



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
SENIOR RECITAL

Ben Jilbert, percussion

Swerve (2016) Gene Koshinski (b. 1980)

Adoration (2022) Gary W. Griffith (b. 1985)

Undertale Variations (2017) Toby Fox (b. 1991)
arr. by Doug Perry

Quadrants (2025) Jordan Shippy (b. 1992)
with Heaven La, Leslie Vazquez, and Trisha Pangan-Kennedy

INTERMISSION

Palpitations (2021) Cody Holmes (b. 1995)

Eight Pieces for Four Timpani (1949-1966) Elliott Carter (1908-2012)
V. Improvisation

Escape Room (2025) Evan French (b. 2002)
with Ethan Pham-Aguilar and Victor Nuno-Robles

Watercolor Sun (2023) Ivan Trevino (b. 1983)
with Matt Amato, Evan French, and Justin Respicio

Rebonds (1987/89) Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001)
B. Rebonds

*This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Music in Percussion.
Ben Jilbert is a student of Dr. Jordan Shippy.*



FRIDAY, 2:00 P.M.
MAY 9, 2025
CAPISTRANO CONCERT HALL

PROGRAM NOTES

Ben Jilbert – May 9, 2025

Swerve (2016)

"Jaw-dropping virtuosity and a flair for the unexpected" (PBS) is why **Gene Koshinski** (b. 1980) has delighted audiences worldwide with his dynamic performances and creative programming. Best known for his extraordinary versatility as a solo, chamber, symphonic, jazz, pop, and world music artist/composer, Koshinski is proud to serve as Professor of Percussion at the University of Delaware. He has performed in Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Japan, Jordan, Slovenia, Spain, the UK, Canada, and throughout the United States; including over 200 guest performances/lectures at some of the most prestigious institutions in the world including the Royal College of Music, The Juilliard School, Conservatoire de Lyon, Shenyang Conservatory, Beijing Conservatory, the National Music Conservatory in Amman, and the University of Rio de Janeiro.

"*Swerve*" was commissioned by Tom Sherwood for the 2017 Modern Snare Drum Competition. The composition is episodic and the title references the rapid change of ideas and diversions from the primary musical material, which keeps returning.

Adoration (2022)

Adoration was a piece written specifically for my wife to walk down the aisle to. I have written a lot of things for her/ inspired her, so I felt it was just right to have something composed for that very special moment. Thankfully she indulges me and lets me do what I like musically - including forcing all of our guests to listen to my work.

Thematically, the motor was added in to simulate anxiety and excitement. As lovely as the day is, it is still a whole lot to deal with. So I wanted some dissonance in the harmony while still keeping it dreamlike and beautiful. In the recording I made for the ceremony, I actually slowed the motor down before M. 11 to simulate how seeing her is a calming presence. Her first steps in the music are taken here as well when the rhythm picks up. The ceremony ends with the more exciting section at M. 24 so I wanted the music to feel celebratory here.

There really isn't much to say about this work, as I think the music speaks for itself. It says exactly what I want to, and October 1st, 2022 will forever have a melody in my head.

Undertale Variations (2017)

Multidisciplinary musician **Doug Perry** blurs the lines of genre and allows musics of all styles and backgrounds to share the same stage. Originally a jazz drummer and vibraphonist, Doug engages in a wide variety of musical settings, including classical, jazz, electronic, rock, pop, and world music styles. In addition to performing, Doug's versatility allows him to be active as a composer, arranger, educator, recording engineer and audio producer.

Undertale Variations is a marimba arrangement of the title track from the game *Undertale*, composed by Toby Fox, the game's creator and original soundtrack composer. This arrangement is from the album *FALLEN: An Undertale Tribute*, by Doug Perry in collaboration with the Materia Collective. This arrangement builds upon the simple yet pleasant melody present in Toby Fox's original composition, and embellishes each repetition of the main melody with sweeping arpeggiated motion, added chordal tones, and complex rhythmic variations.

