



SONICS

2023 TAC Student Showcase

A concert of original music by emerging composers studying in the Technology and Applied Composition program at San Francisco Conservatory of Music

Produced by **Bobby Alarcon**

Live Sound by **Caleb Smit**, Recording by **Anping Chen**

Stage Support by **oog Night**, **Nolan Downey**, and **Lilly Conley**

Saturday, April 8, 2023, 7:30 pm
Studio G

Program

Turnstone

Lilly Conley

Lilly Conley, *piano*
Alan Jones, *bass*
Josh Setala, *drums*

Nuage

Ian Rictor

Ian Rictor, *saxophone*

Always Knew

Chloe Donovan

Chloe Donovan, *vocals/guitar*
Riley Fichtenmayer and Ella Askren, *violins*
Ricardo Ibarra, *viola*
Bill Kumer, *cello*
Mateyko Jazwinski, *bass*
Reece Cogswell, *drums*

The Historian Prologue

Connor Johnson

Assisted Readymade

Nolan Downey

- Intermission -

*Cameras, recording equipment, food and drink are not permitted in Conservatory performance halls.
Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic equipment before the performance begins.*

Program

City Lights

Pyam Pendleton

Pyam Pendleton, *piano/guitar/electronics*
Sam Chalmers, *electronics*

Breached - short film by SFCM Cinema Club

directed by Bobby Alarcon
produced by Bobby Alarcon and Caroline Feitosa

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Caleb Smit

Caleb Smit, *electronics*

Try

Theo Hansen

Theo Hansen, *vocals*

Constellations I & II

Bobby Alarcon

Bobby Alarcon, *piano*

Space Call

009 Night

009 Night, *voice and electronics*

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Selected Program Notes

Lilly Conley

Turnstone

Turnstone, composed for jazz trio, is named for the so-called bird that scavenges for food by overturning stones and shells in its path. This piece features two themes: The first is lively and syncopated, initially stated in a minor key, and subsequently reiterated in a new key area. The second is introduced in the slower, lyrical section that divides the piece formally, but it is eventually transformed in the third section of the piece, which synthesizes the syncopation of the first theme with the sweeter, lyrical qualities of the second theme. This segues into the final section of the piece, an *Ad Libitum* section that features the piano, double bass, and drums respectively. This final section comes to a close as the chaotic highpoint unfolds, which consists of planing second-inversion major triads quickly traversing the registral range of the keyboard. *Turnstone's* contrasting themes, key areas, and combination of styles can be likened to this bird's foraging: just when one section is established a new element is introduced, not unlike when a turnstone unearths a stone, something new is discovered beneath.

Ian Rictor

Nuage

Just as clouds condense from the saturation of the water in the air, “*Nuage*” (“Cloud”) strives to saturate the sonic space with a multitude of sounds from a singular source. Every sound within the piece comes from the recorded and manipulated audio of just one alto saxophone. In the beginning, the listener can hear a cloud of harmonized saxophones steadily growing, until a cacophony of interweaving melodies fills the air. A firm, yet uneven groove takes shape, dissipating back into vaporous textures and ethereal pads, and then fades slowly away. “*Nuage*” aims to use digital manipulation of analog saxophone recordings to emulate the ephemeral nature of clouds, and to capture their immense and fleeting form out of nothingness.

Selected Program Notes

Connor Johnson

The Historian Prologue for narrator and electronics

What else is left but to tell a tale? *The Historian* comes from a collection of CDs I have recently acquired. For the past few months, I have been digitizing and remastering them to be shared with the rest of the world. Though most of their stories are presented as multi-part anthologies, this particular recording stuck out. Not only for its comparatively shorter length, but also for its subject matter. The Historian rarely talks about themselves, aside from this single track. It is for this reason I have decided to share with you what I consider to be the prologue of the Historian series as a whole. As I have found no evidence of such a thing as The Historian existing elsewhere, I will soon begin to upload the rest of the modernized CDs to YouTube. I hope you enjoy tonight's presentation, and all of the stories soon to follow.

Nolan Downey

Assisted Readymade for octophonic electronics

"Assisted Readymade" is my first dive into octophonic sound and is an exploration of movement. The piece is composed of several different kinds of prefabricated sound; found objects, field recordings, and tuba processed through effects pedals. Elements include bicycle chains and bells, field recordings of birds, forklifts, crosswalk signals, and looped samples of the tuba. Through cycling and editing these sounds, I was reminded of the work of Marcel Duchamp, specifically *Bicycle Wheel*, a kinetic sculpture of a bicycle wheel mounted to a stool on its fork. I started collecting sounds as a coping mechanism during the pandemic, and the ones included here encapsulate different moments in my life ever since. I have changed focus artistically, had peculiar employment opportunities, and grappled with my own ability to transform my mindset. While the textures change throughout the piece, the tuba acts as a compositional glue, representing my sustained interest in playing the instrument over the years.

Selected Program Notes

Breached

directed by Bobby Alarcon

prod. by Bobby Alarcon and Caroline Feitosa

A Short Film by SFCM Cinema Club

Janet Bates is the rising CEO of Zentech Inc., the most powerful tech company in the world. Not everyone is so thrilled with the continuously expanding role Zentech's AI technology plays in day-to-day life however. One day, Zentech experiences the most consequential cyber attack in the company's history, putting their 4.7 billion AI-car users at risk. As Janet Bates returns home with her daughters Grace and Ella to deal with the aftermath, it becomes evident that the worst of this attack has yet to come.

