

JACOBSEN

UNIVERSITY of
PUGET
SOUND
School of Music

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST SERIES | 2023-24

STRIKING MUSIC

Seattle-based hybrid percussion ensemble with Rebekah Ko, Storm Benjamin, and James Doyle, percussion; and Ben Marx, composer, sound designer, and synthesizers; in collaboration with designer Mare Hirsch, Art and Art History



FRIDAY, FEB. 9

Schneebeck Concert Hall | 7:30 p.m.

JACOBSEN SERIES

Established in 1984, the Jacobsen Series features performances by School of Music faculty members, students, alumni, and guest artists for the university and the community. The series is named in honor of Leonard Jacobsen, professor of piano and chair of the piano department at Puget Sound from 1932 to 1965 and consists of theme-related concerts presented between September and April each academic year.

The Jacobsen Series Scholarship Fund awards annual music scholarships to outstanding student performers and scholars. This fund is sustained entirely by season subscribers and individual ticket sales. University of Puget Sound wishes to recognize and thank our many patrons whose support has assisted worthy students and has contributed to this successful series.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS 2023–24

Seren Hawtrey '24 and Annie Hochberg '25
Sigma Alpha Iota

As this year's scholarship award winners, we are delighted to represent the Sigma Alpha Iota (SAI) International Music Organization at the 2023–24 Jacobsen Series performances. Our involvement in SAI allows us to participate in a long and honorable history of missions that demonstrate our passion for music, and to promote music and music service to the local community and beyond.

Through our rose sales, receptions, and *FaculTea* events, we help foster appreciation and community at Puget Sound as we celebrate our faculty artist-musicians. Proceeds from Jacobsen Series ticket sales allow our organization to continue supporting SAI Philanthropies, a non-profit organization that benefits music programs such as The Music Therapy Project and People-to-People.

We hope you enjoy this season's Jacobsen Series. Thank you for joining us, and for your support!

Sincerely,

Seren and Annie

STRIKING MUSIC

Feb. 9, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

This performance contains flashing lights that may be disruptive to people who are photosensitive.

Feynman Diagrams.....Benjamin Marx

- Finding Feynman
- Interlude
- They All Seem Ashes
- Interlude

Field IV.....Storm Benjamin

Feynman Diagrams.....Marx

- From Los Alamos to Albuquerque
- To Love You After You Are Dead

Light design by Mare Hirsch

Reception following the program in the Schneebeck Concert Hall lobby.

PROGRAM NOTES FOR *FEYNMAN DIAGRAMS*

I like to be bored. Or maybe a better way to put it would be, I enjoy being in situations where there is nothing to do, no obligation other than to move through time. Riding the bus, waiting in line, the moments between turning off the light and falling asleep. I luxuriate in being unstimulated. Just me and my freedom of thought, the aimlessness of my wondering.

As I was reading *Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman!* by renowned American physicist Richard Feynman, I kept having this recurring thought: "Oh man, this guy is great at being bored." Years later, the series "Fun to Imagine" confirmed my hypothesis: Mr. Feynman is indeed a magnificent wonderer.

For Feynman Diagrams, I fed off of Mr. Feynman's enthusiasm for imagining, while also purposefully misinterpreting one of his crowning achievements. The real Feynman Diagrams are a series of pictorial representations of how subatomic particles interact. In short: They visualize and simplify a process that is near-impossible to imagine, let alone to see with one's own eyes. Instead of taking this literally, I decided to view it in the abstract. The general idea of the diagrams is that we know what goes in and what comes out but we don't fully understand the space between, the highly variable and unseen interaction between impossibly small things. Instead of subatomic particles interacting, I thought of how contradictory feelings can combine and intermingle, with each leaving its impression on the other.

In the years between 1943 and 1945, Feynman led something of a double life. During the week, he worked in Los Alamos, with his mind trained on the creation of humanity's single most devastating weapon. On weekends his attentions would soften and shift as he drove the 95 miles to Albuquerque to care for his ailing wife Arline, who herself was not long for the world.

