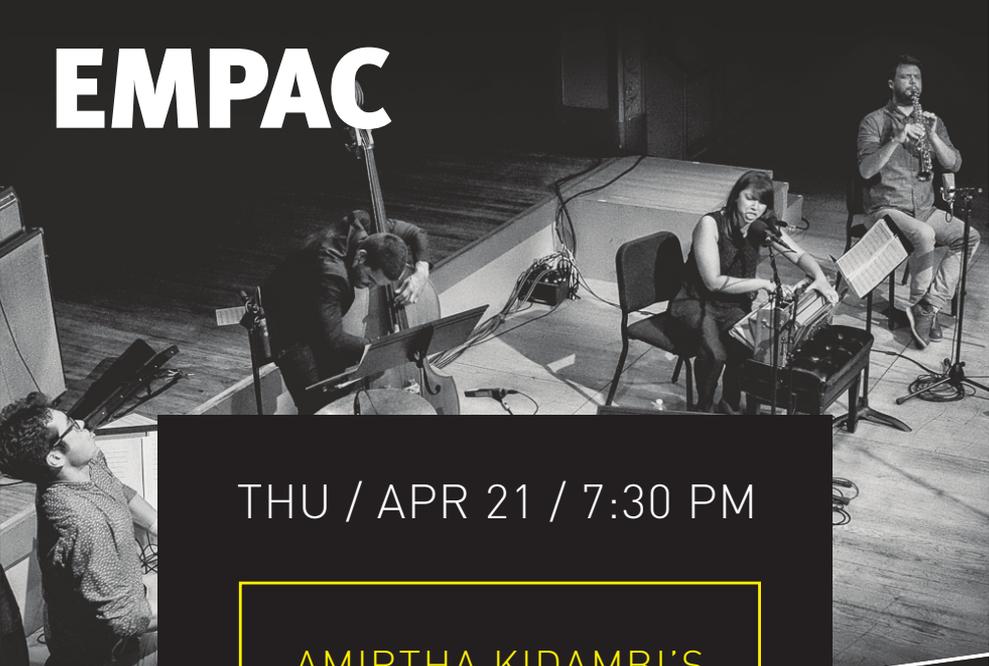


EMPAC



THU / APR 21 / 7:30 PM

AMIRTHA KIDAMBI'S
ELDER ONES
+
LONGLEASH



PROGRAM

LONGLEASH TRIO

Clara Iannotta / *Il colore dell'ombra*

Yukiko Watanabe / *ver flies sen*

Christopher Trapani / *Passing Through, Staying Put*

Juan de dios Magdaleno / *Strange Attractors*

Francesco Filidei / *Corde Vuote*

Pala Garcia, *violin*

John Popham, *cello*

Renate Rohlfing, *piano*

INTERVAL

AMIRTHA KIDAMBI'S ELDER ONES

Mother Tongues Suite

I. Sathya Yuga

II. Treta Yuga

III. Dvapara Yuga

IV. Kali Yuga

Amirtha Kidambi, *voice/harmonium + compositions*

Matt Nelson, *soprano saxophone*

Brandon Lopez, *bass*

Max Jaffe, *drums/percussion*

NOTES

Clara Iannotta: Il colore dell'ombra

"It took me several months to start composing this piece.... The sound of the piano we have nowadays is way more powerful, compared to the one Brahms used, and to balance it we would need a string quartet, instead of just a violin and a cello.

Writing this piece, I was influenced by Ravel's Piano Trio. You can feel, in the whole piece, the shadow of a fundamental sound, A, and in the third movement the material I used comes completely from Ravel's *Passacaille*."

—CLARA IANNOTTA

Yukiko Watanabe: ver_flies_sen

"The German title ver_flies_sen is associated with three different words ('Fliese', 'fließen' and 'verfließen') which have the following meanings in English: 'tile', 'to flow' and 'to blur'. When I was beginning to write the piece, I came across the picture O Húngaro (The Hungarian) by the Brazilian artist Adriana Varejão. Her beautiful picture depicts a tiled swimming pool. The tiles—which are all the same—seem contorted in the water.

