

THIRD:COAST
PERCUSSION







2022/2023/2024



“Creative fearlessness with reverent precision”

-BBC Music Magazine

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Front cover photo and photo above by Saverio Truglia

*Third Coast Percussion is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

Third Coast Percussion is a Grammy Award-winning Chicago-based

percussion quartet. For over fifteen years, the ensemble has created exciting and unexpected performances that constantly redefine the classical music experience. The ensemble has been praised for “commandingly elegant” (*New York Times*) performances, the “rare power” (*Washington Post*) of their recordings, and “an inspirational sense of fun and curiosity” (*Minnesota Star-Tribune*). Third Coast Percussion maintains a busy tour schedule, with **past performances in 38 of the 50 states and Washington, D.C., plus international tour dates in Canada, Colombia, Hong Kong, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom.**

A direct connection with the audience is at the core of all of Third Coast Percussion's work, whether the musicians are speaking from the stage about a new piece of music, inviting the audience to play along in a concert or educational performance, or inviting their fans around the world to create new music using one of their free mobile apps. The four members of Third Coast are also accomplished teachers, and make active participation by all students the cornerstone of all their educational offerings.

The quartet's curiosity and eclectic taste have led to a series of unlikely collaborations that have produced exciting new art. The ensemble has worked with engineers at the University of Notre Dame, architects at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, dancers at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and musicians from traditions ranging from the mbira music of Zimbabwe's Shona people, to indie rockers and footwork producers, to some of the world's leading concert musicians. Third Coast Percussion served as ensemble-in-residence at the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center from 2013-2018, and currently serves as ensemble-in-residence at Denison University.

A direct connection with the audience is at the core of all of Third Coast Percussion's work

A commission for a new work from composer Augusta Read Thomas in 2012 led to the realization that commissioning new musical works can be—and should be—as collaborative as any other artistic partnership. Through extensive workshopping and close contact with composers, Third Coast Percussion has commissioned and premiered new works by **Philip Glass, Missy Mazzoli, Gemma Peacocke, Flutronic, Devonté Hynes, Jlin, Tyondai Braxton, Augusta Read Thomas, Georg Friedrich Haas, Donnacha Dennehy, Glenn Kotche, Christopher Cerrone, David T. Little**, and today's leading up-and-coming composers through their Currents Creative Partnership program. TCP's commissioned works have become part of the ensemble's core repertoire and seen hundreds of performances across four continents.

Third Coast Percussion's recordings include thirteen feature albums, and appearances on eleven additional releases. The quartet has put its stamp on iconic percussion works by John Cage and Steve Reich, and Third Coast has also created first recordings of commissioned works by Philip Glass, Augusta Read Thomas, Devonté Hynes, Gavin Bryars, Donnacha Dennehy, David T. Little, Ted Hearne, and more, in addition to recordings of the ensemble's own compositions. **In 2017 the ensemble won the Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble performance for their recording of Steve Reich's works for percussion.** In 2020 Third Coast received its second nomination in the same category for *Perpetuum*, and in 2021 Third Coast was nominated again for its album *Fields*, with music by Devonté Hynes.

Third Coast Percussion has always maintained strong ties to the vibrant artistic community in their hometown of Chicago. They have collaborated with Chicago institutions such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, the Chicago Children's Choir, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Chicago Humanities Festival, and the Adler Planetarium, performed at the grand opening of Maggie Daley Children's Park, conducted residencies at the University of Chicago and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, created multi-year collaborative projects with Chicago-based composers Augusta Read Thomas, Glenn Kotche, and chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird, and taught tens of thousands of students through partnerships with the People's Music School, the Chicago Park District, Rush Hour Concerts, Urban Gateways, and others.

The four members of Third Coast Percussion (Sean Connors, Robert Dillon, Peter Martin, and David Skidmore) met while studying percussion music at Northwestern University with Michael Burritt and James Ross. Members of Third Coast also hold degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Rutgers University, the New England Conservatory, and the Yale School of Music.

