

**No Exit presents**  
**bass clarinet & marimba duo**  
**Transient Canvas**

by Jarrett Hoffman



The musicians of No Exit have a hand in two concerts this month. First up, on Sunday, March 15 at 3:00 pm, the new music ensemble will perform on the Chagrin Arts series at Federated Church, bringing along works they commissioned from Christopher Stark, Buck McDaniel, and Ladislav Kubik, as well as music by Leo Ornstein, Krzysztof Penderecki, and Giacinto Scelsi.

Then on Friday, March 20 at 7:00 pm, No Exit will take a turn on the presenting side of the equation, hosting Boston-based Transient Canvas (bass clarinetist Amy Advocat and marimbist Matt Sharrock) at Appletree Books in Cleveland Heights, in a program of music that was all written for the duo.

The centerpiece is Marti Epstein's 2012 *Origami*, which repeats and juxtaposes four musical gestures in different ways, "almost as if they fold in on themselves," as Transient Canvas writes on their website.

*Origami* was one of the first pieces ever composed for the duo, as they said during a recent conference call. "Marti is a really major part of the new music scene in Boston, and she's been a huge supporter of ours since the beginning, when we were completely unknown," Sharrock said. "Her music is just amazing."

After a long time away from *Origami*, Sharrock and Advocat returned to it last summer in a performance at the Charlotte New Music Festival, where they were both

on faculty. “And it really struck me how sensitive and achingly gorgeous the piece is,” Sharrock said.

According to Advocat, visual art is part of Epstein’s philosophy of composition. One example is her process of putting down notes. “She actually writes all of her music by hand, and her scores are pieces of artwork on their own — they’re quite beautiful.”



Turning to the music of Epstein (*left*), Advocat described it as intimate, evocative, and beautifully subtle. “Everything that she does is like a tiny gem. I think *Origami* is a great centerpiece for other works that were inspired by art and humanity.” Filling out the program are pieces by Emily Koh, Jonathan Bailey Holland, Crystal Pascucci, Keith Kirchoff, Nicholas Denton-Protsack, and Clifton Ingram — their inspirations ranging from visual art and poetry to scientific phenomena and terminal illness.

Transient Canvas has spent the first half of their season on a different type of music: the duo has been touring an electroacoustic show that largely draws on their second album, *Wired*. They also included electroacoustic pieces written by recipients of their Composer Fellowship Program, now in its third year. “We’ve been averaging about 140 to 150 applications,” Advocat said.

Not only is it a paid fellowship, but there is no fee to apply. “I’m really passionate about the fact we’re not making money off of the composers,” the bass clarinetist said. “It’s been great to get to know all of these people and work with composers from all over the world.” This year’s winners were Mikhail Johnson (Jamaica), Caroline Louise Miller (USA), and Teerath Majumder (Bangladesh). “It’s really exciting, and it’s a great way for us to communicate with the next generation of musicians and composers.”

Before heading to Cleveland, Transient Canvas will bring their *Origami*-centered program to Columbus, where they will be hosted by the Johnstone Fund for New Music. “They’re great supporters of new music in Central Ohio,” said Sharrock, who’s originally from Marion. “They’ve transformed the city’s art scene from when I left about fifteen years ago.”

That brought up comparisons to Northeast Ohio, where Sharrock also has roots. “I did my undergrad at Baldwin Wallace and lived in Cleveland for five years,” he said, noting that

this was before Tim Beyer founded No Exit. “I’ve been elated to see how the new music scene in Cleveland has been flourishing for the last decade.”

Advocat brought up one of Transient Canvas’s recent visits to Cleveland, in September of 2018. “We worked with Tim on a fabulous [project](#) with Andrew Rindfleisch, No Exit, and Zeitgeist,” she said. “It’s so great what Tim is doing to bring all these ensembles together, and we’re excited to continue that collaboration.”

*Admission is free to hear Transient Canvas. Tickets for No Exit’s performance at Chagrin Arts are available [online](#).*

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