting their undergraduate studies at Oberlin Conservatory, Smith has moved primarily to writing chamber music for solo instruments and ensembles with electronics often derived from synthesizer improvisations, as well as working with video art, installation, circuit/instrument building and dance. Their chamber works have been programmed at national conferences such as SEAMUS, N\_SEME and SPLICE Festival, and internationally at the soundSCAPE Festival in Italy. As a performer, Smith continues to play guitar(s), modular synthesizer and various electronics in their own pieces and with ensembles, including the Oberlin Improvisation and Newmusic Collective, the Oberlin Synthesizer Ensemble, Chroma Burst, and The Henry Nelson Ensemble. They are currently in their senior year at Oberlin, where they study Technology in Music and Related Arts with Eli Stine, and have had additional lessons with Peter Swendsen, Aaron Cassidy, Amy Beth Kirsten and Alex Christie.

*Monophonic Study For Four Oscillators* is a piece for solo electronics. The performer begins the piece with all oscillators tuned to the same pitch, and slowly explores feedback connections routed between them.

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Iranian-born composer of acoustic and electronic music based in San Diego, **Jahandari's** works have been performed and recorded in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, and he has received awards including first prizes at 2Agosto and Pejman competitions for his orchestral and chamber music. Commissioning includes the Grammy nominee ensemble, PubliQuartet. Jahandari is a multi-instrumentalist and improviser working across multiple genres and mediums.

Jahandari's music has been selected and performed at numerous festivals including ISCM World Music Days in Estonia, World Saxophone Congress in Croatia, South by Southwest, SEAMUS, International Saxophone Symposium, SPLICE, Electroacoustic Barn Dance, EMS60, ElectroAcousticMiniFest, Midwest Composers Symposium, West Fork New Music, EE+F, Fusebox, Sound In Sculpture, LaTeX, EARS and many more.

Jahandari is currently a Ph.D. student in Composition at the University of California San Diego, holding degrees in Composition from the University of Texas at Austin (M.M.), as well as Tehran University of Art (B.M.). His portfolio includes works for electronic media, mixed chamber ensembles, symphonic orchestra, wind ensemble, choir, and solo instruments.

*...And, I speak to you* is written based on the Persian traditional modes and rhythms, incorporated into Western classical techniques. The title is borrowed from a verse by the Persian poet, Ahmad Shamlou. This piece was commissioned through the Society of Composers, Inc. National Student Conference for performance in August 2021.