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# Concert: Un/Pitched Presents: The Sonic Sandbox Orchestra

Keehun Nam

Sonic Sandbox Orchestra

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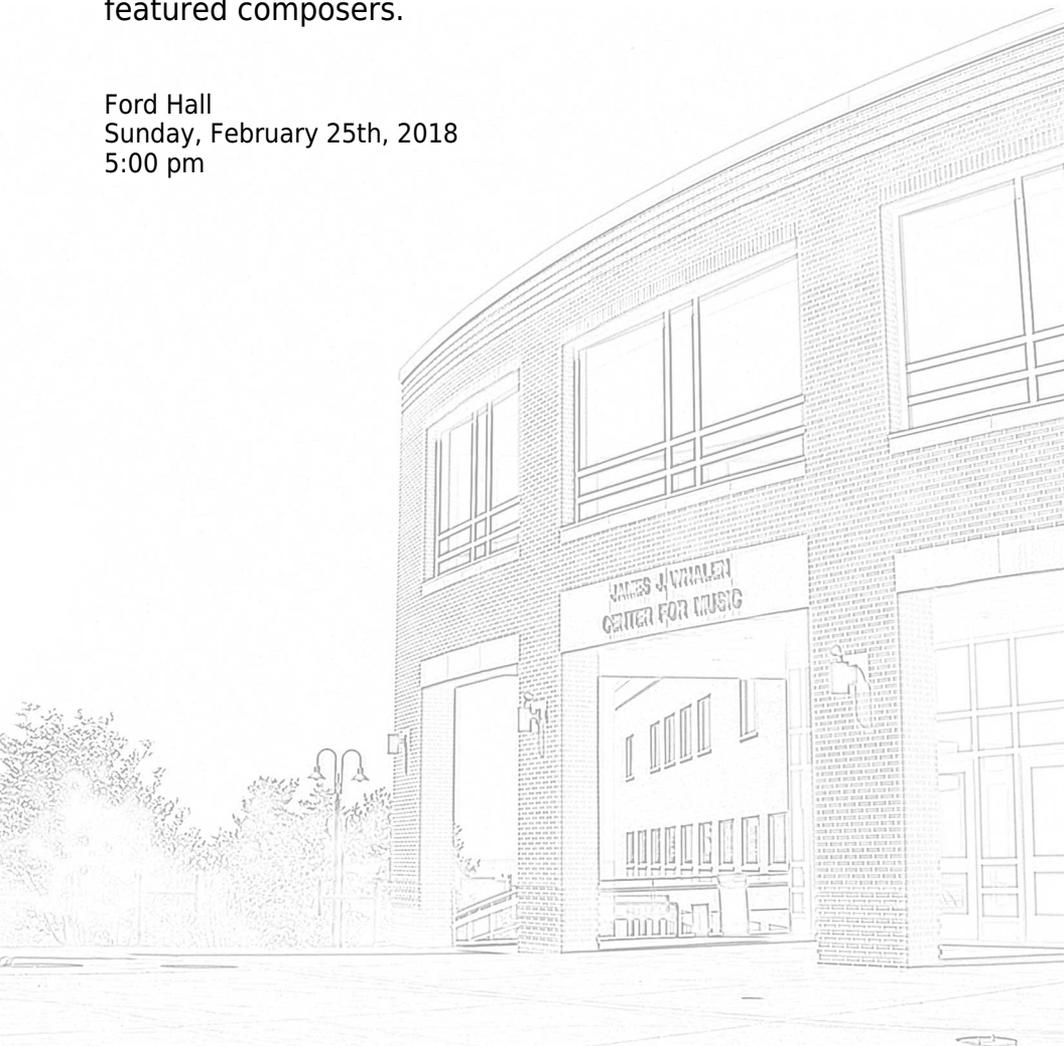
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**Un/Pitched** Presents:  
*The Sonic Sandbox Orchestra*

Keehun Nam, conductor

Dallas J. Howard, Emmanuel Berrido,  
Daniel Sabzghabaei, Barry Sharp  
featured composers.

Ford Hall  
Sunday, February 25th, 2018  
5:00 pm



**ITHACA COLLEGE**

School of Music

# Program

Danza Ritual (Ritual Dance)

Emmanuel Berrido  
(b. 1986)

May 29 - June 9

Daniel Sabzghabaei  
(b. 1992)

Farther from the Truth

Barry Sharp  
(b.1990)

Wendelstein 7-X

Dallas J. Howard  
(b.1992)

## **Biographies**

### **Keehun Nam - Conductor**

Keehun Nam is a conductor passionate about bringing people together both inside and outside the concert hall. In Ithaca, he has served as the Music Director of the Ithaca College Sinfonietta, Assistant Conductor to Ithaca College Symphony and Chamber Orchestras, Orchestra Director to Savoyards Ithaca, guest conductor of Cornell Chamber and Symphony Orchestras, and conductor of the Ithaca College Contemporary Ensemble.

