

percussia - plucked & struck

Plucked & Struck is a collection of works for Celtic (lever) harp and small percussion. Many feature the Orff xylophone, a miniature didactic instrument developed by the German composer Carl Orff in the 1920s as part of his early childhood music education system. This album might be the first to explore the classical compositional potential of this particular combo.

The music is deeply rooted in New York City. All three performers—and most of the composers—are from “the world’s borough” of Queens. You might say this album demonstrates one solution to the problem of transporting large and bulky instruments on the subway to gigs. It’s all a matter of scale.

As percussionist **Ingrid Gordon** writes, “I recall commuting home on the E train late at night, and noticing **Susan [Jolles]** clutching her baby Celtic harp. We got to know each other.

I briefly had a stint as a teaching artist at PS57 in East Harlem, where I was tasked with teaching on the school’s Orff xylophone. In the process, I fell in love with the unassuming instrument. How could something so small sound so good? I eventually bought my own and vowed to treat it as a legitimate musical instrument, not just the indestructible vehicle for boisterous kids it was intended to be.

By now Susan had joined my larger ensemble, **Percussia**, and the two of us began asking every composer we knew to write music for our pairing. Each composer developed their own creative way of circumnavigating the limitations imposed by the instruments in terms of range and pitch: the Celtic harp is tuned by hand with levers, and the original Orff xylophone only plays in three keys.

Armed with a newfound freedom of movement and a unique repertoire of solid classical works – both original and arrangements – for our diminutive instruments, Susan and I (joined by soprano **Melissa Fogarty**) hit the road. We began playing our music in coffee shops, public parks, and even laundromats!

With the help of our wonderful composers’ creative gifts, this album represents the culmination of this collaboration between Susan and myself. It is a celebration of travel, the joy of playing music together, and our friendship. We invite other harpists and percussionists to follow in our tiny footsteps!”

- Sunny Knable** (b. 1983)
1. **envelop(e)** (2020) 6:03
- Lou Harrison** (1917-2003)
2. **Avalokiteshvara** (1978) 2:13
3. **Jahla** 2:05
4. **Sonata in Ishartum** 1:48
- Seth Bedford** (b. 1978)
5. **A Year in New York** (2011) 7:06
- Angelica Negrón** (b. 1981)
6. **Was I the Same When I Got Up This Morning?** (2011) 8:04
- John Dowland** (1563-1626), arr. Susan Jolles
7. **The Lady Rich, Her Galliard** 2:08
8. **The Shoemaker’s Wife (A Toy)** 1:54
- Joseph Canteloube** (1879-1957), arr. Samuel Milligan
9. **Chants D’Auvergne: Trois Bourrées** (1923-1930) 3:02
- Samuel Milligan** (1932-2019)
Sephardic Songs (2015)
10. **Cuando El Rey Nimrod al Compo Salia** 2:25
11. **Puncha, Puncha la Rosa Huele** 2:31
- Carlo Nicolau** (b. 1965)
Windows of Time (2022)
12. **Memories** 2:50
13. **Posterity** 3:01
14. **Life** 3:15

>48:29<

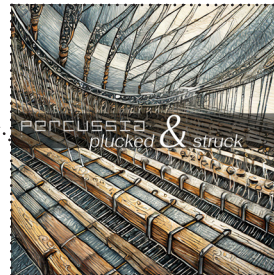
Percussia:

Ingrid Gordon: Orff xylophone, small percussion

Susan Jolles: Celtic harp

Melissa Fogarty: soprano (tracks 10,11)

Percussia.org



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