

Wednesday Noon Hours

Roy Barnett Recital Hall
February 1, 2023 | 12:00pm

Echoes and Embers

*"A collection of pieces,
a collection of feelings,
a fight between dark and light..."*

Jose Franch-Ballester *clarinet*

David Fung *piano*

Programme

Afterlight for Clarinet and Piano

Dorothy Chang
(b.1970)

Five Fragments for Clarinet and Piano

Jörg Widmann
(b.1973)

- I. Äußerst langsam (extremely slow)*
- II. Presto possibile (as fast as possible)*
- III. Sehr langsam, frei (very slow, free)*
- IV. Energiegeladen, sehr schnell (with energy, very fast)*
- V. ♩ = 40*

A little cloud swims to the sun
(Based on a poem by Taras Shevchenko)

Yuri Kuriyama
(b.1998)

Echoes and Embers for Clarinet and Piano

Mark Simpson
(b.1988)

A note from the performers: *The concert will be performed without a break or applause between pieces. Please kindly hold your applause until the end of the program.*

We gratefully acknowledge that we are gathered together for this performance on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

Program Notes

Clarinetist Jose Franch-Ballester and pianist David Fung present **Echoes and Embers**, which explores the intimate relationship between clarinet and piano. This program was conceived to be performed without interruptions or applause thus allowing the common threads and relationships between the works to emerge.

The concert will open with Dorothy Chang's *Afterlight*, a piece written in response to a multitude of tragic events that occurred in early 2018. The title refers not only to the word's definition (in retrospect) but also to her own interpretation of the word "afterlight": the "light" that remains when someone passes, in the form of memories, shared experiences, and a sense of presence even when the person is gone.

Jörg Widman's *Five Fragments* for clarinet and piano are an exploration in brevity. The pithy movements feature imaginative and unconventional sounds from the instruments. After writing several works that grappled with larger forms, Widmann, also a clarinetist, became fascinated by the idea of fractional pieces: reduction, scarcity and concentration.

Yuri Kuriyama is a graduate student in clarinet performance at the University of British Columbia, studying with Jose Franch-Ballester. An accomplished composer and arranger, Kuriyama composed *A little cloud swims to the sun* for her first year masters recital in 2022, which was inspired by Taras Shevchenko's 1849 poem of the same title. Through his poems, Shevchenko aimed to promote Ukrainian literature and national consciousness in spite of significant Soviet influence. This poem conveys his personal reflection on exile and expresses his longing for hope and stability. Kuriyama writes: "In composing this piece based on Shevchenko's literature, I hoped to capture the sense of solitariness and search for hope and comfort in the darkness."

A little cloud swims to the sun,
With all her crimson borders trailing,
And beckons to the sun to sleep
And covers it with rosy veiling,
Cradled in the dark blue sea,
As a mother lulls her child...
Lovely to the eyes... And now,
It seems, the heart is still,
For one little hour of rest,
With God speaks quietly...

Like an enemy, the mist
Falls upon the sea
And the little rosy cloud,
Darkness in its wake
The grey mist rolls and billows out,
And the silent dark
Throws its shroud upon the soul,
And you don't know where to wander,
Longing, longing for the light,
Like small children for their mother.

Concluding the program is an evocative work by clarinetist-composer Mark Simpson. His *Echoes and Embers* explores quiet, delicate textures in both instruments, interspersed with silences that serve both to punctuate and connect musical material. Resonance, echoes and blurring of elements are a primary feature of this work. The material can be both an echo of something heard, a dying ember, and something that serves to have the potential to awaken and become more important.

Echoes and Embers

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Jose Franch-Ballester *clarinet*

The multi-award-winning Spanish clarinetist Jose Franch-Ballester (FrAHnk Bai-yess-TAIR) is considered one of the finest classical soloists and chamber music artists of his generation. He has been hailed for his “technical wizardry and tireless enthusiasm” (The New York Times), his “rich, resonant tone” (Birmingham News), and his “subtle and consummate artistry” (Santa Barbara Independent). The recipient of a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2008, and winner of both the Young Concert Artists and Astral Artists auditions, he is a solo artist and chamber musician in great demand.



As a concerto soloist Mr. Franch-Ballester made his New York debut in 2006 with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at Lincoln Center. He has also performed with the BBC Concert Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, Princeton Symphony Orchestra, Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, Wisconsin Philharmonic, Louisiana Philharmonic, Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, and various orchestras in his native Spain.

An avid proponent of new music, he performed the world premiere of Jake Heggie’s *Winter Roses* in 2004 with mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade at Camerata Pacifica. During the 2011-2012 season, he premiered two new works by Spanish composers: the *II Concerto* by Oscar Navarro, with the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias in Oviedo, Spain; and *Concerto Valencia* by Andrés Valero-Castells, with the Orquesta de Valencia. Mr. Franch-Ballester’s commitment to new music has led him to commission and work with such contemporary composers as Kenji Bunch, Paul Schoenfield, Edgar Meyer, William Bolcom, George Tsontakis, Andrés Valero-Castells, Oscar Navarro, and Huang Ruo.

Jose Franch-Ballester is represented in the Americas by Sciolino Artist Management. He is a Backun Artist.

David Fung piano

Praised for his “ravishing and simply gorgeous” performances in the *The Washington Post*, pianist David Fung is widely recognized for interpretations that are elegant and refined, yet intensely poetic and uncommonly expressive. Mr. Fung regularly appears with the world’s premier ensembles including the Cleveland Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony, the Israel Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the San Francisco Symphony, as well as the major orchestras in his native Australia, including the Melbourne, Queensland, and Sydney Symphony Orchestras.



Mr. Fung’s highly acclaimed debut with the Cleveland Orchestra at the Blossom Music Festival was “everything you could wish for” (*Cleveland Classical*), and he was further praised as an “agile and alert interpreter of Mozart’s crystalline note-spinning” (*The Plain Dealer*). In the following week, he performed Rachmaninoff’s *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* at the Beijing National Stadium for their Olympic Summer Festival.

As a recitalist and chamber musician, Mr. Fung is a frequent guest artist at prestigious festivals and venues worldwide. Notable festival appearances include Aspen, Blossom, Caramoor, Edinburgh, Hong Kong Arts, Ravinia, and Tippet Rise.

Mr. Fung is on faculty at the University of British Columbia and curates the Spirio Piano Series at the Chan Center in Vancouver. He has previously taught piano and chamber music at Yale University and served as associate professor at the University of Georgia.

Mr. Fung is a Steinway Artist.

Thank you for coming!

Join us next week on **Feb 8** when we present ***The Giving Shapes*** featuring UBC Music Alumni **Elisa Thorn** (BMus '11) and **Robyn Jacob** (BMus' 11).

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