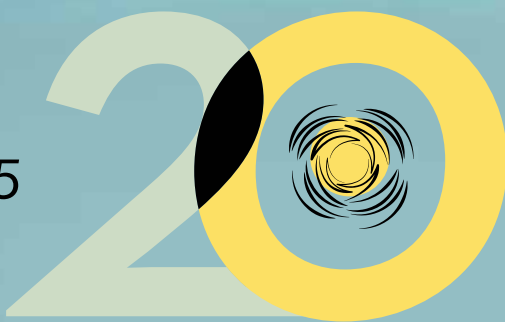




2005



2025

THIRD:COAST PERCUSSION

20TH ANNIVERSARY

20 YEARS OF IMPACT AND RESONANCE

2025 | 2026 | 2027

Third Coast Percussion (TCP) is a GRAMMY® Award-winning Chicago-based percussion quartet and GRAMMY®-nominated composer collective that made history as the first percussion ensemble to win the revered music award in the classical genre. To date, they have gathered seven total nominations. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2025, TCP is renowned worldwide for its exciting and unexpected performances that constantly redefine the classical music experience and “push percussion in new directions, blurring musical boundaries and beguiling new listeners” (NPR), with a brilliantly varied sonic palette and “dazzling rhythmic workouts” (Pitchfork). The ensemble has been praised for the “rare power” (Washington Post) of its more than 30 recordings, and “an inspirational sense of fun and curiosity” (Minnesota Star-Tribune). Third Coast Percussion maintains a busy tour schedule, with past performances in 41 of the 50 states and Washington, D.C., plus international tour dates across four continents and 13 countries, amassing more than 300,000 audience members over two decades.

Stay up-to-date and go behind-the-scenes by following Third Coast:

- @Third Coast Percussion
- @thirdcoastpercussion
- @thirdcoastpercussion
- @thirdcoastpercussion

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

During its momentous 20th anniversary season in 2024–2025, the ensemble embarks on the most ambitious collaborative projects in its history with leading musicians, choreographers, and composers from around the world. The season includes national tours with tabla player Zakir Hussain, including a newly commissioned work and a performance at Carnegie Hall, and with Twyla Tharp Dance in a newly created piece by the famed choreographer set to Philip Glass’s iconic score *Aguas da Amazonia*. Other highlights include TCP performances of Pulitzer Prize-finalist and GRAMMY®-nominated works in their *Metamorphosis* program, choreographed by Lil Buck and Jon Boogz; and a national tour with composer and violinist Jessie Montgomery featuring a brand new work for percussion quartet commissioned by TCP paired with Lou Harrison’s *Concerto for Violin with Percussion Orchestra*, with Montgomery performing the violin solo. In addition, TCP has commissioned new works this season from composers Tigran Hamasyan and Jlin.

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 uniting fans around the world via 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, including thoughtfully curated K-12 workshops and family programming.

The quartet’s curiosity and eclectic taste have led to a series of unlikely collaborations that have produced exciting new art. Their omnivorous musical appetite, paired with approachable and flexible working methods, remove collaborative boundaries across cultures and disciplines. 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 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 workshoping and close contact with



Front cover and above photos: Saverio Truglia

composers, Third Coast Percussion has commissioned and premiered 110 new works by Zakir Hussain, Jessie Montgomery, Philip Glass, Clarice Assad, Danny Elfman, Jlin, Tigran Hamasyan, Augusta Read Thomas, Devonté Hynes, Missy Mazzoli, Ivan Trevino, Tyondai Braxton, and leading early career composers through their annual Currents Creative Partnership. TCP’s commissioned works have become part of the ensemble’s core repertoire and seen hundreds of performances around the world. In 2023, Jlin’s *Perspective*, commissioned by TCP, was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

Third Coast Percussion’s recordings include 19 feature albums and appearances on 14 additional collaborative releases. Besides putting its stamp on iconic percussion works by John Cage and Steve Reich, the quartet has created first recordings of commissioned works by Zakir Hussain, Jessie Montgomery, Philip Glass, Clarice Assad, Danny Elfman, Jlin, Tigran Hamasyan, Augusta Read Thomas, Devonté Hynes, Missy Mazzoli, and more—in addition to recordings of original Third Coast 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. TCP has received five additional GRAMMY® nominations as performers, and in 2021 they received their first GRAMMY® nomination as composers. In their latest GRAMMY® nomination, TCP’s 2023 album *Between Breaths* was nominated for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance in the 2024 GRAMMY® Awards. In just the last 10 years, TCP has amassed over 5 million listeners and more than 10 million streams on Spotify.

