

10 MOSS
ARTS
CENTER
10TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON



VT VIRGINIA
TECH.

SŌ PERCUSSION WITH CAROLINE SHAW AND SPECIAL GUEST SHODEKEH

Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 7:30 PM

Street and Davis Performance Hall, Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre

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SŌ PERCUSSION WITH CAROLINE SHAW AND SPECIAL GUEST SHODEKEH

This is the first performance at the Moss Arts Center by Sō Percussion and Shodekeh. Caroline Shaw first performed at the center in 2017 with A Far Cry and Roomful of Teeth.

PROGRAM

4+9 (2017)

ERIC CHA-BEACH (b. 1982)

ROLLING MEDITATION (1971)

PAULINE OLIVEROS (1932-2016)

EXTREMES (2009)

JASON TREUTING (b. 1977)

VODALITIES: PARADIGMS OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOR THE HUMAN VOICE (2021)

DOMINIC SHODEKEH TALIFERO (b. 1977)

————— INTERMISSION —————

LET THE SOIL PLAY ITS SIMPLE PART (2020)

SŌ PERCUSSION AND CAROLINE SHAW (b. 1982)

To the Sky

The Flood Is Following Me

Let the Soil Play Its Simple Part

Long Ago We Counted

A Gradual Drizzle

Lay All Your Love

Cast the Bells in Sand

Some Bright Morning

A Veil Awake Upon the Waves

Other Song



PROGRAM NOTES

4+9 (2017)

ERIC CHA-BEACH (b. 1982)

4+9 was written for the Sō Percussion Summer Institute 2017. The piece explores all of the ways that a bar of 9/4 can be subdivided: There are 36 16th notes in the bar (nine beats by four 16th notes per beat) — and 36 can be divided evenly by 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12, and 18. The various combinations of different overlapping divisions in the bar make the underlying groupings of 16th notes constantly sound different. I used this basic idea in a piece for Sō Percussion's project, *A Gun Show*, in 2016, but 4+9 explores simply the pure process of hearing each possible combination in turn.

— *Eric Cha-Beach*

PROGRAM NOTES, cont.

***Rolling Meditation* (1971)**

PAULINE OLIVEROS (1932-2017)

Each of the *Four Meditations for Orchestra* has been performed in versions for voices or smaller instrumental ensembles. There is no conventional notation used. The score consists of recipe-like instructions, which are the same for each player. Each performer is responsible for their own part within the guidelines given. Since there is no written part to watch, all the performers' attention can be given to sound and invention. The shape of each meditation emerges from the nature of the score guidelines and the dynamic interplay of the orchestra members. There is no melody, no harmony, and no metrical rhythm. The direction is sound-oriented. Each meditation has a specific focus. In *Rolling Meditation*, players (or singers) are asked to tune exactly to another player or to contribute a pitch that no one else is sounding.

— *Pauline Oliveros*

***Extremes* (2009)**

JASON TREUTING (b. 1977)

Extremes was written in 2009 as a part of Sō Percussion's evening-length work, *Imaginary City*, which was commissioned by six performing arts centers in six different cities — Brooklyn, Burlington, Denver, Helena, Houston, and Cleveland. The rhythms in *Extremes* come from those cities.

Though it is most commonly played around a concert bass drum — with cymbals and pitched metal placed on the drum and a few more pitched instruments added alongside the drum — the instrumentation is flexible and can be played in many ways.

— *Jason Treuting*

***Vodalities: Paradigms of Consciousness
for the Human Voice (2021)***

DOMINIC SHODEKEH TALIFERO (b. 1977)

Vodalities: Paradigms of Consciousness for the Human Voice seeks to illuminate the different modalities of the vocal arts, utilized by not only me, but by vocalists the world over. Through three movements composed specifically for Sō Percussion — with each focused on the vocal modalities, or “vodalities,” of breath art, vocal percussion, and beatboxing — Sō’s challenge was to listen to and learn (and, of course, enjoy) each vocal movement; transcribe the pieces from a hip-hop-based oral tradition construct to a system of Western notation; and finally, through “technique transcription,” figure out which physical, percussion-based instruments and which members of the ensemble using those tools would be best suited to play each element of the overall compositional structure. In other words, welcome to the 21st century, where compositional paradigms and a synthesis of learning styles can take on a whole new reversal of impact, influence, and imagination.

I. The Universality of Breath Art

(Dedicated to Bobby McFerrin)

II. The Genealogy of Vocal Percussion

(Dedicated to Ella Fitzgerald)

III: The Mathematics of Beatboxing

(Dedicated to Doug E. Fresh: The Original Human Beatbox)

— *Dominic Shodekeh Talifero*

PROGRAM NOTES, cont.