2021/22 Season

- Newport Music Festival, Newport, RI
- Grand Teton Music Festival, Jackson Hole, WY
- Philharmonie de Paris, Paris, France
- Denison University, Granville, OH **Ensemble-In-Residence**
- Chicago Humanities Festival ONLINE, Chicago, IL
- Field Museum, Chicago, IL
- Library of Congress ONLINE, Washington, DC
- Texas Performing Arts, Austin, TX
- Wisconsin Union Theatre, Madison, WI
- Lawrence University, Appleton, WI
- Music In The Morning, Vancouver, BC
- Kent State University at Tuscarawas, New Philadelphia, OH
- Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
- TivoliVredenburg, Utrecht, Netherlands
- Kampnagel, Hamburg, Germany
- Venue TBA, Zurich, Switzerland
- Cesis Concert Hall, Cesis, Latvia
- Estonia Concert Hall, Tallinn, Estonia
- Parnu Concert Hall, Parnu, Estonia
- Klaipeda Concert Hall, Klaipeda, Lithuania
- Latvia Concert Hall, Ventspils, Latvia
- Concordia College, Moorhead, MN
- Meany Center, Seattle, WA
- Pablo Center at the Confluence, Eau Claire, WI
- Northrop Center, Minneapolis, MN
- Crosstown Arts, Memphis, TN
- Unity Temple, Oak Park, IL
- Chamber Music on the Fox, Elgin, IL
- DePaul University, Chicago, IL
- Walla Walla Chamber Music Festival, Walla Walla, WA
- Constellation, Chicago, IL



“Absolute masters”

-BBC Music Magazine

PERFORMANCES



“Relentless focus and energy”

-The New York Times

CONCERT PROGRAMS

Perspectives

“Third Coast Percussion brings out the choreographic element of percussion work”

- National Sawdust

Perspectives invites listeners to embark on an exciting musical adventure, featuring virtuosic repertoire written for TCP by some of today's leading music creators. Iconic film composer Danny Elfman, innovative electronic music producer Jlin, American legend Philip Glass, and groundbreaking flute/electronics duo Flutronix embody the diversity of 21st century music making, drawing inspiration from a wide range of influences and points of view. Audio/video program notes delivered directly by the composers, live overhead camera projections of TCP's fascinating collection of instruments, interactive Q&A with the audience, and Third Coast Percussion's infectious energy add up to a truly unforgettable concert experience. **Album release May 2022.**



Metamorphosis

Choreography by Movement Art Is (Lil Buck and Jon Boogz)
performed by Ron Myles and Quentin Robinson

“MAI advocates for social change while expressing how vital dance can be” - The Atlantic

Third Coast Percussion joins forces with the groundbreaking choreography of Movement Art Is for an intimate, evening-length program that explores the duality of human nature. At once intensely personal and fiercely virtuosic, two disparate styles of street dance blend seamlessly with new music by Jlin and Tyondai Braxton, as well as Third Coast Percussion's critically-acclaimed arrangements of Philip Glass's *Aguas da Amazonia*.

Archetypes

with Sérgio and Clarice Assad

Third Coast Percussion teams up with Sérgio and Clarice Assad for an evening-length program of original music based on the 12 Jungian archetypes: Innocent, Sage, Explorer, Rebel, Magician, Hero, Lover, Jester, Orphan, Caregiver, Ruler, Creator. **Album available on Cedille Records.**



Collaborators pictured from top: **Danny Elfman** (photo credit: Brian Averill), **Jlin** (photo credit: Madhumita Nandi), **Ron Myles and Quentin Robinson** (photo credit: Landon Akiyama), **Lil Buck and Jon Boogz** (photo credit: Michael Cobarrubia), **Third Coast Percussion with Sérgio and Clarice Assad** (photo credit: Carolina Rodriguez)



Photo by Elliot Mandel

CONCERTOS

MEANDER, SPIRAL, EXPLODE

by **Christopher Cerrone**

"Third Coast Percussion collaborated animatedly with the orchestra in the gripping work, its three movements unfolding without pause."

- *Chicago Tribune*

Duration: 15 minutes.

Orchestration: 2(I,II=Picc).2(II=EH).2(II=Bcl).2(II=Cbsn)-2.2.O.O-solo perc(4)-perc(2)-hp-pft-strings(min 8.7.6.6.4)

SONOROUS EARTH

by **Augusta Read Thomas**

"Imagine myriad points of light, or multiple showers of shiny metallic objects, flashing across the cosmos, and you get a sense of what this arresting and evocative music sounds like."

- *Chicago Tribune*

Duration: 35 minutes. Movements may be performed independently.

Orchestration: picc.2.2.2.2/2.2.2.O/2 perc./hp./strings

From me flows what you call Time

by **Toru Takemitsu**

"31 minutes of the most exquisite meditative quiet you have ever heard in a concert hall."

- *Chicago Tribune*

Duration: 31 minutes.

Orchestration: 5 solo perc.3(2.,3.pic 3.af).3(2.obd'am 3.ca).4(2.Ebcl 3.bcl 4.cbcl).3(3.cbsn)-4.3.3.O-2hps.cel-strings(14.12.10.8.6)

“Third Coast Percussion’s *Think Outside the Drum* program is a natural fit for a virtual elementary or middle school offering. This digital, asynchronous program allows teachers to share individual chapters with their students on their own schedule in a way that remains engaging and interactive!”