Third Coast Percussion has always maintained strong ties to the vibrant artistic community in their hometown of Chicago. They have collaborated with Chicago institutions including Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, the Uniting Voices Chicago choir, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Chicago Humanities Festival, and the Adler Planetarium. TCP performed at the grand opening of Maggie Daley Children’s Park; conducted residencies at the University of Chicago, Northwestern University and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago; created multi-year collaborative projects with Chicago-based composers Jessie Montgomery, Clarice and Sérgio Assad, Augusta Read Thomas, Glenn Kotche and chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird; and taught tens of thousands of students through partnerships with Uniting Voices Chicago, The People’s Music School, the Chicago Park District, Rush Hour Concerts, Urban Gateways, Changing Worlds 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, and formed the ensemble in 2005. Settling in Chicago, the four friends have carefully and thoughtfully built a thriving nonprofit organization—including full-time staff, office/studio space, and a board of directors—to support their vision and facilitate their efforts to bring new works to life. 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. 🌱

Performances

2024/25

“Relentless focus and energy”

—New York Times

“Absolute masters”

—BBC Music Magazine

Photo: Stephanie Berger

Grand Teton Music Festival
Teton Village, WY

Chautauqua Institution
Chautauqua, NY

Ravinia Festival
Highland Park, IL

Überschlag Festival
Hanover, Germany

Soirée Cedille
Chicago, IL

Denison University
Granville, OH
(Ensemble-In-Residence)

Truman State University
Kirksville, MO

Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo
Hong Kong

Walden Chicago
Chicago, IL

Al Larson Prairie Center for the Arts
Schaumburg, IL

Live from WFMT
Chicago, IL

Penn State Behrend
Erie, PA

Music at Dumbarton Oaks
Washington, DC

**Northwestern University
Winter Chamber Music Festival**
Evanston, IL

Messiah College
Mechanicsburg, PA

Brigham Young University
Provo, UT

Chamber Music Society of Logan
Logan, UT

Northrop, University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN

Hancher Auditorium
Iowa City, IA

Detroit Opera
Detroit, MI

**Kennedy Center for the
Performing Arts**
Washington, DC

Cal Performances
Berkeley, CA

UC Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, CA

Segerstrom Center
Costa Mesa, CA

Modlin Center for the Arts
Richmond, VA

University Musical Society
Ann Arbor, MI

Carnegie Hall
New York, NY

Green Music Center
Rohnert Park, CA

La Jolla Music Society
La Jolla, CA

New York City Center
New York, NY

Lyon Auditorium
Lyon, France

Philharmonie de Paris
Paris, France

Harris Theater for Music and Dance
Chicago, IL

Cultura Artistica
São Paulo, Brazil

**Festival Internacional
de Musica Clasica**
Bogotá, Colombia

**Krannert Center,
University of Illinois**
Champaign, IL

**DeBartolo Center,
University of Notre Dame**
South Bend, IN

Oberlin College
Oberlin, OH

**Meany Center,
University of Washington**
Seattle, WA

Stanford Live
Stanford, CA

Constellation
Chicago, IL

Albany Symphony Orchestra
Albany, NY

Epiphany Center for the Arts
Chicago, IL

20th Anniversary Touring Programs

Over the course of two decades, Third Coast Percussion has dared to imagine how percussion music is capable of transforming the performing arts landscape. As part of Third Coast Percussion's 20th Anniversary celebration, the ensemble is thrilled to offer an array of touring programs that pay tribute to past collaborations while forging ahead into a bold new future.

TCP @ 20 Recital Program

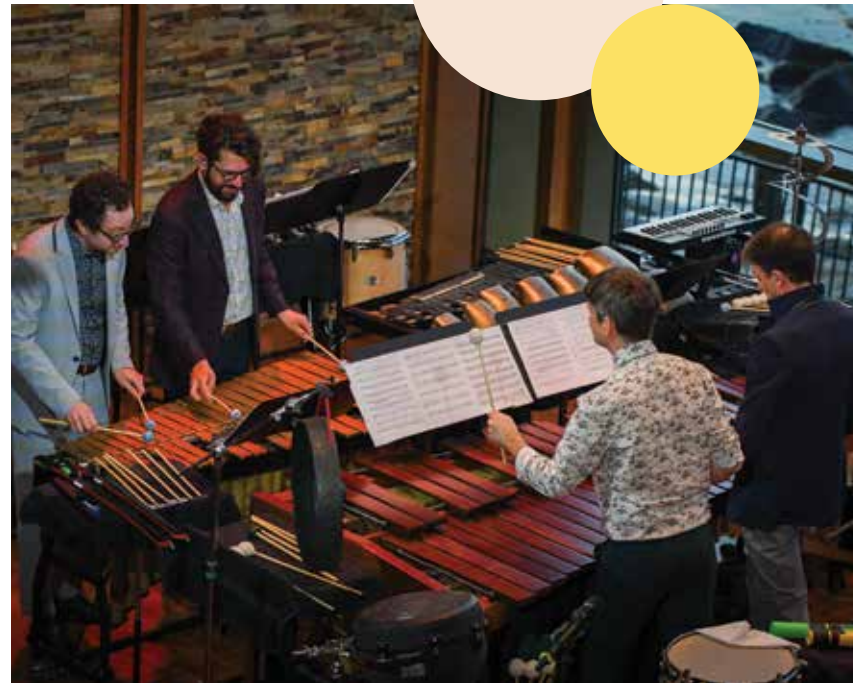
A one-of-a-kind concert program honoring Third Coast Percussion's 20th Anniversary