This gave me the inspiration for my piece. First of all I created a structured foundation with nine invisible layers that all have different tempi, and then I placed appropriate notes on them. The music is in constant motion, sometimes it 'distorts', becomes indistinct, like tiles in water—or vague, old memories, which you look back on."

—YUKIKO WATANABE

Christopher Trapani: Passing Through, Staying Put

I. PASSING THROUGH

"This is what islands are for, they are places where different destinies can meet and intersect in the full isolation of time." *

II. STAYING PUT

"Life in an island, however rich, is circumscribed, and one does well to portion out one's experiences, for sooner or later one arrives at a point where all is known and staled by repetition." *

*Lawrence Durrell, *Bitter Lemons*

'Passing through, staying put,' I chanted to myself. 'Passing out, staying through.'

—GEOFF DYER. *JEFF IN VENICE, DEATH IN VARANASI*

"*Passing Through, Staying Put* is a piece split into two parts — like the novel from which it takes its title (Geoff Dyer's *Jeff in Venice, Death in Varanasi*) or the city of its premiere, Nicosia. The first half (*Passing Through*) is all about motion and change; a long chain of consonant four-note piano chords—calculated in OpenMusic to correspond to a set of meticulous voice-leading principles—unfolds throughout the piece, while snippets of the strings move in and out of phase in chiasma patterns inspired by Nancarrow. The second part (*Staying Put*) by contrast deals with settling and stasis, a sense of arrival."

—CHRISTOPHER TRAPANI

Juan de Dios Magdaleno: Strange Attractors

The title of this work makes explicit reference to the mathematical concept in which a system tends to evolve toward a set of numerical values, for a wide variety of starting conditions of the system. An attractor is called strange if it has a fractal structure and their dynamical evolution is mostly chaotic.

This piece represents one of the first attempts I did in order to incorporate different formal concepts and technical ideas informed by chaotic behavior or simply chaos theory. Concepts such as fragmentation, non-linear development, micro-tonality and the role of memory in the perception of musical form lie in the core of the compositional research undertaken throughout this work.

Thus, *Strange Attractors* unfolds itself throughout 31 limbs contained in 6 cycles, throughout which each of the initial 5 limbs tackle its own intrinsic non-linear development and draw their corresponding chaotic trajectories. *Strange Attractors* was a prizewinning work at the *9th Franz Schubert und die Musik der Moderne Internationale Kompositionswettbewerb für Klavier Trio 2014*.

—JUAN DE DIOS MAGDALENO

Francesco Filidei: Corde Vuote

The fundamental operating principle of *Corde Vuote* lies in its title, which translates from the Italian to “open strings”. The violin and cello play open strings for the entire duration of the piece, treating the instruments as resonant objects in constant timbral flux. The open strings also imply a tonality that gradually emerges and blossoms at the trio’s apex, supported all the while by a constant, gently rocking triple meter.

Mother Tongues Suite

The suite is comprised of four sections named for the four Yugas or eons of cosmic time, described in Hindu texts. The *Sathya Yuga* in which there was no need for religion and each man believed that his true nature was the same as God, the *Treta Yuga* in which man is only three quarters virtue and is driven further away from the Universal Truths, the *Dvapara Yuga* where man strives to find his way back to the Universal Truths through science and study, and the *Kali Yuga*, the current age of tumult and destruction, eventually leading back to the beginning of the cycle. The music is a meditation on the ideas of time, the ancient, inheritance, truth, metaphysics, divine creativity, and human nature, with no desire to instill any strict narrative in the mind of the listener.

In the *Kali Yuga* movement, Sanskrit lyrics are excerpted from the Hindu Vedic chant, the *Vishnu Sahasranamam*, describing a story from the epic *Mahabharata* at the dawn of the *Kali Yuga* era. Yudhishtira the eldest of the Pandavas is instructed by Lord Krishna to ask the wise Bhishma questions about Dharma, Karma and the nature of God. Bhishma’s response is the 1008 names of Lord Vishnu, of which there is a small portion here. The chant is thought to have power in its sound and vibrations.

