

# TUES@7

## From Scratch

April 6, 7pm EDT

featuring

Josh Modney  
Ingrid Laubrock  
Cory Smythe  
Mariel Roberts  
Rebekah Heller  
Fay Victor

### PROGRAM

Rebekah Heller & Fay Victor  
Set of Three Works

Quartet Music by Josh Modney  
Opening  
Whalefall  
Crystallization I  
Ballad

### PERSONNEL

Rebekah Heller, bassoon  
Fay Victor, voice

Josh Modney, violin & composition  
Ingrid Laubrock, soprano saxophone & tenor saxophone  
Mariel Roberts, cello  
Cory Smythe, piano, quarter-tone piano & Roli keyboard

Sound by Maciej Lewandowski  
Video by Ross Karre

## NOTES

### **Rebekah Heller & Fay Victor Duo**

Fay Victor and Rebekah Heller met through their work at The New School's College of Performing Arts, where they are both faculty members.

After an instant connection, and a mutual artistic admiration, they decided to collaborate on a new project.

Tonight's set is their first live performance together, and the seeds of a new duo project.

All three works were spontaneously composed and unedited.

### **Modney/Laubrock/Roberts/Smythe Quartet**

Stemming from a desire to bring these four artists and their distinctive musical practices together, Modney's work combines tightly structured material with open forms that highlight the formidable improvisational skills of the band members. In one sense, this quartet represents an extension of Modney's 2018 album of solo violin music, *Engage* (New Focus Recordings), which is rooted in a highly detailed relationship to sound production on the violin, an interest in Just Intonation (tuning according to the relationships of the overtone series), and the "translation" of wind techniques such as multiphonics and circular breathing into a string instrument language. In the quartet, the idea of translation moves in multiple directions: an idiomatic violin solo piece becomes a "unison solo" for all of the instruments, while the Just Intonation harmonization of violin/cello is translated to the equal temperament of quarter-tone piano/soprano saxophone, and then again to the continuous pitch spectrum of Smythe's innovative Roli keyboard setup. Ultimately, this is a music about collaboration and relationships, and Josh would like to express his deep gratitude to Ingrid, Mariel, and Cory for bringing such beautiful artistry, creativity, and generosity to this project.

## BIOS

### **Rebekah Heller**

Former Ensemble Artistic Director, and founding Ensemble Evolution Faculty member, Rebekah Heller's work aims to expand the sonic possibilities of her instrument — both in her solo work and through a deep collaborative practice. Called "an impressive solo bassoonist" by *The New Yorker*, she is dedicated to exploration, experimentation, and the democratization of sound. As bassoonist of the International Contemporary Ensemble since 2008, Rebekah has premiered hundreds of groundbreaking new works worldwide. She has two solo albums of music written for and with her, and in 2018, Rebekah made her solo debut with the New York Philharmonic, playing the music of longtime collaborator Ash Fure.

### **Fay Victor**

"She's essentially invented her own hybrid of song and spoken word, a scat style for today's avant-garde." — Giovanni Russonello, *The New York Times*

Fay Victor is a sound artist that uses performance, improvisation and composition to examine representations of modern life and blackness. Based in Brooklyn, NY, Victor's 'everything is everything' aesthetic permeates her work and approach to the vocal instrument. Victor's released eleven critically acclaimed albums as a leader, including her latest release, "WE'VE HAD ENOUGH!" with her improvising quartet SoundNoiseFUNK (ESP-Disk) just released in October 2020. Victor is breaking ground as an educator and is on the faculty of the New School of Jazz & Contemporary Music in NYC.

### **Josh Modney**

Josh Modney is a violinist and creative musician working at the nexus of composition, improvisation, and interpretation. A "new-music luminary" (*The New York Times*) hailed for "jaw-dropping technical skill..." and as "one of today's most intrepid experimentalists" (*Bandcamp Daily*), Modney is a foremost interpreter of adventurous contemporary music, and has cultivated a holistic artistic practice as a composer, solo improviser, bandleader, music director, writer, arts administrator, and collaborator. Modney is the violinist and Executive Director of the Wet Ink Ensemble, a member of the International Contemporary Ensemble, and the music director of Kate Soper's opera *The Romance of the Rose*, and he has worked closely with leading composers of his generation including Alex Mincek, Sam Pluta, Eric Wubbels, Tristan Perich, and Rick Burkhardt, and with major figures including Kaija Saariaho, Mathias Spahlinger, Helmut Lachenmann, George Lewis, and Pauline Oliveros. Modney has composed music for violin solo, chamber ensemble, and film ("Dreamland", Paramount Pictures), released an album of improvised chamber music with guitarist

Patrick Higgins, EVRLY MVSIC (NNA Tapes), and has a forthcoming album of quartet music written for acclaimed creative musicians Ingrid Laubrock (saxophones), Mariel Roberts (cello), and Cory Smythe (piano). Modney's triple-disc debut solo release, *Engage* (New Focus Recordings), featuring works written for Modney alongside music by Anthony Braxton, J.S. Bach, and Modney's own solo violin music, was lauded by *The New York Times* as "one of the most intriguing programs of the year", and was recognized on Best of 2018 lists by *Sequenza21* and *Bandcamp*. Modney's writing on Just Intonation and collaborative musical practices has been published on *Sound American* and *New Music Box*, and he has served as the editor of *Wet Ink Archive*, an online journal of adventurous music, since its launch in May 2020.