"[Third Coast Percussion] continues to push percussion in new directions, blurring musical boundaries and beguiling new listeners."

—NPR Music

An evening with Third Coast Percussion reveals an exhilarating new world of musical possibilities. This program celebrates 20 years of genre-defying, award-winning music, including many of the ensemble's 20th Anniversary commissions: a new piece by renowned composer Jessie Montgomery, a work by J.S. Bach reimagined by electronic music innovator—and recent Pulitzer Prize finalist—Jlin, and *Sonata for Percussion* by acclaimed jazz pianist Tigran Hamasyan.

Album release April 2025.



Third Coast Percussion & Zakir Hussain

"If there is such a thing as a tabla superstar, Indian virtuoso Zakir Hussain is it..."

—Chicago Tribune

Third Coast Percussion commissioned Zakir Hussain to compose *Murmurs In Time*—a major new work that blends the sounds of tabla with a classically-trained percussion ensemble. A shared spirit of collaboration and curiosity reverberates among the five artists who share the stage as part of this special concert presentation.

Limited tour period: October 16-November 2, 2025.

Photos: Rory Crator, Martine Severin

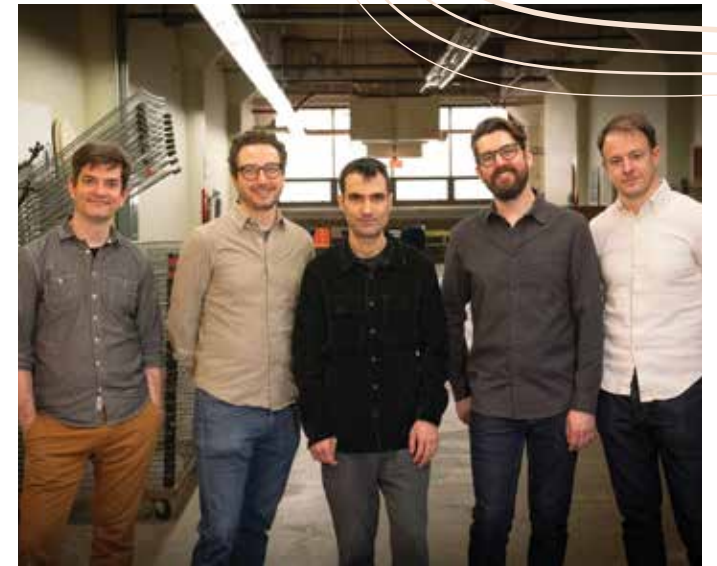
Third Coast Percussion & Tigran Hamasyan Double Bill

"Hamasyan and his collaborators travel musical expanses marked with heavy grooves, ethereal voices, pristine piano playing and ancient melodies. You'll hear nothing else like this..."

—NPR Music

Adventurous listeners are in for an unforgettable experience as Tigran Hamasyan and TCP share an evening of boundless musical exchange. Among the featured repertoire is *Sonata for Percussion*, a new piece for TCP written by Hamasyan which was the catalyst for this inspiring cross-genre collaboration.

Limited tour period: March 2026.



Metamorphosis

Choreography by Movement Art Is (Lil Buck and Jon Boogz)

"Propulsive, exciting, and full of gorgeous sounds all the way through"

—New York Classical Review

Third Coast Percussion joins forces with groundbreaking choreographers Lil Buck and Jon Boogz (Movement Art Is) for an intimate, evening-length program that is both intensely personal and fiercely virtuosic. Two U.S. street dance styles blend seamlessly with *Perspective* by Jlin (2023 Pulitzer Prize-finalist) plus music by Tyondai Braxton and Philip Glass.

Limited availability.

