University of Pittsburgh

Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences
Department of Music

The University of Pittsburgh Department of Music
—presents—

"Ritual and Magic"

University of Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Roger Zahab, Director

Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025 • 8:00 P.M.
Bellefield Hall Auditorium

315 S Bellefield Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

University of Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Roger Zahab, director
Stella Wadiru, graduate assistant
Joe Pearson, undergraduate assistant
Emmanuel Berrido, guest conductor

Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025 – 8:00 PM
Bellefield Hall Auditorium

PROGRAM

Danza Ritual (2018; rev. 2025) — **Emmanuel Berrido**

Emmanuel Berrido, guest conductor

The Soggy Cereal Revolution — **Sophie Zhang**

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner — **Will Stephens**

Looking Back — **Roy E. Agnew, arr. Ava Gargiulo**

Divine Revelation — **Jordan Pastor**

Nocturne Nº4 in E flat major, Op. 36 (opening section) — **Gabriel Fauré, arr. by Anthony Chaer**

Clashing Wills — **Daniel Cheng**

L'Oiseau de Feu / The Firebird (1911, rev. 1919) — **Igor Stravinsky**
Suite from the Ballet, reorchestrated 1919

Introduction
L'oiseau et sa dance
Ronde des princesses: Khorovode
Danse infernale du roi Kastcheï
Berceuse
Final

Roger Zahab, conductor

Program Notes

Emmanuel ("Manny") Berrido is a Dominican American composer, pianist, and conductor with the goal of creating musical narratives that resonate with people from all walks of life. His love for sound has enabled him to work with energetic symphony orchestras of all levels, and chamber music ensembles all over the US and Europe. Manny cherishes the work with his mentors, Orlando Jacinto García, Evis Sammoutis, Jorge Villavicencio Grossmann, Amy Williams, Eric Moe, Mathew Rosenblum, and Charles Peck. He holds degrees from Florida International University and Ithaca College and is currently pursuing a PhD in Music Theory and Composition at the University of Pittsburgh. Learn more at **emmanuelberrido.com**.

DANZA RITUAL is a fast-burning candle where two narratives collide: the opening and concluding sections draw upon religious practices from the Dominican Republic, especially the *música de palos*. These traditions are characterized by communal intensity, dance-driven energy, layered percussion, and homophonic vocal textures, underscored by drums and the metallic resonance of the *güira*. In these passages, I sought to evoke such rhythmic vitality, spiritual fervor, and ceremonial atmosphere, with the *güira* serving as a distinctive sonic emblem of Dominican culture.

The central portion of the work turns toward the theme of sacrifice, inspired by the biblical account of Abraham and Isaac—a narrative which sits in my memory as a poignant story of devotion and surrender. Throughout DANZA RITUAL, these two ideas of dance and sacrifice operate in dialogue, illuminating one another as they unfold. The work invites listeners into a sound world where cultural memory, spiritual contemplation, and ritual motion converge. **– EB**

Sophie Zhang studies biology and studio arts at the University of Pittsburgh. She is a flute player that performs with various ensembles and competed in both state and national level competitions. This is her first time composing.

The Soggy Cereal Revolution is about the adventure of a piece of corn flake in the ocean of milk. I wrote this after one morning my cereal basically gave up on life the second they hit the milk. THE CEREALS HAVE FALLEN... and I hope you can hear the sadness**. – SZ**

Will Stephens was born in Atlanta Georgia and is currently a student at the University of Pittsburgh pursuing a degree in Music Composition.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is based on the poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, first published in 1798. It was composed by Will Stephens under the revisionist eye of Roger Zahab in the Instrumentation and Orchestration class at the University of Pittsburgh. It is the first time a piece composed by Will Stephens will be performed live by an Orchestra. **– WS**

Ava Gargiulo is a Junior at the University of Pittsburgh studying Music on the Performance track. Ava has been involved in the Music Department since her Freshman year and has participated in University Gamelan during her Freshman Spring semester and Heinz Chapel Choir since her Sophomore year. She plans on graduating next year and wants to go to graduate school to earn a Music Education Teaching Certificate.

She is grateful for this course and would like to thank Dr. Zahab for the opportunity to orchestrate a piece for the University Orchestra.

