UW Music 2017-18 concert season kicks off Sept. 27

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Zakir Hussain (photo: Jim McGuire)

Ursula Oppens, piano (photo: Steve J. Sherman)

Sepideh Raissadat

Michael Partington, guitar

Percussion Studies Chair Bonnie Whiting

Robin and Rachelle McCabe

Faculty cellist Sæunn Thorsteinsdottir performs at the Jones Playhouse Oct. 19 (Photo courtesy the artist).

Pianist Craig Sheppard performs at Meany Theater (photo: Steve Korn).

Garth Knox, viola

Acclaimed guest artists, esteemed faculty, and hundreds of talented student musicians from all across the UW's departments are the key ingredients in the school's 2017-18 concert season, with nearly 100 unique performances and music-related events on the calendar between late September and early June. Highlights include appearances by the world-renowned tabla master Zakir Hussain, pianist Jon Kimura Parker, and guitarist Bill Frisell, faculty recitals spanning an eclectic range of repertoire, and a festival paying tribute to the music and instruments of 20th century composer Harry Partch.

The season kicks off Sept. 27--first day of fall quarter classes at the UW--with a faculty performance by Percussion Studies Chair Bonnie Whiting and her performance partner, the Norwegian musician Jennifer Torrence. The pair present a program of new works of an experimental nature for percussion and voice, including an intriguing collaboration with DXARTS professor Afroditi Psarra featuring the artist's wearable electronics and embroidered synthesizers.

Whiting returns to Meany center on Oct. 25, joining faculty colleagues Richard Karpen, Cuong Vu, Juan Pampin, and Ted Poor and guest artists from France, Vietnam and Sweden--including violist Garth Knox and members of the Six Tones Ensemble and the Cuong Vu Trio for an Intercontinental Experimental Music Ensemble performance leading off the 2017-18 Music of Today series. Other dates on the series are Nov. 28, Feb. 21, and May 1. The series conclude in mid-May with a Harry Partch Festival May 11, 12, and 13, presented in collaboration with composer/Partch expert and UW Music faculty member Charles Corey. The festival, celebrating the iconic American composer's music and collection of handmade instruments, includes three distinct and separate programs of works by Partch as well as brand new compositions created for the instruments.

Other UW Music faculty presenting recitals and concerts in 2017-18 include cellist Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir (Oct. 19) and pianists Robin McCabe (with pianist Rachelle McCabe) (Jan. 11) and Craig Sheppard (Feb. 23) who returns to Meany Theater April 16 for a concert with Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir), guitarist Michael Partington (joined by duo partner Mark Teicholz) (April 16), organist Carole Terry (Apr. 27), and violinist Melia Watras, who performs with former teacher Atar Arad March 28 at Meany Theater and again May 27 with chamber trio Frequency, whose members also include Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir on cello and Michael Jinsoo Lim on violin.
Guest artists on the 2017-18 season include world-renowned tabla player Zakir Hussain (Nov. 19), presented by the School of Music and its Ethnomusicology Program, which also hosts concerts of Persian classical music by Sepideh Raissadat on Feb. 1 and by flamenco guitarist Ricardo Garcia on May 3. Guitarist Bill Frisell joins UW Jazz Studies students, faculty, and acclaimed guest artists for IMPFest X—the tenth annual Improvised Music Project Festival—on (May 30 and 31). Notable guest pianists Ursula Oppens (Nov. 1 and 2), Paul Roberts (April 2 and 3), and Zhenni Li (April 24 and 25) each present a recital and master class. Visiting orchestral performers include the String Orchestra of the Rockies, a Missoula-Montana based conductorless orchestra making its premiere swing through the Pacific Northwest and performing with UW faculty bassist Barry Lieberman and violinist Maria Larionoff on May 19.

School of Music students and faculty collaborate on dozens of ensemble, chamber, and solo performances in venues on campus and further afield. The University Symphony Orchestra (David Alexander Rahbee, director) performs at Seattle's Benaroya Hall on Feb. 5, with faculty soloists Cristina Valdés, Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir, and guest violinist Michael Jinsoo Lim. Faculty violist Melia Watras performs with the UW Chamber Orchestra April 20 at Brechemin Auditorium. The Orchestra performs April 27 with faculty clarinetist (and Seattle Symphony principal) Ben Lulich, March 9 with head of conducting (and Seattle Symphony Music Director) Ludovic Morlot, Nov. 3 with faculty artist-in-residence Jeff Fair and horn colleagues from Seattle Symphony, and Dec. 8 with acclaimed pianist Jon Kimura Parker (presented in collaboration with Meany Center for the Arts). The orchestra's 2017-18 season ends June 1 with an epic collaboration with the Combined UW Choirs, with Rahbee and Choral conducting chair Giselle Wyers sharing the podium for a program including works by Debussy and Brahms.

In highlights from the performance studios, faculty artists-in-residence Stephen Stubbs and Cyndia Sieden co-direct the UW's talented voice students in two opera workshops—Ravel's L'enfant et les Sortilèges on Dec. 2 at Brechemin Auditorium and Britten's Beggar's Opera March 8 at the Meany Studio Theater. Bonnie Whiting leads students from the Percussion Studio in a performance of composer John Cage's recently discovered radio play The City Wears a Slouch Hat (Dec. 1); the School's official student scholarship chamber groups the Evergreen Trio (Dec. 1 and April 28) and Daisha (Feb. 7 and May 4) present debut UW concerts; and the UW Wind Ensemble (Tim Salzman, director) features numerous faculty soloists (guitarist Michael Partington on Dec. 7, percussionist Bonnie Whiting on March 8), as well as visiting musicians from Shanghai University, who join with members of the Wind Ensemble Oct. 29 for a free side-by-side performance in Brechemin Auditorium.

Free admission to 2017-18 concert season events in Brechemin Auditorium is made possible with generous support from the Brechemin Family Foundation and late School of Music friend Mina Brechemin Person. Some 50 concerts and music-related events--more than half the events on the entire season--are presented free of admission charges thanks to the family's support.

Details about individual performances are posted at music.washington.edu. More information about free performances in Brechemin Auditorium can be found here.

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