Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble
Taylor Ho Bynum, director

with guest ensemble Thumbscrew
Mary Halvorson, guitar
Michael Formanek, bass
Tomas Fujiwara, drums

Funded in part by the Don Glasgo Fund and a gift to the Don Glasgo Fund in memory of Alan Gottesman '13.

Fri • Feb 8, 2019 • 8 pm
Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College
Program

House Party Starting.......................................................... composed by Herbie Nichols, arranged by Michael Kramer
The Peacocks................................................................. composed by Jimmy Rowles, arranged by Bill Holman
East of the Sun (and West of the Moon) .............................. composed by Brooks Bowman, arranged by Sy Oliver
Pocket Pass........................................................................... composed by Tomas Fujiwara, arranged by Taylor Ho Bynum
Away With You (No. 55) ......................................................... composed by Mary Halvorson, arranged by Taylor Ho Bynum
A selection of Thumbscrew originals, to be announced from the stage
Exoskeleton Parts IV & V (Echoes Without Regrets/Under Armor) .................................. composed and arranged by Michael Formanek
Stablemates.......................................................................... composed and arranged by Benny Golson

Program Notes

I am especially delighted to have the all-star collective trio Thumbscrew (Tomas Fujiwara, Mary Halvorson and Michael Formanek) as our special guests with Coast this term. Each of these outstanding musicians is a hugely respected figure in the jazz and improvised music community as an individual, and as a collective, they are recognized as a supergroup—one of the best rhythm sections in contemporary music. I will admit my bias upfront—beyond being a huge fan of their music, they are all dear friends and regular collaborators—but I am far from alone in my assessment; the band has been feted by every major music publication, performed throughout the world, and held court at the mecca of New York jazz clubs, the Village Vanguard. (I also take some small credit as their accidental matchmaker: the three first played together when I had Michael as a guest with my sextet, which has long featured Mary and Tomas.) In addition to the sterling artistic accomplishments detailed in their bios below, they are also all committed educators and engaged mentors; having them in residence at Dartmouth this week has been deeply inspiring, and you shall hear the results in the music tonight.

For this concert, we are borrowing a concept from Thumbscrew’s most recent recordings, Ours and Theirs, with one album documenting the group’s original compositions and the other album featuring cover versions of favorite standards. Tonight’s format will mirror that set-up, with four classic compositions from Theirs (two performed by Thumbscrew and Coast together, and two performed with each ensemble’s version back-to-back), and one original composition by each member of Thumbscrew arranged for big band. Additionally, Thumbscrew will perform a few more of their originals as a trio.

We begin the show with House Party Starting, by the unjustly overlooked composer/pianist Herbie Nichols (1919–1963). Nichols is a cult figure among jazz

Approximate duration: 75 minutes
aficionados, a friend and contemporary of Thelonious Monk, with whom he shared a predilection for knotty melodies and subtly odd forms, though their work is quite distinct. Best known for writing the Billie Holiday classic *Lady Sings the Blues*, Nichols only recorded four albums during his short life before he died of leukemia, but his compositions have long been championed by outsider artists like Steve Lacy, Roswell Rudd and Misha Mengelberg. With the 100th anniversary of his birth on January 3 of this year, it felt appropriate to kick off the concert with Nichols’s rendering of the rent parties of his Harlem upbringing.

Though Nichols always wanted to compose for orchestra like his heroes Bela Bartok and Duke Ellington, he never got the chance during his own neglected career. In looking for large-ensemble arrangements of his music, the only performances I could find were by the US Army Blues, the first-class big band based near Washington DC. In addition to his musical accomplishments, Nichols was a WWII veteran, and the Army’s resident jazz ensemble paid tribute in a concert-length program of his music. Staff Sergeant Michael Kramer, also a fine guitarist, generously shared with us his arrangement of this great tune.

