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The Force of Things : An Opera for Objects

Office of Arts + Cultural Programming

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Ashley Fure/Adam Fure/
International Contemporary Ensemble

The Force of Things: an Opera for Objects



Photo by Marina Levitskaya

October 6—8, 2017

Alexander Kasser Theater

**Arts + Cultural
Programming**



**MONTCLAIR STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Susan A. Cole, President

Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts

Jedediah Wheeler, Executive Director, Arts & Cultural Programming

**Ashley Fure/Adam Fure/
International Contemporary Ensemble**

The Force of Things: an Opera for Objects

Composer **Ashley Fure**

Architect **Adam Fure**

Producer/Percussionist **Ross Karre**

Engineer/Percussionist **Levy Lorenzo**

Lights **Nicholas Houfek**

Voices **Alice Teyssier, Lucy Dhegrae**

Saxophone **Ryan Muncy**

Bassoon **Rebekah Heller**

Percussion **Dustin Donahue**

With special thanks to Cesar Alvarez (dramaturg) and Patrick Eakin-Young.

Duration: 65 minutes, no intermission.

In consideration of both audiences and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.

Program Note

The Force of Things: an Opera for Objects is an immersive work of music theater that wrestles with the animate vitality of matter and the mounting hum of ecological anxiety around us. The project is driven by a desire to tune our focus toward a rate of change and a scope of alteration at odds with the scale of human life. Audience members enter into a field of sculpted matter ringed by speakers emitting sounds too low for humans to hear. Though they vibrate under the threshold of audibility, this choir of subwoofers causes waveforms that ripple through and activate the material space. Aircraft cables, tensioned web-like across Kasser's 150-foot stage, double as infrastructure and instrument when bowed like mammoth double basses. Two singers snake side-by-side amidst the audience, shouting a warning that sounds like a whisper in a language no one can understand. The piece has a palpable sense of urgency and yet it's eerily still, as if the timescales are off, as if some future frantic state reaches us only in slow motion. These moves attempt to train our perception past its apparent boundaries—below the sounds we're built to hear and through the illusions of separation and stasis that render us impotent in the face of collapse.

—Ashley Fure

About the Artists

Ashley Fure (b. 1982) is an American composer and installation artist. Called “raw, elemental,” and “richly satisfying” by the *New York Times*, her work explores the kinetic source of sound, bringing focus to the muscular act of music making and the chaotic behaviors of raw acoustic matter. She holds a PhD in Music Composition from Harvard University and joined the Dartmouth College Music Department as assistant professor in 2015. A finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in Music, Fure also received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Rome Prize in Music Composition, a DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Prize, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant for Artists, a Fulbright Fellowship to France, and a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship from Columbia University.

Adam Fure (b. 1980) is an architect and assistant professor at the University of Michigan Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning. He received his masters of architecture degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he graduated with distinction and was awarded the Alpha Rho Chi medal. His work has been exhibited at the Venice Biennale, the Beijing Biennale, The New School in New York, the A+D Gallery in Los Angeles, the AA in London, and the Grand Rapids Museum of Art. He is the recipient of numerous awards including the 2014 Architectural League Prize and a residency fellowship at the Akademie Schloss Solitude. His essays have been published in *Log*, *Project Journal*, and *Pidgin*. Fure is a founding principal of the Ann Arbor–based architectural practice T+E+A+M.

The **International Contemporary Ensemble** (ICE) is an artist collective committed to transforming the way music is created and experienced. As performer, curator, and educator, ICE explores how new music intersects with communities across the world. The ensemble's 35 members are featured as soloists, chamber musicians, commissioners, and collaborators with the foremost musical artists of our time. ICE has received the American Music Center's Trailblazer Award and the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, and was also named Musical America Worldwide's Ensemble of the Year 2014. The group currently serves as artists in residence at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart Festival and previously led a five-year residency at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. New initiatives include OpenICE, made possible with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which offers admission-free concerts and related programming wherever ICE performs, and online through DigitICE, the ensemble's streaming video library. ICE's First Page program is a commissioning consortium that fosters close collaborations between performers, composers, and listeners as new music is developed. EntICE, a side-by-side youth program, places ICE musicians within youth orchestras as they premiere new commissioned works together. Yamaha Artist Services New York is the exclusive piano provider for ICE. Read more at iceorg.org.

The Force of Things is made possible by generous commitments from the International Contemporary Ensemble: First Page Program, University of Michigan Office of Research, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Dartmouth

College Provost's Office Seed Funding Program, Miller Theater at Columbia University (NYC), and Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt (IMD). This project was supported by New Music USA, made possible by annual program support and/or endowment gifts from New Music USA project grants. With the friendly support of the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung.

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The **Office of Arts & Cultural Programming** (ACP) enhances the cultural, creative, and academic life of the Montclair State campus and the broader community. Its signature program, Peak Performances, features innovative works by international contemporary artists of exceptional merit, and by the next generation of great artists training at Montclair State University's College of the Arts. Through its Cultural Engagement program, ACP offers master classes, workshops, lectures, and discussions designed to deepen participants' understanding of the aesthetic, cultural, and social contexts of the performances presented.

ACP gratefully acknowledges its student staff and volunteers.

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To view our complete season and for more information, visit **peakperfs.org**.

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