I tried to imagine how those drives must've felt. How that distance and that time gave him pause from his passions. How his occupied mind oscillated from love to work, from cherishing life to manufacturing death.

The movement titles of Feynman Diagrams are borrowed from phrases found in a letter Feynman wrote to his wife, years after her passing. It was in that space and that time that he could finally understand the nature of his love. I also employ samples of his voice from the series "Fun to Imagine," filled to the brim with enthusiasm for science and wondering. This contrast between titles and content make for fascinating juxtapositions, if a little contradictory.

But I would posit that that very contradiction, that unknowably small interaction between things we believe to be inherently opposite, is exactly where our minds are supposed to be.

— *Benjamin Marx, 2024*

STRIKING MUSIC

Striking Music is a Seattle-based hybrid percussion and synthesizer/sound design ensemble specializing in multi-discipline collaboration. Comprised of percussionists Rebekah Ko, Storm Benjamin, and James W. Doyle, and composer, keyboardist, and sound designer Ben Marx, Striking Music regularly collaborates with lighting installation designers, multimedia projection artists, sculptors, videographers, modern dancers, and soundscape creators throughout the Pacific Northwest. Recent performances include sold-out shows for the Seattle Symphony Orchestra's octave9 Series, live broadcasts on Seattle's Classical King FM, collaborations with *Arx Duo*, and residencies and curated performances for Seattle-area concert series and arts festivals.

<https://www.strikingmusic.org>

BIOGRAPHIES

Storm Benjamin holds a bachelor's degree in Percussion Performance from Central Washington University and master's degree from Central Michigan University. While attending university, he toured nationally with the Oregon Crusaders Drum and Bugle Corp, and performed in two years with the Oregon Crusaders Indoor Drumline.

As an educator, Benjamin is dedicated to creating life-long musicians. His teaching style centers on creating a strong emotional connection to music while building proficiency and knowledge.

As a performer, he has been featured as a contemporary percussion soloist across Seattle. His ensemble experience includes symphony orchestras, chamber orchestras, percussion ensembles, and opera companies. Benjamin also composes and performs with his collaborative, percussion-centered multimedia ensemble, Striking Music, and the alt-rock band Terra Nobody.

James W. Doyle is a percussionist based in the Pacific Northwest (PNW). He performs in a variety of settings as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral percussionist throughout the PNW, the Rocky Mountain region, and Japan. He's a passionate observer of moving water. This latter detail can be understood through his ongoing series of single-shot videos/compositions titled *Confluence*.

Doyle earned a Doctor of Music Arts from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and currently serves on the full-time faculty at St. Martin's University. Prior to moving to Tacoma, he served as Professor of Music at Adams State University where he was the director of percussion and music director of the Music of the Americas Project—an ensemble dedicated to exploring and performing the music resulting from colonialism and forced migration to the Western Hemisphere. Preceding his career in academia, he served as principal percussionist with the USAF Band of the Golden West where he toured and recorded extensively throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Rebekah Ko is a percussionist specializing in contemporary and classical music, currently based in Seattle, Wash. As an internationally recognized performer, her work has been showcased at events such as the International Computer Music Conference, Music for All Summer Symposium, Classical King FM 98.1, and the Percussion Arts Society International Conference (PASIC).

Ko holds a degree in percussion performance from the University of North Texas, where she studied with Christopher Deane. During her time there, she performed with the UNT Wind Symphony, NOVA Ensemble, participated

in two national tours with the Santa Clara Vanguard Drum and Bugle Corps, and was selected as a Yamaha Young Performing Artist.

Ko's artistic philosophies are rooted in the integration of the traditional with the modern, merging her classical roots with her love for new and experimental music. She strives to create unusual and exciting concert experiences through exploration of new performance methods in non-traditional venues, taking contemporary classical music out of the concert hall and into the community.