Let the Soil Play Its Simple Part (2020)

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

Caroline Shaw and Sō Percussion combine forces for a powerful new original set of songs composed together. Shaw's faultless ear for melody and harmony, combined with Sō's rhythmic invention and compositional experimentation, make for a world of sonic richness that feels fresh and unique. It is a journey across the landscape of the soul, told through the medium of distinctly contemporary songs, which represent Shaw's debut as a solo vocal artist.

Shared lifetimes of voluminous musical and literary experiences traverse the spiritual realms of the Sacred Harp and the Book of Ruth, the oceanic ruminations of James Joyce, the American roots song *I'll Fly Away* filtered through medieval plainchant; and even the pop group ABBA. Sonically, there is no other collaboration to compare it to. Shaw's voice cycles through the gently intimate, to penetrating rapture, through layers of constructed counterpoint, while Sō Percussion's nearly endless menagerie of instruments and techniques provides varying accompaniments of drums, piano, marimba, steel drums, electronics, tuned flower pots, toys, synthesizers, and much more.

The thrill in this collaboration lies partly in the sense that each entity adds dimensions to the other's music, which revitalizes them both. Shaw gives voice and melody to the years of experimentation in rhythm, color, and complexity that defines Sō's work over two decades and more than 20 albums. Sō opens a world of sonic possibilities and rhythmic virtuosity that dramatically expands Shaw's palette beyond the vocal and string writing for which she is best known.

In this collection of 10 songs, forces alternate between tightly crafted orchestrations and spontaneous duets between Shaw and each of the four members of Sō Percussion. The title song of

the set features Shaw's unadorned voice setting her own words, accompanied by Josh Quillen's lyrical strumming on the steel drums. In *Lay All Your Love on Me*, Shaw and Adam Sliwinski concoct a stately motet for voice and marimba out of the chorus from ABBA's famous hit song. In *Long Ago We Counted*, Jason Treuting unleashes cascades of his signature drumming underneath otherworldly loops of Shaw's voice. With *Some Bright Morning*, Eric Cha-Beach simmers various layers of ambient drones under Shaw's gradually unfolding synthesis of *I'll Fly Away* and the 13th-century plainchant *Salve Regina*.

Other songs build layers of instrumentation as blocks of rhythm and sound underneath Shaw's voice. *Other Song* announces itself with a progression of flower pot harmony, which builds surprisingly into an uplifting, anthemic celebration of life and devotion. Two songs take their titles from lines in James Joyce's *Ulysses* — *The Flood Is Following Me* and *A Veil Awake Upon the Waves*. Both are thick with layers of ambivalence and reflection. *To the Sky* builds interlocking rhythms reminiscent of Steve Reich, which Shaw elevates with a yawp of spiritual ecstasy from the Sacred Harp tradition.



BIOGRAPHIES

SŌ PERCUSSION

Eric Cha-Beach

Josh Quillen

Adam Sliwinski

Jason Treuting

For 20 years and counting, Sō Percussion has redefined chamber music for the 21st century through an “exhilarating blend of precision and anarchy, rigor and bedlam” (*The New Yorker*). The group is celebrated by audiences and presenters for a dazzling range of work: live performances in which “telepathic powers of communication” (*The New York Times*) bring to life the vibrant percussion repertoire; an extravagant array of collaborations in classical music, pop, indie rock, contemporary dance, and theatre; and its work in education and community, creating opportunities and platforms for music and artists that explore the immense possibility of art in our time.

The ensemble's commitment to the creation and amplification of new work and its extraordinary powers of perception and communication have made it a trusted partner for composers, allowing the writing of music that expands the style and capacity of brilliant voices of our time. Sō's collaborative composition partners include Caroline Shaw, David Lang, Julia Wolfe, Nathalie Joachim, Dan Trueman, Kendall K. Williams, Angélica Negrón, Bora Yoon, Bobby Previte, Matmos, and many others.

This season Sō returned to Carnegie Hall for its biennial Zankel show, offering world premieres by composers Vijay Iyer, Angélica Negrón, and Olivier Tarpaga, as well as a sprawling performance of the latest flexible work by Sō's Jason Treuting, *Go Placidly with Haste*. Other dates in the 2023-2024 season include Hancher Auditorium at the University of Iowa; Oklahoma Philharmonic (for David Lang's *man made*, written for Sō and featured in its latest recording with the Cincinnati Symphony and Louis Langrée); concerts with composer/performer Dominic Shodekeh Talifero at the Library of Congress; in Berlin with Caroline Shaw; performances in Benin and Burkina Faso, Africa with Olivier Tarpaga; and more.