We continue with a composition by another under-heralded pianist, *The Peacocks* by Jimmy Rowles (1918–1996). Though never a household name, Rowles was a musician’s musician, a favored accompanist of Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan and Carmen McRae and sideman to legends like Stan Getz, Gerry Mulligan and Ben Webster. *The Peacocks* is his best-known composition, with recordings by the likes of Bill Evans and Wayne Shorter, in addition to Rowles’s own version with Getz. The Coast will perform a version by the wonderful arranger Bill Holman (who worked with Stan Kenton, Count Basie, Buddy Rich and so many others), followed by Thumbscrew’s trio interpretation.

*East of the Sun (and West of the Moon)* was written by Brooks Bowman (1913–1937) in 1934 while he was still an undergraduate at Princeton; sadly he died in a car crash days before his 24th birthday and never got to realize his full artistic potential. Nonetheless, this classic jazz standard has garnered him some immortality, recorded by just about everyone at one time or another: Charlie Parker, Sarah Vaughan, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennet, Betty Carter and countless others. It was first popularized by Frank Sinatra singing with the Tommy Dorsey band; after Thumbscrew’s version, the Coast will perform Sy Oliver’s fantastic arrangement from Sinatra’s 1961 *I Remember Tommy* album, their tribute to their one-time employer. (Both Sinatra and Oliver joined Dorsey’s band in 1939, when Oliver became one of the first black arrangers hired full-time by a white bandleader.)

Next we move to the portion of the program with original compositions by our guest artists. Tomas, Mary and I have worked together in numerous contexts over the past few decades, and have played each other’s music hundreds of times, but this was the first time I got to put on my Gil Evans hat and take a stab arranging their compositions for big band, which was a huge pleasure. We start with *Pocket Pass*, Tomas’ barn-burner of a tune from his 2018 album *Triple Double*, then continue with Mary’s *Away With You*, an intricate chamber piece that was the title track on a 2016 octet recording *After*.

Thumbscrew takes the spotlight for a few more of their originals (to be announced from the stage); then the Coast and our guests reconvene for two movements from Michael’s *Exoskeleton* suite—a massive work that was the heart of *The Distance*, the acclaimed 2016 album with his 18-piece Ensemble Kolossus. As on that recording, the Thumbscrew trio takes over in the improvisational segue between the movements.
Program Notes continued

We close with a hard-bop classic by the tenor saxophonist and composer Benny Golson (b. 1929). After featuring the work of so many departed giants over the last few terms, it is a treat to perform the music of a master musician who is still with us, who just celebrated his 90th birthday on January 25. Golson emerged from the rich Philadelphia jazz scene of the 1940s, and was a friend and contemporary of other tenor sax legends like John Coltrane, Jimmy Heath and Bill Barron. He was a featured sideman and in-house composer with Lionel Hampton, Tadd Dameron, Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, Quincy Jones and many others, and co-led the Jazztet with trumpeter Art Farmer, one of the classic small groups of the early 1960s. Many of his compositions have entered the standard repertoire, including I Remember Clifford, Whisper Not, Killer Joe, Along Came Betty and tonight’s feature Stablemates. We’ll be playing Golson’s own arrangement from his time with Dizzy Gillespie’s big band, with Mary stepping into Dizzy’s role on the melody.

On behalf of the Coast and Thumbscrew, thanks for braving the cold for some music; hopefully, we’ll warm you up. Enjoy!

Taylor Ho Bynum

About the Artists

“Thumbscrew is a very exciting group that highlights intricate and emotionally driven compositions focused on intense interactions between instruments. One of the most exciting bands currently playing.” (Cisco Bradley, jazzrightnow.com)

The trio Thumbscrew came about by accident, after bassist Michael Formanek subbed in a band including guitarist Mary Halvorson and drummer Tomas Fujiwara. Something special happened among them right away, so they formed a trio, a cooperative in the truest sense. They play originals by all hands, compositions whose rhythms may surge or lag or veer sideways according to their own internal logic. Bass and drums solo within the ensemble, not in quarantine. No one needs to be loudest. The blend is tight: one string (or metal) sound may bleed into another. It’s something to hear—something twisty and turny and always on the move. The band has released four albums, all on Cuneiform Records: Ours and Theirs (2018), Convallaria (2016) and Thumbscrew (2014).