Quadrants (2025)

Quadrants is a fast-paced, relentless work for percussion quartet, built around a unique spatial and rhythmic concept. The performers are arranged like points on a Cartesian plane, with a shared bass drum at the origin. Each player's setup corresponds to a mathematical quadrant: Players 1 and 3 occupy the vertical axis with pairs of toms to the north and south, while Players 2 and 4 cover the horizontal axis to the west and east with pairs of congas.

The structure of the piece mirrors its geometric inspiration. It unfolds as a symmetrical form—almost a rhythmic palindrome—beginning and ending with the full ensemble moving as one. In between, the players split into duos, then break into solo passages before reuniting. Throughout, each performer contributes fragments to a dense, interlocking texture, where individual rhythms combine to form a driving composite pulse. *Quadrants* explores the intersection of individual precision and ensemble cohesion.

Palpitations (2021)

Cody Holmes (b. 1995) is originally from Lubbock Texas. Holmes graduated from Texas Tech University where he was a percussion student of Dr. Lisa Rogers and Alan Shinn. During his time at Texas Tech, Holmes served as Principal for the Texas Tech University Symphony Orchestra as well as Drumline Captain for the 'Goin Band From Raiderland.' Holmes was also a member of the Percussion Ensemble I, Steel Band (Apocalypso Now), and Symphonic Wind Ensemble. While studying at Texas Tech, Cody became a founding member of the Holmes Percussion Duo, consisting of himself and his brother, Ben. His first composition for the duo, *Insomnia*, has quickly become a standard in Marimba Duet literature and is regularly performed across the globe.

Palpitations is a challenging marimba duet comprised of sweeping arpeggio passages, groove-centered melodies, and echoing rhythms that work together to create a bigger picture to the listener. I landed on the title *Palpitations* when writing the beginning section of the piece. Although the music remains in a simple meter, the pulse is felt differently throughout, and the echo effect between the marimbas creates an unsteady feeling that constantly builds and releases tension. The following section of the duet begins much more stable and develops a groovy bassline and melody. As soon as the pulse stabilizes, it is thrown off into odd-meter licks that give the feeling of an entirely new tempo. In the third section of the piece the two players begin to create their own "echo chamber" that develops and expands throughout. When writing this section, I imagined falling asleep listening to a heart monitor, where the imagination would take a single tone and expand on it until it became something different entirely. With moments of stability and instability, *Palpitations* has the opportunity to create a thrilling listening experience to the audience.

Eight Pieces for Four Timpani (1949-1966) / V. "Improvisation"

Composer **ELLIOTT CARTER** (December 11, 1908 - November 5, 2012) is internationally recognized as one of the most influential American voices in classical music, and a leading figure of modernism in the 20th and 21st centuries. He was hailed as "America's great musical poet" by Andrew Porter and noted as "one of America's most distinguished creative artists in any field" by his friend Aaron Copland. Carter's prolific career spanned over 75 years, with more than 150 pieces, ranging from chamber music to orchestral works to opera, often marked with a sense of wit and humor. He received numerous honors and accolades, including the Pulitzer Prize on two occasions: in 1960 for his *String Quartet No. 2* and in 1973 for his *String Quartet No. 3*. Other awards include Germany's Ernst Von Siemens Music Prize and the Prince Pierre Foundation Music Award. Carter was the first composer to receive the United States National Medal of Arts and is one of a handful of composers inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. He was recognized twice by the Government of France: being named Commander of the "Ordre des Arts et des Lettres," and receiving the insignia of Commander of the Legion of Honor in September 2012.

The Canto and Adagio of this set of Eight Pieces for Four Timpani (One Player) were written in 1966, while the other six were composed in 1949. In those days, these six were found difficult, if not impossible to play effectively, but, as time passed interest in them and performing skills grew, so I decided to publish the set complete, as four of them had been widely circulated in manuscript, in 1966. At that time, they were revised with the help of the percussionist, Jan Williams, of the New York State University at Buffalo. In gratitude for his advice, the Canto and Adagio were composed for him and included the set. Unlike the other, each of which is a four-note piece based on different tunings of the drums, these two employ the possibilities of the pedal-tuned chromatic timpani.