Recent highlights include performances at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg; Big Ears; Cal Performances; the Palau de la Musica Catalana in Barcelona; the Barbican in London; the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; Penn Live Arts in Philadelphia; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and at the 92nd Street Y in New York.

Its Nonesuch recording with Caroline Shaw, Dawn Upshaw, and Gilbert Kalish, *Narrow Sea*, won the 2022 Grammy for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. Other recent albums include the co-composed cycle with Caroline Shaw, *Let the Soil Play Its Simple Part; A Record Of...* on Brassland Music with Buke and Gase; and — on new imprint Sō Percussion Editions — an acclaimed version of Julius Eastman's *Stay on It*, plus Darian

BIOGRAPHIES, cont.

Donovan Thomas' *Individuate*. This adds to a catalog of more than 25 albums featuring landmark recordings of works by David Lang, Steve Reich, Steven Mackey, and many more.

In fall 2023 Sō Percussion began its 10th year as the Edward T. Cone performers-in-residence at Princeton University. Rooted in the belief that music is an elemental form of human communication, and galvanized by forces for social change, Sō enthusiastically pursues a range of social and community outreach through its nonprofit umbrella, including partnerships with local ensembles such as Pan in Motion and Castle of Our Skins; its Sō Laboratories concert series; a studio residency program in Brooklyn; and the Sō Percussion Summer Institute, an intensive two-week chamber music seminar for percussionists and composers. Find more information at sopercussion.com.

CAROLINE SHAW

Caroline Shaw is a New York-based musician (vocalist, violinist, composer, and producer) who performs in both solo and collaborative projects. Shaw was the youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2013 for *Partita for 8 Voices*, written for the Grammy-winning Roomful of Teeth, of which she is a member. Recent commissions include new works for Renée Fleming with Inon Barnatan, Dawn Upshaw with Sō Percussion and Gil Kalish, Seattle Symphony, Anne Sofie von Otter with Philharmonia Baroque, the L.A. Philharmonic, Juilliard 415, the Orchestra of St. Luke's with John Lithgow, the Dover Quartet, TENET, The Crossing, the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, the Calidore Quartet, Brooklyn Rider, the Baltimore Symphony, and Roomful of Teeth with A Far Cry. Shaw's film scores include Erica Fae's *To Keep the Light* and Josephine Decker's *Madeline's Madeline*, as well as the upcoming short *8th Year of the Emergency* by Maureen Towey.



She has produced for Kanye West (*The Life of Pablo* and *Ye*) and Nas (*NASIR*) and has contributed to records by The National and Arcade Fire's Richard Reed Parry. Once she got to sing in three part harmony with Sara Bareilles and Ben Folds at the Kennedy Center, and that was pretty much the bees' knees and elbows. Shaw has studied at Rice, Yale, and Princeton; currently teaches at New York University; and is a creative associate at the Juilliard School. She has held residencies at Dumbarton Oaks, the Banff Centre, Music on Main, and the Vail Dance Festival. Shaw loves the color yellow, otters, Beethoven's op. 74, Mozart opera, Kinhaven, the smell of rosemary, and the sound of a janky mandolin.

DOMINIC SHODEKEH TALIFERO

With 36 years of personal, professional, and community-based experience, Dominic Shodekeh Talifero continues to make musical strides as a groundbreaking and highly adept beatboxer, vocal percussionist, and breath artist, pushing the boundaries of the human voice within and outside the context of hip-hop music and culture. Talifero served as a dance technique musician and composer-in-residence for Towson University's Department of



BIOGRAPHIES, cont.

Dance for 12 years — the first vocal percussionist to do so — and is the founding director of Embody, A Festival Series of the Vocal Arts. Embody strives for artistic and cultural convergence through a variety of vocal art traditions across a multitude of worlds, from opera and Tuvan throat singing, to the many forms of vocal percussion. The series has featured such vocal luminaries as Madison McFerrin, Alash Ensemble, Dan Deacon, Raul Midon, and Joyce J. Scott.

A form of vocal percussion born from hip-hop, beatboxing easily exists as one the most advanced vocal art forms known within the diversity of the human voice. Imitating and often replacing a drum set, drum machine, or drum loop through a series of vocal effects or percussive sounds primarily produced by the larynx and nasal, oral, and chest cavities, beatboxing exemplifies the hip-hop philosophy of creating meaningful artistic expressions with limited resources at its most extreme. It replaces the source of the timeless break beat with the human voice, becoming an ubiquitous and indigenous feature of the African American city experience and soundscape.

