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Fifth House Ensemble and Alash, Sonic Meditations, February 25, 2019

Lawrence University

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2018–19
WORLD MUSIC SERIES

Nobuntu
Monday, October 8, 2018, 8 p.m. | Harper Hall, Music Drama Center

Yumi Kurosawa
Monday, January 14, 2019, 8 p.m. | Harper Hall, Music-Drama Center

Projeto Arcomusical
Wednesday, February 6, 2019, 8 p.m. | Harper Hall, Music-Drama Center

Fifth House Ensemble and Alash • Sonic Meditations
Monday, February 25, 2019, 8 p.m. | Lawrence Memorial Chapel

Innov Gnawa
Monday, April 8, 2019, 8 p.m. | Harper Hall, Music-Drama Center

Lawrence University Gamelan Concert
Monday, May 27, 2019, 3 p.m. | Stansbury Theatre

WORLD MUSIC SERIES

FIFTH HOUSE ENSEMBLE AND ALASH PRESENT
SONIC MEDITATIONS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2019
LAWRENCE MEMORIAL CHAPEL
8 P.M.

go.lawrence.edu/worldmusic
Fifth House Ensemble and Alash present Sonic Meditations
Monday, February 25, 2019
Lawrence Memorial Chapel
8 p.m.

Program will be announced from the stage.

Fifth House Ensemble and internationally acclaimed Tuvan throat singing group Alash cross oceans, borders, and musical traditions. The culmination of a cultural- and continent-spanning collaboration that brought Fifth House to Tuva and Alash to the United States, this communal concert explores how folk music preserves sacred stories through participatory music-making. Join us as we delve into music both deeply familiar and deeply distant, and create brand-new music with us through guided improvisations that place the audience at the center of the action!

Players
Bady-Dorzhu Ondar, vocals, igil, doshpuluur, guitar
Ayan-ool Sam, vocals, igil, doshpuluur, guitar
Ayan Shirizhik, vocals, kengirge, shyngyrash, shoor, murgu, xomus
Melissa Ngan, flute
Grace Hong, oboe
Elizandro Garcia-Montoya, clarinet
Eric Heidbreder, bassoon
Parker Nelson, horn
Charlene Kluegel, violin
Sixto Franco, viola
Herine Coetzee Koschak, cello
Alex Goodin, double bass
Tyler Kivel, piano
Sean Quirk, Alash manager and interpreter

About Alash
Alash are masters of Tuvan throat singing (xöömei), a remarkable technique for singing multiple pitches at the same time. What distinguishes this gifted trio from earlier generations of Tuvan throat singers is the subtle infusion of modern influences into their traditional music. One can find complex harmonies, western instruments, and contemporary song forms in Alash's music, but it's their overall sound and spirit that is decidedly Tuvan.

Trained in traditional Tuvan music since childhood, the Alash musicians studied at Kyzyl Arts College just as Tuva was beginning to open up to the West. They formed a traditional ensemble and won multiple awards for traditional throat singing in international xöömei competitions, both as an ensemble and as individuals. At the same time, they paid close attention to new trends coming out of the West. They have borrowed new ideas that mesh well with the sound and feel of traditional Tuvan music, but they have never sacrificed the integrity of their own heritage in an effort to make their music more hip.

Alash first toured the U.S. under the sponsorship of the Open World Leadership program of the Library of Congress and the National Endowment for the Arts. Since then they have returned many times, to the delight of American audiences. The Washington Post described their music as “utterly stunning,” quipping that after the performance “audience members picked their jaws up off the floor.”

Alash enjoys collaborating with musicians of all stripes. They appear as guest artists on Béla Fleck & the Flecktones’ holiday CD, Jingle All the Way (2008), which won a Grammy. The Denver Post remarked, “As electrifying as the Flecktones’ performance was, the band was nearly upstaged by Alash Ensemble.” Alash also enjoys a longstanding musical partnership with the legendary Sun Ra Arkestra, and they have collaborated with musicians across the spectrum, from country to classical to beatboxing.

Beyond performing, Alash has a passion for teaching and promoting understanding between cultures. Their tours often include workshops that introduce Tuvan music to students from primary, middle and high schools, colleges, universities, and music conservatories. Children as young as 8 have learned to throat-sing. As one student exclaimed, “Alash opened my eyes to a whole new world!”
About Fifth House Ensemble

Praised by the New York Times for its “conviction, authority, and finesse,” the Chicago-based Fifth House Ensemble harnesses the collaborative spirit of chamber music to reach beyond the traditionally perceived limits of classical music. The ensemble’s artistic, educational, and civic programs engage theater groups, video game designers, corporate innovators, and folk bands to share stories as diverse as the communities it serves.