Strum, Strike, Bend

Third Coast Percussion & Jessie Montgomery

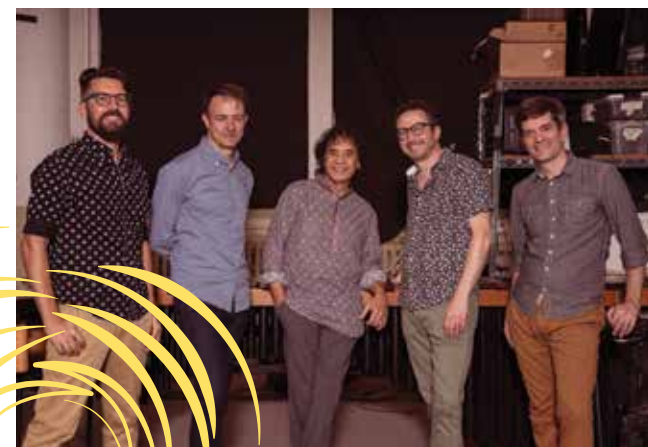
"One of the most distinctive and communicative voices in the US, as a player and a creator."

—BBC

GRAMMY® Award-winning Jessie Montgomery and TCP collaborate in a dynamic program that equally showcases Montgomery's excellence as a composer and violinist. A newly-commissioned work for percussion quartet is paired with Lou Harrison's *Concerto for Violin with Percussion Orchestra*—a tour de force that draws inspiration from the vibrant sounds of Javanese gamelan.

Limited tour period: February 9-15, 2026.

Photos: Martine Severin, Marc Perlisch



Concertos



PLAY! Concerto for Percussion Quartet, Vocalist, and Orchestra by Clarice Assad

"This piece should be played all over the country as it's both musically brilliant and also fantastic for the audience." —Simon Woods, President and CEO, League of American Orchestras

Acclaimed composer/performer Clarice Assad composed *PLAY!*, a new concerto for herself and Third Coast Percussion to perform as soloists with orchestra. The piece celebrates the many different forms and meanings of "play" and is at turns virtuosic, joyful, and deeply moving.

Duration: 20 minutes.

Orchestration: 2.2.2.2 - 4.2.2.1 - timp. perc(1) - strings



From me flows what you call Time by Toru Takemitsu

"Takemitsu's composition emphasizes quality of sound over power or volume...when percussionists played the balcony bells, audience heads shifted upward in wonder" —Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Commissioned by Carnegie Hall to celebrate its centennial in 1990, Takemitsu drew inspiration for this sublime piece from "Clear Blue Water" by Japanese poet Makoto Ooka. The music is both visually and sonically stunning, harnessing the power of five forces of nature: water, fire, earth, wind, and sky.

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)-4.3.3.0-2hps.cel-strings(14.12.10.8.6)



Meander, Spiral, Explode by Christopher Cerrone

Commissioned for Third Coast Percussion by the Britt Music & Arts Festival and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago in celebration of its 100th season, Christopher Cerrone's fractal three-piece movement offers a deceptively simple opening that expands, accelerates, and finally blossoms into a sea of polyrhythms; leading to the inevitable conclusion: an explosion of the musical core, leading us back to the beginning.

Duration: 15 minutes.

Orchestration: 2(I,II=Picc).2(II=EH). 2(II=Bcl).2(II=Cbsn)-2.2.0.0-solo perc(4)-perc(2)-hp-pft-strings(min 8.7.6.6.4)

Photos: Colin Talcroft, Todd Rosenberg, Jonathan Kim

In Development 20th Anniversary Commissions

Dame Evelyn Glennie

Dame Evelyn Glennie is a pioneer in the world of percussion performance, and one of the most eclectic and innovative artists working today. TCP is honored to collaborate with her to develop a new work for percussion soloist and percussion quartet.



NEW

Musekiwa Chingodza

The renowned Zimbabwean mbira master reunites with Third Coast Percussion for a new work, to be performed by the quartet alone or side-by-side with the master himself.



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

Sérgio Assad

Third Coast Percussion is excited to collaborate once again with this giant of the classical guitar world, following the success of their 2x GRAMMY® nominated *Archetypes* program.