OM

Shuklam-baradharam Vishnum shashivarnam chaturbhujam |
Prasanna vadanam dhyayet sarva vighnopa-shantaye ||
One should meditate for the removal of all obstacles upon Vishnu who is clad in white garments, who has a lustre like the moon, who has four arms and a beneficent face.

Vyasam vasistha-naptaram shakteh poutrama-kalmasham |
Parasha-raatmajam vande shukatatam taponidhim ||
Vyasa is the great grandson of Vasistha and the grandson of Shakti. He is the son of Parasara and the father of Suka. I offer my obeisance to the Vyasa who is free from all defects and is a repository of austerities.

Vyasaya vishnuroopaya vyasaroopaya vishnave |
Namo vai brahmanidhaye vasisthaya namo namah ||
My repeated salutations to Vyasa who is the form of Vishnu and to Vishnu who is the form of Vyasa — sage Vyasa who is a descendant of Vasistha and who is a treasure of Knowledge of Brahman.

Avikaraya shudhaya nithya paramathmane |
Sadaika roopa roopaya vishnave sarva gishnave ||
I offer my obeisance to Vishnu, Who is devoid of all mutations, Who is by nature pure and eternal, Who is endowed with a form which is uniform at all times and Who is the victor over all.

Yasya smarana-matrena janma-samsara bhandanat |
Vimuchyate namasta-smai vishnave pradha-vishnave ||
My salutations to that Supreme Being Vishnu, by a mere thought of Whose name all persons are freed from the bonds of Samsara. Salutations to the omnipotent Being Who is signified by the Pranava.

Om namo vishnave prabhavishnave

SRI VAISHAMPAYANA UVACHA

Shrutva dharma nasheshana pavanani cha sarvashah |
Yudhishtirah shantanavam punareva abhya-bhashata ||
Sri Vaishampayana said — Having heard all the Dharmas in their entirety (without anything having been left out) and having learnt about all purificatory acts, Yudhishtira again addressed Bhishma as follows;

YUDHISHTHIRA UVACHA

Kimekam daivatam loke kim vapyekam parayanam |
Stuvantah kam ka marchantah prapnuyuh manavah-shubham ||
Yudhishtira said: —Who is the One Supreme Being which the Scriptures declare? What is the one Supreme Goal which should be sought? By the recitation of what mantra is a person released from the bonds of repeated birth and death? Which in your opinion is the highest form of religion?

Ko dharmah sarva-dharmanam bhavatah paramo matah |
Kim japanmuchyate janthuh janma samsara-bandhanat ||
What spiritual path is that, which according to thy judgment is the foremost of all paths? What are those mantras by reciting which a being becomes freed from the bonds of birth and death.



AMIRTHA KIDAMBI S ELDER ONES

LONGLEASH (violin, cello, piano) is a group with a traditional instrumentation and a progressive identity. Inspired by music with unusual sonic beauty, an inventive streak, and a truthful cultural voice, Longleash extends a love of classical chamber musicianship to the interpretation of contemporary music, crafting performances that are both dynamic and thoughtfully refined. An “expert young trio” praised for its “subtle and meticulous musicianship” (Strad Magazine), Longleash has quickly earned a reputation in the US and abroad for innovative programming, artistic excellence, and new music advocacy.

Longleash balances a full performing schedule with commissioning and recording projects and the trio’s own summer festival, *The Loretto Project* (KY). Recent and upcoming concerts include appearances at EMPAC (Troy, NY), the Consulate of the Federal Republic of Germany (NYC), The Kaufman Center, Center for New Music (CA) and the Green Music Center (CA). The trio takes its name from *Operation Long Leash*, a recently declassified CIA operation designed to disseminate the work of American avant-garde artists throughout Europe during the Cold War.

Elder Ones, a quartet performing the compositions of vocalist Amirtha Kidambi, lies nestled in a Venn diagram of diverse musical spheres and communities in New York City. Bandleader Kidambi performs on harmonium and draws her vocal influence from both Indian Carnatic and Western Classical training. With saxophonist Matt Nelson, bassist Brandon Lopez, and drummer Max Jaffe, the band expands its influence to the realm of hip-hop and free improvisation. Oscillating between modal, Sufi-like circular grooves and jagged, brutal rhythmic constructions, the band equally suspects Thyagaraja, Coltrane, and Stockhausen as illegitimate fathers of their sound.

