



San Diego New Music and the Athenaeum Music & Arts Library present

Digital Dose #2

A Virtual Concert Featuring

Mark Menzies, violin

Colin McAllister, electric guitar

Christopher Adler, harpsichord

Students of the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

February 20, 2021
7:30 p.m. Pacific time

Mark Menzies, violin

Faultlines (2009), by Chris Cree Brown

Recorded December, 2020, at the Arts Centre of Christchurch, New Zealand
Video by Mark Menzies and Stephen Compton

Colin McAllister, electric guitar

Black Flowers (2018), by Chaya Czernowin

“obscure vegetation: black flowers bloom in matter’s darkness”—Gaston Bachelard

Recorded January, 2021, by Michael Lascuola, in Colorado Springs, Colorado

Christopher Adler, harpsichord

things that flow (1996), by Christopher Adler

Recorded January, 2021, San Diego, California
Video Production by Christopher and Supeena Adler
Harpsichord courtesy Dr. Marianne Pfau

Colin McAllister, electric guitar

Weft Sutra (2020), by Philip Blackburn *

Recorded January, 2021, by Michael Lascuola, in Colorado Springs, Colorado

Students of the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

...ginGer... (2020), by Mark Menzies *

with oboe solo composed by Luka Reardon

Recorded December, 2020, at the Arts Centre of Christchurch, New Zealand
Video by Mark Menzies and Stephen Compton

*** world premiere performance**

Selected Program Notes

Weft Sutra, by Philip Blackburn

Weaving a narrative, spinning a yarn, seems to be a human thing to do. Sometimes it's a story, sometimes an impression open to imaginative interpretation. Either way, we are kept rapt in the moment, dwelling in the patterns and colors as they emerge. In the case of *Weft Sutra*, I have set up the loom and provided technical guidance, and then let the weaver do his work. It may have something to do with my ancestral family background in the Cheney Brothers silk mills of Manchester, Conn.—the warp and weft of the looms that created such richly nuanced fabrics and textures. 'Sutra' in Sanskrit literally means string or thread; perhaps this is the magical force making the instrument sing or the ritual enactment of sacred harmonic worlds. The electric guitar has been touched before, but never by me. I wanted to approach it afresh, as much internal Tai Chi as outward sonic manifestation, as much scordatura hurdy-gurdy as ambient drone pleroma. The score is not written but delivered by instructional Youtube video. The oral tradition begins anew with each performance. This is how stories live and spread. I am grateful to Colin McAllister for requesting the work and bringing it to life with his whole body, intellect, and heart.

Artist Biographies

Christopher Adler is a composer, performer and improviser living in San Diego, California. His compositions encompass cross-culturally hybrid forms drawn from contemporary concert music and traditional musics of Thailand and Laos, the application of mathematics to composition, and the integration of improvisation into structured composition. He is a foremost performer of traditional and new music for the khaen, a free-reed mouth organ from Laos and Northeast Thailand. In 2020 he released *Triangulations: New music for khaen, volume one*, a CD of khaen solos by composers from around the world. He is a pianist with Nief-Norf and NOISE, an Affiliated Artist with San Diego New Music, a co-founder of the soundON Festival of Modern Music, and Director of Composition for the Nief-Norf Summer Festival. He studied with Scott Lindroth, Evan Ziporyn, Steven Jaffe and Sidney Corbett and is currently Professor of Music at the University of San Diego. www.christopheradler.com

Philip Blackburn was born in Cambridge, England, and studied music there as a Choral Scholar at Clare College (BA, MA). He earned his Ph.D. in Composition from the University of Iowa where he studied with Kenneth Gaburo and began work on publishing the Harry Partch archives. Blackburn's book, *Enclosure Three: Harry Partch*, won an ASCAP Deems Taylor Award. He worked at the American Composers Forum from 1991 until 2020, running the *innova Recordings* label (which has been called “the nation’s premiere label for American new music”) – producing over 650 albums and garnering two Grammy Awards – while developing re-granting programs (notably the Jerome commissioning program and McKnight Fellowships). In 2020 he took over the *Neuma Records* label. PhilipBlackburn.com