From 2019-2022, Shodekeh served as Towson University's first innovator-in-residence, a historic designation anchored by the College of Fine Arts and Communication that allowed him to lecture, collaborate, experiment, compose, perform, and conduct research. In previous years, Talifero served as music faculty of the American Dance Festival at Duke University and has served as the chosen musician for a variety of master class experiences led by luminaries like Ailey II of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Paul Taylor American Modern Dance Ensemble, and the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. In his close relationship with the world of dance, he has acquired a wealth of experiences applying his vocal and rhythmic skills in the movement context of ballet, capoeira, fire movement, belly dancing, and a wide range of modern dance techniques, created by such legends as Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham, and Lester Horton.

This deeply synthesized relationship with dance began in 2006 and has played a tremendous role in Talifero's sustained and pioneering development of breath art, which is essentially the deep practice and extensive research of isolated creative breathing techniques and methods maintained within the musical and kinesthetic modalities of universal human vocal expression. This deep artistic and philosophical practice and ongoing research of breath art are greatly exemplified in Talifero's recent commissions of original compositional work for the COVID-19 sculptures created by Rebecca Kamen for *Reveal*, the 2021 exhibition at the American University Museum in Washington, D.C., as well as *Vymatics*, his cymatic/sound art composition for the 2022 world premiere event of *Voyages*, a brand new immersive science communication series based at the National Aquarium in Baltimore.

Over the years, Talifero has evolved and moved through the world as a musical ambassador from beatboxing's hip-hop roots, exploring innovative and convergent cultural collaborations

BIOGRAPHIES, cont.

with a wide range of traditional and classical artists. He serves as beatboxer and vocal percussionist for the globally renowned Alash Ensemble, one of the world's leading Tuvan throat singing ensembles from Southern Siberia, and features as a guest artist on the ensemble's Smithsonian Folkways album release, *Achai*. He also serves as a co-curator and executive producer on a recent album by Alash Ensemble's Bady-Dorzhu Ondar, *Embodiments*, the first full album of traditional Tuvan throat singing and hip-hop fusion. Talifero has become a regular collaborator with the magnificent percussion and rhythm ensemble Sō Percussion, with whom he composed during his historic Carnegie Hall debut in 2021.

One of Talifero's most recent — and by far bravest — endeavors has been the establishment in 2021 of his own collection and living archive with the Towson University Special Collections and University Archives, called Ideations of Potential: Shodekeh's Innovation Lab of Embodied Scholarship & Hip-Hop Imagination. This lifelong collaboration is the first hip-hop-based archive created in the state of Maryland and the first beatbox- and breath art-driven archive instituted in the world, raising awareness on the epidemic of Black youth suicide and ideation.

SŌ PERCUSSION CREDITS

Sō Percussion's 2023-2024 season is supported in part by awards from the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council; the Aaron Copland Fund for Music; the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University; the Amphion Foundation; the Brookby Foundation; the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation; the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation; the Howard Gilman Foundation; and the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation.

Sō Percussion uses Vic Firth sticks, Zildjian cymbals, Remo drumheads, Estey organs, and Pearl/Adams instruments. Sō Percussion would like to thank these companies for their generous support and donations.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!



We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to *Small Island, Big Song* on Wednesday, April 17, 2024. bit.ly/so-percussion-feedback

GO DEEPER

As described in the program notes, the compositions by Shodekeh and Caroline Shaw in tonight's program incorporate numerous allusions to other musicians and works. Which of the musical references did you find to be most compelling, and why? How do Sō Percussion's eclectic instrumentation and performance styles reimagine familiar music and voices from the past?

ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

MARCH 18-19, 2024

UNIVERSITY CLASS VISITS

Sō Percussion, Caroline Shaw, and Shodekeh shared their talents and expertise with Virginia Tech students at the Creativity + Innovation District Living-Learning Community, and in music, creative writing, and dance courses.

MARCH 18, 2024

WORKSHOP WITH WEST END CENTER FOR YOUTH

Students in an after-school program in Roanoke City participated in a workshop, led by Shodekeh.

MARCH 21, 2024

SCHOOL-DAY PERFORMANCE

Educators and students from Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Floyd, Pembroke, and Salem, predominantly, in grades 5-9 experienced a free performance by Sō Percussion and Shodekeh.