### **Ingrid Laubrock**

Ingrid Laubrock is an experimental saxophonist and composer, interested in exploring the borders between musical realms and creating multi-layered, dense and often evocative sound worlds. A prolific composer, Laubrock was named "one of the most distinctive rising compositional voices" by *Point Of Departure* and a "fully committed saxophonist and visionary" by the *New Yorker*. Laubrock has performed with Anthony Braxton, Muhal Richard Abrams, Jason Moran, Kris Davis, Tyshawn Sorey, Mary Halvorson, Tom Rainey, Tim Berne, Dave Douglas and many others. Laubrock has composed for ensembles ranging from duo to chamber orchestra. Awards include Fellowship in Jazz Composition by the Arts Foundation, SWR German Radio Jazz Prize and German Record Critics Quarterly Award. She won best Rising Star Soprano Saxophonist in the 'Downbeat Annual Critics Poll in 2015 and best Tenor Saxophonist in 2018. Laubrock is one of the recipients of the 2019 Herb Alpert Ragdale Prize in Music Composition and has received composing commissions by The Shifiting Foundation, The Jerwood Foundation, American Composers Orchestra, Tricentric Foundation, SWR New Jazz Meeting, The Jazz Gallery Commissioning Series, NYSCA, John Zorn's Stone Commissioning Series and the EOS Orchestra.

### **Cory Smythe**

Pianist Cory Smythe has worked closely with pioneering artists in new, improvisatory, and classical music, including saxophonist-composer Ingrid Laubrock, violinist Hilary Hahn, and multidisciplinary composers from Anthony Braxton to Zosha Di Castri. His own music "dissolves the lines between composition and improvisation with rigor" (*Chicago Reader*), and his first record was praised by Jason Moran as "hands down one of the best solo recordings I've ever heard." Smythe has been featured at the Newport Jazz, Wien Modern, Trondheim Chamber Music, Nordic Music Days, Approximation, Concorso Busoni, and Darmstadt festivals, as well as at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart festival, where he premiered new work in collaboration with



Peter Evans and Craig Taborn. He has received commissions from Milwaukee's Present Music, the Banff Centre for the Arts, the Trondheim Jazz Orchestra, the International Contemporary Ensemble (of which he is a longtime member), and the Shifting Foundation, which supported his 2020 release, *Accelerate Every Voice*. Smythe received a Grammy award for his work with Ms. Hahn and plays regularly in the critically acclaimed Tyshawn Sorey Trio.

### **Mariel Roberts**

American cellist and composer Mariel Roberts is widely recognized not just for her “virtuosic” performances, but as a “fearless explorer” (Chicago Reader) in her field. Her passion for collaboration and experimentation as an interpreter, improviser, and composer have helped create a body of work which bridges avant-garde, contemporary, jazz, classical, and traditional music. Roberts has been hailed as “one of the most adventurous figures on New York’s new music scene—one with a thorough grounding in classical tradition but a ravenous appetite for and tireless discipline in new work.” (Bandcamp). Roberts has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician across four continents, most notably as a member and co-director of the Wet Ink Ensemble, as well as with the International Contemporary Ensemble, Mivos Quartet, Bang on a Can All Stars, and Ensemble Signal. Roberts' compositions have been performed at venues such as Merkin Hall and Miller Theater in New York City.



## CREDITS

Josh Modney's project is made possible in part by the Queens Council on the Arts with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



The International Contemporary Ensemble is grateful for the support of the NYC COVID-19 Response and Impact Fund in The New York Community Trust, as well as our extraordinary individual supporters who contributed to our Springboard Campaign in Spring 2020, in making this program possible. Performances and commissioning activities during the 2020-21 concert season are made possible by the generous support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, A.N. and Pearl G. Barnett Family Foundation, Jerome Foundation, Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund for Music Inc., Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts, Amphion Foundation, Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung, The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, Pacific Harmony Foundation, Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University, The Casement Fund, BMI Foundation, as well as public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the New York State Council for the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and the Illinois Arts Council Agency. The International Contemporary Ensemble is the Ensemble in Residence of the Nokia Bell Labs Experiments in Art and Technology. Yamaha Artist Services New York is the exclusive piano provider for the International Contemporary Ensemble.