



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Thursday, April 30, 2026 • 8:00 PM

DEPAUL ENSEMBLE
20+

Michael Lewanski, conductor

Mary Patricia Gannon Concert Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

Thursday, April 30, 2026 • 8:00 PM
Gannon Concert Hall

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PROGRAM

Olga Berman (2004)
Undiscovered (2026) (world premiere)

Salvatore Sciarrino (1947)
Introduzione all'oscuro (1981)

Craig Davis Pinson (1990)
Cell Phone Shields Woman from Flying Orange (2014)

Toru Takemitsu (1930–1996)
Rain Coming (1982)

As a courtesy to those around you, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Flash photography is not permitted.

BIOGRAPHIES

Conductor, curator, educator, and writer **Michael Lewanski** is a champion of new and old musics. He seeks to create engaged connections between audiences, musicians, composers, and the music that is part of their culture, society, and history. His work hopes to be part of collective, systemic change in the classical music industry. He is conductor of Ensemble Dal Niente and Associate Professor of instrumental ensembles at the DePaul University School of Music, where his work focuses on helping the next generation of musicians become thoughtful artistic citizens.

Michael was Curatorial Director of Ear Taxi Festival 2021, a festival of 21st century Chicago music. He was resident conductor of the 2017 and 2019 SoundSCAPE Festivals in Italy. His guest conducting engagements have been wide-ranging and stylistically diverse, working with organizations such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW Series, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, the State Symphony Orchestra of Turkmenistan, Ensemble CEPROMUSIC (Mexico City), the Seattle Modern Orchestra, and many others. He has led hundreds of world premieres. He was the Conducting Assistant for the Civic Orchestra of Chicago from 2010 to 2014. At the 2012 Darmstadt Summer Courses, Ensemble Dal Niente won the prestigious Kranichstein Music Prize under his direction. Michael has an extensive discography as both a conductor and a producer on US- and Europe-based labels.

A native of Savannah, Georgia, he studied piano and violin in his youth; he made his conducting debut at age 13, leading his own composition. At 16, he was the youngest student ever accepted into the conducting class of the legendary Ilya Musin at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Michael attended Yale University. His post-Yale education included conducting study with Cliff Colnot and Lucas Vis. He is based in Chicago, and respectfully acknowledges the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Odawa, Ho-Chunk, Myaaamia, Menominee, Peoria, and Illinois Confederacy among other tribal nations as custodians of the traditional Native land on which he lives and works.

PROGRAM NOTES

Olga Berman (2004)

Undiscovered (2026) (world premiere)

Duration: 7 minutes, 30 seconds

A blimp was flying over my head, and for a second I thought about its weight—how flawlessly it moved through the clouds, swimming in their essence, joyfully washing itself in their bodies.

A thick layer of blood covered the tiles, while I couldn't move my eyes away from the flying object.

Oh, how beautiful that coup d'état, how beautiful their war.

I was still looking at the blimp. Never had I felt so alive.

I closed my eyes.

The blimp was looking at me.

Note by Olga Berman

Salvatore Sciarrino (1947)

Introduzione all'oscuro (1981)

Duration: 18 minutes

Generally, the term "introduction" refers to a musical piece that precedes another—announcing or suggesting elements of it, sometimes through contrasting characteristics. Such is not the case, however, in this "Introduction to the Dark" where the word fully assumes the meaning of anticipation.

In *Introduzione all'Oscuro*, the imitation—the transference—of certain physiological sounds is evident: a kind of objectification, a silent dramatization of the heartbeat and of breathing. Here, the music tends to invert the terms of absence and presence, shifting them toward the "spectral." What is looming cannot be perceived; all that remains is a blind, enigmatic motion—an acceleration and deceleration of periodic pulsations.

Faint reminiscences of songs emerge—fragments of reality amidst this tense climate—appearing not merely with the magical indifference of things familiar to us, but, even more profoundly, almost as limpid epiphanies.

