

23.24

A photograph of three musicians on a rooftop terrace. In the foreground, a man with a beard and dark hair, wearing a brown blazer, sits on a concrete ledge holding a trombone. Behind him to the left, a man in a blue blazer holds a trumpet. Behind him to the right, a man in a black blazer holds a saxophone. The background shows a cityscape with trees and buildings under a bright sky.

LOADBANG PRESENTS PREMIERES: VOL. 23

World premieres of works by Baldwin Giang, Ben Zervigon, Ya-Jhu Yang, and Elisa Johnson and NYC premieres of works by Oscar Bettison and Li Qi.

May 3, 2024
Opera America
330 7th Ave.
NY, NY 10001

LOADBANG

PROGRAM

I am a Garden Adorned (NYC Premiere)

music by Oscar Bettison
text adapted from the poetry of Ibn Zamrak

*Commissioned by the Serge Koussevitzky Music
Foundation in the Library of Congress*

See Us Too (World Premiere)

Elisa Kain Johnson

*Commissioned as a part of the loadbang/Luna
Composition Lab Partnership*

Tides of Tears (NYC Premiere)

music by Li Qi
text by Li Qingzhao

INTERMISSION

Lux Aeterna (World Premiere)

Ya-Jhu Yang

I carry (World Premiere)

music by Baldwin Giang
text by Katie Kitamura

*Winner of the 2022 loadbang Commission Competition and supported in
part by the Fellows' Project Fund of the American Academy in Rome.*

Given Words (World Premiere)

i. Palm Sunday

I. "a seam in dirt divides past from present"

ii. Gulf Wind

iii. Taubenpost

II. "a daughter but no child"

iv. Aux Natchitoches

III. "like children, seeking love"

v. "at last among eachother"

Ben Zervigon

7:30 PM

OPERA AMERICA

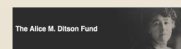
330 7TH AVE.

NY, NY 10001

This concert is made possible in part by the The Amphion Fund, The Aaron Copland Fund for New Music, The Alice M. Ditson Fund for New Music, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the city council, and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME

NYC Cultural
Affairs



The Aaron Copland
Fund for Music

THE
AMPHION
FOUNDATION



**Council on
the Arts**

BIO:

New York City-based new music chamber group loadbang is building a new kind of music for mixed ensemble of trumpet, trombone, bass clarinet, and baritone voice. Since their founding in 2008, they have been praised as 'cultivated' by The New Yorker, 'an extra-cool new music group' and 'exhilarating' by the Baltimore Sun, 'inventive' by the New York Times and called a 'formidable new-music force' by TimeOutNY. Creating 'a sonic world unlike any other' (The Boston Musical Intelligencer), their unique lung-powered instrumentation has provoked diverse responses from composers, resulting in a repertoire comprising an inclusive picture of composition today. In New York City, they have been recently presented by and performed at Miller Theater, Symphony Space, MATA, and by the Look and Listen Festival; on American tours at Da Camera of Houston, Rothko Chapel, and the Festival of New American Music at Sacramento State University; and internationally at Ostrava Days (Czech Republic), China-ASEAN Music Week (China), the Xinghai Conservatory of Music (China), Shanghai Symphony Hall (China), Visiones Sonoras Festival (Morelia, Mexico), and the Musikverein (Vienna, Austria).

loadbang has premiered more than 450 works, written by members of the ensemble, emerging artists, and today's leading composers. Their repertoire includes works by Pulitzer Prize winners David Lang and Charles Wuorinen; Rome Prize winners Andy Akiho and Paula Matthusen; and Guggenheim Fellows Chaya Czernowin, George Lewis, and Alex Mincek. loadbang can be heard on numerous commercial recordings and on record labels including Bridge Records, New Focus Recordings, NEOS, Another Timbre, and ANALOG Arts. Their most recent releases include Old Fires Catch Old Buildings, Quiver, and Plays Well With Others, an album of music for loadbang and string orchestra.

