



Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 8:00 PM
Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Princeton Sound Kitchen presents **Gallicantus**

Vocal ensemble **Gallicantus** performs new works by Princeton University graduate student composers **Ellie Cherry, Francisco del Pino, Hannah Ishizaki, Travis Laplante, Hope Littwin, Isaac Santos, Connor Elias Way, and Justin Wright.**

DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC
AT PRINCETON

About the Department of Music

The Department of Music at Princeton University provides its undergraduates—whether they major or minor in Music—the opportunity to learn from a world-renowned faculty of scholars and composers. Performance opportunities include student-led and departmental ensembles like symphony orchestras, multi-genre choruses, jazz, contemporary music, African music, steel band, laptop orchestra, and much more, and students have access to private instrumental and voice lessons from eminent performing artists. The graduate program offers two distinct and prestigious PhD programs in composition or musicology; graduate students receive fully-funded, immersive experiences conducting research, advancing their craft, and collaborating with faculty within Princeton University’s inspiring, interdisciplinary campus.

For more information about the Department of Music and other upcoming events, and to sign-up for our mailing list, please visit music.princeton.edu.

PROGRAM

Ellie Cherry	<i>I am You are Who?</i>
Travis Laplante	<i>Her Hand</i>
Justin Wright	<i>This Night the Sun Shined Very Brightly</i>
Hannah Ishizaki	<i>Ah, Ee, Oo, Eh, Oh</i>
Isaac Santos	<i>monólogo navideño</i>
Hope Littwin	<i>Ave Maria</i>
Francisco del Pino	<i>Madrigal</i>
Connor Elias Way	<i>Sic vita fluit</i>

PERFORMERS

Gallicantus:

David Allsopp, countertenor

Matthew Long, tenor

Tom Robson, tenor

Gabriel Crouch, baritone

Giles Underwood, bass

The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited.
Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.

PROGRAM NOTES

Ellie Cherry

I am You are Who?

Have you ever caught yourself doing something (gesticulating with your hands, inflecting your sentences, choosing certain products at the store) in a way that reminded you so much of someone else you had to wonder how much of you is just them? This piece was born three years ago when a combination of circumstances compelled me for the first time to seriously examine what portion of my mannerisms and self-image and worldview were unconsciously borrowed from someone else, and the conclusion made me so uncomfortable that I had to put the piece away, only recently finding the composure to musically revisit this fascinating, frightening idea that we are not only ourselves.

I am You are Who? encapsulates my contemplation of this notion of non-unique identity, the musical structure of the piece being a microcosm of how I've responded to it over the years: It begins with sonic material that is repetitive and monophonic, so the only element that distinguishes one singer's voice from another is the subtle difference between the vowel sounds of the words 'I' and 'you.' Featuring text that is hypnotically minimal and disorientingly nonsensical, the texture steadily strives towards greater independence of the voices, transforming from monophonic, to homophonic, and finally to heterophonic. As the texture becomes increasingly dense, there emerges a profusion of incidental wordplay from the interaction of the singers' lines, leaving it to the listener to decide to what extent their meanings are connected.

Travis Laplante

Her Hand

Her Hand contains a story that lies somewhere between a fable and an autobiographical experience from the past decade of my life. It is my hope that this story will be clear enough for the listener to follow if they spend a few moments carefully reading the lyrics before listening. However, understanding the lyrics is not required to experience the music fully. More urgent is that the piece serves as a prayer of remembrance for what matters most to each of us, beneath all of the fear and resulting violence in our world.

Text

The trees are crying out to us
remember, remember
the leaves that are inside of you, all of the time
oceans are inside of your tears, all of the time

Power breaks us over and over
remember, remember
that my body's not a weapon
It's a sign of weakness to show that you love
I've killed so much Beauty inside all of my life
until that night...

She came to my window
heard me crying out for forgiveness
forgiveness
She didn't say a word
blew out all of the candles
feel her breath all over my neck
scents of rose enter the room
Her hand covers my eyes
chills down my spine

She showed me what I forgot inside the forest so many years ago
just a simple locket
but it contains the secrets of uniting water and fire.
I follow her to retrieve the lost truth

We travel through the layers of my mind
I can feel my guards start to come down
I keep ahold of her hand
I'm in a place I've never been before

There's terror, terror, terror
but there's clarity
that the enemy is inside me
She takes me to a place
underneath the anger
underneath the fear
underneath the hatred
underneath the bloodshed
underneath the endless hunger
underneath lust
underneath the first cut

underneath abandonment
underneath loneliness
underneath despair
underneath sadness
underneath the cold
It's so cold it's so cold it's so cold
but there's something else further in, further in
What are we made of underneath it all?

