

The Ph.D./D.M.A. Programs in Music

May 2nd, 2022 1:00 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall



Yoshi Weinberg, flute with Daniel Schreiner, piano

12 Miniatures for flute and piano (1946)

No. 1 - *Improvisation*

No. 2 - *Arietta*

No. 3 - *Burleske*

No. 4 - *Carpiccio*

No. 5 - *Nocturne*

No. 6 - *Walzer*

No. 7 - *Ode*

No. 8 - *Duett*

No. 9 - *Barkarole*

No. 10 - *Etüde*

No. 11 - *Intermezzo*

No. 12 - *Pastorale*

Mieczysław Weinberg
(1919–96)

Some people are flowers (2021)

Yoshi Weinberg
(b. 1993)

Le Merle Noir (1952)

Olivier Messiaen
(1908–92)

INTERMISSION

when life is quite through with (*World Premiere*)

Yoshi Weinberg

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the D.M.A. degree.

Itinerant (1989)

Tōru Takemitsu
(1930–96)

Digital Bird Suite (1982)

Takashi Yoshimatsu
(b. 1953)

- I. *Bird-Phobia*
- II. *A Bird in the Twilight*
- III. *Twitter Machine*
- IV. *A Bird in the Noon*
- V. *Bird Circuit*

Notes on the Program

Mieczysław Weinberg has a life history fraught with terror, tragedy, and displacement. Despite this, much of his music is filled with optimism, light-heartedness, and playfulness. Born to a Jewish family in Poland in 1919, Mieczysław Weinberg (also Moisey or Moische Vainberg, or Moisey Samuilovich Vaynberg) had a prolific compositional output including twenty-two symphonies, seventeen string quartets, seven operas, eight violin sonatas, twenty-four preludes for cello, six cello sonatas, four solo viola sonatas, six piano sonatas, and several other instrumental sonatas and concerti. His father Shmil was a violinist and conductor of a local Yiddish theater in Warsaw, and his mother Sonia was an actress in several Yiddish theaters in Warsaw and Lodz. Weinberg entered the Warsaw Conservatory at age 12 studying piano, and graduated there in 1939. At the outbreak of WWII, Weinberg's family attempted to flee to the Soviet Union, but the journey became treacherous and his sister and parents stayed behind and eventually perished in the Trawniki concentration camp, leaving Weinberg on his own in Minsk. Here is where he would begin composition studies with Vasily Zolotarev. Eventually, Weinberg had to flee from Soviet soil, and was evacuated to Tashkent (central Asia) where he would continue to compose opera and met and marry Natalia Vovsi. There he also met one of his major influencers and friends, the composer Dmitri Shostakovich. In 1943 Weinberg moved to Moscow at the suggestion of Shostakovich.

Weinberg wrote *12 Miniatures for flute and piano* in 1946 during a particularly productive time living near Shostakovich in Moscow. The 12 Miniatures are arranged in ascending chromatic order starting with the key of Db major, and ending in C major. The modes of each movement also alternate between minor and major, giving each movement a distinct yet cohesive character. Several movements are performed without pause between them, suggesting the cycle be performed as one and not as individual movements. The relationship between the flute and piano is interesting throughout, as sometimes the flute is the soloist with piano accompaniment, and other times the piano is featured as the soloist, leaving the flute to comment or highlight the harmonies. Weinberg uses a harmonic language based on polytonality, introducing harmonies that do not fit into the key, and often on top of a tonic or dominant harmonic pedal. This occasionally gives the *Miniatures* an unsettled or apprehensive feeling, as well as a yearning and longing towards something that is not obtainable.

Some people are flowers was inspired by a poem written by non-binary poet Will Farris. The words connected with me on a deep level, having recently come out as non-binary myself, and discovering a new relationship with my own body as well as to others. This work is a coming to terms with past trauma and the effect it has on the physical body. Beginning with a brief desire for intimacy and closeness, then moving into a struggle with being and identity, and finally exploding into a conflict of pain and joy, this work can be interpreted and experienced in many ways. The words of the poem are used throughout the score to inspire the performer's interpretation. If desired, the poem can be read aloud during or before the performance.