The six from 1949, besides being virtuoso solos for the instrumentalist, are studies in the controlled, interrelated changes of speed now called "metric modulation," and generated ideas carried further in my First String Quartet begun at the same time and completed shortly afterwards. Each piece is dedicated to a

performer who showed an interest in the works in their early days: *V. Improvisation* (1949/1966) – Paul Price – The opening phrase furnishes materials for numerous variations with constant changes of speed.

Escape room (2025)

Escape Room is a trio for oboe, bassoon, and cajon that explores themes of desperation, problem-solving, and exhilaration. Inspired by the popular puzzle-based attractions that gained widespread popularity in the 2010s, the piece mirrors the emotional rollercoaster of trying to solve a series of challenges under pressure—imagine the intensity of *Saw*, but without the danger and gore. Throughout the work, moments of despair give way to bursts of excitement following a breakthrough, only to be undercut by misleading clues that spiral back into confusion. All the while, an invisible timer looms, ticking steadily in the background...

Watercolor Sun (2023)

Ivan Trevino is a Mexican American composer, percussionist, teacher, and arts advocate. Recognized around the world for his contributions to percussion literature, Ivan's music has been performed across five continents in 25 countries. His music distinctly threads indie-pop sounds with a contemporary classical aesthetic, and his body of work spans storytelling, singing marimba players, cello rockers, and an ever-present social consciousness. His newly commissioned works include music for The Juilliard School, The San Diego Symphony Orchestra, and Grammy-winning quartet, Third Coast Percussion. He is a multi-recipient of the Percussive Arts Society's International Composition Contest, and in 2020, was the featured composer on NPR's *Performance Today*.

Watercolor Sun (2023) was commissioned by the Grammy-winning ensemble, Third Coast Percussion. It was written for the quartet to perform on one single 4.3 octave marimba. I have been friends with the members of Third Coast for many years and have watched them from afar with much admiration. It brings me great joy to write music for them. There are moments in life that create a feeling I can't quite describe. Like waking up in a sunlight room, or sharing a meal with old friends, or going on a road trip with someone you love. There's a jovial, euphoric feeling to it. I feel it when I catch the sunrise with my family, and I feel it when I play music too. Maybe it is gratitude, or peace, or something in between. Whatever this feeling is, it is at the heart of *Watercolor Sun*.

Rebonds-B (1987-89)

Iannis Xenakis is one of the leaders of modernism in music, a hugely influential composer, particularly in the later 1950s and 1960s, when he was experimenting with compositional techniques that soon entered the basic vocabulary of the twentieth century *avant garde*. Xenakis was born, not in Greece, but in Braila, Romania, of Greek parents, on 29 May 1922. His initial training, in Athens, was as a civil engineer. In 1947, after three years spent fighting in the Greek resistance against the Nazi occupation, during which time he was very badly injured (losing the sight of an eye), he escaped a death sentence and fled to France, where he settled and subsequently became an important element of cultural life.

Xenakis was first active as an architect, collaborating with Le Corbusier on a number of projects, not least the Philips Pavilion, designed by Xenakis, at the 1958 Brussels World Fair. It was in the 1950s, too, that Xenakis' compositions began to be published. In 1952 he attended composition classes with Olivier Messaien, who suggested that Xenakis apply his scientific training to music. The resulting style, based on procedures derived from mathematics, architectural principles, and game theory, catapulted Xenakis to the front ranks of the *avant garde*—although there was never any suggestion that he was a member of a clique or group: he was always his own man. He never, for example, embraced total serialism, and he also avoided more traditional devices of harmony and counterpoint; instead, he developed other ways of organizing the dense masses of sound that are characteristic of his first compositions. These stochastic, or random, procedures were based on mathematical principles and were later entrusted to computers for their realization.

Rebonds is a major work by Iannis Xenakis for multiple percussion solo. A ritualistic web of complex rhythms in two substantial movements, this is rated as one of his masterpieces. Xenakis composed the solo percussion work *Rebonds* in 1987-89 and dedicated it to percussionist Sylvio Gualda.