Flowers,
I give myself to you
colors that you've never seen
Love permeates every cell
your breath is no longer separate from the sound of wind.
It is where my life ends and begins

Her eyes will shatter your life
don't pick up the pieces off the floor
let them dissolve
into the green fields
of her arms
just let them dissolve
into you
It's where we all come from
It's where we all go
It's where we all come from
It's where we all go.

- Travis Laplante

Justin Wright

This Night the Sun Shined Very Brightly

And thus, like men already metamorphosed into the yce of the Country, and already past both our sense and reason, stood wee with the eyes of pittie beholding one another.

- Frederick Martens, *God's Power and Providence in the Preservation of Eight Men in Greenland Nine Moneths and Twelve Dayes*

In 1596, the Dutch explorer Willem Barentsz first laid eyes on an archipelago 400 miles from the North Pole that we now call Svalbard. The following year in England, unrelated to this discovery, the composer John Dowland wrote a set of simple lamentations for his friend Henry Noell's death. Over the four centuries that followed, Svalbard has undergone many forms of resource exploitation, decimating the population of walruses (then called sea horses)

and whales before moving to coal mining. Its interaction with global climate systems has resulted in rapid geological and ecological changes, and its climate is currently warming at a rate roughly six times the Earth's average.

This piece, inspired by my own travels to Svalbard, is a rework of Dowland's *Lord Hear my Prayer* from his *Henry Noell Lamentations*. Its transformation attempts to mimic some of the many ongoing geological changes that have quickly given the archipelago a new landscape, and retains little of the original structure and harmony. Additional lyrics and spoken words are pulled from the accounts of 17th-century Arctic explorers such as Edward Pellham and Frederick Martens.

Hannah Ishizaki

Ah, Ee, Oo, Eh, Oh

Ah, Ee, Oo, Eh, Oh delves into an abstracted world of syllables, progressing from consonants to vowels. The composition is structured around the phonetic sounds of the vowels in the order of the Japanese alphabet: 'a' (Ah), 'i' (Ee), 'u' (Oo), 'e' (Eh), and 'o' (Oh). Stark consonant sounds of 'k' and 'sh' morph into these five distinct vowels to explore the individual timbral differences between them.

Isaac Santos

monólogo navideño

The text used in this work is derived from a poem by my late grandmother, Salvadora Ortiz. Said poem is from a collection she published in 2013, *Musa: Pensamientos Del Alma*; it is titled *Monólogo Navideño* or *Christmas Monologue*.

In this particular verse, she expresses resentment and sadness towards her mother's absence in her life—a sentiment she carried till her death. At the time of her passing, my therapist had recommended I create something in honor of her. When I received the opportunity to write a piece for the vocal group Gallicantus, I thought it the most opportune time to recognize her life. My grandmother considered herself many things: a singer, a painter, a poet... but most of all, always a mother. She cared deeply for anything living.

In this composition, I hope to communicate feelings of grief, hope, love, and passion.

Text adapted from
Monólogo Navideño
from the collection **Musa: Pensamientos Del Alma**

Mother,

I am speaking today with you,
because I feel as though looming
are very 'joyous' celebrations...

The elders say: That it is called 'Christmas'
And in the countryside where I live,
Far from town,
They do not speak of such things
And all the days,
are the same for me...

Mother, listen here
They've told me you've gone far,
Because you have 'things'
Very important things to take care of
And soon you will return...

Well, I really wish you were here with me
Then we'd go to those joyous celebrations,
Singing and dancing,
Now that father no longer is able to,
Because it's been a while since he's gone to heaven...

If you don't have any money,
I will work for you...
I ask myself:

Why won't you write me?
I dreamt last night
That you kissed my temples,
And uttered: "daughter of mine, I have traveled far to embrace you."
Whilst an angel guided your path.
I woke up sobbing,
Lulling my pillow
And thereafter chuckled as I would never cease to see you,
To go together to that distant manger,
On the other side of the hill,
To sing to baby Jesus
And mother I will ask you

To always be by my side,
For me to never feel alone,
Alone,
like an orphan
Whose mother had lost

– Salvadora Ortiz

Hope Littwin

Ave Maria

I walked the Camino de Santiago this summer, a 500 mile Christian pilgrimage in Spain walked by the likes of Saint Francis of Assisi, etc. I was surprised to notice that rather than feeling deep, spiritual peacefulness, I mostly felt rage against the patriarchy. When I returned from the month-long walk, people asked me if the experience inspired any music and I initially said no, just rage and revelation, but when the opportunity to write for Gallicantus emerged, I immediately knew I wanted to write them an *Ave Maria*. Some part of me knew that seed had been planted on the Camino. Here's to mother worship.