Cast (In Order of Appearance)

Joi Marcheti, *Janet*

Sara Heckadon, *Ella*

Allegra Kelly, *Grace*

Halyna Kuznetsov, *Grandma*

Sam Nedel, *Bryan*

Additional Crew

Lauren Kandt and Connor Johnson, *screenwriters*

Brandon Pietro, *screenplay editor/assistant director*

Owen MacEwen, *on-set sound engineer*

Bobby Alarcon

Constellations I & II

Constellations I & II is a set of two compositions for solo piano. The first was composed in late 2018, while the second was composed in early 2023. Both pieces encounter the same mystical chord: floating, weightless, not bound to any key. Yet each piece dances around, and eventually resolves that same chord in different ways. The first piece loves to take risks, making daring leaps, and revealing itself in spectacle, showmanship, and wonder. The music doesn't "think" of what it needs to do next, it just does. The second piece is much more introspective, neoclassical, and careful. It listens to itself, and finds beauty in simplicity, form, and gradually working towards its destination. Together, they tell one story of the composer, illustrating how his first four years of study, in all its joy, chaos, misery, and love, changed the way he looks at the stars.

Selected Program Notes

009 Night
Space Call

Space Call is a quadraphonic piece of music about calling out to the universe. It is a celebration of the human condition and a reflection on the existential question “Are we alone?”. The calls at the beginning and middle of the piece are answered at the end by a familiar yet robotic voice suggesting the possibility that we are not alone. Enjoy!

Selected Artist Profiles

Lilly Conley is a Florida transplant, multimedia composer, pianist, audio engineer, and warm weather enthusiast currently based in San Francisco. She earned her B.M. in Music Composition from Stetson University studying composition with Dr. Manuel de Murga and Dr. Lonnie Hevia, and piano with Dr. Sean Kennard. Eclectic in her musical taste, Lilly draws strong compositional inspiration from a similarly varied amalgam of sources including film scores, video game soundtracks, romantic and impressionist composers, choral music, modern jazz, and pop music. She is currently earning her M.M. in Technology and Applied Composition from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Ian Rictor is a saxophonist, composer, and producer in San Francisco, California. He has performed and arranged music throughout the United States and Europe, featuring as a guest soloist at the Wigan International Jazz Festival, the Banskó Jazz Festival, and the Tournai Jazz Festival. He has been fortunate to share the stage with numerous inspiring artists such as Dave Douglas, Dave Liebman, and Rufus Reid, and has performed as an opener for Steve Wozniak and Jay Leno. His editions and arrangements have been performed by the NATO Jazz Orchestra, the NATO Jazz Combo, and the Latvian Armed Forces Band. Ian holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Colorado and is pursuing a Master of Music in Technology and Applied Composition at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Connor Johnson is a second year undergraduate student at SFCM's TAC program. He began primarily as a jazz trombonist and pianist, before shifting his main focus to composition during the pandemic. Combining his experience with his love of storytelling in media, Connor now works to create music and sound design for video games and film. Whether it is creating short games with developers across the globe, or working on his Historian series, he will always find a way to make his music tell a tale.

Nolan Downey is an electronic musician and tubist currently based in San Francisco. They integrate tuba performance techniques into college with field recording and electroacoustic composition. Cultivating an art practice heavily inspired by musique concrète and early electronic music, Nolan blurs recorded reality as a means of creative transformation, exploring the surreal and often uncanny potential of sound.

Selected Artist Profiles

Bobby Alarcon is a Rocky Mountain raised, adventure seeking composer for film, conductor, and pianist. Starting his compositional studies at seventeen with Rachael Lu Hutchings at the University of Denver, Bobby proceeded to pursue his musical education at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music; studying media composition with Daria Novolianceva and Marco d'Ambrosio. Following the musical tradition of his American heroes including Leonard Bernstein, Bernard Hermann, Aaron Copland, and Stephen Sondheim, Bobby's music freely embraces and blends a variety of musical styles that has come to be the defining feature of his unique aesthetic. He loves finding creativity through a diversity of hands-on experiences and can often be found behind the camera, hiking, or skydiving when not composing at the piano. During his studies at SFCM, he worked on concert music for notable performers including the Telegraph Quartet, the SFCMP Ensemble, and Hans Zimmer's touring cellist Sophia Bacelar. In musical theatre, Bobby works on the music team for American Conservatory Theatre's upcoming 2023 production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Beginning his media composition career, Bobby worked on the composer's team for H.P. Mendoza's *Secret Art of Human Flight*. He also produced, directed, filmed, scored, and edited his own short film in 2023, *Breached*. In August 2023, Bobby will be continuing his studies of music for film, television, and video games at Berklee College of Music in Valencia, Spain.

oo9 Night is a composer, music producer, sound designer, and performing artist. She is a scholarship and grant award winning multi instrumentalist that elevates the user experience through refined music and sound for the entertainment industry. Her knowledge of and passion for games, film, television, and the music industry form the foundation of her interactive music and sound for an immersive experience.