Prior to moving to Ithaca, he founded and was the Music Director of the Vanderbilt Commodore Orchestra, the first and only community orchestra at Vanderbilt University which has now become a cornerstone of student culture on campus. At Vanderbilt University, he collaborated with world-class soloists in concert such as Jeremy Wilson (formerly Vienna Philharmonic) and Peter Sheppard-Skaerved (Royal Academy of Music, London) in a BMI-sponsored world premiere of the full version of Elliott Schwartz's Chamber Concerto VI: Mr. Jefferson.

Outside of school, he served as production assistant to Jim Gray, one of the most sought-after arrangers and orchestrators in the country. Under Mr. Gray, he supervised recording sessions, prepared music, and engraved manuscripts. When he is not conducting or studying scores, he can be found cooking, orchestrating, hiking, canoeing, computer programming, reading, or writing.

### **Emmanuel Berrido - Composer**

Emmanuel Berrido is a Dominican-American composer and pianist with a passion for telling stories through sound, having composed music for the concert hall, the radio, or even the dance floor. His work has been performed by a variety of groups and performers including the Amernet String Quartet, cellists Jason Calloway, Megan Chartier, and Craig Mehler, violinist Peter Sheppard Skaerved, and the FIU Wind Ensemble. Recent experiences have included performances at the Indiana State University Contemporary Music Festival, the New Music Miami Festival, the Ball State University Festival of New Music, the SCI Student National Conference, the Ann Arbor Society of Musical Arts, and the Kendal Sound Arts Series. In May 2017, he was awarded the Louis Smadbeck Composition Prize in Ithaca, NY, for his work *Bend the Knee* for brass quintet.

Emmanuel has a degree in Music Business (Creative Production) from Miami Dade College, and a B.M. in Music Composition from Florida International University where he studied with composer Orlando Jacinto García. He is currently pursuing his Master of Music degree

under the mentorship of composers Evis Sammoutis and Jorge Villavicencio Grossmann at Ithaca College, in Upstate New York. Other educational experiences have included mentorship by composers Bernard Rands, Augusta Read Thomas, and Chinary Ung, violinist Peter Sheppard Skaerved, and clarinetist Lori Freedman.

Alongside Lindsey Eastham, Dallas Joseph Howard, and Sergio Cote, he co-founded the Un/Pitched organization and concert series, a project devoted to promoting contemporary music in the greater New York area, to enrich collaboration and educating communities about twenty-first-century art. The Un/Pitched concerts in the Fall of 2017 marked the first official collaboration between Ithaca College and Cornell University composers.

When he is not composing, performing, or practicing, Emmanuel Berrido creates websites for other musicians and small businesses, draws, and reads non-fiction books about any topic, from history and philosophy to communication and language.

## **Daniel Sabzghabaei - Composer**

Daniel Sabzghabaei (ASCAP) is a composer and vocalist whose work aims to emphasize the malleability of time and how we experience it, not just in the concert hall but in everyday life as well. His music has been performed and commissioned by professional and amateur organizations alike, including: Hong Kong's *Intimacy of Creativity* Festival, the *New York Festival of Song*, Minnesota's *VocalEssence*, Dallas' *Voices of Change*, *The Esoterics*, the *Busan Choral Festival*, Korea's *Ansan City Choir*, Minneapolis' *Magpies & Ravens*, Romania's *ICon Arts Festival*, *Festivalul Internațional Craiova Muzicală*, Pittsburgh-based *OvreArts*, and Ukraine's *Kharkov Academic Youth Orchestra* to name a few. As of late, Daniel has been increasingly interested in his Persian heritage, seriously studying and taking inspiration from Persian melodic and rhythmic systems, Persian folk music, and Persian art and poetry. Daniel graduated *summa cum laude* with a BM in Composition as a Distinguished Honors Scholar from the University of North Texas in 2014. He then earned his MM in 2017 from The Peabody Conservatory of The Johns Hopkins University, whereupon graduation, he was given the P. Bruce Blair Award in Composition by the faculty. His teachers have included: Kevin Puts, Panayiotis Kokoras, Joseph Klein, William Coble, Kirsten Broberg, and Andrew May. Daniel is currently a doctoral student and Sage Fellow at Cornell University, studying with Roberto Sierra, Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri, and Kevin Ernste.