- Elizabeth Duffell, Director of Artistic Engagement, Meany Center for the Performing Arts

“TCP is not only a powerhouse ensemble of prolific musicians, they are also a powerhouse ensemble of educators and innovators. They were such amazing collaborators, always working in lockstep with us to achieve our unique goals for each engagement. There is not a better group of artists out there doing such robust educational and performance work!”

- Haley Smyser, Programming and Education Manager, Center for the Arts at George Mason University



Photo credit: Third Coast Percussion

digital_TCP

Delivering the best of Third Coast Percussion’s performance and education programming directly to your audience.

LICENSING

TCP offers a wide variety of high quality content available for licensing, including:

- Pre-recorded concert performances: *Archetypes* and *Metamorphosis*
- K-12 educational programs: *Think Outside the Drum* and *WAVES*
Last season, we reached over 5,300 students thanks to presenters who licensed our programs!
- Fully-customizable content derived from an extensive media catalogue

LIVESTREAMS

Livestream performances are broadcast from TCP’s studio in Chicago and feature high quality multi-track audio, multi-camera HD video, multi-platform streaming capabilities, interactive audience chat, exclusive video content from guest artists and composers, and live Q&A with the ensemble.

CUSTOMIZED VIDEO CONTENT

Engage TCP to create innovative, original video content specifically for your audience. The possibilities are endless!

...AND MORE!

TCP has created an extensive series of master classes, videos with practice tips, and FAQs about the ensemble’s artistic, logistical, and business practices.

TCP’s Production Manager is available to lead online master classes on a range of topics, including: audio engineering, live sound, livestreaming, and more.

“Third Coast Percussion is not only creating terrifically creative programming and performing it impeccably, they’re far and away one of the most entrepreneurial and engaging music ensembles to hit the airwaves. Co-sponsoring one of their livestreams was exciting for us and our audiences—a resounding success!”

- Margaret Lawrence, Director of Programming,
Moss Arts Center, Virginia Tech



49
digital
performances



9
world
premieres

PRESENTING PARTNERS

92Y
Black Mountain College
Museum + Arts Center
Beaches Fine Arts
Series
Berea College
Bowling Green State
University
Carnegie Hall
Chamber Music Society
of Detroit
Chandler Center for
the Arts
City of Chicago DCASE
Denison University

DePauw University
Elkhart County
Symphony
Fall For Dance North
George Mason
University
Fox Cities Performing
Arts Center
Hancher Center at
University of Iowa
Meany Center
at University of
Washington
Midori & Friends
Moss Arts Center at

Virginia Tech
New Music Gathering
Noe Music
Schwartz Center at
Emory University
Southern Illinois
University Edwardsville
Stanford Live
Swarthmore College
UC Santa Barbara Arts
& Lectures
UChicago Presents
Zoellner Center at
Lehigh University

digital_TCP Impact
(March 2020 - June 2021)



67,000+
viewers from
25 countries and
6 continents



livestream education &
community engagement
activities

IN DEVELOPMENT



“Millennium Canticles” by Missy Mazzoli

Hailed as “the 21st century’s gatecrasher of new classical music” (NPR’s Turning the Tables), **Missy Mazzoli** is composing her first-ever percussion quartet inspired by the theme of rituals.

Flutronix + Third Coast Percussion

Flute/electronics duo **Flutronix (Nathalie Joachim and Allison Loggins-Hull)** is joining forces with Third Coast Percussion to create a modular, collaboratively-composed piece for both ensembles with electronics.



“The threshold we cross with closed eyes” by Gemma Peacocke

New Zealand-based **Gemma Peacocke** is writing a new 30-minute cycle for percussion and electronics, set to premiere online in October 2021. New media artist Xuan is creating video art to accompany the music, resulting in a fully-immersive experience for audiences.



Contact Reba Cafarelli for co-commissioning opportunities:
reba@thirdcoastpercussion.com

Photo credit (from top): Marylene Mey, Erin Patrice O'Brien, Susanna Hancock

TEACHING, RESIDENCIES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Third Coast Percussion offers interactive hands-on learning and music-making experiences for a wide range of students and community members.

“Working with the musicians in Third Coast Percussion was enlightening, refreshing, and truly inspiring.”