Chris Cree Brown is currently a freelance Composer and Sonic Artist. In 2018, he retired from his position as Associate Professor at the School of Music, University of Canterbury. His main interests include conventional instrumental composition, electroacoustic and computer music, and inter-media art. In August 2018, he has been granted the University of Otago Wallace Trust Residency at the Pah homestead in Auckland, and in 2019, he has been invited to teach/assist in teaching Masters students at the musikhochschule in Lubeck, Germany for the northern summer semester. He has twice been awarded the Mozart Fellowship at the University of Otago, has twice been appointed Composer-in-Schools, has won two prizes in the Wellington Youth Orchestra's Young Composers Competition, and has written a number of film scores. In 1986, he received the CANZ Trust Fund Award and in 2010, he received the CANZ KBB Award for services to New Zealand Music. His work has been performed in many countries, including Australia, England, Finland, Hungary, France, Germany, Canada, Japan, Portugal, Russia, Scotland, and the United States of America.

Chaya Czernowin was born and brought up in Israel. After her studies in Israel, at the age of 25, she continued studying in Germany (DAAD grant), the US, and then was invited to live in Japan (Asahi Shimbun Fellowship and American NEA grant) Tokyo, in Germany (a fellowship at the Akademie Schloss Solitude) and in Vienna. Her music has been performed throughout the world, by some of the best orchestras and performers of new music, and she has held a professorship at UCSD, and was the first woman to be appointed as a composition professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, Austria (2006–2009), and at Harvard University, USA (2009 and on) where she has been the Walter Bigelow Rosen Professor of Music. Together with Jean-Baptiste Jolly, the director of Akademie Schloss Solitude near Stuttgart and with composer Steven Kazuo Takasugi, she has founded the summer Academy at Schloss Solitude, a biannual course for composers. Takasugi and Czernowin also teach at Tzili Meudcan, an international course based in Israel founded by Yaron Deutsch of Ensemble Nikel.

Colin McAllister is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, where he was awarded the 2020 LAS Outstanding Teaching Award. His performances as a guitarist have been hailed as “sparkling...delivered superbly” (San Francisco Chronicle), “ravishing” (San Diego Union Tribune) and “an amazing tour de force” (San Diego Story), and he has recorded on the Summit, *innova*, Centaur, Naxos, Albany, Old King Cole, Vienna Modern Masters, Carrier and Tzadik labels. His research interests include contemporary music performance and pedagogy, musical modernism, and the apocalyptic paradigm as manifested in varying phenomena—literature, music, and art.

Mark Menzies Mark Menzies has established an important, world-wide reputation as a violist and violinist, pianist and conductor. He has been described in the Los Angeles Times as an 'extraordinary musician' and a 'riveting violinist.' His career as a viola and violin virtuoso, chamber musician and pianist, conductor and advocate of contemporary music, has seen performances in Europe, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, Japan, New Zealand and across the United States, including a series of appearances at New York's Carnegie Hall. Mark Menzies has a considerable reputation as

a chamber music performer; currently he is violist and violinist in the Formalist Quartet, and whose discography includes a forthcoming release of the complete quartets by Christian Wolff. A significant number of Menzies' (solo) recordings are premiere performances: Michael Finnissy's ...above earth's shadow; Roger Reynolds' Process and Passion and image/viola; Barry Shrader's Fallen Sparrow; James Newton's In a moment...Menzies' compositions are increasingly played across the globe with recent premieres in The Netherlands, Italy, Los Angeles and Christchurch. Viola, violin professor and coordinator of conducted ensembles at the California Institute of the Arts, from 1999-2016, where Mark Menzies curated a remarkable series of concerts at REDCAT at Disney Hall in downtown Los Angeles, and he is now Professor of Music at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.



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