Special thanks to the Creativity + Innovation District Living-Learning Community, VTDITC: Hip-Hop Studies at Virginia Tech, West End Center for Youth, Craig Arthur, Kevin Ayoub, Julia Basso, Kayley Carter, Vicky Ferguson, Charles Nichols, Freddy Paige, Annie Stevens, Sophia Terazawa, Dan Thorp, and Peter Wallenstein



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Messengers explores the use of photography to communicate — not only through visual aesthetics, but to transmit more profound personal, cultural, and societal messages. Photography acts as a conduit for the artists' hybrid interdisciplinary approaches, enabling them to convey rich and multifaceted narratives, evolving through their formal and material languages.

Tarrah Krajnak; Self-Portrait as Weston/as Charis Wilson, 1934/2020, 1925/2020, 2020 (detail); from Master Rituals II: Weston's Nudes series; silver gelatin print; 10 x 8 inches; ed. of 5, 2 AP; exhibition copy on view; © Tarrah Krajnak, courtesy Zander Galerie

K-12 PROGRAMS AT THE MOSS ARTS CENTER

At the Moss Arts Center, we believe that arts experiences are a crucial part of a child's education. We've been dedicated to providing opportunities for children at no cost since we opened in 2013. A wide array of Moss programming and experiences to inspire, engage, and empower students of all ages and backgrounds. This season, we're offering five school-day matinee programs, in-school workshops and performances, and gallery tours with professional artists for learners of all ages.

Learn more at bit.ly/moss-K12.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Moss Arts Center has presented over 100 visual arts exhibitions and installations since opening in 2013. The Ruth C. Horton Gallery, Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery, and Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor were created to support not only traditional two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, but also virtual, digital, live, and performance art. Moveable walls, a variety of lighting options, room darkening capabilities, and more helped make these spaces adaptive.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland, and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands in California and other areas in the West.

LABOR RECOGNITION

Virginia Tech acknowledges that its Blacksburg campus sits partly on land that was previously the site of the Smithfield and Solitude Plantations, owned by members of the Preston family. Between the 1770s and the 1860s, the Prestons and other local White families that owned parcels of what became Virginia Tech also owned hundreds of enslaved people. Enslaved Black people generated resources that financed Virginia Tech's predecessor institution, the Preston and Olin Institute, and they also worked on the construction of its building.

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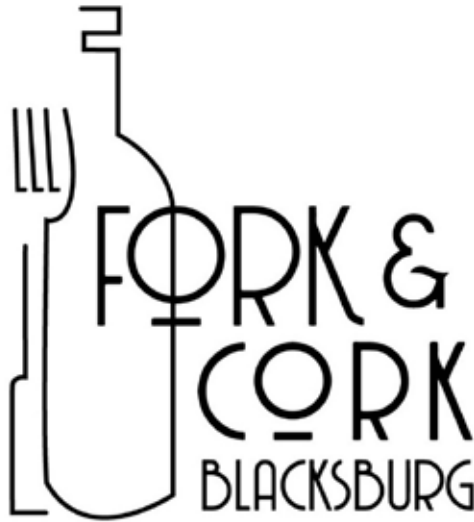
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The Y 150 YEARS
The YMCA of Virginia Tech

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The Y Thrift Shop has always provided low-cost goods for members of our community. But while the Thrift Shop sales are essential to funding our service programs, we don't forget its first mission to help others. It does this by donating inventory to social services, the Christmas Store, the Women's Resource Center, United Way, local schools and others. Be sure to stop by and check out our awesome Craft Corner for your latest project!



The Y Thrift Shop



Meet the Y Team

Violet Zaleski

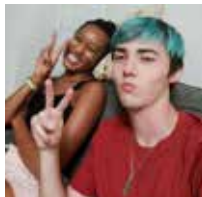
I just finished my undergraduate degree in Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise in December 2023.

I am currently taking my gap year and studying for the MCAT and am serving as a Program Leader for the Joining Generations program.

My favorite thing about the Y has been how welcoming everyone is. I didn't expect to share so many laughs with others! I have cherished my moments volunteering with other Y members.

I love being a part of celebrating 150 years of the Y! It's incredible to be a part of an organization that has been committed to serving the community in an abundance of ways.

A fun fact about me is that I have yet to see the original Lion King movie!



Mark Andrew Young

I am a Senior, majoring in Psychology and Cognitive/Behavioral Neuroscience. I am an Americorps service member, leading the Y afterschool program at Blacksburg Middle School (BMS).

Probably my favorite thing about the Y is the thrift store. It is a really affordable and expansive collection of items that you'll have trouble finding elsewhere in Blacksburg.

It's incredible that our Y has continued to run for so long and it's inspiring that people's commitment to service in our community has endured for so long.

I enjoy dyeing my own hair, and while I certainly fried my hair the first few times I tried I've gotten pretty decent and have had 8 different hair colors over the years!