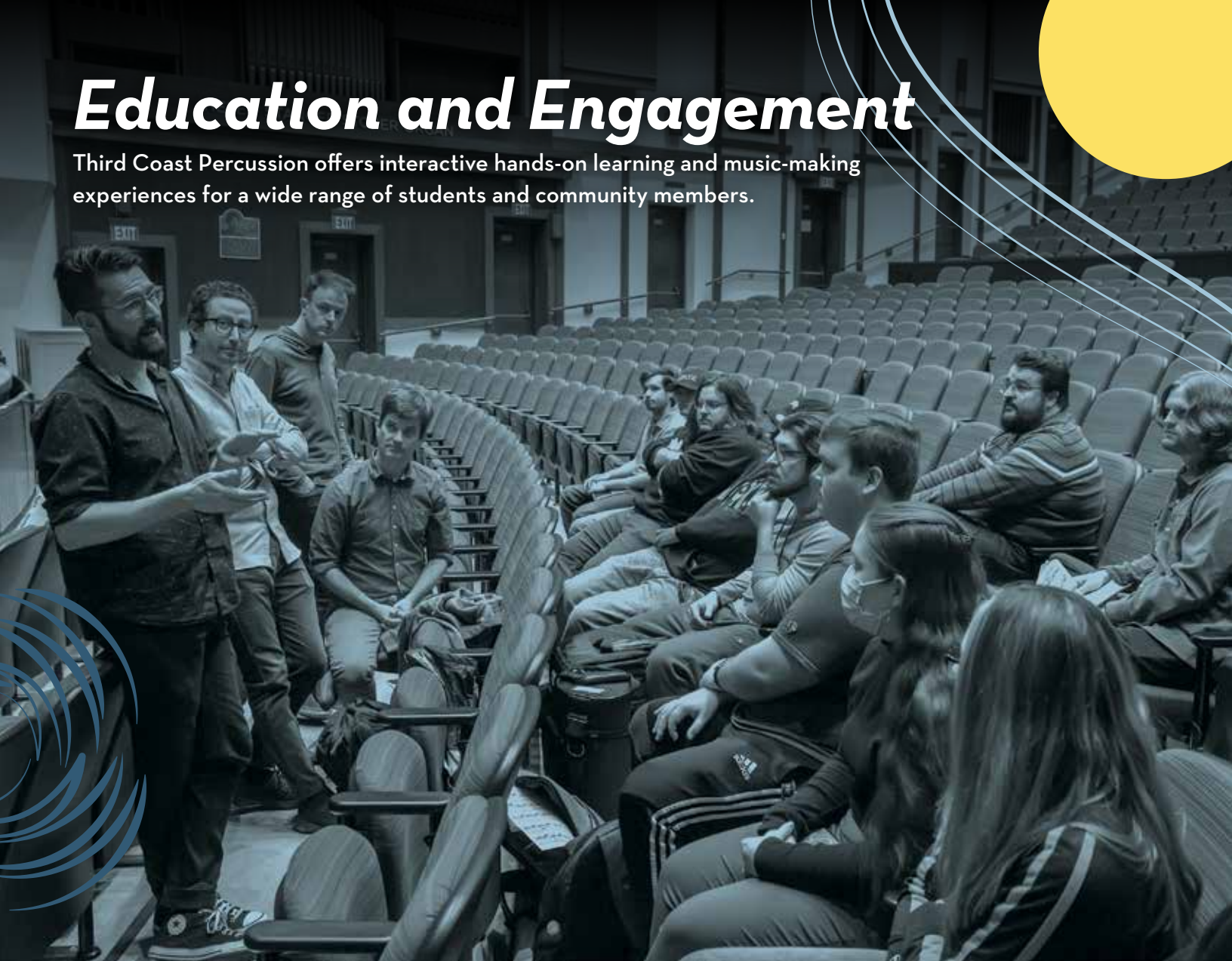
Augusta Read Thomas

Longtime friend and collaborator Augusta Read Thomas is one of the most transformative collaborators in TCP's twenty-year history. Her newest work for the ensemble is inspired by birds: birdsong, migration, flocking patterns, and the many roles they play as pollinators, scavengers, seed dispersers, predators, and ecosystem engineers.



Education and Engagement

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



9,000+ students
engaged each season



70+ educational presentations
offered each season

Contact **Reba Cafarelli** for more details:
reba@thirdcoastpercussion.com

- **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

- **Guided sound meditation, co-led by Third Coast Percussion**
- Reading, performing, and coaching student compositions
- Interdisciplinary collaborations across a wide range of disciplines, including engineering, architecture, astronomy, dance, and more
- **Multi-day music composition residency** that empowers music students to compose an original piece of music and perform it with TCP

- **Modes of Listening:** an exploration of the way our brains perceive music as passive, active, and participatory listeners.
- Facilitation of side-by-side performances with students and community members of large scale pieces such as *In C* by Terry Riley

Photo: Rowan University

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.

50-60 minute duration. Ideal for students kindergarten through 5th grade, but can be adapted for any audience. Any size audience can be accommodated.

Available for digital residencies!

“The teachers have been stopping me in the hallway to tell me how wonderful the assembly was. You have certainly inspired the next generation of musicians.” –**Rob Fox**, Evesham Township School District



Interactive Drumming Workshop / Drum Circle Facilitation

An engaging, community-building activity open to all levels of musical experience.

Members of Third Coast Percussion facilitate a drum circle session that encourages participants to express themselves in a welcoming environment, all while building improvisation and group leadership skills. The inclusive and flexible format invites participation from a wide range of communities including college campuses, community centers, after-school programs, and more.

WAVES

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.

Digital-only program!