In its 2018–2019 season, Fifth House Ensemble presents a world-spanning collaboration with Tuvan throat-singing masters Alash Ensemble that explores storytelling, participation, and ritual through interviews and documentary video filmed on location in the remote Siberian republic. Sonic Meditations brings together folk storytelling, deep listening and meditation practices, and new commissions from Fresh Inc Festival alumnus William Pearson and Grammy-nominated video game composer Austin Wintory. Composer and Fifth House Artistic Director Dan Visconti’s musical puzzle, Unchained Melodies, forms another program of virtuosic solo pieces that combine in counterpoint to form duos, trios, and ultimately a full dectet. The world premiere of prolific opera composer Daron Hagen’s newest project, Orson Rehearsed, looks at the process of art through the lens of pivotal creative force Orson Welles.

Also this season, Fifth House visits Ball State University (Muncie, Ind.), Georgia Tech University, The Harris Center (Folsom, Calif.), and MSU Denver with Journey LIVE, an interactive arrangement for Fifth House of Austin Wintory’s Grammy-nominated score responsive to live game play, and visits the Studebaker Theater, Chicago Latino Music Festival, Waukegan Chamber Music Society, Fermilab, Illinois State University, University of Dayton, Old Town School of Folk Music, and Southeast Missouri State University for performances, training workshops, and residency activities this season.

Performances in previous seasons include those at Texas Performing Arts, LiveConnections (Philadelphia, PA), MAGFest music and gaming festival (National Harbor, MD), WFMT Impromptu (Chicago, IL), Steppenwolf Theater, the Forma Festival (Moscow), National Sawdust (NYC) and the Miller Theatre (NYC).

Through the ensemble’s heartfelt social and civic practice work, Fifth House has co-created artistic projects with urban neighborhoods, social service organizations, and an agricultural community to spark conversations on issues that matter. Recent projects include Broken Text, a collaboration with Raven Theatre and DJ Searchl1te inspired by multi-week residencies at the Cook County Temporary Youth Detention Center and St. Leonard’s Ministries; Voices from the Dust Bowl, a collaboration with composer Steven Snowden and bluegrass band Henhouse Prowlers exploring stories from workers’ rights organizations nationwide; Nedudim, an exploration of music and cultural identity in collaboration with Baladino that engages Chicago-based organizations representing Israel, Iran, Germany and Spain, and Harvest, a year-long partnership with DePauw University and the Greencastle, Ind., community culminating in a Mother’s Day celebration of the people, places, and stories of Putnam County.

Reaching 17,000 students annually through its arts-integrated educational programs, Fifth House connects K-12 core curricula to vivid, custom-crafted, and interactive musical experiences which challenge students to share and lead. A member of the Illinois Arts Council Association’s Arts-in-Education Roster, Fifth House has presented performances and residencies at Chicago public schools and the Chicago Cultural Center in partnership with the International Music Foundation, the Chicago Teachers’ Center, Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education, and Ravinia’s Reach*Teach*Play program.

As an extension of this work, Fifth House enters its fourth year of partnership with Loyola University’s Center for Urban Research and Learning this season, through which the ensemble is in residence at sites serving at-risk youth and adults including Deborah’s Place, Teen Living Programs, and Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative School at the Chicago Temporary Youth Detention Center. Fifth House also partners with Storycatchers Theatre as part of its residency at the detention center to develop new curriculum culminating in a new theatrical work based on participants’ own experiences.

An established partner and resource to the nation’s top music schools and conservatories, Fifth House launches the careers of emerging artists through entrepreneurship residencies and training programs, including those at Yale College, Eastman School of Music, New England Conservatory, Indiana University, Roosevelt University, the Cleveland
Institute of Music, UT-Austin, Northwestern University, San Francisco Conservatory, DePaul University, and the Colburn School. Recent creative partnerships have included those with The Cleveland Orchestra and the San Francisco Opera. In 2012, Fifth House launched Fresh Inc, a two-week, intensive training program for emerging composers and performers where Fifth House works with participants on building careers in music in line with their own unique, vision and values.

Fifth House is currently an Ensemble in Residence at the Music Institute of Chicago.

This program is supported in part by grants from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation’s International Connections Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, and from the Paul R. Judy Center for Innovation and Research at the Eastman School of Music.

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