

Contemporary Players Artist Chats

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This is Artist Chats brought to you by San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. You'll hear contemporary music's most inspired personalities share insight into their art, their life, and their upcoming performance with the Contemporary Music Players.

Season 1 Episode 4

Yesterday Night: the Performer's Perspective

Artistic Director Eric Dudley speaks with oboist Kyle Bruckmann about the workshopping and creation of DeVanté Winn's new piece.

Eric Dudley in Conversation with Kyle Bruckmann

Eric Dudley: And joining us now is Kyle Bruckmann, one of our esteemed oboists with the Contemporary Players and Kyle, we've had this collaboration going with the Technology and Applied Composition Program at SFCM [San Francisco Conservatory of Music] for a while now- share with us your impressions of how that program is going and how you think it might be adding to what we do as an ensemble.

Kyle Bruckmann: Right, I love it, I've always thought of my work as a, an educator and as a new music specialist in the same breath they go hand-in-hand to me- it's always a wonderful moment of serendipity when they land together on the same gig. I teach at a few different places. I do a lot of work with electronics and I LOVE workshopping things directly with composers, so I think this partnership is a magical thing and I'm glad to be a part of it this round.

Eric: So you've been workshopping with, I think, with all of the students but then specifically with DeVanté [Winn] (**Kyle:** yes.) for at least a couple months now, right? (**Kyle:** yeah.) Talk to us about that process and how this piece has kind of come together.

Kyle: Uh, well there was a, an initial session with the entire class with the entire composition studio at TAC and that was basically a *dog and pony show* of: here all the things that the oboe could do but probably shouldn't and if you want to go any of these places here's here's how we can make it happen. And then they did their own work and came down to DeVanté getting, getting the tap on the shoulder. And his piece is, is it's elegant, it's beautiful it's very straightforward honestly so, our back and forth, well, at least in terms of its demands on the

oboist, right. So our back and forth was primarily a pragmatic one, he was very conscious and very considerate about idiomatic concerns, you know, he would ask, you know, "Am I giving you enough time to breathe? Is this too exhausting?" No, it's quite, absolutely fine, this is actually what the oboe does very naturally, right, the kind of lyrical, long singing lines. The concerns in the back and forth were mostly pragmatic. Like, since we're doing this in a remote setting, and I don't have an accompanist I can nod to and there's no peripheral vision, this beautiful kind of open-ended sound world that the piece opens with- ya gotta throw me a lifeline, or I need a click track or something. It was really that specific and that pragmatic.

Eric: Yeah, just literally about when to come in (**Kyle:** Yeah, yep.) Yeah so how did you end up working that out? What was the strategy?

Kyle: Well, a couple of different things like we always do in ensembled music, writing cues into the part from the score and since we're going to be recording this anyway, it's simple enough to have a click track in the ear.

Eric: So what would you say characterizes the piece, I mean, you already said there's like this beautiful lush environment in the opening- what is it that's special to you that you think kind of compliments the oboe in terms of what the electronics are doing?

Kyle: The electronics are just very warm and immersive, there's a lot of attention to timbre, to the comforting bath, I get to, I get to swim in for 6 minutes.

Eric: Is there a particular moment in the piece where you think the oboe writing is especially strong or something we can zero in on as listeners?

Kyle: Uh, it's singing line that just arrange-wise hits right in the sweet spot of the oboe, you know it's the same tessitura that composers have been exploiting since you know, nineteenth-century orchestral writing it's it's there's there's, there's nothing not to like.

Eric: and DeVanté has figured out how to exploit that to his best advantage. (**Kyle:** Absolutely) Awesome, well, we're going to look forward to hearing it, and thank you Kyle.

Kyle: right, thank you Eric.