

Brian Ciach, Composer/Theorist/Educator

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Award-winning composer-pianist and passionate music educator: teaching experience includes extensive classroom, private instruction, and anti-racist curriculum development. Expertise in music theory and composition, electronic music, aural skills, and piano performance. Teaching focuses on empowering and inspiring students by featuring the work of their musical icons in the theory classroom, helping composers reach their unique musical voice, and writing music that pushes the boundaries in both acoustic and electro-acoustic realms.

College Teaching Experience

San José State University, Lecturer (AY-C), CA, 2019-present

- Taught Music Theory/Aural Skills sequence, Counterpoint, Applied Composition
- Faculty Special Consultant for revising theory/aurals curriculum to identify systemic racism, and to propose alternative means and materials
- Showcased student music theory projects inspired by the pandemic/social justice movements in the Pandemic Pandemonium so that students feel more connected
- Inspired students with “Pop Song Solfege” projects in aural courses, where they sang favorite songs by marginalized artists so that they feel more engaged in class
- Created and administered the online graduate music theory placement exams using Auralia and Musition, and continue to use this software in classes
- Learned about online equity and inclusion, use of new media/software, and assessment strategies in SJSU’s Teach Online Summer Certificate Program

Santa Clara University, Adjunct Instructor, CA, 2016-18

- Taught classes in music theory fundamentals, aural skills, and composition to adults from a predominantly Spanish-speaking community
- Guided adult students from no music theory knowledge to reasonable competency within the time frame of two years
- Motivated students to create unique cell phone ring tones in Logic Pro so that their class projects had practical applications

Murray State University, Assistant Professor, KY, 2012-14

- Taught Electronic Music, Applied Composition, Music Theory/Aural Skills, Form and Analysis, Counterpoint, Orchestration, and Music Fundamentals
- Redesigned and updated software/hardware for the electronic music studio, so that students could have a new and exciting creative space to work in
- Premiered several student piano compositions and helped facilitate the student composer concert series, featuring new acoustic and electronic music

Ball State University, Adjunct Instructor, Muncie, IN, 2012

- Taught Arranging for Concert Band and Applied Composition

- Students created arrangements for concert band, and successfully conducted readings of their pieces with a class ensemble
- Strengthened student knowledge of orchestration, new repertoire, helped students gain conducting and rehearsal experience, and provided recordings of readings

Indiana University, Associate Instructor, Bloomington, IN, 2007-10

- Taught graduate sight-singing review, aural theory review courses, and the undergraduate theory and aural skills sequence
- Helped “unlock” aural skills for graduate students, who simply lacked practical working methods for executing certain activities, like dictation and sight-singing
- Learned a great deal about how to teach by working in parallel with professors in the theory department, who taught me things I could apply to my classes
- Enjoyed developing rapports with fellow graduate students, leading to several musical collaborations and commissions

West Chester University, Adjunct Instructor, PA, 2004-06

- Taught a Graduate Seminar in Music Theory Pedagogy with textbook comparisons, curriculum design, teaching methods, and provided students teaching opportunities
- Taught the undergraduate music theory/aural skills sequence and composition
- Developed unique and compelling curricula for 20th-Century theory/aurals courses
- Performed a piano recital of new music by the composition faculty, which featured the world premiere of my *Berg Variations*

Courses Taught

Graduate

Pedagogy of Music Theory

Dictation Review

Sight-Singing Review

Undergraduate

Intro to Music Synthesis

Music Theory (entire sequence)

Aural Skills (entire sequence)

Counterpoint

Orchestration

Form and Analysis

Applied Composition

Guest Lecturer

International

The Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, Israel

Buchmann-Mehta School of Music, Tel Aviv University, Israel

US

San José State University, CA
Indiana University, Bloomington
Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
Ball State University, Muncie, IN
Murray State University, KY

Adjudicator

San Jose State University Student Concerto Competition, CA, 2018
New Music on the Bayou Summer Festival, Composition Prize, Monroe, LA, 2018