Note by Salvatore Sciarrino

Craig Davis Pinson (1990)

Cell Phone Shields Woman from Flying Orange (2014)

Duration: indeterminate

Cell Phone Shields Woman from Flying Orange, titled after a bizarre news headline from 2013, is a guided improvisation framework aimed at providing conductors with a hands-on, playful way of improvising on a structural level, while giving individual performers the space to make their own spontaneous expressive decisions. It's a response to the rich history of conducted improvisation systems coming from various sources, such as free jazz, new music, and other forms of collective experimental music. I provide a specific cueing system and four different modules of material, the order of which is decided intuitively by the conductor in the moment. The conductor's two hands are used to independently cue the group, which is divided in half. The number of fingers raised by the conductor indicate different textural types and relationships between players within each module. Degree of consonance/dissonance is also cued by the conductor, posited as something that each player aims for in an intuitive way, based on how they relate to the sounds of their peers subjectively. This parameter is indicated by a closed fist or open palm. The conductor is encouraged to make bold decisions about large-scale structuring at the moment of performance.

Note by Craig Davis Pinson

Toru Takemitsu (1930–1996)

Rain Coming (1982)

Duration: 8 minutes

One of the most prolific composers of the second half of the 20th century, Toru Takemitsu left over 180 concert pieces, 93 film scores, and several works for theater and dance at the time of his death. Prior to meeting John Cage in Hawaii in 1964, the two major influences on Takemitsu's musical language were those of Debussy and Messiaen. Though these influences would become more pronounced from the 1960s onward, his use of modal melodies that emerge out of chromatic atmospheres, elimination of regular meter, and a predilection for timbre as a major force in formal delineation can be heard in as early a work as *Lento in due movimenti* for piano (1950).

Rain Coming falls into a series of works beginning in the early 1980s that are referred to as the Waterscape cycle. Takemitsu had become more and more preoccupied with a sense of tonality – not the functional progressive directed tonality of classical Western

harmony, but one more fluid, one able to grow from rain drops into rivers flowing into what he came to call a “sea of tonality.” As a result, Takemitsu’s contemplation of water became a compositional metaphor for a more porous harmonic flow, able to carry with its current not only the inevitable famous mid-20th century ‘dissonances’ just able to keep their heads above swirling waters, but also earlier modalities and textures largely attributable to Debussy and Messiaen, which increasingly manifested themselves in his work into the “sea of tonality” from this point until his death. In a note to one of his compositions from the early 1960s Takemitsu wrote: “When I see and listen to flowing water, it reminds me of an old Japanese word, *Tao* (the Path)... My image of *Tao* is not a continuous road but many disconnected dots. Listeners will experience a feeling of stillness, motion, time, and space. These spaces and times are not the same as physics. They are rhythm of nature and time of mind.”

In *Rain Coming* one can hear echoes of not only Debussy (especially in the final section) but, at least to this writer’s ears, Alban Berg and Boulez of *Le marteau sans maître* as well, mostly in the opening sequence; the timbre and melodic line of the alto flute being most reminiscent of the latter. There may be more compositional tributaries contributing to this rain of sound flowing into the “sea of tonality” formed by the rhythm of nature and time in Takemitsu’s mind but we can’t know for sure; we must follow the *Tao* of its flow.

Note from hollywoodbowl.com

PERSONNEL

FLUTE

Chia-Fen Chang

OBOE

Jose Alvarez

CLARINET

Finley Jones

BASSOON

Anya Johnson

HORN

Ethan Clark

Kathryn Wolfgram

TRUMPET

Jesse Hamilton

TROMBONE

Rix Barlow

PIANO

Sibu Chen

Wonee Kim

PERCUSSION

Brendan Rich

VIOLIN

Ben Koenig

Mia Smith

VIOLA

Madeline Guyer

CELLO

Marc Vredenburg

DOUBLE BASS

Stephen Kilpatrick

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July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

May 1 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Wind Symphony

May 9 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Concert Choir & DePaul
Concert Orchestra

May 10 • 2:00 P.M.
Jarvis Opera Hall
DePaul Concert Choir & DePaul
Concert Orchestra

May 14 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
DePaul Composers Forum

May 19 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Ensemble 20+

May 22 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Symphony Orchestra

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

May 11 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
Ian Ding, Eric Millstein, & Cynthia Yeh,
percussion

May 18 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Jason Moy, harpsichord & Kangwon
Lee Kim, baroque violin

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