## **Barry Sharp - Composer**

Composer and performer Barry Sharp engages with sound as an

experimental and collaborative force. Performances of Barry's compositions have taken place in the U.S., Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, and Thailand by performers such as sTem, the JACK Quartet, Khemia Ensemble, the Princeton Singers, OSSIA Ensemble, Ithaca New Music Collective, Cornell Orchestras, Cornell Chamber Singers, Webster County High School, and the MSU Brass Band. He is a recipient of a 2016 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, multiple Cornell Council for the Arts Grants, and was a semi-finalist in the 2016 American Prize for Choral Music. He has been invited to participate at the MISE-EN PLACE Bushwick Winter Residency, the 2018 Northwestern University New Music Conference, June in Buffalo, New Music on the Point, and the Lehigh Choral Composers Forum. He is currently composer in residence with the New York based Duo Helix.

Barry's music is often collaborative. His work, *Hear me*, in collaboration with architect Min Keun Park received a grant from the Cornell Council for the Arts for the 2016-2017 biennial. His collaboration in 2014 was with poets, dancers, light designers, and other composers. We created a fifty-minute production addressing war trauma entitled "No Armistice." We also created installations for Liz Lerman's *Worth Fighting For* Pop-up museum. Current collaborations include a piece for Duo Helix, a new work for Switch Ensemble, a percussion quartet for the University of Kansas percussion, and a chamber opera with poet Vincent Hiscock.

Barry is currently pursuing a doctorate at Cornell University where he studies with Kevin Ernste, Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri, and Roberto Sierra. He also holds degrees in music from Murray State University (BM) and the University of Iowa (MA). More at [www.barrysharpmusic.com](http://www.barrysharpmusic.com).

## **Dallas J. Howard - Composer**

Dallas Joseph Howard is an award winning composer, performer, and collaborative artist. He was awarded the Maddy Summer Artist award at the Interlochen Summer Arts Camp for composition, as well as the Project21: Music for the Twenty-First Century Composition Competition Prize at Oklahoma City University. Earlier experiences include working with Derek Bermel as a Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Composing Fellow. He was a founder of new music festivals, such as the P21 Music Festival in Oklahoma City and the TwisterFest Music and Art Festival in Chickasha, Oklahoma. He was also responsible of organizing Ithaca College School of Music's first World Music Festival.

Dallas' formal music composition training began in high school with a focus in film music under the mentorship of Thom Sharp (UCLA), and

concert music with Anthony Suter (Redlands University). After spending a year under the instruction of Don Freund at Indiana University, Dallas transferred to Oklahoma City University to study composition with Dr. Edward Knight. Since finishing his undergraduate studies, Dallas has studied with several composers including Augusta Read Thomas, Chinary Ung, Bob Aldridge, David Dzubay, Greg Simon, and Jorge Villavicencio Grossmann.

Recent activities in 2017 have featured performances from virtuoso violinist Peter Sheppard Skærved, contemporary clarinetist Lori Freedman, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and a work commissioned by Easthama: International Percussion Duo. He also helped in founding of a new new music organization called Un/Pitched which focuses on bringing together different institutions and communities together through new music. Dallas has recently attended Brevard Music Center Summer Institute.

Currently, Dallas is pursuing his last semester of his Master's in Music Composition with Dr. Evis Sammouris and is the graduate assistant for Composition Department as well as the Electro-Acoustic Studios at Ithaca College School of Music. His recent projects include a collection of pieces for amplified prepared shopping cart, a chamber piece for the Switch Ensemble, and a fanfare for the Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra. This summer Dallas will be attending Tanglewood as one of their Composition Fellows for the 2018 season. In the future, Dallas J. Howard hopes to continue his work of spreading music everywhere he goes.