Music Technology Skills

Max/MSP	Logic Pro
Reactor	Sibelius
RTcmix	Dorico
Digital Performer	Finale
Pro Tools	Auralia/Musition

Education

Indiana University, Bloomington
Doctor of Music in Music Composition, 2011
Minor Fields: Music Theory, Computer Music
Study Abroad: FUBiS, Berlin, Germany

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
Master of Music in Music Composition, 2004

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
Master of Music in Piano Performance, 2004

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance, *summa cum laude*, 2002

Delaware County Community College, Media, PA
Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts, *magna cum laude*, 1998

Principal Composition Teachers:

Samuel Adler, Don Freund, John Gibson (e-music), Sven-David Sandström, Richard Wernick

Principal Music Theory Teachers:

Cynthia Folio, Robert Hattan, Julian Hook, John Johnson, Blair Johnston, Jan Krzywicki

Music Festivals

International

EAR (Electro Acoustic Room) International Music Festival, Lugano, Switzerland
MITO (Milan-Torino) *SettembreMusica* International Music Festival, Italy
FUBiS (International Summer University of Free University Berlin), Germany
soundSCAPE International Contemporary Music Festival, Pavia, Italy
International Tuba and Euphonium Conference, Knoxville, TN
International Tuba and Euphonium Conference, Bloomington, IN

Electronic Music Festivals, US

SEAMUS, Sweetwater Sound, Fort Wayne, IN
22nd Ussachevsky Festival of Electroacoustic Music, Pomona College, Claremont, CA
Ball State New Music Festival 42 & 39, Muncie, IN
Midwest Composers Symposium, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Hot Air Music Festival, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, CA
New Music on the Bayou Summer Festival, Monroe, LA

Acoustic Music Festivals, US

Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, Minneapolis, MN
Mizzou New Music Summer Festival, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
48-Hour Opera Festival, San Francisco, CA
The American Liszt Society Bicentennial Festival, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Score Publications

Solo instrument and electronic music

Chaconne for cello and electronic music, Potenza Music, 2020

Piano solo

Fourth Piano Sonata, Potenza Music, 2018, in circulation: Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, United Kingdom, 2018

Tuba and piano

California Ballad for piano and tuba, Potenza Music, 2017
Kentucky Folk Pieces arranged for piano and tuba, Potenza Music, 2017
Dance King for piano and tuba, Potenza Music, 2015
Mountain Song for piano and tuba, Potenza Music, 2015

Orchestra

The Einstein Slide for chamber orchestra, Potenza Music, 2018
Collective Uncommon: Seven Orchestral Studies on Medical Oddities, nomus21, 2017

Recordings

Mountain Song: Works for tuba and piano by Brian Ciach, Potenza Music, 2020
Variations Promethean, for piano and electronic music, self-released, 2019
Parting Song, for piano trio, U07 Records, 2018
Fourth Sonata, for piano, self-released, 2016
Third Sonata, for piano, self-released, 2014
Contemporary Music from Panama, for piano, music of Emiliano Pardo-Tristán, Fermata Publications, 2003

Piano Improvisation Albums

Doppelgänger, (piano and electronics) self-released, 2012
Constant Carousel (Fifths on the Fifth), (piano improvisation), self-released, 2012
The Fourths of July (Fourths on the Fourth), (piano improvisation), self-released, 2012
The Land of All is Well (Thirds on the Third), (piano improvisation), self-released, 2012

Commissions

Ensembles

Alarm Will Sound
IU New Music Ensemble
Altisonus Vocal Ensemble
Chorus Delicti Wien
IU Percussion Ensemble
Square Peg, Round Hole
Cisum Percussion

Soloists

Charles Abramovic
Linda Chatterton
Paul Carlson
Amanda Deboer-Bartlett
Kurt Gorman
Duane Large
Matthew McCright

Notable Performers of Original Works

Ensembles

Minnesota Orchestra
Alarm Will Sound
Alterity Chamber Orchestra
Chorus Delicti Wien
Miró Quartet
Ensemble TaG
Trio Siciliano