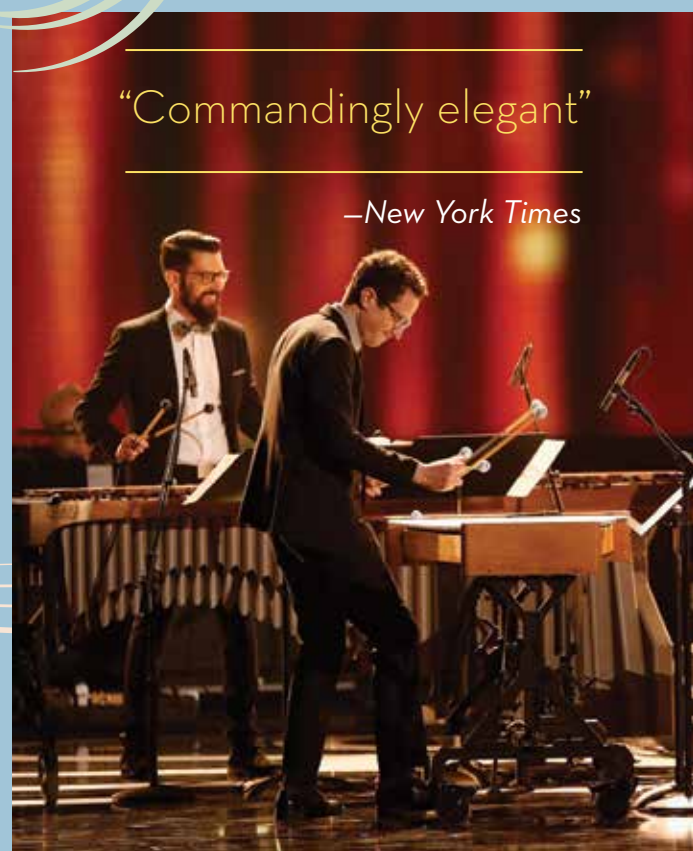
“Among the multitude of family and education concerts I’ve seen over 25 years in my field, Think Outside the Drum stands out as one of the very best. The ensemble’s masterful balance of virtuosic performance, accessible explanation of musical concepts, and audience interaction makes for a show that truly engages people of all ages and backgrounds. I felt like a kid as I fully lost myself in the joy and energy they brought to the stage, and my only disappointment was when it was over!”

Additionally, TCP was a delight to work with throughout their residency in Jackson Hole. They invited children to play instruments on the stage, participated enthusiastically in audience Q&A and pre-concert lectures, and helped us to brainstorm future ideas for collaboration. Their open-mindedness and genuine desire to foster community through music is a breath of fresh air.”

–**Meaghan Heinrich**
Education Curator,
Grand Teton Music Festival

In the News

Read what the press has to say about Third Coast Percussion.



“Commandingly elegant”

—New York Times

Chicago Classical Review

Third Coast Percussion Puts On A Spectacle With Montgomery, She-e Wu

Third Coast Percussion’s concert on Friday night at DePaul University’s Holtschneider Performance Center demonstrated again why live performance is so vital. Only in person is it possible to feel the energy sizzling between the members of TCP as they bring to life such rhythmically and texturally complex music. Particularly in an age where computer-generated beats are ubiquitous, it is easy to take for granted the amount of communication, concentration, and physicality required to achieve their level of precision and artistry.

Even more than for traditional chamber groups, there is a visual dimension to TCP’s performances as you watch them change instruments and mallets as deftly as dancers. You can see how the unusual sounds are created, which might not be readily apparent without a visual clue. Trying to count the number of instruments on stage Friday night would have been fruitless, but suffice it to say TCP’s extensive setup included flowerpots, Almglocken (tuned cowbells), Tibetan singing bowls, and tom drums with breathing tubes (more on that later).

TCP’s varied programming dispelled any fears that a percussion concert might become monotonous. Half of the works on the program were originally written for other instruments and artfully arranged for percussion quartet by members of TCP. As such, most of the pieces relied heavily on mallet percussion instruments like marimba, vibraphone, and xylophone. Arrangements included Tigran Hamasyan’s playful *Étude No. 1*, originally for solo piano, and three movements from Philip Glass’s *Aguas da Amazonia*.

Glass’s minimalist music lends itself naturally to percussion arrangement with its repetitive structures. That said, TCP’s inventive use of different instruments, as well as their impressive dynamic control, prevented the music from ever becoming tedious. Judicious use of electronic tracks supplemented the acoustic instruments on stage. For instance, a subtle bed of



synth organ sound added a unique color to “*Madeira River*” without being overpowering.

