



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

Digital Dose #4

A Livestream Concert Featuring

Sarah Skuster, oboe
Eric Starr, trombone
Christopher Adler, khaen
Batya MacAdam-Somer, violin

May 21, 2021
7:30 p.m. Pacific time
<https://tinyurl.com/sdnm-live>

Eric Starr, trombone

Erratic Peaks (2021), by Varun Rangaswamy
recipient of the 2021 Falk Commission

Sarah Skuster, oboe

Sequenza VII (1969), by Luciano Berio

Sarah Skuster and Eric Starr

Mirror/Fall (2011), by Christopher Adler

Batya MacAdam-Somer, violin, and Christopher Adler, khaen

K's Crossing (2019), by Christopher Adler

Polka efter Axel Edfors (1870-1927)

arranged by Bridget Marsden and Leif Ottosson, adapted by Christopher Adler

The Serpent's Dance (2021), by Christopher Adler

Sommarvalsen, by Ale Möller (b. 1955)

arranged by Christopher Adler

Program Note

Erratic Peaks is an open form piece. The performer is given templates of sorts: multiple versions of three sections. While the piece can be played sequentially (Section 1 Version 1, Section 1 Version 2...Section 2 Version 1), the performer is invited to change the sequence of the different versions. Each version involves a different kind of physical manipulation to the instrument, adding objects, removing slides, etc. By choosing how and in what order to play these templates, the performer is invited to explore different relationships to their own instrument and jump between them. I hope this performance can encourage us to think about how multiple facets of our identities are both constantly in motion and always in conversation with one another.—Varun Rangaswamy

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. Christopher Adler is the world's leading innovator in contemporary concert music for the khaen, the bamboo free-reed mouth organ of Laos and Northeast Thailand. He has performed his own compositions and traditional repertoire at Carnegie Hall, the Bang on a Can Marathon, Merkin Hall, Music at the Anthology, the Cultural Center of Chicago, and at universities across the U.S., Thailand and Singapore. With his ongoing project *New Musical Geographies*, he has promoted the instrument by commissioning and recording new works by composers including Sidney Marquez Boquiren, Christopher Burns, Jinhee Han, H. James Harkins, Jeff Herriott, Vera Ivanova and Yu Kuwabara. In December, 2020, he released *Triangulations: New music for khaen, volume one* (Liber Pulveris Recordings), the first compact disc dedicated to contemporary khaen solo ever produced, featuring works by seven composers. His recordings of compositions by David Loeb have been released on Vienna Modern Masters and Centaur. 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. His work may be heard on Tzadik, Innova, Blue Griffin, Liber Pulveris, pfMENTUM, Rattle, Blue Leaf, Nine Winds, Artship Recordings, Vienna Modern Masters, Centaur, Traditional Crossroads, Circumvention, and Accretion Records. www.christopheradler.com

Batya MacAdam-Somer performs with Quartet Nouveau, a string quartet that presents classical chamber music throughout Southern California. I am also a member of Baby Bushka, an eight-piece all-female band celebrating the music of Kate Bush. Since our inception in 2017, Baby Bushka has quickly become an international sensation. We've played sold out shows up and down the West Coast and are headed overseas for our second UK/Ireland tour in 2021. In 2014, I graduated from the University of California, San Diego with a doctoral degree in violin performance, focusing on

avant garde repertoire and experimental practices. Being a part of the UCSD musical community allowed me to collaborate with awesome composers and performers such as Nicholas Deyoe, Leslie Leytham, Meghann Welsh, Yvette Janine Jackson, Bonnie Lander, Jonathan Piper, Clinton Ross Davis, Michiko Ogawa, Stephanie Aston, Katalin Lukács, Sam Dunscombe, Jessica Aszodi, Judith Hamann, Rachel Beetz, Todd Moellenberg, Clint McCallum, Carolyn Chen, Rick Snow, and Bob Pierzak, to name a few. I performed a number of premieres and studied with the late Hungarian violinist János Négyesy. I play often for The Hutchins Consort, Project [BLANK], San Diego New Music and Art of Élan. I've also had the opportunity to work with Los Angeles based ensembles WasteLAnd and wild Up, NYC ensembles ICE and Bang on a Can All-Stars, and Ensemble Pamplemousse. A little about my past: I grew up in a musical household, the third of four children. We all studied a string instrument (violin or cello) as well as piano and performed often together in our hometown of Houston, Texas. Along with being immersed in classical music from a young age, I became obsessed with the local oldies radio station- The Mamas and the Papas, The Supremes, The Shirelles, The Beach Boys, The Beatles, Simon and Garfunkel, Doo Wop, etc. My interest in popular music continues to influence the work I do. Some current favorites are The Feelies, Viv Albertine, Barrington Levy, Kate Bush, Daniel Johnston, Townes Van Zandt, Aldous Harding, Joni Mitchell, The B52s, The Pet Shop Boys, Yoko Ono and Robyn Hitchcock. In Houston, my primary teachers were Judy Offman of the Suzuki School of Houston and Fredell Lack. I began my college studies at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston and continued on to earn a bachelor's degree from the Manhattan School of Music as a student of Sylvia Rosenberg. I've performed at the Ojai Music Festival, La Jolla Summerfest, Lucerne Festival Academy, Aspen Music Festival, and Bach Festival of Leipzig. Recently, I've enjoyed being a part of the Baroque on Beaver Island Festival and Festival Vértice in Mexico City.