Soloists

Charles Abramovic
Mario Brunello
Paul Carlson
Linda Chatterton
Sharon Harms
Lawrence Indik
Duane Large

Selected Performance Venues of Original Works

International

St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London, England
National Concert Hall, Dublin, Ireland
Teatro Dal Verme, Milan, Italy
Neue Synagoge, Berlin, Germany
Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland

Lugano Conservatory of Music, Switzerland
Peterskirche, Vienna, Austria

US

Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis, MN
Custom Made Theater, San Francisco, CA
Osher Salon, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, CA
Academy of Vocal Arts, Philadelphia, PA
Andrea Clearfield's Music Salon, Philadelphia, PA
The Abbey, Orlando, FL
Sweetwater Sound, Fort Wayne, IN

Awards & Honors

International

American Liszt Society Bicentennial Composition Competition, First Prize, Athens, GA, 2011
Black Bayou Composition Award, Winner, New Music on the Bayou Festival, 2017

US

The American Prize, First Prize in Composition – Vocal Chamber Music, 2019
The American Prize, First Prize in Composition – Orchestra, 2018
ASCAPPLUS Awards, 2012-15
Subito Music Corporation Inaugural Composer Fellow, Verona, NJ, 2012
Indiana University Dean's Prize in Orchestral Composition, Bloomington, 2011
Indiana University Georgina Joshi Commission Prize, Bloomington, 2010
The Presser Music Award, Indiana University, 2008

Professional Memberships

SMT (Society for Music Theory), 2020
SEAMUS (Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States), 2008-present
SCI (Society of Composers, Inc.), 2008-present
ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers), 2007-present
CFA (California Faculty Association), 2020

Original Electronic Music

Solo instrument and electronics

Sbrine, (Sixth Sonata), for Piano, Seaboard, and Seapler (Max/MSP)
Variations Promethean, for piano and pre-recorded electronic music
Chaconne, for cello and pre-recorded electronic music
Doppelgänger, for piano and electronics (improvisation)

Fixed stereo audio

Ich bin, a fantasy based on a famous JFK speech

Water Clocks, a fantasy depicting a bell tower consumed by water
Se vuoi, musique concrète with reference to Puccini's *La Bohème*
15 Original Ringtones, for cell phones

Original Acoustic Works

Piano

Fifth Sonata (work-in-progress)
Fourth Sonata
Third Sonata
Two Berlin Preludes
Second Sonata
First Sonata
Berg Variations

Other solo instruments

Night Song, for tuba
Free, for marimba
Five Pieces for Guitar

Chamber

Woodwinds

Kentucky Folk Pieces, for flute (or tuba) and piano
Eastside Madrigals, for woodwind quartet

Brass

Sonatina Quarantena, for trumpet and piano
O magnum mysterium, for brass quintet
Dance King, for piano and tuba
California Ballad, for piano and tuba
Mountain Song, for piano and tuba

Percussion

Fifteen Artisanal Ringtones, for percussion trio
Blank Slate, for four percussionists (found instruments)
Strange Assortments, for 6 percussionists

Strings

String Quintet, for string quartet and contrabass
String Quartet
Trio in B, for piano, violin and cello
Three-minute Trio for violin, viola, and cello

Vocal

Road Trip, for soprano and chamber orchestra
Mölna Elegy, for soprano and four percussionists
Japanese Rhapsody, for soprano, string quartet, and bassoon
Three settings cummings, for bass-baritone and piano
Happiness, for mezzo soprano and piano

Choral

Rorate Caeli, for SATB a cappella choir

Gaudete Omnes, for SATB a cappella choir

Whitman Carol, for SATB a cappella choir

Opera

Full Moon Bender | *A werewolf opera*, for two sopranos and piano

Concertante

Dreamcatcher, for guitar and chamber orchestra

Violin Concerto, for violin and orchestra

Piano Concerto, for piano and orchestra

Orchestral

The Einstein Slide, for chamber orchestra

Collective Uncommon: Seven Orchestral Studies on Medical Oddities, for large orchestra