

My speech floating in veils.

Natalia Merlano Gómez
Second DMA Recital
May 17, 2024 – 7 p.m
Experimental Theater

Falling: drops and a breeze (2024)

World Premiere

Composer: Akari Komura

Visuals: Kate Gorman

Texts: Akari Komura and Natalia Merlano Gómez

Quisieron enterrarnos pero no sabían que éramos semilla (2023)

USA Premiere

Composer: Estefanía Lambuley

Cassandra (2012-2013)

World Premiere of the voice and electronics version

Composer: Wilfrido Terrazas

Fixed media: Natalia Merlano Gómez

Texts: Nuria Manzur (Spanish)

Ronnie Yates (English)

Dualidad (2024)

World Premiere

Composer: Juliana Ortigoza

Inter-acción. 2.0 (2023-2024)

Images and Fixed Media Natalia Merlano Gómez

Collaborators:

David Aguila (Sound Projection)

Ilana Waniuk (Visuals in Cassandra)



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Falling: drops and a breeze. (2024) World premiere.

"Falling: drops and breeze" was created by composer Akari Komura, visual artist Kate Gorman, and myself. The piece features a solo voice accompanied by pre-recorded sound and three layers of fabric in primary subtractive colors.

Akari and I recorded the fixed media with the help of David Aguila, using our voices and a text we co-wrote. During the recording process, we discovered how the sound of our voices brought out various meanings in the text. To create the text, Akari suggested keeping a diary journal for one week, writing down things we saw, heard, tasted, smelled, and touched.

Kate's interactions with the fabric inspired the movements with and around it, which Akari transformed and complemented with lighting.

Quisieron enterrarnos pero no sabían que éramos semilla. (2023) USA premiere.

Estefanía Lambuley is a composer, songwriter, and percussionist hailing from Colombia. She has created a piece called "Quisieron enterrarnos pero no sabían que éramos semilla" for voice and audio fixed-media. The piece aims to denounce the violence against women. Estefanía used texts from the banners displayed during the women's day demonstrations in Bogotá in 2022 and 2023, along with field recordings to create the fixed media. Additionally, she recorded some chords with her voice as an accompaniment. The poem in the voice part, written by Estefanía, compares a woman's life with a flower. The seed of this flower grows in arid, sandy ground, facing harsh winds, sun, and rain. This flower must survive despite facing challenges such as birds and serpents wanting to destroy her. And finally, this flower can be radiant, survive, and help others bloom.

Cassandra. (2012-2013) World premiere of the version with electronics.

It is a musical composition for solo voice or voice and electronics, created by Wilfrido Terrazas between 2012 and 2013. The piece draws inspiration from the Greek myth of Cassandra and includes texts in Spanish by Nuria Manzur and in English by Ronnie Yates. It was written for Carmina Escobar and dedicated to Nuria Manzur and Ronnie Yates.

Like some of Wilfrido's other works, Cassandra is characterized by improvisation modules that allow the performer to experiment with different sounds and techniques while interacting with the dynamics and materials outlined in the score. For the fixed media component of the piece, which was created using only the sounds of my voice, I recorded myself singing multiple versions, edited the results, and added additional elements such as text repetitions and reverse sounds to create a background.

The piece's fixed media component serves as a shadow to the live voice, representing the voices that Cassandra is hearing in her head and the madness, sadness, and frustration that may have resulted from knowing the future but being unable to reveal it due to disbelief in her voice. In this version, we also add a visual component created by the incredible Ilana Waniuk.

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Dualidad. (2024) World premiere

Dualidad is a musical composition by Juliana Ortigoza, a talented Colombian composer, visual artist, and musician. It was commissioned for this recital and made for a solo voice and fixed media. Juliana is known for her proficiency in working with electronics and software such as SuperCollider and Pure Data.

The piece is divided into two types of materials that the performer uses to improvise during the performance. One of the materials is related to traditional singing practices, while the other involves more experimental and extended techniques. The fixed media is made up of recordings of the voice. Juliana wrote the text using words I provided her regarding the versatility of the voice and its multifaceted possibilities, its contradictions and emotions.

Inter- acción 2.0 (2023-2024)

Between 2023 and 2024, I created a piece called Inter-acción for improvisers, providing some of the graphics you will see tonight. Last year, I played the first version of it with David Aguila in a voice, trumpet, and fixed media configuration. During that time, I created a fixed media by recording the sounds of my voice and working with them to create a spatialization effect during the recording process.

The version you will be listening to tonight was presented in January 2023 as part of the Working Title event organized by Project Blank. For this version, I used some recordings that David and I made on the stairs of the CPMC building, where we utilized the space's natural reverberations. Later, I edited the materials without adding any other effect, only cutting, reversing, and changing pitches. Inter-acción is a piece to listen to while interacting with our outside and inside sound world.

Program notes by Natalia Merlano Gómez

I want to thank Akari, Juliana, Estefanía, and Willy for those fantastic pieces and all your time and patience working with me to create these performances. Also, thank you, Ilana, for all your creativity and visuals for tonight. And David, thanks for all your support with the tech in all the pieces and for being my partner and favorite team.

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Natalia Merlano Gómez

Musician, singer, vocalist, improviser, and creator. She has been captivated by experimental music, worldwide folk music, improvisation, graphical notation, explorations with electronic devices, and extended vocal sounds. Additionally, she is curious about theatrical performance and explorations around video and photography.

She earned an M.A. in Contemporary Music - Singing at Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart, Germany, being part of different multidisciplinary projects combining music, theater, dance, literature, and visual arts. Yielding good results, she did her undergraduate program at the Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas in Bogota, Colombia. She is pursuing a Doctorate in Music Arts at the University of California San Diego.

Since 2009, she has premiered many works by composers worldwide and commissioned new pieces. In 2021, she presented her first album called Resonancias Entrelazadas. It includes 15 works written by female composers and improvisations with female performers. Also, in 2022, she premiered the project CINCO with audiovisual pieces by Latin American composers written primarily for her.

Audience members are reminded to please silence all phones and noise-generating devices before the performance. As a matter of courtesy and copyright law, no unauthorized recording or photography is allowed in the hall.

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