loadbang is dedicated to education and cultivation of an enthusiasm for new music. They have worked with students ranging from elementary schoolers in the New York Philharmonic's Very Young Composers program and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's OrchKids Program to college aged student composers at institutions including Columbia University, Cornell University, Manhattan School of Music, New York University, Peabody Conservatory, Princeton University, University of Buffalo, the University of California in San Diego, and Yale University. They are the ensemble in residency at Cornell University through the Steven Stucky Memorial Residency for New Music, and through a partnership with the Longy School of Music of Bard College in Boston, they are on the performance faculty of Divergent Studio, a contemporary music festival for young performers and composers held each summer.

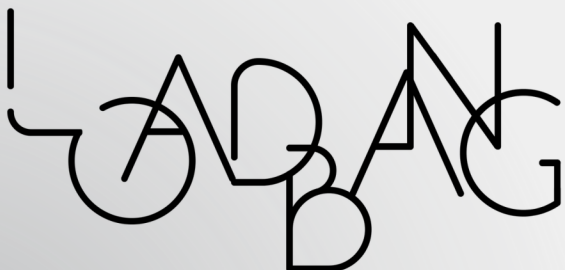
and/or

who are we? ostensibly we are a new music quartet with a unique line up of baritone voice, bass clarinet, trumpet, and trombone. but don't look at our instruments - look at us. we are four human beings from radically different walks of life, with interesting, colorful backstories that are just as unique as our ensemble.

we have many identities, public and personal, and many interests, which we are happy to share. we were founded and continue to exist in an act of radical friendship, and we'll share what that means and any other amount of stories we have accumulated over the years with any who are interested.

we've commissioned a lot of pieces, played at a lot of places, but rather than a list of highlights, we encourage you to come listen to us with an open mind and heart, and join us afterwards in sharing how you felt or what you thought. we will always attempt to lean towards sharing and empathy.

we will make music both for ourselves and our audiences, and we will represent who we are in our own ways throughout anything that we take on. we love collaboration, we love exploration, we love intimacy, and we love sharing. come join us on our journey.



LOADBANG

PROGRAM NOTES AND TEXT:

Oscar Bettison - I am a Garden Adorned (2023)

"I am a Garden Adorned" was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation, Library of Congress for Loadbang. When I started writing the text for the piece, I thought back to the writing I had seen on the walls of the Alhambra -the so-called "Palace of the Moorish Kings"- in Granada, Spain. The Alhambra is an extraordinary place, the construction of the main buildings was so fine, that even today, many hundreds of years after it was built, the corners of the towers remain as sharp as they must have been when they were built. Of course, this is to say nothing of the artistry of the details that adorn so many rooms of the palace. One other important feature of the palace, is the beautiful gardens "El Generalife". In thinking about this place, I recalled the vital contribution the Islamic world made to the world's knowledge of astronomy (not to mention mathematics and other subjects) as well as the fact that, before the Reconquista, this was a place where Muslims, Jews and Christians lived in relative peace and furthered the advancement of human knowledge together. It was these thoughts that were in my mind when I wrote the text. The walls of the "Sala de Dos Hermanas" ("Hall of the Two Sisters") are decorated with a poem by Ibn Zamrak (1333-1393). This poem starts with the line "I am a garden graced with beauty". I adapted this line and some of the rest of this poem as a starting point for my text, imagining an eternal garden that bears witness to the ebb and flow of seasons and, in a longer time-frame, celestial movements.

Ultimately, both in music and text, the piece is about layers of meaning. Taking an inscription in Arabic, going through Spanish, then into English and then making a modern, abstract text for me served as a metaphor for the piece. Recordings, which for me are an audio analogue for this idea of ideas getting passed down through the echoes of history, translated and re-contextualized, play a central part of the piece.

Elisa Kain Johnson - See Us Too (2023)

The summer before my freshman year of high school, I set up my first social media profile. Like many teenagers, I spent hours scrolling, and I began to notice an interesting pattern.