Amirtha’s background in Hindu devotional singing or Bhajan, led her to use the Indian harmonium as accompaniment and compositional tool. Amirtha has been singing with the harmonium since a young age and has a deep connection to its timbre, intonation and mystical qualities. She was also inspired in part by her work with Darius Jones and the Carnatic tradition, to use abstract syllables to liberate the voice from specific literal ideas to facilitate unhindered improvisation, and to allow the listener a greater range of interpretation. Her music has developed through years of dedicated collaboration with bands, composers and other improvisers, finally leading to her own

individual sound. She owes her individual sound to her South Indian tradition, 90s R&B, John and Alice Coltrane, Edgard Varèse and many other musical languages and influences. The name Mother Tongues partly refers diversity of what she feels are equally native musical languages, that have found their expression in these compositions. Her actual mother tongue is Tamil.

Amirtha Kidambi is invested in the performance, investigation and exploration of creative music, ranging from the Carnatic vocal tradition, free improvisation, experimental bands and new music. As a soloist, collaborator and ensemble member in groups such as, the early music influenced dark folk band Seven Teares, the homemade analog percussion and light ensemble Ashcan Orchestra, and Darius Jones’ vocal quartet the Elizabeth-Caroline Unit, Amirtha has performed in a variety of venues from DIY spaces to concert halls including Carnegie Hall, Issue Project Room, Silent Barn, Whitney Museum, Le Poisson Rouge and The Kitchen. In collaboration with Charlie Looker, the band Seven Teares released their debut album *Power Ballads* on Northern Spy Records. Recent projects include *Apollo’s Accidental Answer* a chamber opera with the Pat Spadine’s Ashcan Orchestra, the premiere of AACM founder and legendary composer/pianist Muhal Richard Abrams’ *Dialogue Social*, and *The Oversoul Manual* by Darius Jones at Carnegie Hall with an album on Aum Fidelity Records. In 2015, she premiered Ben Vida’s work Slipping Control for voice and electronics with Tyondai Braxton at the Borderline Festival in Athens, Greece. Amirtha is fortunate to have had the great honor of working with the late composer Robert Ashley since 2011 in *That Morning Thing* and premiered *WWW III (Just the Highlights)*. Amirtha and the Varispeed ensemble also premiered his final opera *CRASH* in the 2014 *Whitney Biennial* with an album on Ashley’s label, Lovely Music. Upcoming performances include a premiere of new work by Pat Spadine and music for Mary Halvorson’s new quintet featuring Amirtha on vocals, Tomas Fujiwara on drums, Ambrose Akinmusire on trumpet and Michael Formanek on bass.

STAFF

Geoff Abbas / Director for Stage Technologies
Eric Ameres / Senior Research Engineer
Argeo Ascani / Curator, Music
Eileen Baumgartner / Graphic Designer
David Bebb / Senior Network Administrator
Peter Bellamy / Senior Systems Administrator
Michael Bello / Video Engineer
Victoria Brooks / Curator, Time-Based Visual Arts
Eric Brucker / Lead Video Engineer
Michele Cassaro / Guest Services Coordinator
John Cook / Box Office Manager
David DeLaRosa / Desktop Support Analyst
Zhenelle Falk / Artist Services Administrator
Kimberly Gardner / Manager, Administrative Operations
Johannes Goebel / Director
Ian Hamelin / Project Manager
Ryan Jenkins / Senior Event Technician
Shannon Johnson / Design Director
Carl Lewandowski / Production Technician
Eric Chi-Yeh Lin / Lead Stage Technician
Stephen McLaughlin / Senior Event Technician
Josh Potter / Marketing and Communications Manager
Alena Samoray / Event Technician
Candice Sherman / Business Coordinator
Avery Stempel / Front of House Manager
Kim Strosahl / Production Coordinator
Jeffrey Svatek / Audio Engineer
Dan Swalec / Master Electrician
Todd Vos / Lead Audio Engineer
Michael Wells / Production Technician