One marker of bassist Michael Formanek’s creativity and versatility is the range of distinguished musicians of several generations he’s worked with. While still a teenager in the 1970s he toured with drummer Tony Williams and saxophonist Joe Henderson; starting in the ’80s he played long stints with Stan Getz, Gerry Mulligan, Fred Hersch and Freddie Hubbard. (As a callback to those days, Formanek recorded with hardbop pianist Freddie Redd in 2013). The bassist has played a pivotal role on New York’s creative jazz scene going back to the ’90s when he led his own quintet and played in Tim Berne’s barnstorming quartet Bloodcount. Nowadays Formanek performs with the co-op Thumbscrew.

Formanek is also a composer and leader of various bands, from his acclaimed quartet with Tim Berne on alto saxophone, Craig Taborn on piano and Gerald Cleaver on drums, which recorded The Rub and Spare Change (2010) and Small Places (2012), to his 18-piece all-star Ensemble Kolossus, as heard on The Distance (2016). All these recordings, on ECM Records, received five-star reviews in Downbeat. His latest release as a leader, Times Like These (2018), features his Elusion Quartet with saxophonist Tony Malaby, pianist Kris Davis and drummer Ches Smith.

**Tomas Fujiwara** is a Brooklyn-based drummer and composer. In *The New York Times*, Nate Chinen writes, “Drummer Tomas Fujiwara works with rhythm as a pliable substance, solid but ever shifting. His style is forward-driving but rarely blunt or aggressive, and never random. He has a way of spreading out the center of a pulse while setting up a rigorous scaffolding of restraint ... A conception of the drum set as a full-canvas instrument, almost orchestral in its scope.” Fujiwara is an active player in some of the most exciting music of the current generation, with his bands Triple Double (with dual drummers Tomas and Gerald Cleaver, guitarists Mary Halvorson and Brandon Seabrook, and brass players Ralph Alessi on trumpet and Taylor Ho Bynum on cornet), 7 Poets Trio (with vibraphonist Patricia Brennan and cellist Tomeka Reid), and Tomas Fujiwara & The Hook Up; his collaborative duo with cornetist Taylor Ho Bynum; the collective trios Thumbscrew and the OutLOUDs (with Halvorson and Ben Goldberg); and a diversity of creative sideman work with forward thinking peers like Bynum, Halvorson, Reid, Matana Roberts, Amir Elsaffar and Nicole Mitchell, and legendary figures like Anthony Braxton and John Zorn.

Born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, Fujiwara studied with legendary drummer and teacher Alan Dawson for eight years before moving to New York at the age of 17. He has performed at festivals and venues across North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Middle East, and has many experiences outside the jazz realm, including a five-year run with the Off Broadway show *Stomp* and performances with the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical *Fela!*, featuring Patti Labelle and members of Antibalas. Website: www.tomasfujiwara.com.

One of improvised music’s most in-demand guitarists, **Mary Halvorson** has been described as “a singular talent” (Lloyd Sachs, *JazzTimes*), “NYC’s least-predictable improviser” (Howard Mandel, *City Arts*), “one of the most exciting and original guitarists in jazz—or otherwise” (Steve Dollar, *Wall Street Journal*), and “one of today’s most formidable bandleaders” (Francis Davis, *Village Voice*), and in recent Downbeat Critics Polls was celebrated as guitarist, rising star and rising star composer of the year.