-Jane Hirshberg, Campus and Community Engagement Manager, The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

- Master classes on topics including entrepreneurship, 20th/21st century music performance, chamber music skills, and more
- Coachings for chamber music groups of any instrumentation
- Educational performances in schools, libraries, and more
- Pre-concert and post-concert discussions and audience feedback
- Reading, performing, and coaching student compositions
- Interdisciplinary collaborations across a wide range of disciplines, including engineering, architecture, astronomy, dance, and more

WAVES

****NEW digital-only program!****

An Interactive Digital Presentation Exploring the Science Behind Sound

Students learn about the scientific and musical properties of sound waves (amplitude/dynamics, frequency/pitch, etc.) by participating in interactive activities using app-based technology to visualize learning objectives. Ideal for audiences ranging from 3rd-8th grade.



**70+ educational
presentations**
offered each season



9,000+ students
engaged each season

Contact reba@thirdcoastpercussion.com

for more details

THINK OUTSIDE THE DRUM

**A Fun, Interactive, and Educational Presentation for All Ages
Introducing the Building Blocks of Music**

Performances by Third Coast Percussion are interspersed with teaching moments that introduce the building blocks of music (rhythm, melody, and timbre) through participation in a series of interactive activities including clapping, singing, and a listening game.

Think Outside the Drum is ideal for audiences ranging in age from pre-school to 6th grade. Alternative versions of the program are suited for 7th grade to 12th grade students. The program is also well suited for all-ages family audiences. Any size audience can be accommodated.

Available for digital residencies!



MUSIC COMPOSITION PROJECT

**Students Compose an Original Piece of Music
and Perform it with TCP**

Over a 4-day residency, TCP performs for the students, introduces three building blocks of music (melody, rhythm, and musical textures), leads the students in breakout sessions where all students create their own melodies, rhythms, and textures, and leads the full ensemble of students in assembling the musical building blocks into a final piece.

Available for groups of 30-40 students with assistance and supervision from the students' regular music teacher.

Available for digital residencies!



“Commandingly elegant”

New York Times



GRAMOPHONE

THE WORLD'S BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC REVIEWS

ALBUM REVIEW: ARCHETYPES

May 21, 2021

by Laurence Vittes

This very cool collection of tours de force takes a random selection of archetypal themes composed and collaboratively performed by Clarice and Sérgio Assad and Third Coast Percussion – Sean Connors, Robert Dillon, Peter Martin and David Skidmore – and owes as much to modern jazz as to classical traditions. In each of the 12 self-contained pieces the players are always exploring where their shifting combinations of vastly different timbres and lyrical proclivities will take them, often just letting the tides carry them away. The individual playing is so intensely magnetic at times that it cries out for video.

The album opens with Rebel, in which a minute-long series of drum riffs designed to demo dynamic speed and tight bass is followed by stretches where the players seem hypnotised themselves. There are classical sightings at times, such as a chaconne of sorts in Ruler and some powerful romantic gestures in Magician, which is pretty stunning overall with cartoonish intentions that stretch what these instruments can do when they're falling in love with each other at a fabulous, frenetic pace. In the concluding Explorer they throw everything in their toolkit into a lumbering sprint to the finish. The only thing that's missing is an occasional tenor sax solo and in Caregiver, a song suffused with romance, a singer.

Recorded in January 2020 at the Chicago Recording Company just before Covid struck, 'Archetypes' is an album in the mold of Lincoln Mayorga's iconic Sheffield Labs vinyl from the 1970s combining intense musical takes with improvisatorial feel and state-of-the-art audiophile sound.



These Five Albums Show That Contemporary Classical is Thriving

May 19, 2020

by Peter Margasak

Devonté Hynes, of Blood Orange fame, wrote the music on Fields (Cedille 192; 60:47 ***1/2) as a score for choreographer Emma Portner, collaborating closely with Chicago's Third Coast Percussion, which orchestrated his works. While known for alternative pop and r&b, Hynes started out playing classical music, and the influence of minimalist Philip Glass shines through. At the same time, a penchant for woozy melodies and lush synth textures exerts itself, blending seamlessly with percussion that rings and gurgles seductively and establishes pulsing rhythms evoking the wide-open spaces evinced by the work's title.



“Madeira River” on NPR’s “Songs We Love”

February 2, 2018

by Brad Turner

At first, there’s just a drip: a gentle pulse from a marimba. Then a bewitching melody played on a set of tuned cowbells enters and the music comes into focus. The four musicians in the Chicago-based Third Coast Percussion let the piece unfold deliberately. They play as if they’re a single, eight-armed organism.

“Madeira River,” named for an Amazon River tributary, is vintage Philip Glass – up to a point. The melody floats on a bed of relentless eighth notes. The rumble of an organ recalls the teeth-rattling opening to Glass’ *Koyaanisqatsi* film score. But Third Coast Percussion’s arrangement teems with odd overtones from metal pipes and Thai gongs. They lend the music a sense of frailty rarely heard in recordings of Glass’ work.