Benjamin Marx is an American composer. His latest work, *Feynman Diagrams for percussion, synthesizers and samples*, premiered at Octave 9 in May of 2023, under the auspices of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. His other works include 2019's *Anxious Pangs*, an album of contemporary chamber music, 2021's *You Don't Say*, remote songs from isolation, and 2024's forthcoming *on the Benefits of Staying in One Place (while your lover moves away)*. Marx releases all of his music via For Good Records, under the name *tov*.

Mare Hirsch is assistant professor, art and art history at the University of Puget Sound. Hirsch's work investigates the ways technology and art can expand opportunities for creative expression, connect data to creative practice, and foster opportunities for inclusive discourse on the social, political, scientific, and philosophical issues of our time. Her art and research expand conventional methods of creative practice by developing and using artist-centric technologies. To do so, she draws on methods and tools from other domains, such as computer science and engineering, to reimagine technology's role in art in a way that is inclusive to a broad diversity of media.

Hirsch's work is often collaborative; she engages with experts in fields such as dance, ecology, philosophy, sociology, and physics to reimagine our collective relationship to data generated by the practice of these fields. She draws connections between form and information through a practice that results in diverse visualizations and communications of knowledge, which inherently span, point out, and reinforce the bonds between seemingly disparate methods of creative thought.

Hirsch holds a Ph.D. in media arts and technology from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Prior to her doctoral studies, Hirsch completed a bachelor of music at Lawrence University's Conservatory of Music and a master of music at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Striking Music would like to extend a special thanks to Pam Taylor, Greg Hearn, Anna Mondschean, Jeff Lund, Tracy Doyle, and the School of Music Events Committee.

This event is sponsored by the Catharine Gould Chism Fund for the Humanities.

UPCOMING SCHOOL OF MUSIC EVENTS

All events are free unless noted otherwise. Most performances are broadcast at pugetsound.edu/schneebecklive. Tickets available at tickets.pugetsound.edu, in the Logger Store, or sold at the door.

MONDAY, FEB. 19

Library at Noon Series

Various student performers
Collins Memorial Library, noon (sack lunch welcome)

TUESDAY, FEB. 20

Symphony Orchestra

Anna Jensen, conductor; with Jack Kuntz '26, piano
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEB. 25

Jacobsen Series: Dreaming Away the Winter Chill

Joyce Ramee, viola and Karen Ganz, piano
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 2 p.m. | Tickets required
(Free for Puget Sound and K-12 students)

FRIDAY, MARCH 1

Puget Sound Wind Ensemble

Gerard Morris, conductor
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

All listings are subject to change. For the most current information about upcoming arts events and lectures, visit pugetsound.edu/events.

Puget Sound is committed to being accessible to all people. If you have questions about event accessibility, please contact 25Live@pugetsound.edu, or visit pugetsound.edu/accessibility.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that this event takes place on the ancestral territory of the Puyallup Tribe and the Lushootseed-speaking people, whose relationship with the land continues to this day.

We respectfully acknowledge and honor the history and presence of Indigenous students, staff, and faculty here at Puget Sound. We who are guests on this land offer our gratitude for the opportunity to make music together here.

The School of Music strives to recognize, include, and respect all of the peoples and musical traditions that make up our community.

The School of Music at University of Puget Sound, situated within a nationally recognized liberal arts university, prepares students to be broad-minded, creative, arts-aware social leaders. We attract highly engaged student musicians and empower them to create the diverse musical offerings and effective educational programs of the future.

From the classroom to the concert hall, we cultivate students' self-expression, cultural competency, and critical engagement. Through a wide variety of public offerings and a vibrant Community Music program, the School of Music enriches the cultural life of both the Puget Sound campus and surrounding communities.

Community Music, a division of the School of Music, welcomes people of all ages and skill levels to participate in music lessons and classes throughout the year.
pugetsound.edu/communitymusic | 253.879.3575





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