Olivier Messiaen was a French composer, theorist, and organist notable for his transcriptions of bird song. *Le Merle Noir* (*The Blackbird*) was written as a test piece for the Paris Conservatoire in 1952. This work is one of his first to imitate a specific bird species, and began an oeuvre of bird transcriptions in many forms including solo piano, orchestra, and chamber ensemble. This work in particular oscillates between fluttering and chirping flute cadenzas, and placid, still, interwoven contrapuntal piano and flute lines. This short piece ends with a flurry of chirps and tweets from the flute and piano, emblematic of the piece's inspiration, the blackbird.

when life is quite through with is based on a poem of the same name by e.e. cummings. This is an improvised piece, with no pre-written musical material besides the fixed media component. The fixed media was created by manipulating the sounds of tornado sirens and birdsong, and recitation of the poem. This work is dedicated to those who lost love during this pandemic, and who admirably can still find themselves amidst the dark times.

Toru Takemitsu was a Japanese composer of avant-garde music. Largely self-taught, he is one of the most influential composers of the 20th century. Influenced by both Japanese traditional music, and French modernists like Debussy and Messiaen, Takemitsu's musical language is florid, lush, and expressive. By the 1970s Takemitsu's music had gained international attention, and in 1975 Takemitsu met with Olivier Messiaen in New York. The influence of Messiaen on Takemitsu is clear, and upon Messiaen's death Takemitsu is quoted saying "Truly, he was my spiritual mentor ... Among the many things I learned from his music, the concept and experience of color and the form of time will be unforgettable." *Itinerant* was written in 1989 in memory of the sculptor Isamu Noguchi, a friend of Takemitsu's. This work incorporates many of Takemitsu's favored compositional techniques, including repeated melodic cells in various transpositions, timbral ornamentations, a wide range of the instrument and dynamic contrast, as well as interwoven silence as integral to the music. The idea of wandering is apt in this work, as is the concept of a struggle between musical objects and the silence surrounding it. Philosophically this piece can be understood as a way to replicate Noguchi's artwork through the voice of Takemitsu.

Takashi Yoshimatsu is known along with Takemitsu as one of Japan's most prominent composers. Also largely self-taught, his music has a unique blend of influences, including traditional Japanese classical music, contemporary, and progressive rock music like Pink Floyd, and The Beatles. Yoshimatsu's tonal language can be described as pandiatonic neo-Romanticism, with some atonal elements. *Digital Bird Suite* was written in 1982 as a tour-de-force for both the flutist and pianist. A suite of five movements, this work is one of several of Yoshimatsu's "bird" themed piece, along with the "Cyber Bird" saxophone concerto, *Fuzzy Bird Suite* for alto saxophone and piano, "Bird Rhythmics" concerto for marimba, and others. The first movement, titled *Bird-Phobia*, blends the piano and flute sound as one voice, and interplays lines that hocket back and forth between the two. Occasional bursts of persistent flute staccatos interrupt, as if a bird is attempting to break apart the intertwined lines. The second movement *A Bird in the Twilight* is a quirky ballad between two opposing

keys. The third movement, *Twitter Machine*, is a cadenza for solo flute, with bird-like exclamations that grow with intensity to the peak of the cadenza, and then slowly die away as if a flock of birds is flying far away. The fourth movement *A Bird in the Noon* is an off-kilter type waltz, with cluster chords, whole tone scales, and uneven meters. The final movement *Bird Circuit* is reminiscent of late 20th century minimalist music, with repeated cells that throw the music in loops, as if the circuit of an electric bird is on the fritz.