After a tragic event like a shooting or a natural disaster, my page would flood with information about the event. It seemed no one could wait to share posts about the underlying social issue surrounding the it. I was inundated with links to petitions and donation sites. Then suddenly, everyone would stop talking about the event and life would return to normal.

The problem is, the issues do not disappear. We should not cease to care about them just because they are not trending on social media anymore.

"See Us Too" is about the social issues we choose to ignore when we are lost in the chaos of social media. I urge those who listen to pay closer attention to their social media usage and ask themselves what information they are choosing to consume. (notes by Elisa Kain Johnson)

Li Qi - Tides of Tears (2024)

Text from "Spring at Wu Ling" by Li Qingzhao (1081-c.1141)

Original Text

物是人非事事休，
欲语泪先流。

Pronunciation

vu sh rin fi sh sh hiou,
yiu giu lui sien liou

Translation

Still the same images,
But not the people,
How all has stopped.
I wish to speak, but instead,
Tears flow.

Ya-Jhu Yang - Lux Aeterna (2024)

Text:

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es. Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine;
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Translation:

May everlasting light shine upon them, O Lord
with thy saints in eternity,
for thou art merciful. Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
and may everlasting light shine upon them.

Baldwin Giang - I carry (2024)

Commissioned by loadbang as a part of the 2022 Commission Competition. This project is supported in part by the Fellows' Project Fund of the American Academy in Rome.

Text by Katie Kitamura

I. Here, it is possible to be more.

II. The boundary between the world and myself stretches and grows thin and presses close. I carry the others inside me.

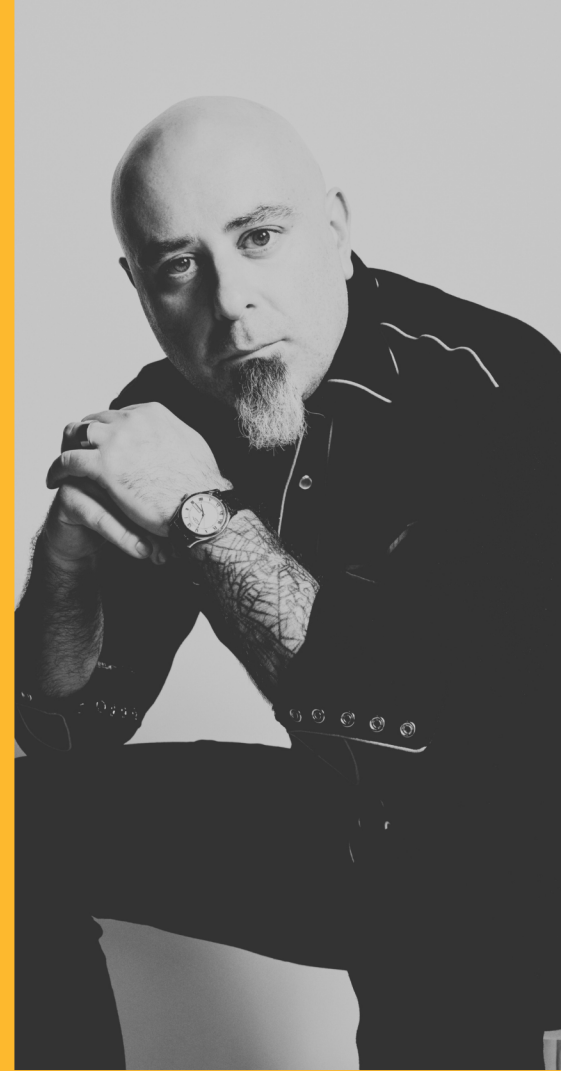
III. Here, we are returned. The boundary of my skin at once porous and strong. I observe you lifting a hand. I hear myself speaking, and then you speaking again.