A sense of understatement gives this interpretation much of its potency. It’s one of four short *Aguas da Amazonia* pieces by Glass the group arranged for the upcoming album *Paddle to the Sea*. Glass fans may recall the vivid, equally percussive, renditions released by the Brazilian group Uakti in 1999.

This new version of “Madeira River” highlights the craftsmanship Third Coast Percussion puts into each phrase. Even subtle moments can be revelatory. In the final third of the piece, the hypnotic repetition gives way to a hushed descending pattern. The speed picks up and the musicians remain in sync until the surprise ending. Suddenly the music comes to a halt and all that’s left are sweet overtones lingering in the air.

BOSTON CLASSICAL REVIEW

Assads, Third Coast Percussion Bring “Archetypes” to Life

January 26, 2020

by Aaron Keebaugh

According to Carl Jung, stories, myths, and legends from around the globe revolve around common characters by which individuals can measure their own personalities and identities. That is the focus of “Archetypes,” a new musical program devised by guitarist Sérgio Assad, his daughter the pianist and vocalist Clarice Assad, and the ensemble Third Coast Percussion.

Twelve short, exploratory works spanning the intricacies of classical chamber music and the drive of Latin jazz, the program had its Boston and Celebrity Series premieres on Saturday night at Jordan Hall.

As written by the Assads and the Third Coast quartet, each piece cast a vivid impression of its respective theme. A composition depicting a hero took on a grand sweep, while the zesty rhythms of another piece brought to mind the cavalier persona of the classic rebel. Music contains archetypes of its own, and these works embodied concepts of humanity that exist in all cultures.

(Boston Classical Review article cont'd)

Clarice Assad's "The Rebel" led off the program with a vibrant groove, the music unfolding from a flourish on the drum set. As it progressed, melodies echoed between piano and marimba took on the suave grandeur and zeal of a score to a spy film. Assad's own wordless vocals brought radiant glow to the line as the percussionists answered with steady rhythms from tom-toms and cajon.

Sérgio Assad's "The Magician" was cast in mystery. The work's harmonies, with their modal inflections, became enmeshed in a wash of sparkling colors from cymbals and vibraphone. Central to the short piece, though, were the bebop licks, which took on angular shapes and stinging dissonances as they unfolded.

Feelings of tenderness and isolation were explored in Sérgio Assad's "The Innocent" and "The Orphan." These delicate miniatures featured the ensemble in soft melodies, gently flowing arpeggios in guitar and piano, and warm, improvisatory solos, which Assad played with sensitivity.

David Skidmore's "The Lover" also unfolded from simple gestures—here an arpeggio spanning an octave that flowered into beautiful chromatic turns. The performers unspooled their phrases with increasing intensity, yet they never erupted in fervor—the music more of a controlled passion than urgent, burning desire.

Equally powerful was Peter Martin's "The Ruler." Anchored by sweeping phrases from Assad's guitar, the lines swelled into grand statements, as if the full ensemble were relaying a tale from long ago. Visuals brought additional flair as the percussionists unfurled fans in a fiery display of flamenco rhythm.

Other works cast an eye towards mid-twentieth-century modernism. Robert Dillon's "The Sage" was a spacious, pointillistic collage, its mix of dissonant harmonies and sparse textures coming across as if Pierre Boulez were writing a jazz ballad.

Clarice Assad's "The Jester" took on a Cageian absurdity. This short, humorous piece for percussion involved the players performing on a variety of noisemakers, including flexitone, slide whistle and mouth harp, all of which coalesced in a twanging groove. Assad invited the audience to add their own "whoops", and she led all in a cascade of buzzes, glissandos, shouts, and rattles. When her stick fell to Sérgio Assad, he at first shook his head, then blared out a note on a party horn.

The mood softened in Clarice Assad's "The Caregiver" and Sean Connors's "The Creator," both of which involved gentle melodies that glittered in their simple textures. The latter had moments of delicate beauty as the percussionists supplied sounds from hand chimes and bells.

In contrast, Clarice Assad's "The Hero" had the driving intensity of a jam session, which showcased the band in twisting melodies, wildly shifting harmonies, and rhythms that surged into powerful conclusion.

Composed by Sérgio Assad, "The Explorer" also took on a vivacious groove as the musicians traded phrases between vibraphone, glockenspiel, guitar, and piano. Here as elsewhere in this unique program, the performers played with verve, revealing the music's power to convey the traits underlying ancient, eternal ideas.

For booking information, contact Reba Cafarelli:

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Photo by Saverio Truglia

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