Rubix, which TCP wrote in collaboration with the duo Flutronix, made further use of electronic tracks. Because Flutronix were not present at the concert, their flute playing was piped in, adding another layer of coordination complexity. The second movement, “Go,” distinguished itself in its hip-hop feel, achieved through the use of the drum kit and the flutes mimicking rapping with repetitive two-note figures.

The second half of the program highlighted composer and violinist Jessie Montgomery, a fixture of new music in Chicago who is currently wrapping up her final season as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Mead Composer-in-Residence. Montgomery’s *Suite from In Color*, arranged by TCP member Sean Connors, elicited even more unusual sound combinations, such as whistling, which created otherworldly overtone clashes with the instruments.

Next was *Study No. 1*, Montgomery’s first piece written expressly for percussion quartet. Featuring mostly unpitched percussion, it made for a welcome change of pace. The piece began with the quartet on a set of tom drums hooked up with air hoses. The players then blew into the hoses to change the pressure inside the drums and the pitch along with it. This bit of physics magic

created the effect of a brewing thunderstorm or heavy wind.

The meat of the program was Lou Harrison’s *Concerto for Violin with Percussion Orchestra*, which brought guest percussionist She-e Wu and Montgomery, now as violin soloist, to the stage. Harrison was among the first generation of classical composers to write for percussion ensemble. Although this piece used the most unusual instruments on the program—such as flowerpots, wind chimes, and cowbells—the solo violin rooted it within the classical tradition. The influence of Shostakovich and Bartók was apparent in the violin part, evoking the image of a time traveler from the Old World thrust into the cacophony of contemporary life.

Montgomery was a serene presence amid the flurry of percussive punctuations and complex rhythms around her. While the first movement featured devilish double stops in the unaccompanied cadenza, her most compelling playing came in the highly exposed slow movement, essentially a violin soliloquy with minimal percussive interference. Montgomery played the slow-winding stream of even quarter notes with supreme legato and subtle phrasing before fading into nothingness. Finally, the return of the bevy of complex percussion led the third movement to a thrilling close. 🎻

Photos: Marc Perlish

Third Coast Percussion Offers A Unique Perspective



Within classical music, many like to pretend that a performer's role—whether presenting a classic work, commission, or arrangement—is to access something static and predetermined about the composer's intent.

The reality: Through the act of performance, musicians give unique embodiment to a score, imbuing it with singular and experientially specific emotional resonance. In this way, performers are collaborative producers in every work, be it a staple of the canon or a world premiere.

Few ensembles lay out this case in clearer terms than Third Coast Percussion did in its Friday night program at the Nimoy Theater for UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance. The ensemble's interpretive powers expanded the emotional architecture of commissions from Gemma Peacocke and Danny Elfman. And across arrangements of music by Philip Glass and Clarice Assad and a collaborative realization of composer Jlin's electronic scores,

Third Coast's distinctive footprint came into even clearer focus.

Peacocke's *Death Wish*, scored for four players on two marimbas, was written, says the composer, "after watching a short film featuring New Zealand survivors of sexual assault. ... In the piece I thought about the spooling and unspooling of energy and how we are all bound and driven by forces both within and beyond ourselves."

The ensemble worked skillfully to make these ideas of spooling and unspooling manifest through interpretation. The players' pillowed touch in the slow opening melodies highlighted the way Peacocke's confident writing embraces percussion's relationship to resonance and decay. As the piece introduced more outward moments of intensity, the ensemble found new layers of emotion. Frenetic pinging figures in the upper registers were satisfyingly breathless. Meanwhile, a strong group blend in pulsing bass gestures allowed a synth-like throbbing to emerge, as if spontaneously.

Elfman's *Percussion Quartet* allowed the group further opportunity to showcase its athletic abilities, aided by the introduction of live-from-the-stage footage, which spotlighted vigorous moments of chamber playing. The ensemble brought an appropriately cinematic showmanship to the work's prickly, quick-change sensibility, dynamism, and dramatic sense of scale.

This quality came through most strongly in the piece's third

movement, a quasi-scherzo. Sean Connors's virtuosic kit-spanning solo—a rhythmic double to fast-moving marimba figures—was a perfect encapsulation of the piece's penchant for both spectacle and wryness.

Third Coast continued to find fitting colors in its arrangements and reimaginings. Assad's *The Hero* was propelled by running modal lines that were translated gracefully across the ensemble's keyboard percussion instruments. Robert Dillon's crisp groove on cajón was instrumental in maintaining the angularity of this piece originally for piano and guitar.

The ensemble's arrangement of Glass's *Metamorphosis No. 1* found emotional moments in its textural diversity, too. Near-niente glockenspiel melodies, focused but fragile, unfolded over gristly tolls from bowed xylophones. A melodic, which garnered a few chuckles when first introduced, soon took on a surprisingly touching solemnity as it developed those melodies.