Ave Maria

*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.*

Translation:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and in the hour of our death. Amen.

Francisco del Pino

Madrigal

Based on *Summer in St. Petersburg (or: My Nerves are Shot)* by Rebekah Smith

The contemplation of abstract sequences (even the mundane, like, in this case, the order of the letters of the alphabet) has always had for me a strange fascination. There is something of

a penitential quality to them, a sense of journey that is as accepted as it is inexorable. I find that quality beautifully captured in Rebekah Smith's work, a stream-of-consciousness text where the alphabet sequence is like a clock ticking away, relentless, unforgiving.

Summer in St. Petersburg (or: My Nerves are Shot)

A is for scared of the dark
B is for scared of the dark
C is for scared of the dark
D is for disdain
E is for love, for fear of it
F is for scared of the dark
G is for disappointing
H is for disappointed
I is for scared I said the wrong thing
J is for scared I'll say the wrong thing
K is for scared I'll say anything
L is for scared of the dark
M is for scared my mother will die
My mother will die
N is for scared of the dark
O is for scared I'll hurt somebody
P is for jealous
Q is for having only bad ideas
R is for having no ideas
S is for scared of the dark
T is for scared of the dark
U is for not knowing
V is for scared that I said the wrong thing
W is for love
X is for finished
Y is for not scared anymore
Z is for anxious instead
A is for scared of the dark
B is for not knowing
C is for not scared anymore
D is for intimidated instead
E is for anxious instead
F is for scared of the dark
G is for scared of the dark
H is for having a hard time
I is for having a really hard time
J is for scared I said the wrong thing
K is for scared I said the wrong thing
L is for scared I said the wrong thing

M is for scared I said anything
N is for nervous
O is for scared
P is for disappointment
Q is for love
R is for really really scared
S is for *stryomny*
T is for scared of the dark
U is for scared of the dark
V is for scared of the dark
W is for scared of the dark
X is for done

– Rebekah Smith

Connor Elias Way

Sic vita fluit

The text of this piece, a Latin epigram by the Welsh poet John Owen, touches on the inherent melancholy bound up in the human experience. My setting is an attempt to evoke certain facets of this melancholy, such as the unsettling feeling of time slipping away.

Text

*Ad mortem sic vita fluit, velut ad mare flumen.
Vivere nam res est dulcis, amara mori.*

– John Owen (1564 – 1622)

Translation:

So life flows to death, as a river to the sea.
For to live is a sweet thing, to die is bitter

ABOUT

Ellie Cherry is an electroacoustic composer fundamentally compelled by the belief that as an artist she is first and foremost an observer: be it the acoustic properties of the bark of a beech tree or the childhood experiences of an audience member, every element in our shared reality is worthy of consideration. Her composition therefore takes a holistic approach, in which spectral theory, physics, psychoacoustics, and historical and political context are all thoughtfully intertwined. She is particularly interested in exploring how new music composition can provide an effective platform for activism, frequently addressing topics such as environmentalism, gender and class inequality, and trauma.

Francisco del Pino is a Buenos Aires-born composer and guitarist with an affinity for music that is meticulous, expressive, and patient. Drawing influence from both classical and vernacular traditions, his work revolves around process and pattern and is usually characterized by an extensive use of counterpoint. Francisco's debut album *Decir*, a song cycle on texts by Argentinian poet Victoria Cocco, was released on New Amsterdam Records in 2021. His music has been described as of "sheer beauty" (*Bandcamp Daily*), "lucid, entrancing" (*I CARE IF YOU LISTEN*), and "ethereal, yet heavy, distinguished, yet humble—and always beautiful" (*Classical Post*). Francisco is a PhD candidate in the Music Department and a fellow in the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in the Humanities.

"Everything Gallicantus touches seems to turn to gold" – Adrian Horsewood, *Early Music Today*. Literally meaning 'rooster song' or 'cock crow,' **Gallicantus** was a name used in monastic antiquity for the office held just before dawn, which celebrated the renewal of life and offered a sense of gratitude and optimism for the coming day. The membership of the group shares a wealth of experience in consort singing, and is bound by a belief in the rhetorical power of great Renaissance music. Under the direction of Gabriel Crouch, Gallicantus creates performances and recordings which explore narratives and draw out unifying themes within their apparently diverse repertoire. Gallicantus has performed in many significant venues and festivals in the UK (Wigmore Hall, Spitalfields Festival, York Early Music Festival, Temple Winter Music Festival), as well as Germany, Austria (Trigonale Festival), Poland (Wroclaw Festival), Italy, and the low countries (Utrecht Early Music Festival). In the USA the group holds regular residencies at Princeton and Yale Universities, and in 2017 made its Carnegie Hall debut in New York. Gallicantus has released six CDs, each garnering lavish praise. With *Hymns, Psalms and Lamentations* (Signum), dedicated to the music of Robert White, critics acclaimed "impassioned, exciting music" (*The Times*), whilst *Gramophone* magazine declared: "What an outstanding disc ... The opening of the *Lamentations* could stand as a kind of illuminated initial at the beginning of a gorgeous manuscript, so transparent and luminous is it." Their second recording *Dialogues of Sorrow: Passions on the Death of Prince Henry (1612)*, was described as "one of the best choral releases of the year" by *TheArtsDesk.com*, possessing "singing of clarity, suppleness and poignancy" (*Daily Telegraph*); whilst International Record Review proclaimed "... this is a well sung, intelligently produced and exhaustively researched project, which deserves great success." The 2012

release *The Word Unspoken*, featuring music by William Byrd and Philippe de Monte was equally well received, with *The Sunday Times* saying “The intensity of the music is reflected in Gallicantus’s beautifully shaped performances.” It was named ‘Editor’s Choice’ in *Gramophone* magazine, which noted that “the ensemble’s view is delivered with such intelligence and rhetorical persuasiveness that the cumulative weight of their Byrd, in particular, is well-nigh symphonic in effect.” The group’s fourth CD—the remarkable *Lagrime di San Pietro* by Lassus—cemented Gallicantus as one of Europe’s foremost early music ensembles, earning a second consecutive ‘Editor’s Choice’ selection from *Gramophone*, as well as nomination for a coveted Gramophone Award in 2014. The group’s 2017 release, *Queen Mary’s Big Belly*, garnered another ‘Editor’s Choice’ award from *Early Music Today*, for its “sumptuous music performed with supreme artistry ... brilliant, both musicologically and artistically”; and their most recent recording—*Sibylla* (2018)—earned the ‘star review’ in *Choir & Organ* magazine, and was singled out by *Gramophone* magazine for its definitive recording of the *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* by Lassus: “this warrants a top recommendation, for Gallicantus surpass the mixed ensembles technically and edge The Hilliards’ more reverential account interpretatively.” The group’s most recent release is *Mass for the Endangered*, a new composition by Sarah Kirkland Snider released on the Nonesuch / New Amsterdam labels, which has garnered high acclaim from *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, NPR’s ‘All Things Considered’ and elsewhere, and reached number one on the iTunes classical album charts in September 2020.

Hannah Ishizaki is a composer and sound artist based in New York City. Her music seeks to foster connections between musicians and the audience through the explorations of the physicality of music performance. Hannah finds inspiration in the process of composition, leading her to experiment with a wide range of instruments and sound generating methods—from acoustic instruments in an orchestra to digital sensors to rocks and zippers. Immersed in the world of collaboration, Hannah has worked with dancers, actors, filmmakers, and visual artists, to connect the seemingly unconnected and create innovative and multidisciplinary projects. Recently, Hannah was named one of five 2023 Hildegard commission winners, which is presented by National Sawdust and generously supported by The Onassis Foundation and the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

Travis Laplante is a composer, improviser, and saxophonist. Laplante leads the acclaimed tenor saxophone quartet Battle Trance, as well as Subtle Degrees, his duo with drummer Gerald Cleaver. Recently, Laplante has composed long-form works for new music ensembles such as the JACK Quartet, Yarn/Wire, and the ~Nois Saxophone Quartet. Laplante is also known for his raw solo saxophone concerts and being a member of the avant-garde quartet Little Women. He has performed and / or recorded with Tyshawn Sorey, Caroline Shaw, Ches Smith, Peter Evans, Sō Percussion, Ingrid Laubrock, Mary Halvorson, International Contemporary Ensemble, Michael Formanek, Buke and Gase, Darius Jones, Mat Maneri, Julia Bullock, and Matt Mitchell, among others. Laplante has released 12 critically acclaimed albums as a leader or co-leader on New Amsterdam Records, Aum Fidelity, Skirl, Tripticks Tapes, Out of Your Head Records, and NNA Tapes. Laplante has toured his music extensively and has appeared at many major international festivals such as The Moers Festival (Germany), Jazz Jantar (Poland), Saalfelden (Austria), Jazz em Agosto (Portugal), Earshot (Seattle),

Hopscotch (North Carolina), and the NYC Winter JazzFest. As a composer, Laplante has been commissioned by the Lucerne Festival (Switzerland), the JACK Quartet, Roulette Intermedium, Yarn/Wire, the Yellow Barn Music Festival, the MATA festival, and The Jerome Foundation.

American composer and music producer **Hope Littwin** grew up in dance and theater before she took to music, first as a singer-songwriter then as a classical singer and now as a composer and music producer. She loves to collaborate with artists of all kinds on embodied, expressive works. Hope's compositions fuse chamber music, vocal music, electronics, choreography and storytelling. She has been commissioned by choirs, chamber ensembles, theater and dance companies to lead the creation of original works that pull from the idiosyncratic desires and abilities of the ensembles that she is engaged with. She is currently pursuing her PhD in Music Composition at Princeton University. *The Daily Princetonian* says Hope Littwin's music explores the "euphoric realm, where the physicality of musical expression is fully embraced—where music is not only something we do, but something we are." Hope's original works are available for streaming on band camp and YouTube, her albums can be found on Spotify and iTunes. Find Hope on Instagram @hopelittwin

Isaac Santos is a composer of contemporary concert music based in New Jersey and originally from Broward County, Florida. Much of Isaac's current output is inspired by visual art, nature, and everyday life. Through his compositions, he aspires to create deeply affective music that engages introspectively with some of our most deep and poignant emotions.

Rebekah Smith is a translator, writer, scholar, bookmaker, and editor at Ugly Duckling Presse.

Connor Elias Way is a composer based in Brooklyn, NY whose music explores resonance through carefully wrought networks of imitative counterpoint and a spectrally-informed approach to sonority and timbre. His music has been performed by groups such as the Minnesota Orchestra, Alarm Will Sound, JACK Quartet, Aizuri Quartet, Contemporaneous, Sō Percussion, Arx Duo, Bergamot Quartet, and the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, among others. Current projects include a forthcoming solo marimba work for Jisu Jung and an album-length project for the Irish singer Iarla Ó Lionáird and harpist Parker Ramsey which will premiere in Dublin in October of 2024 thanks to a commission from the Arts Council of Ireland. He is currently a PhD candidate at Princeton University.

Justin Wright is a composer, cellist, and multimedia artist from Montreal, Canada. After finishing his masters in molecular biology, Justin left science and started performing in bands of all sorts before eventually teaching himself how to compose, using the techniques he learned in recording studios. Justin's primary composition tools, for both electronic and acoustic music, are his cello, Ableton Live, a modular synthesizer, and a 4-track tape machine. Lately, Justin has focused on filmmaking, early music, virtual reality, and in situ composition. He has opened for artists such as Johann Johannsson, Hauschka, Thomas Mapfumo, Lubomyr Melnyk, Colin Stetson, Okkyung Lee, and Mount Eerie. Justin's most recent album, *A Really Good Spot*, was released in July 2022 on Beacon Sound and First Terrace Records. This past

summer, Justin traveled to Svalbard, an archipelago close to the North Pole, and serenaded the glaciers with the most northerly cello performances in history.



What is PSK?

A lab for Princeton University composers to collaborate with today's finest performers and ensembles, Princeton Sound Kitchen is a vital forum for the creation of new music. Serving the graduate student and faculty composers of the renowned composition program at the Department of Music at Princeton University, PSK presents a wide variety of concerts and events throughout the year.

Upcoming Princeton Sound Kitchen events

Tuesday, March 19, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Hub New Music

Flute, clarinet, violin, and cello ensemble Hub New Music perform new works by Princeton University faculty composer Donnacha Dennehy, and graduate student composers Francisco del Pino, Aliayta Foon-Dancoes, Hope Littwin, Elijah Daniel Smith, and Max Vinetz.

Tuesday, April 16, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Generals Concert

Princeton University second-year graduate student composers, Ellie Cherry, Kennedy Taylor Dixon, Bobby Ge, Travis Laplante, and Nathan Schram, in partial fulfillment of the General Examination, create new works in response to the work of other, established artists. Various guest artists and ensembles perform the works.

Tuesday, May 14, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Wednesday, May 15, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Sō Percussion

Princeton University's Edward T. Cone Performers-in-Residence, Sō Percussion, perform two concerts—each with a different program—over two consecutive nights featuring new works by Princeton University graduate student composers Ellie Cherry, Francisco del Pino, Gladstone Deluxe, Kennedy Taylor Dixon, Liam Elliot, Aliayta Foon-Dancoes, Bobby Ge, Hannah Ishizaki, Travis Laplante, Lucy McKnight, Christian Quiñones, Isaac Santos, Nathan Schram, Max Vinetz, and Justin Wright.

**Keep up to date about Princeton Sound Kitchen events
on the Current Season page of our website princetonsoundkitchen.org**