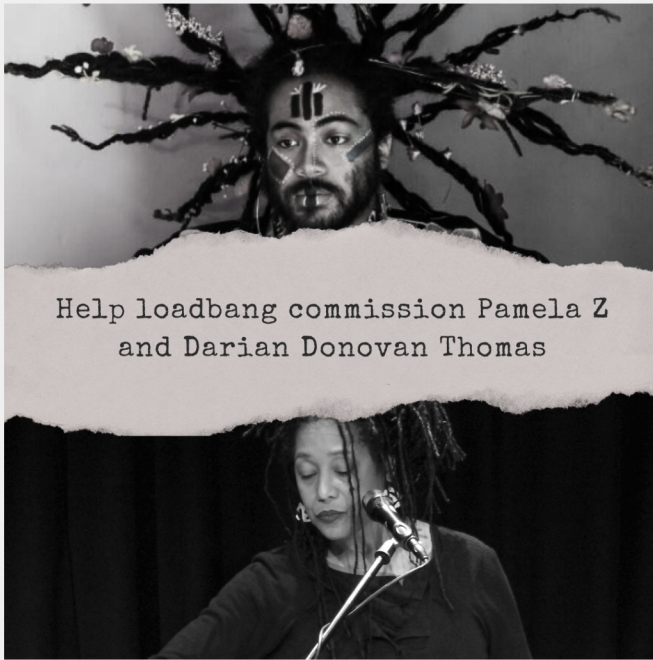
IV. Here, I-we stand. It is in being seen that you say for certain that I-we exist, that our limbs are as real as I-we touch them. It is in being seen that my being is intact as we peer out into the world.

V. Here, I escape into the self: something other, something more. I-you-we, a chain of words, I-you-we, sturdy as a cable. I-you carry you-us inside me. And around me, the waiting darkness.

Ben Zervigon - Given Words (2023)

The text of this work is derived from personal correspondences, original erasure poems on the work of Nicole Coley and George Open, as well as Seidl's *Taubenpost* and the Cajun-Creole folksong *Aux Natchitoches*.





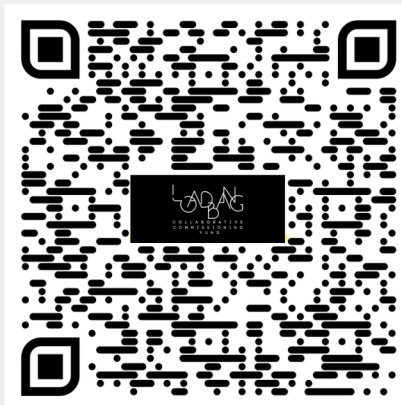
Help loadbang commission Pamela Z
and Darian Donovan Thomas

LOADBANG

COLLABORATIVE
COMMISSIONING
FUND

loadbang's Collaborative Commissioning Fund is designed to commission BIPOC composers with direct funding from the ensemble. This frees loadbang from necessarily depending on the unreliable nature of traditional foundation funding. White supremacy in New Music has sidelined and excluded BIPOC composers, despite the important historical and contemporary artistic contributions they have made to the field. loadbang believes it is absolutely essential that the experiences, voices, and musical art of these composers are heard and acknowledged as an integral part of our musical landscape. This fund gives loadbang the flexibility and autonomy to independently commission BIPOC composers and compensate them appropriately for their work.

**Donate to the CCF at
loadbang.com or by scanning this
QR code:**



UPCOMING EVENTS:

May 24, 2024 - Lei Lab at UCSD (San Diego, CA)

As a part of Lei Lab at UCSD, loadbang will be working closely with Lei Liang and the students at UCSD to create and environmentally relevant concert length work.

June 24–July 6, 2024 - Longy's Divergent Studio (Cambridge, MA)

loadbang is the ensemble-in-residence at this contemporary music summer festival. More details will be released in the coming months.

SUPPORT LOADBANG

loadbang operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization called Loadbang Inc. loadbang's mission is to commission new works, write works for the ensemble, and develop a unique language of improvisation. loadbang also believes in the receptivity of children to experimental art and is committed to bringing uncompromising sounds to young ears through outreach programs.

To make a donation online, visit loadbang.com

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