

Festival showcases contemporary compositions

Guest performers bring original works to Truman for a weekend of experimentation and improvisation in concert

BY KEATON ROBERTSON
Staff Reporter

Truman State's music department and Sigma Alpha Iota, the professional women's music fraternity, will host The New Horizons Music Festival Oct. 24-25.

This year will be the festival's 16th consecutive year. Previously known as The New Music Festival, the event is meant to expose performers and audiences to new experiences with music.

According to The New Horizons Music Festival's event website, seven musicians will perform throughout the weekend beginning 8 p.m. Friday. The second day of performances will resume at 1:30 p.m. Saturday. Amy X Neuburg and the duo pincushioned will be featured during the show as special guests. According to the festival's website, pincushioned was formed by Barry Moon, computer technician and composer, and percussion composer Doug Nottingham. The group's act melds digital sounds and images with analog sounds.

Music professor Charles Gran is the director of the festival. He said many of the artists have music that is loose with time, tone and is unconventional. He said one notable aspect of these performers is their experimental nature and abstract concept of music.

The Hunter/Gatherer Art Exhibit has featured some of this music throughout the week, and Gran said the music department had a call for submissions of sound pieces and for colleagues to take part in the exhibit. Those Gran chose were part of an installment in Truman's Art Gallery exhibit and helped make the exhibition more of an experience rather than a viewing.

Gran said there was a call for new musical theatre productions to perform at the festival. There were a total of 140 submissions from across the U.S. and Europe, and only two excerpts were chosen, he said.

The Amy X Neuburg performance will follow excerpts from the musicals "Beautiful Dreamer" and "We Foxes," which Gran chose. He said Neuburg's performance at 6:30 p.m. will include a variety of vocal solos and music compositions. Following her performance, Neuburg will speak and answer questions from the audience about the piece she composed for Truman's Percussion Ensemble, "Crowd Source."

Michael Bump, music professor and percussion ensemble director, has been assisting with festival planning. He said the ensemble will present and premiere "Crowd Source," a piece commissioned by Neuburg for Truman. Bump said there has been considerable communication between himself and Neuburg about the piece and its performance, and he said part of this dialogue was relaying feedback from students.

Bump said "Crowd Source" has offered a completely new experience for many of the students performing. He said this was the first time the percussion ensemble had worked with a vocalist in a production, and he said the group even would provide vocals themselves.

Freshman Jensynn Kasper is part of Truman's percussion ensemble. Kasper said "Crowd Source" features multiple percussion instruments. She said she plays steelpan, also known as steel drums and pans. Kasper said Neuburg left many of the decisions for performing the piece to the ensemble. She said she appreciated this freedom because it allowed the ensemble to take some liberties with their decisions to use one instrument rather than another.

Kasper said this was the first time she experimented with percussion technology, and she said the experience was enjoyable and exciting. She said she was shocked going through the piece for the first time because of its unconventional nature. Kasper said she encourages students and the people of Kirksville to come and experience the performance.

New Horizons Music Festival Schedule

Monday, Oct. 20 to Saturday, Oct. 25

Noon to 6:30 p.m. — [Playing Continuously: A Gallery of Fixed-Media](#) (Truman Art Gallery)

The event features pre-recorded works by international composers. This hour-long program plays continuously and is curated by Robert Martin.

Friday, Oct. 24

8 p.m. — [Digital Smorgasbord](#) (Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall)

The hour-long concert will feature new works for live performances, electronics and video with a variety of styles and performers from around the United States.

Saturday, Oct. 25

1:30 p.m. — [New Improvisation](#) (OP 2340)

This concert showcases music creation in real time with two separate jam sessions. The first will feature faculty artists on percussion, saxophone, trombone and electronics. For the second, alumnus Theodore Moore returns with his latest work for saxophone, video, and electronics eclipse.

2:45 p.m. — [pincushioned](#) (OP 2340)

Dueling laptops from Arizona perform far-reaching music with video and robots! Douglas Nottingham and Barry Moon will appear in concert as pincushioned.

4 p.m. — [New Music-Theater](#) (James G. Severns Theater)

The event features excerpts from two brand new works for the stage. "Beautiful Dreamer" chronicles the inner lives of a group of high school students and their sometimes dangerous fantasies. "We Foxes" follows a young vagabond who tries to escape the clutches of a scheming small-town Missouri socialite.

6:30 p.m. — [Amy X Neuburg](#) (Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall)

Amy X Neuburg performs her solo song compositions while playing electronic percussion.

7:30 p.m. — [A Short Conversation With Amy](#) (Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall)

Amy X Neuburg discusses her new work for Truman, "Crowd Source."

8 p.m. — [New Ensemble Works](#) (Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall)

This concert includes a newly commissioned work by Amy X Neuburg for the Truman Percussion Ensemble.

All performances are free.
Festival programs can be purchased for \$5.
Donations of \$10 are appreciated but not required.

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