Looking Back, by Roy E. Agnew: The original score of Looking Back by Roy E. Agnew flows very calmly and pleasantly. When orchestrating, Ava wanted to prioritize keeping the movement consistent with the piano score. When she first heard the original score, she felt the piece sounded as if someone was recovering lost memories. She ultimately avoided orchestrating for many brass instruments as the atmosphere of the piece is very quiet, and most of the dynamics surrounded that of piano. She felt the flute and the first violins carried the melody best and liked supporting the melody with strings, as she felt that was the best way to convey the original composer's ideas. The melody eventually shifts to other woodwinds, and the song's contour continues to flow in a wave-like motion. The piece ends as it started, peacefully, as if the flow of one's memories have come to an end. **– AG**

Jordan Pastor writes: I am a junior pursuing a degree in music composition, hoping to write movie scores and video game music in my future.

When writing "**Divine Revelation**," I wanted to capture the intense feelings you'd expect to feel in an exciting movie, all condensed into two and a half minutes. I wanted to fuse together the feelings of anxiety, action, excitement and triumph in a way that takes the listener through a roller coaster of emotion, but quickly enough that they wish each section were longer and more developed. I imagined a movie, all in the span of two minutes. Overall, I am thankful for the orchestra for playing my unconventional piece, I am thankful to professor Zahab and my classmates for the guidance and encouragement, and I am grateful to you for listening! **– JP**

Anthony Chaer writes: I am a senior studying music performance in piano with the hopes of pursuing graduate school for physical therapy. I enjoy playing classical music and I chose this piece because I had not heard it before and I wanted to listen to a wider range of music.

This piece is a transcription of the opening section the **fourth Nocturne (in E flat major, op. 36). by Gabriel Faure,** a French composer and organist active in the 19th and 20th century. The transcription was formed by using all of the strings except the first violin to be the accompaniment for the nocturne while the first violin and wind instruments get the melody line. **– AC**

Daniel Cheng is a junior majoring in Computer Science and minoring in Music and Business. He has been playing the violin for over 12 years and enjoys composing, writing songs, and producing music.

Taking heavy inspiration from one of Daniel's favorite composers, Mahler, **Clashing Wills** represents Daniel's love for dramatic and emotional music, as well as his journey learning to compose. He hopes to one day expand upon this piece and develop it into a larger work of music. The piece itself begins with a thunderous conflict, followed by a somber contemplation, and culminates in a powerful climax, solidifying the beginning of a long and harsh struggle. **– DC**

Roger Zahab (b. 1957) enjoys instigating fairly complex and unpredictable interactions through his activities as composer, violinist/violist, improvisor, conductor, teacher, and

writer. Born in Akron, Ohio of Lebanese-American ancestry, his interests have ranged far and wide. He has fostered premieres of more than 200 works and his repertoire spans some 700 years - from Guillaume de Machaut to the present.

Roger's work as composer and improvisor is primarily focused on music's place in society for everyone from young students to experienced new music specialists. Recent activities include conducting and acting in Daron Hagen's film/operas *Orson Rehearsed* and *9/10 Love before the Fall*, and arranging/editing/premiering works by Julia Perry: *Concerto for violin* (Carl Fischer), and Prelude for strings (Boosey and Hawkes).

Recordings include **at the piano**, performed by Robert Frankenberry, and **at the violin.** A new album, **Magic and desire…songs of intimate connections by Gilda Lyons and Roger Zahab** will be released (digitally) on February 20, 2026 by Albany records**.**

After a decade in New York as a freelance musician he returned to the Great Lakes region to create the University of Akron's New Music Group/Daedalus while also teaching at Mount Union College and the University of Pittsburgh, where he moved to full time in 2001 and is currently Teaching Professor, Director of the Orchestra, and Director of Undergraduate Studies.

In 2011 he helped found the Vermont College of Fine Arts Master of Fine Arts in Music Composition program and continues as core faculty member and instigator.

University of Pittsburgh Orchestra Personnel

Stella Wadiru, graduate assistant, Joe Pearson, undergraduate assistant
Georgia Paraskos, stage manager

Emmanuel Berrido – *Danza Ritual*

Flute
Emmie Stouffer
Chris Miller (+picc)

Oboe
Adrianna Petraitis
Aaron Steinmetz

Clarinet
Michael Levin
Peyton Anderson

Bassoon
Austin Durham*
Steve Ehrin*

Horn
Megumi Barclay
Prashanth Kumaran
Al Riska
Elise Villella

Trumpet
Andrew Levin
Brennan Fingal

Trombone
Henry Mruz
Zoe Curtis
Jack Isaac (bass trombone)

Tuba
Sam Morton

Timpani
Satyaj Bhargava

Percussion
Jacob Doran
Joe Pearson

Harp
Alyssa Hensley*

Piano
Billy Su

Sophie Zhang – *The Soggy Cereal Revolution*

Flute
Van Slavishak
Chris Miller (piccolo)

Oboes
Aaron Steinmetz

Clarinet
Peyton Anderson

Bassoon
Austin Durham*

Horn
Megumi Barclay

Trumpet
Brennan Fingal

Trombone
Zoe Curtis

Timpani
Satyaj Bhargava

Percussion
Jacob Doran
Joe Pearson

Will Stephens – *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

Flutes
Van Slavishak
Emmie Stouffer
Chris Miller (piccolo)

Oboes
Aaron Steinmetz
Adrianna Petraitis

Clarinet
Peyton Anderson
John Oths
Michael Levin (bass clarinet)

Bassoon
Austin Durham*
Steve Ehrin*

Horn
Megumi Barclay
Prashanth Kumaran
Al Riska
Elise Villella*

Trumpet
Andrew Levin
Brennan Fingal

Trombone
Henry Mruz
Zoe Curtis
Jack Isaac

Percussion
Satyaj Bhargava
Jacob Doran
Joe Pearson

Piano
Billy Su

Roy E. Agnew, arr. Ava Gargiulo – *Looking Back*

Flute
Chris Miller

Oboe
Aaron Steinmetz

Clarinet
John Oths

Bassoon
Austin Durham*
Steve Ehrin*

Horn
Al Riska

Jordan Pastor – *Divine Revelation*

Flute
Van Slavishak
Emmie Stouffer
Chris Miller (piccolo)

Oboe
Aaron Steinmetz
Adrianna Petraitis

Clarinet
Peyton Anderson
John Oths

Bassoon
Austin Durham*
Steve Ehrin*

Horn
Megumi Barclay
Prashanth Kumaran
Al Riska
Elise Villella*

Trumpet
Andrew Levin
Brennan Fingal

Trombone
Henry Mruz
Zoe Curtis
Jack Isaac (bass trombone)

Tuba
Sam Morton

Percussion
Satyaj Bhargava
Jacob Doran
Joe Pearson

Piano
Billy Su

Gabriel Fauré, arr. Anthony Chaer – Nocturne N°4 in E flat major, Op. 36

Flute
Chris Miller

Oboe
Aaron Steinmetz

Bassoon
Austin Durham*

Daniel Cheng – *Clashing Wills*

Flute
Van Slavishak
Chris Miller

Oboe
Aaron Steinmetz
Adrianna Petraitis

Clarinet
Michael Levin
Peyton Anderson

Bassoon
Austin Durham*
Steve Ehrin*

Horn
Megumi Barclay
Prashanth Kumaran
Al Riska
Elise Villella*

Trumpet
Andrew Levin
Brennan Fingal

Trombone
Henry Mruz
Zoe Curtis
Jack Isaac (bass trombone)

Tuba
Sam Morton

Percussion
Satyaj Bhargava
Jacob Doran
Joe Pearson

Strings

Violin I

Daniel Cheng, Jeremy Luu
Sean Consigli, Isaiah Hollinger
Ava Luu, Heather Wu

Violin II

Raymond Jewell, Georgia Paraskos
Calli Sophocles, Olivia Sinciline
Lauren Mulcahy, Kyoungah Lee

Viola

Finn Fitzgerald, Meghan Cherry
Celia Hoffman, Isabella Muthler
Isabel Sarsfield, Adria Jew
Thomas Scheurich

Cello

Tommy Zummo, Allyssa Wagner
Sangita Das-Quigley, Matthew Enders
Caelyn Gollinger, Alexander Whowell

Bass

JP Tomlinson, Addie Kelly

∗ = guest artist