About the Artists

Yoshi Weinberg (they/them) is a New York City based flutist, harpist, and composer. Lauded for their “sublime tone” and “creative interpretation and technical virtuosity” (I Care If You Listen), Yoshi is a dedicated performer of contemporary and experimental works. They have performed on the stages of Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall, Roulette Intermedium (NYC), the Fitzgerald Theater (St. Paul, MN), the Ordway Center for the Arts, Banff Centre for the Arts (Canada), Mahaiwe Theater (Great Barrington, MA), Orchestra Hall (Minneapolis, MN), Gesellschaftshaus (Magdeburg, Germany), Fondation des États-Unis (Paris, France), Conservatoire Darius Milhaud (Aix-en-Provence, France), Duomo di Pavia (Pavia, Italy), Palau de la Musica (Valencia, Spain), among many others. They currently are Artistic Director of InfraSound, and is founding member and flutist for Apply Triangle, InfraSound, and KnoxTrio. Additionally, Yoshi served as Artistic Director of the Minnesotan new music ensemble RenegadeEnsemble for the 2017-2018 season, and performed regularly in Minneapolis/St. Paul as flutist with Renegade, Zeitgeist and Spitting Image Collective. Yoshi was a participant in the 2018 Ensemble Evolution residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts, where they worked and performed with members of the International Contemporary Ensemble, and premiered works by George Lewis, Cory Smythe, and themselves. Yoshi won 1st Prize in the 2015 Schubert Club Competition, 2nd Prize in the 2019 Upper-Midwest Flute Association Young Artist Competition, and 3rd Prize in the 2020 South Carolina Flute Society Young Artist Competition. An avid piccoloist, Yoshi currently plays 2nd flute/piccolo in the Berkshire Opera Festival orchestra, piccolo/3rd flute with the Greenwich Village Orchestra, and previously held the solo piccolo position with Encore Wind Ensemble.

As a composer, Yoshi’s compositions have been described as “a stunning compositional display of polyphony and texture” (ICIYL) and “transcendent, emotional, and intimate” (Sparks and Wiry Cries). Their works have been premiered by InfraSound, e(L)ement duo, the dream songs project, and RenegadeEnsemble, and have been featured on Minnesota Public Radio and at the American Harp Society Summer Institute.

Yoshi is currently studying their D.M.A. in Flute Performance at the CUNY Graduate Center, studying with Robert Dick. They graduated with a B.M. in Music Performance from Saint Olaf College in 2015 studying flute with Catherine Ramirez and harp with Elinor Niemisto, and a M.M. degree in Contemporary Music Performance at the Manhattan School of Music in 2020 studying flute with Tara Helen O’Connor, composition with Reiko Fütting, David Adamcyk, and Susan Botti, and harp with Susan Jolles. Other teachers and coaches include Margaret Kampmeier, Lucy Shelton, Patricia George, and Michele Frisch. Yoshi currently resides in Brooklyn, NY with their 55+ houseplants.

A musician and interdisciplinary artist of diverse interests, **Daniel Schreiner** is fashioning a career of experimentation and radical discovery. As a concert pianist, Daniel has performed internationally at venues in France, Italy, New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, Ohio, North Carolina,

Tennessee, and Washington, D.C. As an avid chamber musician, Daniel has worked with members of the JACK Quartet, Alan Pierson of Alarm Will Sound, David Bloom of Contemporaneous, Kathy Supové, Betsy Jolas, Ensemble Calliopée, Infrasound, LIGAMENT, Balance Campaign, BlackBox Ensemble, NewMusicMannes, and the Berkshire Symphony. Having also majored in Studio Art while attending Williams College, Daniel is interested in integrating two-dimensional visual art, sound art, and performance art with piano music. His experimental sound art installations have been featured in exhibitions in Sardinia, Italy; Berlin, Germany; and Yonkers, NY. A recipient of the Harriet Hale Woolley Scholarship from the Fondation des États-Unis, Daniel spent the 2019-20 academic year in Paris, France, studying at La Schola Cantorum with Billy Eidi and performing works by Fauré, Debussy, Messiaen, Murail, and contemporary Paris-based composers. Daniel's latest projects include a trilogy of piano works inspired by the water cycle, multi-movement graphic scores written for open instrumentation, and new collaborations spawned from his recent residency with OneBeat. He lives in Brooklyn, NY with his boyfriend and cantankerous shih tzu.

Texts

Untitled

Will Farris (reprinted with permission)

Violets soft
beneath my hands

I want to be
Some velvet thing

When I was young
I might have been
a flower

might have thought
bodies were bells

We shape to hold more bodies, not

meat melting over
screwy bones

Some people are flowers
we rend and want