Varun Rangaswamy is a composer, scholar, bassoonist, and Karnāṭak musician. Their music, which has been performed across North America and Europe, focuses on the interstices between different identities within a single body. He engages with the instability of cultural processes— like the formation and reconfiguration of identity—by deconstructing normative cultural associations between sonic, visual, and spiritual signifiers within a highly representational compositional setting. To achieve this, Rangaswamy performs distortive transformations of musical practice, whether through physical experimentation with instrumental convention or relocation of the body in musical action, conjuring a chaotic degree of viscerality. Rangaswamy was originally trained in Karnāṭak music. He has studied voice with C.M. Venkatachalam, Chitraveena N. Ravikiran, and Balu Balasubrahmaniam, and is currently studying mridangam with Rajna Swaminathan. He has also studied bassoon performance with George Sakakeeny and Valentin Martchev. Rangaswamy is currently a graduate student in composition at UC San Diego.

Hailed by the New York Times as a musician of “noteworthy elegance,” **Sarah Skuster** joined the San Diego Symphony as principal oboist in 2009 and has subsequently appeared as a featured soloist with the orchestra on several occasions. She previously served as interim second oboe with the Dallas Symphony, and second oboe with the Akron Symphony and has appeared as a substitute with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony. Ms. Skuster enjoys performing with the San Diego Symphony Chamber Series, Art of Élan, Camarada, Palimpsest, Renga and San Diego New Music and has appeared at the Ojai Music Festival, Festival Mozaic and the Mainly Mozart Festival. Ms. Skuster earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music where she studied with John Mack and attended Mannes College as a student of Elaine Douvas with additional studies at the Aspen Music Festival and as a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. She is also a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, where she studied with Dan Stolper. Ms. Skuster is a Lecturer of music

at San Diego State University, the adjunct oboe instructor at Point Loma Nazarene University and maintains a private teaching studio of all ages and abilities.

Eric Starr maintains a multi-faceted musical career as a faculty member at SDSU, Executive Director for San Diego New Music, Trombonist for Westwind Brass and Community Engagement Partner with Art of Elan. At SDSU, Eric serves as Studio Artist Teacher, Lecturer, Brass Coordinator, Internship Coordinator and Program Advisor for the Music, Entrepreneurship and Business degree. He was named "Most Influential Faculty" in 2018. Dubbed a "Trombone Champion" with "Stunning Style" (UT San Diego), Eric is a passionate advocate for contemporary music who has premiered dozens of solo and chamber works for the trombone. He has been a featured soloist at venues such as Copley Symphony Hall, the Athenaeum Music & Arts Library, Spreckels Organ Pavilion, San Diego Museum of Art, and with the SDSU Symphony Orchestra and Wind Symphony. Eric has performed with the San Diego Symphony, San Diego Opera, La Jolla Symphony, Renga, Palimpsest and has appeared at the Ojai Music Festival, SoundON Festival, and Music Prisms Festival among others. Eric earned a B.M. from the University of Southern California, an M.M. and A.D. from the Cleveland Institute of Music and a D.M.A. from Stony Brook University with additional studies at the Aspen Music Festival and Tanglewood Music Center. He lives in Ocean Beach with his wife, oboist Sarah Skuster, where he watches the waves daily, is becoming a better cook, and has a continued interest in fine wines and body surfing.



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