## **Program Notes**

### **Danza Ritual (Ritual Dance)**

DANZA RITUAL (Ritual Dance) came to be when I was preparing for the Miami Summer Music Festival Composition Institute, back in 2015, under another name; regardless of how I felt about the work back then, I knew I would come back to it at some point in my life. Now, almost three years after, I was given the opportunity to look back at this piece and re-connect with the impulse that prompted the creation of this work – a need to establish and the continued search of my expression as a Dominican-American composer, in which the features that make Dominican culture beautiful come forth. This piece, then, is inspired by the afro-caribbean religious dances that can be found in the "bateyes" (villages in the sugar cane fields) in the Dominican Republic, with the heavy use of drums and ostinati that, more than a musical function, serve the ritualistic purpose of getting participants into a sort of trance, allowing them to come together in praise, as well as coming together for parties dedicated to the saints. – EB

**May 29 - June 9**

The significance of this work's title lies in the two specific dates and the short time in between these dates for Michael Shane Schafer and those close to him: on May 29, 2015 Michael was married to Jillian Paige Gottlieb, and on June 9, 2015, he passed away after an arduous battle with tongue cancer. The two moments are presented in reverse chronological order in the piece, book-ended by two instances of silence, with other blocks of silence interspersed throughout the work. Since each first chair player becomes an occasional soloist in the piece, there is a constant teetering between full ensemble and chamber ensemble, allowing for sudden bursts of intimacy between these five players amongst the power of the full group. Many of the conversations and discussions between Michael and I focused on German lieder, specifically Schumann's iconic cycle *Dichterliebe*; Michael, a dark, lyric tenor, was passionate about the German art song tradition. As I was drafting this work, I had a copy of *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai* on my piano, and I felt its influence on me throughout this work's composition; many of the motives feel to me as blossoms out of Schumann's short song full of so much depth. Eventually, the song's melodic content is presented, but in the ether, floating, arrhythmically in the upper harmonics of the string quintet players, each sustaining their notes to create a lush sky of incidental harmony that sits atop the rest of the ensemble.

## **Farther from the Truth**

Imagery has become an important aspect of my work. While writing *Farther from the truth*, I started experimenting with a reactionary and improvisatory process where I meditate on a vision or image, then go to an instrument and improvise a piece in its entirety. Actively "touching" the sounds and connecting with them in this way has become an important part of my process. While much of this material never made it into the piece, these initial improvisations shaped its development. The vision I associate with this piece comes from a period of great tension in my life. Much of my downtime is spent being present in nature and, if possible, in front of a huge body of water. It's humbling. It's a safe space. The piece doesn't attempt to directly portray nature itself, but rather the specific feelings and network of associations it evokes. Water is present at the core of the piece: the desire to be near it and to be totally immersed in it.

## **Wendelstein 7-X**

Wendelstein 7-X is an experimental stellarator in Greifswald, Germany. This nuclear fusion reactor is made up of five field-period Halias. This reactor uses superconducting magnetic coils to suspend plasma in order to allow it to spin freely without touching the reactor's walls, which must maintain it's outer coils at -300 Celsius to stay superconductive. The plasma reaches six million degrees Celsius

during a cycle of 2,000 pulses. The amount of energy this device outputs will change the world in terms of our environmental footprint as well reshape our economical stress caused by our energy needs. This 750 ton machine is comprised of over a million different machines in order for it to function and sustain it's power. This piece is artistic soundscape of what this machine is and what future it will bring humanity. During the construction of this piece I simply asked myself "What happens when abundant raw energy is unleashed?"

## About Un/Pitched

*Un/Pitched* is an organization focused on bringing together different institutions, communities, and their respective perceptions and ideologies through the cultivation of contemporary music. Their first project: *New Percussion Music Alliance* workshopped works by Ithaca College and Cornell composers by our own *Un/Pitched Percussion Trio* (Lindsey Eastham, Ujjal Bhattacharyya, and Ben Cordell), Ithaca College composition faculty members Jorge Grossmann and Evis Sammoutis, as well as participating doctoral candidates and graduate composition students from Cornell and Ithaca College. After the workshop, *Un/Pitched* awarded 1st Prize of it's Call For Scores to Parker Callister.

*Un/Pitched* then held their first concert series in the Fall of 2017 featuring the *Un/Pitched Percussion Trio* performing newly composed pieces from six award-winning composers in the Ithaca area. This two-concert series featured composers Sergio Cote, Emmanuel Berrido, Parker Callister, Dallas J. Howard, Piyawat Louilarpprasert, and Barry Sharp. This is the first time Cornell University and Ithaca College School of Music have participated together in a project of this type to promote student collaboration between these two fine institutions.

This collaboration inspired what we present to you today, our second major project: *The Sonic Sandbox Orchestra* under the baton of our resident conductor, Keehun Nam. Thank you to all of our performers on stage that have donated their time and energy to make this project a reality.

Take a look at our website (<https://www.unpitched.org>) or check us out on Facebook to keep up to date on all of our future events. Our next season will be announced fall 2018 and will feature more calls for scores, workshops, masterclasses and performances, as well as the debut of the *Un/Pitched Ensemble*. Stay tuned!