Halvorson has released a series of critically acclaimed albums on the Firehouse 12 label, from *Dragon’s Head* (2008), her trio debut featuring bassist John Hébert and drummer Ches Smith, expanding to a quartet with trumpeter Jonathan Finlayson and alto saxophonist Jon Irabagon on *Saturn Sings* (2010) and *Bending Bridges* (2012), a septet with tenor saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock and trombonist Jacob Garchik on *Illusionary Sea* (2014), and finally an octet with pedal steel guitarist Susan Alcorn on *Away With You* (2016). She also released the solo recording *Meltframe* (2015), and most recently debuted *Code Girl* (2018), a new ensemble featuring vocalist Amirtha Kidambi (singing Halvorson’s own lyrics), trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, bassist Michael Formanek and drummer Tomas Fujiwara. One of improvised music’s most in-demand guitarists, over the past decade Halvorson has worked with such diverse bandleaders as Tim Berne, Anthony Braxton, Taylor Ho Bynum, Trevor Dunn, Ingrid Laubrock, Jason Moran, Tom Rainey, Tomeka Reid, Marc Ribot and John Zorn. She is part of several collaborative projects including Thumbscrew and recent duo recordings with guitar heroes Bill Frisell and Joe Morris. Website: www.maryhalvorson.com.
The Barbary Coast is the student jazz ensemble of Dartmouth College. Composed almost entirely of non-music majors, the Coast is dedicated to the idea that a large group of people improvising together, exploring ideas and making choices in real time, can be a transformative experience. The jazz orchestra has been a model of creative interaction, structural innovation, and American ingenuity for over a century—and the Coast has been around for almost as long: first for decades as a student-led ensemble, then for forty years under the leadership of Don Glasgo. In its rich history, the ensemble has hosted a diversity of guest artists, from jazz legends like Max Roach, Dexter Gordon and Clark Terry; to leaders of the avant-garde like Sun Ra, Don Cherry and Lester Bowie; to Latin jazz masters like Eddie Palmieri and Jerry and Andy Gonzales. This tradition continues with visits from some of the brightest voices of today’s creative music scene, like the guests on tonight’s concert. The Coast explores the full spectrum of jazz and creative music, from pioneers like Duke Ellington, Mary Lou Williams and Charles Mingus, to the latest original compositions by its guest artists, its director, and its students. Each term brings a new theme—whether the focus is on a particular composer or historical period, a collaboration with guests or other Hop Ensembles, or a program conceived by graduating students.

Taylor Ho Bynum, who began leading the Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble at Dartmouth in 2017, has spent his career navigating the intersections between structure and improvisation—through musical composition, performance and interdisciplinary collaboration, and through production, organizing, teaching, writing and advocacy. Bynum’s expressionistic playing on cornet and his expansive vision as composer have garnered him critical attention on over twenty recordings as a bandleader and dozens more as a sideman. His varied endeavors include leading his own bands (such as his long-running Sextet and his 15-piece creative orchestra The PlusTet), his Acoustic Bicycle Tours (where he travels to concerts solely by bike across thousands of miles) and his stewardship of Anthony Braxton’s Tri-Centric Foundation (which he served as executive director from 2010-2018, producing and performing on many major Braxton projects, including two operas and multiple festivals).

Bynum has worked with legendary figures such as Bill Dixon and Cecil Taylor and maintains current collaborative projects with Tomas Fujiwara, Mary Halvorson, Kyoko Kitamura, Joe Morris and Tomeka Reid, among others, with other recent sideman credits including Nels Cline, Ensemble Musikfabrik, Jason Kao Hwang, Ingrid Laubrock, Nicole Mitchell and Yo La Tengo. Bynum travels the globe to conduct explorations of new creative orchestra music, with works premiered by the Scottish BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Tri-Centric Orchestra, and has taught workshops at universities and festivals worldwide. Bynum’s writing has been published in the New Yorker, Point of Departure and Sound American, and he has served as a panelist, board member and consultant for leading arts organizations and individual artists. Website: www.taylorhobynum.com.

About the Artists continued
Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble

Taylor Ho Bynum, director
Guest performer/composers: Thumbscrew
Mary Halvorson (guitar), Michael Formanek (bass), Tomas Fujiwara (drums)

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<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Players</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Isabel Hurley '19*, Kevin Mercado '19, Shivesh Shah '19</td>
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<td>Noah Campbell '21 (+ clarinet), Dillon Ford '20 (+ bassoon), Connor Quigley '21</td>
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<td>Percussion</td>
<td>Mackenzie Kynoch '19*, Alex Rivlin '21</td>
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*section leader
^ensemble assistant
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Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra
with Sally Pinkas, piano
Filippo Ciabatti, conductor
Sat • Feb 23 • 8 pm
An all-Beethoven concert featuring the Hop’s pianist-in-residence.

Jazzmeia Horn
Wed • Apr 3 • 7 pm
Grammy-nominated jazz singer poised for greatness, with
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