By contrast, the group's collaboration with Jlin, the Pulitzer



Photo: Chanel Foster

Prize-nominated *Perspective*, finds Third Coast at the peak of its arranging powers. By working with Jlin to translate her electronic recordings into a performance score suited for analog instruments, the group has integrated its performance idiom seamlessly into the structure of the work.

Perspective's musical materials range widely, from boom-bap interludes in "Derivative," reminiscent of vintage Clipse, to the halting irregularity of "Paradigm" and the polyrhythmic buzzing of "Embryo." At every turn, the performers infused the materials with their own sensibility, approaching the extreme timbral variation with seemingly endless invention.

The extent to which a rubber mallet, slid just so over the face of a bass drum, mimicked a classic 808 drum machine was nothing short of astonishing. So, too, was the variety of synth-like shades wrung from the xylophone through a bevy of extended techniques. Even with the benefit of accompanying live footage, it was impossible to ascertain every method by which the group produced all of the startling sonorities on display.

In a video message which followed the first movement, Jlin opined, "If I write for a band or an orchestra, I don't want [my piece] played back to me exactly like I wrote it. I want, you know, a different perspective." No matter the repertoire, Third Coast's perspective is always worth a listen. 🎧

Between Breaths Album Review



I think I must be predisposed genetically towards music for percussion (hopefully in my next life I am fated to be a xylophonist!) but I have always loved the sound of drums, of mallet and clashed instruments. This immensely enjoyable album from the prodigiously gifted quartet Third Coast Percussion ticks all my boxes.

I reviewed an earlier release of theirs, *'Perpetuum'* (Orange Mountain Music, 6/19) and found it hugely enjoyable. As then, the best-known composer—Missy Mazzoli here, Philip Glass previously—does not necessarily provide the most compelling work, not that Mazzoli's *Millennium Canticles* (2022) is anything less than absorbing. The concept is a group of survivors of some unspecified catastrophe and their mechanisms for coping. Thus, *'The Doubter's Litany'* is succeeded by *'Bloodied Bells'* (the most compelling movement) and *'Choir of the Holy Locusts'*, topped and tailed by *'Famous Disaster Psalm'* and *'Survival Psalm'*. The suite is a kaleidoscope of instrumental

and vocal techniques, including some of the most menacing counting by performers one is likely to encounter.

The other four works embrace the sonic possibilities of percussion in remarkably varied ways, making this a continually intriguing listen, nowhere more so than in the group improvisation *In Practice* (2022). Starting as a random 'sound meditation' and then 'warm-up routine', the quartet conjure magically an enchanting diptych of equal musical and expressive interest. Tyondai Braxton's *Sunny X* (2022), one of several works to use electronics, also starts as a set of meditations but rapidly moves into more elemental, drum-driven territory—to my mind the most exciting work on the album. However, Ayanna Woods's *Triple Point* (2017) is different again, musing on the brief state where a given element can exist simultaneously as a gas, a solid and a liquid. Finally, Gemma Peacocke's *Death Wish* (2017) is another beguilingly euphonious study for two marimbas (two players per instrument) inspired by the Maori artist and visionary, the late Hinewirangi Kohu-Morgan, who died in February this year.

Stunning playing of five riveting new compositions, captured in stunning sound. Yes, there are some abrasive textures along the way, but really, what's not to like? Buy it, listen, and enjoy. 🎧

Album art: Zelene Jiang Schlosberg



"What an exhilarating experience Metamorphosis was—a truly innovative programme which worked amazingly well. The audience's reaction was memorable, and I'm sure everyone could feel that from the stage. It was an absolute pleasure!"

—Chris Sharp
The Barbican Centre



"Third Coast Percussion is that most cherished of unicorns—an ensemble of exceptional musicians, inherently curious and collaborative, open-minded and gleefully playful, organized, communicative, and engaged. Third Coast Percussion is committed to diminishing the boundaries of contemporary and percussive music in the 21st century while always realizing their visual value of personality and entertainment in live performance."

—Paul Brohan
Executive Director, Modlin Center for the Arts



"Third Coast Percussion has been amazing as an Ensemble-In-Residence at Denison. Their impact on students and the community extends beyond the music department, beyond the arts, and reaches across the entire campus with innovative workshops, collaborations, and projects. Their artistry is masterful and they provide unique and lifelong experiences for all."

—Ching-chu Hu
Director, Vail Series, Denison University



"We have been wanting to work with Third Coast for years, and having them in our first season in the brand new Nimoy Theater was a treat. It was acoustically fantastic, and they brought so much artistry to our new, intimate venue, and a sold out, very enthusiastic house! The concert was a seamless blend of incredible live performance and super interesting and detailed video work. We look forward to working with these amazing artists in the future."

—UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance
